

The Thief and The Cobbler

Shooting Script

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*Coming out of blackness, a crystal ball moves forward.
Two ancient disembodied hands gesture around the ball.
Magical images glow within.
Golden 'arabian nights' style credit titles appear
above the moving hands and crucible.*

ANCIENT VOICE:(Sir Felix Aylmer)

It is written among the limitless constellations
of the celestial heavens
and in the depths of the emerald seas
and upon every grain of sand in the vast deserts
that the world which we see
is an outward and visible dream
of an inward and invisible reality.

*Shimmering images appear in the ball, mysterious and
majestic. The CAMERA moves closer as the ball fills with light.*

ANCIENT VOICE:

Once upon a time
there was a golden city

*(a fabulous 'Babylonian' city appears.
It is the moment before sunrise.)*

In the centre of the golden city
atop the tallest minaret
were three golden balls.

*The city CRANES closer as the balls are lit by the first rays
of the sun.*

ANCIENT VOICE:

The ancients had prophesied
that if the three golden balls were ever taken away
harmony would yield to discord
and the city would fall to destruction and death.

The hands gesture as the ball fills with fire.

ANCIENT VOICE:

But...
the mystics had also foretold

*(the hands withdraw and the smoke clears)
that the city might be saved
by the simplest soul
with the smallest and simplest of things.
The CAMERA moves inside the ball and ZOOMS deep into
the city as sunlight spreads across an empty bazaar.*

ANCIENT VOICE:

In the city there dwelt a lowly shoemaker...

ANGLE-AN OLD BOOT SIGN "Tack the Cobbler" as the sun lights it. The CAMERA goes through the front window of a COBBLER'S SHOP. A sunbeam falls on TACK THE COBBLER asleep in his work-clothes among his shoes and tools.

ANCIENT VOICE:

...who was known as Tack the Cobbler.

Although the young Cobbler is asleep, he is working. He is about 20 years old and has the white face of a clown. His knapsack-like clothes are grey - worn and patched. His toes stick out of his own neglected shoes. In contrast to his appearance, he stitches an intricate golden design on a delicate crimson shoe. It's clear he's an artist.

ANCIENT VOICE:

Also in the city...

(pan across the bazaar to a halo of flies hovering above a wall)

existed a Thief...

(The THIEF'S head rises up under the flies. He looks around and zips down).

who shall be nameless.

The flies move along the wall to a saddle shop. The Thief's hand whips out and steals a saddle. He breaks cover and runs behind a fountain. His flies follow.

There is SINGING and a LITTLE OLD LADY, the NURSE, hobbles along dragging a bunch of bananas. The Thief sneaks up behind her and reaches for them. Suddenly a huge arm shoots out of her robes and grabs his wrist. She kung-fu's him, shakes out all his stolen goods and ties him in knots. Returning to her former frail self she hobbles off and he skitters away like a crab.

INT. THE COBBLER'S SHOP

Still 'sleep-working' Tack takes some twine from his pants and forms an amazing cats-cradle which he snaps into a beautiful pattern on the shoe. He rolls over and his purse slides out from one of his many pockets.

Flies BUZZ and the Thief appears in the doorway. He approaches the sleeping Cobbler, his eyes on the hanging purse. He lifts it, snaps it open and a moth flies out. He turns it inside out. Empty. Some flies land on Tack's nose, making him twitch and he rolls over pinning the Thief to the floor. Still in deep sleep Tack picks up one of the Thief's hands and hammers it on the thumb. The Thief is in silent agony.

TRUMPETS SOUND. *The Thief looks up.*

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MORNING

On the horizon ostrich plumes wave and men in black run around. A procession is coming. The townspeople pull back in fear.

CHANTING VOICES:

Have no fear! Have no fear!
Zigzag the Grand Vizier is near!

INT. THE COBBLER'S SHOP

Still asleep, Tack stitches the Thief's robe to his own clothes. The Thief's flies really bother the Cobbler. The moth lands on his nose and it twitches. The Thief frees an arm to scratch Tack's nose.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

The chanting procession is in full view.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG THE GRAND VIZIER

walking with a zigzagging rhythm - picture of total disdain. He is a tall vulture-like man with the shifting gait of a marionette. Eight CROW-LIKE MEN run in continuous motion round Zigzag unrolling and rolling up 2 carpets so that his jewelled slippers never touch the earth. As Zigzag proceeds they roll up the carpet he has just walked on and run round to the front to unroll the other one just in time to receive his next step.

Four COURTIERS, GOPHER, GOBLET, SLAP and TICKLE lead the chant, throwing rose petals and fanning Zigzag with ostrich plumes.

Behind, four huge EUNUCHS singing in high-pitched harmony carry a pink palanquin. The curves of the moving drapes suggest a large female within. CROW-LIKE MEN lash out with long whips, keeping the crowd back.

Leaping in and out of the Eunuchs' pantaloons, a DWARF bellows.

DWARF and EUNUCHS:

Have no fear! Have no fear!
Zigzag the Grand Vizier is here!

INT. THE COBBLER'S SHOP

The Thief and the sleeping Cobbler are now so stitched together that it appears that four hands are doing the work. The offscreen procession is outside. Tack hammers the Thief's head. The Thief can't stand it and grabs the cobbler's nose. Tack is shocked awake and jumps up - tied face to face with the Thief. The Thief tries to escape and they roll entwined down the stairs, crashing into the street with chickens, dogs, cats, spoons and tacks flying everywhere, and land in a heap at Zigzag's feet. The commotion makes the carpet late and Zigzag steps onto an upright tack.

ZIGZAG:(Vincent Price)

Yeeeeeooooowwww!

The Cobbler is bewildered. The Thief hides behind him,

unstitching himself, trying to act as a shadow.

ZIGZAG:(pointing to Tack)

Seize him! Take him! Seize him! Take him!

The four courtiers echo their master.

GOPHER, GOBLET, SLAP and TICKLE:

Seize him! Take him! Seize him! Take him!

The Cobbler makes a run for it, dragging the Thief. GUARDS appear and encircle the Cobbler's throat with spears. They trample all over the Thief - who escapes into the crowd.

Tack shakes with fear, then zips down and with lightning speed and shoemaker's dexterity he runs around at ground level, attacking their toes with hammers - as if playing a xylophone. The Guards HOWL.

Tack breaks free only to have a second wave of Guards rush at him with spears. He reaches into his 'knapsack' pants and throws handfuls of reels and spools beneath their feet and they tumble. A third wave of Guards comes at him, spears outstretched. Again Tack drops low and darts in and out stitching their pantlegs together. He tugs and they collapse. He looks to escape but FOUR HUGE EUNUCHS glide up behind him. SWISH! A scimitar crosses his throat. SWISH! Another behind his neck. SWISH! Another. SWISH! And another. They tighten round his throat.

ZIGZAG:

Take him into the palace!

EXT. THE GOLDEN PALACE - MORNING

Huge palace doors RUMBLE open. Their edges are like giant teeth. Zigzag's procession marches through with the Cobbler in tow.

EXT. A PALACE WINDOW

A beautiful 18-year-old is placing a yellow rose and a blue rose with white star-speckles into a delicate and precise flower arrangement on a window ledge. She hums what will be the love theme and sings:

PRINCESS YUMYUM:

Two kinds of beauty
Bring a new kind of beauty to light
Would the sun be such a miracle
Without the starry counterpoint of night?
And yet I find it strange
Though I arrange and arrange
There's still an empty place in me.
A missing face I cannot see.

Her POV through gap in flower arrangement; she sees Tack. Curious, she peers out, then turns and disappears.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

following the procession, he sneaks through the crowd, across the moat, and up to the palace entrance. He freezes, staring into the

sky.

THIEF'S POV

looking in at the palace minaret. The CAMERA ZOOMS up to the top. The THREE GOLDEN BALLS gleam.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

*The Golden Balls appear in his eyes.
Two huge GUARDS block his path. The doors close, leaving him outside.*

INT. THE THRONE ROOM

The young beauty from the window - PRINCESS YUMYUM - hurries over to her father, KING NOD. Old and worn-out, he slumps on his throne like a beanbag, snoring fitfully. She kisses his cheek.

YUMYUM:

Wake - wake - my father! Something's happening without!

KING:(Sir Anthony Quayle)

(waking) Er...er...oh! What?

Zigzag leads the pink palanquin up to the throne. The Cobbler is in the rear - his tacks and spindles and spools spilling.

ZIGZAG:

Oh Great King Nod - have no fear!

Zigzag your Grand Vizier is here!

KING:

Oh...it's you...Zigzag... (snore)

Zigzag moves up close to the dozing King. The pink palanquin is brought closer. Deep female chuckles come from within.

ZIGZAG:

And now - Oh Greatest of the Great!

To rest you from affairs of State -

I've searched the world

and brought you thence

at no little effort and great expense -

a plaything from far south of Gaza -

(whispering into the King's ear)

A bountiful Maiden from Mombassa!

A long-lashed violet eye peeks out from the curtains. The Courtiers snicker in the background. Princess Yumyum rolls her eyes heavenward.

KING:

(coming out of his stupor) Mombassa?

A deep chortle comes from inside the palanquin and from the curtains a female hand produces a bunch of grapes. In the rear the Cobbler is shoved forward, stumbling, tacks spilling. The Princess eyes the young Cobbler curiously. Zigzag notices.

YUMYUM:
Who is this?

ZIGZAG:
(ignoring her) Oh Greatest King of all the Earth!
This low-born person of no worth
attacked me in the square today!
-shall we take his head away?

KING:
(slipping back to sleep) Oh...uh...Zigzag...if you really...think so...

YUMYUM:
But what has he done?

ZIGZAG:
(hurt - to Yummyum) Attacked me! (holds up a tack)
In the centre of town!

YUMYUM:
Humph.

ZIGZAG:
We must put this clown -down.

He whips out a wand, puts it behind the Cobbler's neck and presses his face to the floor. The King is asleep again.

ZIGZAG:
Oh King...Oh Ki-i-ing...

The Cobbler crawls forward to pick up tacks and Zigzag falls over him onto the tacks.

ZIGZAG:
Ow! Ow! You great fool!

KING:
What? What? What?

YUMYUM:
Oh let him go father. No real harm appears to be done.

She slips off her shoe and unseen by her father breaks it in half. SNAP. She displays it.

YUMYUM:
At the moment...Daddy...I need a cobbler.

KING:
...Oh, I see...

Yummyum looks warmly at the Cobbler. Tack is astonished. Zigzag's blue face goes red with jealousy. He obviously has his own designs on her.

ZIGZAG:

(to the Princess - smile with all teeth and bowing) Of course...Oh Rose of the Land. Your slightest whim is my command.

KING:

Er...Cobbler...go with Princess Yumyum...(slides back to sleep)

Yumyum looks haughtily at Zigzag and gives her broken shoe to Tack. Zigzag seethes with frustration. Yumyum beckons to Tack who bows to the King and backs into a pillar. He tries to stand and bow at the same time, holding the shoe, dropping spools and spindles, going forwards and backwards as he follows Yumyum out.

EXT. THE PALACE - MORNING

The Thief's head rises out of a RUBBISH BIN on wheels.

Horses pass by.

A GONG RINGS

DWARF and EUNUCHS VOICES (OS):

Open for the Royal Polo Ponies!

The huge spiked doors of the palace gate THUNDER open. A procession of magnificent POLO PONIES crosses the drawbridge. At the end of the line of horses the Thief looks out from his rubbish cart. His head zips back inside and his arms come out and push the wheels like a wheelchair, blindly propelling the cart down a slope to the drawbridge.

The last horse has just gone in when the seemingly empty rubbish bin rolls just inside the guarded entrance. Since the Thief can't see where he's going, he turns and goes out again, wiggling and wobbling to the middle of the bridge. He gets stuck at the edge. The guards watch mystified as the Thief's arms come out and grab the wheels. With a hefty push he dumps himself out of the cart - SPLASH! Into the moat.

He dog-paddles semi-submerged alongside the palace wall, round a curve and out of sight of the guards. He grabs a large pipe running up the outside of the palace wall. He lifts himself into it and wriggles up the inside of the palace piping.

INT. THE PRINCESS' CHAMBERS

Yumyum hums her love theme. She is at a table, her arms full of flowers. An amazing cat's cradle of golden thread moves between Tack's fingers. He sits on the floor working on Yumyum's slipper, accompanying her song with his tools.

Dragging her bananas, Yumyum's old NURSE (the karate expert) enters singing and hobbles past in front of him. She puts on her glasses to see, and one arm of her spectacles comes loose.

NURSE:

The nice young man is fixing your slippers, my dear?

YUMYUM:

(smiles and nods) Yes, Nanny.

Tack swiftly, as a physical aside, fixes the Nurse's glasses.

The Nurse likes him for it.

She tugs the bananas over to a monkey in a cage and gives him one.

Then with great difficulty, she picks up a vase and carries it to

Yummyum.

NURSE:

Your favorite vase, my dear...

Yummyum smiles and delicately arranges the flowers. She looks at Tack. He flicks his hands and three beautiful embroidered flowers appear on the slipper. Yummyum watches and absently places three flowers in the same position in her arrangement. Then she realises her work has affected her work. She's emulating him and it makes hers better. Then he sees the effect. They look at each other. LOVE. She blushes and turns away - to make believe it didn't happen and goes back to arranging. His face goes red and he gets all tangled up in his twine and tools. The old Nurse hobbles around in the background muttering pleasantly.

NURSE:

Young people...

Behind Tack is a large window. RIP! CLONK! A big section of piping falls into view, pulled half off the palace wall. The Nurse stares, puzzled. Tack and Yummyum are oblivious.

EXT. THE PALACE WALL

The pipes rip loose as the Thief squirms ever upwards to the top of the palace. The flies follow along outside the vibrating pipes, then enter a break as the Thief works his way up into a turret with a single crescent moon window.

INT. THE KING'S COMMODORE

The crescent moon window is seen from inside a luxurious commode. The 'opening' is cushioned. A sash hangs, encrusted with jewels. Up through the hole rise the flies, followed by the Thief's head. He looks around. There is the SOUND of giggling, eating of chocolates and grapes.

ANGLE - KING'S BEDROOM

Straddled across the bed is the pink palanquin. The curtains move and King Nod's foot is revealed being massaged.

PAN right to the commode.

The Thief sees the jewel-studded sash hanging. He grabs it and pulls down. There is a violent WHIRRR and the Thief is FLUSHED away, his eyes vanishing down the tubes.

INT. THE KING'S BEDROOM

The King's head pops out of the palanquin curtains, puzzled at the FLUSHING.

EXT. THE PALACE WALL

Fast CUTS as the Thief rockets down the inside of the pipes. He shoots out of the original opening. SPLASH! Back into the moat.

INT. YUMMYUM'S CHAMBER

Tack and Yummyum exchange shy glances while humming and tapping.

A GONG SOUNDS shattering the beauty of the moment and the huge Eunuchs armed with scimitars fill the doorway. Yummyum steps protectively in front of Tack. Out of the Eunuch's pantaloons pops the dwarf. He booms:

DWARF:
Oh beautiful Princess Yummyum!
The Eunuchs squeal in 'chime' chords:

EUNUCHS:
Oh! Beautiful! Princess! Yummyum!

DWARF:
(leaping into another pantaloon)
The Great Lord Zigzag sends greetings!

EUNUCHS:
And! Bids! You! Return!

DWARF:
The Cobbler!

Yummyum picks up the slipper that Tack is repairing.

YUMMYUM:
Not at the moment - not today!

She breaks the slipper as if it just came apart of itself. She looks at Tack. It's a private moment. He realises she did it to save him.

GONGGGGGG!
The Dwarf and Eunuchs exit backwards, bowing.

CUT TO:
A CLOSE-UP of Zigzag's head. A pyramid and the Sphinx PAN behind him. He appears to be riding. The CAMERA pulls back showing the scenery to be a large painting carried by SLAP and TICKLE. Zigzag is seated on a semi-throne. He kicks off his slippers.

ZIGZAG:
Gopher! Bandages! Goblet! Slap! Tickle!

All four minions compete in attending their master with bandages, ointments, a goblet of wine.

GOPHER, GOBLET, SLAP and TICKLE:
Your command is my wish, Milord!
Avec plaisir! Your Divinity!

The GONG SOUNDS and the four Eunuchs appear in the doorway.

ZIGZAG:
And what did the Princess Yummyum say?

Out pops the Dwarf from the pantleg curtains and bellows with the Eunuchs:

DWARF & EUNUCHS:
Not at the moment - not today!

Zigzag's face turns bright red. He forces a smile, all teeth.

EXT. THE PALACE WALL - DAY

The vertical piping shakes as the Thief inside makes his way upwards yet again. Plaster and screws fall loose. The pipes lead up to the King's turret, but the Thief arrives at a T-junction. He turns left this time towards another turret with female shaped windows. His foot bursts out, flailing as a section of pipe falls away, but he keeps on going. The flies enter the pipes and follow up into the turret.

INT. PRINCESS YUMYUM'S CHAMBER

Yumyum is taking a bubble bath and humming her song. She plays with big floating lilac-coloured bubbles that both reflect her beauty and discreetly conceal her. Rose-coloured anemones float in the water, inside bubbles. She lifts one up. The bubble pops and she sniffs the blossom. She recoils in puzzlement. Something doesn't smell good. There is the SOUND of BUZZING and through a drain grill rise the Thief's flies, followed by his fingers. He removes the grill and squeezes out of the drain. The shimmering bubbles reflecting his face fascinate him. He pops some with his finger and crawls across the tiles seeking the source of these wonders.

Then he sees the lovely head, back and shoulders of the Princess. But it is not Yumyum who has riveted his attention - it is the glittering, jewel-encrusted ivory BACKSCRATCHER with which she scratches herself and flicks bubbles around.

He crawls alongside the tub and as she scratches her back he slides the backscratcher out of her hand and ducks. She looks round and fishes in the water for it.

YUMYUM:

Where is my backscratcher?

Within the water?

...Ah, well, I have another.

She no sooner uses the second backscratcher than the Thief slides this one away too and escapes along the floor beside the tub. Yumyum fishes around bewildered.

The Thief backs toward the door-curtain. His sleeves cover his real hands so that the little fork-like backscratchers appear to be his own tiny hands, which disappear under the door curtaining.

INT. YUMYUM'S CHAMBERS

CLOSE-UP on a TACK suspended on a cats-cradle of thread between the Cobbler's fingers. He moves the threads and the tack spins in the air, landing in a spool on his shoulder. The spool runs down his arm to his wrist and lands upright on the new leather of Yumyum's shoe under repair. A hammer is pivoted between his two toes. His other foot taps the handle and THWACK! Knocks the tack into the shoe.

Flies BUZZ and the Thief enters still walking backwards. He backs blindly down some steps towards Tack.

A butterfly enters and lands on Yumyum's flowers causing Tack to look over at them, away from the approaching Thief. Tack puts his work down and goes over and admires and sniffs them. He grimaces as there is an obvious bad smell.

He turns - face to face with the Thief. The Thief grabs Yumyum's slipper from Tack's hand. He runs off and Tack tears after him.

They race across marble floors, in and out of corridors, mirrors and stairs. The Thief hides in the King's chamber behind the palanquin. Tack sees the movement in the palanquin and leaps inside, crashing into the King and the Maiden from Mombassa. Grapes and chocolates fly.

The Thief and Tack shoot through the legs of the King's ANCIENT EUNUCH guarding the door. The King looks out in amazement.

Losing the Thief, Tack lifts up the lids of some large wine jugs. The Thief's head peers out of the end jug and it falls over. CRASH! The others fall like dominoes and roll and bounce down the stairs. Tack leaps at the Thief running round a corner and grabs the slipper out of his hand. The Thief slips on a banana skin and slides down a staircase handrail spiralling below, then flies away, smashing out through a stained-glass window into the Throne Room, flying across the room and out through another stained-glass window.

Tack slides head first on the handrail down another set of stairs, through doors, diving between the legs of the Eunuchs who bar a series of entrances. He shoots into Zigzag's dressing room and knocks Zigzag into a sit-down

fall on top of him. Tacks spill.

Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle surround the Cobbler. The Eunuchs block the exits. Zigzag grabs the slipper but Tack hangs on.

ZIGZAG:

Aha! You've finished Yummy's shoe!
You've done it very well!

He yanks Tack towards him by the slipper and zips out his wand.

ZIGZAG:

And now she has no need of you
we'll put you in a cell!

SPRONG! The wand telescopes out with two talons on the end and pins Tack's neck to the wall.

INT. A DUNGEON - LATE DAY

Tack is tossed in. The door SLAMS and footsteps fade. He has a ball and chain round his ankle. There is a bowl of water and a crust of bread. Sadly, he takes out Yummy's slipper and starts embroidering roses on it.

A crack in the wall becomes Yummy singing a bit of her song.

Some mice with large ears come out and sit in a semi-circle in front of him. They come out of their little mousehole door which is half off its hinges. Absently, Tack fixes the door hinges. He breaks off little bits of bread and feeds the mice. One mouse sniffs, steps forward and exchanges a sympathetic glance at Tack. "I know about love, too." They both look at the roses on the slipper. The mouse sneezes.

There is the SOUND of HORSES close by.

Tack stands on the ball and hammers tacks into the wall, making a 'ladder'. He climbs up to a small barred window and peers out.

TACK'S POV

horses hooves

EXT. THE WINDOW

Tack looks out and the CAMERA pulls back to reveal the elegant polo ponies on review for King Nod, who sits in a viewing pavilion. The pink palanquin straddles another throne beside the King. A purple fingered hand feeds the King grapes. The other hand peeks out with opera glasses.

The King is falling asleep, though he seems vaguely interested in the horses. At his other side is Zigzag.

ZIGZAG:

Oh Imperial Majesty!
From farthest Cathay at my bidding was sent
the best polo ponies from the Orient.
As your Vizier and servant of course I adore you,
It gives me great pleasure to make pleasure for you.

KING:

Yes, yes, Zigzag, very nice...

Zigzag stands in a grandiose manner and proclaims to the assembly:

ZIGZAG:

To please King Nod
beloved by all
Commence the game!
In short - PLAY BALL!

TRUMPETS BLARE startling the King awake, and amid CHEERING, WHINNYING, and THUNDERING HOOVES, the game begins.

ANGLE - THE PRINCESS AND HER NURSE

In a box at the game. Yummyum eats a pear, hums her love theme and watches the game without interest. The Nurse sings amiably under her breath then erupts like a hockey fan.

NURSE:
LET'S KICK ASS!

She subsides. Yummyum pays no attention.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

running round the back of the palace and onto the playing field. A glittering white sphere rolls past him and stops. Transfixed, he goes up to it. There is the sound of THUNDERING HOOVES and CRACK! The ball and the Thief fly up into the air.

The horses disappear as the Thief hits the ground. He gets up and runs away from it, but it follows him. He runs and the ball chases him. HOOFBEATS POUND and CRACK! He flies into the air and splats onto the ground.

ANGLE - YUMMYUM AND NURSE

NURSE:
(erupting again) THROW THAT BUM OUT OF THE GAME!
The horses race over a hill, the Thief scurrying away.

ANGLE - YUMMYUM
leaning over her father.

YUMMYUM:
Father, Father...

KING:
(waking)
Snort...what?

YUMMYUM:
Do you know where my
Cobbler has gone to?

KING:
What? Er, no - isn't he with you?
...Fixing your shoe?

YUMMYUM:
He seems to have vanished.

ZIGZAG:
(diverting the King to the game)
Oh! What a wonderful swing, oh King!

KING:
Yes...er...yes, of course...

Zigzag smiles at Yummyum. His eyes run lasciviously up and down her. She pulls a robe across her breast. He stares. She throws away her pear in disgust.

ANGLE - THE GAME

The horses race towards the Thief, who scurries into a rabbit hole.

INT. RABBIT HOLE

Inside, only the Thief's eyes are visible. The SCREEN shakes as the horses THUNDER PAST above. The Thief's eyes show relief. Then the glittering white ball rolls down into the blackness and stops. The Thief sees the ball. Panic. There is the SOUND of POUNDING HOOVES and WHACK! He is shot into the air amid flying sod and earth. His head catches in the forked limb of a tree and the horsemen race away below. BUMP! The ball drops onto his head from the foliage above. He shimmies backwards away from the ball, along the limb, down the tree trunk to the ground. But the ball rolls out from behind the tree. He races down the hill, the ball following in hot pursuit. The horses THUNDER up and THWACK! The Thief is shot over a hill into the greenery. A ray of late afternoon sun lights up the three golden balls on the ancient minaret. The scene is idyllic.

ZIGZAG:

(rising imperiously, proclaiming)

Oh Wisest of Rulers!
Happy is the Kingdom
In this milk and honeyed land!
Happy...

EXT. PRISON WINDOW

Tack's eyes peer out of a tiny barred opening. His hands work one of the bars with a small file.

ZIGZAG: (VO)

...are the subjects
who live beneath your hand!

EXT. THE PAVILION

ZIGZAG:

We rejoice at all around us
as the beautiful evening falls,
safe beneath the sure protection
of the Ancient Golden Balls!

The CAMERA goes up to the three gleaming gold balls and the horizon swivels as the CAMERA goes around the balls and over the city, river, green gardens, and golden fields. In a vast panoramic shot, the darkening foothills of the mountain approach. The orange light of the evening sun lights the valleys and snowcapped mountains. Summer thunderstorms pass below and the azure of the evening sky and sunlit luminous clouds transform as the CAMERA travels. The sequence has the feeling of time-lapse as we animate the magic and breadth of nature's elements in a Chinese-Persian landscape.

The CAMERA slows as it veers toward a crevasse where circling vultures lead through the twists and turns of a canyon. There are the SOUNDS of death and the CAMERA passes over dying elephants and soldiers out onto a great plain lit by the final rays of the sunset. Filling the SCREEN is a mountain of heaped corpses - a groaning pile of horses, elephants, and men riddled with arrows. Surrounding the mound are huge, black-armoured, purple-faced soldiers with red beards and one eye closed as if permanently taking aim - the other staring open. Atop the mound stands THE MIGHTY ONE-EYE, his standard with its ghastly one-eye emblem cracking in the wind.

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

One-Eyes! One-Eyes! One-Eyes win again!
The surrounding One-Eye Army thunders back.

ONE-EYE ARMY:

One-Eyes!

Vultures land on the mountainous pile of bodies.

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

The day of death has come to the Golden Land!
One-Eye has destroyed the Frontier Guard!

ONE-EYE ARMY:

One-Eye! One-Eye! One-Eye!

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

Now we march on the Golden City!
And I shall conquer the Golden City!

ONE-EYE ARMY:

One-Eye! One-Eye! One-Eye!

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

No one is left alive to warn them!

The CAMERA PANS to the back of a pile of corpses stuck with spears and arrows like a vast pincushion. A piece of the pincushion moves and a small SOLDIER studded with arrows crawls like a porcupine towards a terrified horse. He just manages to pull himself up onto the horse.

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

I shall trample and break them!
And not show pity!
No man escapes the Mighty One-Eye!

The Soldier spurs the horse and gallops off unseen as the last ray of sun fades. The CAMERA swivels and rises following the tiny horse and rider through deep ravines, then travels ahead through valleys, peaks, storms, canyons, waterfalls, forests. It is dark now, lit by early stars. The journey accelerates as an orange moon rises, whitens and shines on silver clouds passing over the valleys.

Arriving back at the starlit Goolden City, the CAMERA CRANES round a tall minaret with a vulture-like turret. Window "eyes" light up like searchlights. The CAMERA goes up a winding staircase in its "gullet" to arrive at.

INT. ZIGZAG'S PLOTTING ROOM

The walls are covered with maps, tables and corners full of flasks and beakers, books, astrological and occult paraphernalia. Perched on a globe is Zigzag's pet vulture, PHIDO. Phido is skinny and haggard and has the swollen stomach of the starving. He is asleep on a world globe as Zigzag paces.

ZIGZAG:

Sleep...Sleep...Sleep!
They sleep...they sleep...they're all asleep!
(looking down at the city with a telescope)
But I am quite awake! Eh, Phido?
Phido SNORES softly.

ZIGZAG:

I rise above the human heap!
He gestures towards the moonlit city below.

ZIGZAG:

The world is mine to take!

Leaning over the dozing Phido on the globe, Zigzag gives it a violent spin and the vulture shoots off into the wall, SPLAT! SQUAAWK! Phido flaps dizzily back and lands on an hour glass.

ZIGZAG:

Eh, Phido?

Phido nods in agreement, but when Zigzag turns his back he sticks his tongue out at him.

ZIGZAG:

Men are fools who walk in dreams...

Phido sits on the hour glass, seemingly peeing a thin stream of sand.

ZIGZAG:

...they sleep their lives away!

But I, Zigzag, will reign supreme!

(Phido snores)

For they are easy prey...

Eh, Phido?

Zigzag fingers the back of Phido's neck. Phido panics - then manages to "PURR" up to Zigzag. When Zigzag turns away he HISSES silently at his back.

ZIGZAG:

(pointing with his wand)

The King himself sleeps all the time...

A lost unconscious soul...

too stupid to suspect

that I am in control!

He zips his wand to twice its length and brandishes it in front of the vulture. Phido sighs, rolls his eyes and wearily jumps aboard. With Phido on the end, Zigzag gestures with the wand at the silver city below.

ZIGZAG:

Control! Control the Golden Land!

And all it's golden wealth!

I rule now with an unseen hand

by cleverness and stealth!

Eh, Phido?

Perched on the wand, hovering over a large candle, Phido's tail feathers burst into flames.

PHIDO: (Donald Pleasance)

Squa-a-a-awwwk!

Flapping his huge wings and with his arse blazing he races over to a big ink pot and dips his burning end in. HISSSSSS! Rising steam and a big sigh of relief.

ZIGZAG:

But this ignoble way of life

is just a passing thing!

He pulls a quill feather from Phido's tail, already dipped in ink.

ZIGZAG:

For I intend to take as wife...

On the wall is a full-figure painting of Princess Yummyum.

ZIGZAG:

...the daughter of the King!

Zigzag inscribes a large double "Z" across the Princess' body.

ZIGZAG:

And with her as my Royal Bride
I'll rule in public sight -
With Princess Yummyum at my side
the crown is mine by right!

He throws the quill like a dart into the painting, but we don't see where it lands. He bursts into obscene laughter. Phido registers disgust. Zigzag suddenly notices him.

ZIGZAG:

Poor Phido! How could I forget?
I fear you haven't eaten yet.

Phido starts to fawn and drool and purr.

ZIGZAG:

For you dear bird, a special treat -
For breakfast you'll have Cobbler meat!

Phido's eyes light up and he jumps on Zigzag's shoulder flapping, hissing and cackling. Zigzag bursts into laughter and they both leave the tower, twisting and turning down the spiral steps.

WHITE PAVILION - NIGHT

Yummyum lies in the centre of a large white circular fur rug. She hums her lament while breaking a pile of jewelled slippers. She fondles one.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

hidden in the bushes, his eyes reflect the jewels.

Yummyum sighs and rolls over to sleep. The Thief crawls on his belly commando-style, sneaks onto the rug and tiptoes through the fur. Without waking Yummyum he grabs an armful of slippers and makes it halfway back across the rug.

RUMBLE. RUMBLE. The ground trembles and huge white DOG'S HEADS rise up surrounding the Thief. The "rug" is a circle of white dogs. There is the SOUND of growling, rending and tearing. Yummyum wakes.

YUMMYUM:

Thief! Thief! Stop thief!

INT. TACK'S CELL

A sunbeam pours past a severed bar in the window and shines on Yummyum's slipper which Tack has stitched to his shirt over his heart. He is still sewing it on in his sleep as he curls up on the cell floor when sunlight awakens him. He sits upright and discovers the stitched slipper. He gives a deep heart-broken sigh and starts to unpick the slipper from his chest. The sympathetic mouse is there to give a sniff and a sigh, then SNEEZES. Tack glances at the cell door and stiffens in terror. The mouse vanishes.

ANGLE - THE CELL DOOR

A large yellow eyeball with a red iris is staring at him through a slot. The eye blinks sideways like a camera lens.

EXT. THE CELL DOOR

Phido is staring into Tack's cell. Phido has stereo vision and while one eye looks at Tack, his other eyeball looks at Zigzag, who holds him.

ZIGZAG:

(unlocking the door)

There's your breakfast, Phido dear.
You can eat him up right here.

Tack braces himself with his ball and chain as the HISSING vulture beats his big wings against the opening door.

DISSOLVE TO:

Superimpositions of VULTURES landing on dead bodies. On top of these are superimposed images of the Dying Soldier riding in long shot and close-up, blending one into the other as in a dream. Behind the galloping Soldier are the faces of the One-Eye Soldiers and then - large - the head of Mighty One-Eye. The pounding hoofbeats build to a crescendo and POP!

CLOSE SHOT - KING NOD

snaps awake bolt upright - frozen in fright. He shouts:

KING:

Zigzag! Zigzag! Get me Zigzag!
Get me Zigzag now!

*The King's old Manservant bangs his mighty hands together. BOOM!
A Eunuch is in a door arch and the Dwarf leaps out of his pantaloons.*

DWARF AND EUNUCHS:

The King wants Zigzag!

INT. TACK'S CELL

*Tack has his ball and chain set to brain Phido as Zigzag opens the door. Phido is so excited that his huge flapping wings prevent him getting through the doorway.
Zigzag cackles, but stops as the Eunuchs' call reaches him.*

EUNUCHS: (VO)

Zigzag! Zigzag! Zigzag!
The King wants Zigzag now!

All pleasure disappears from Zigzag's face.

ZIGZAG:

Oh fffffffPhido!
Affairs of State!
I fear your breakfast will have to wait!

Zigzag shuts the cell door and locks it. Phido can't believe it! He flaps and cries in frustration bashing his wings against the door.

ANGLE - TACK

as he falls back against the wall, panting. The mouse looks out.

EUNUCHS: (VO)

Zigzag! Zigzag! Zigzag! Zigzag!
The King wants Zigzag now!

ANGLE - ZIGZAG

ZIGZAG: (irritated)

Coming your Majesty! Coming! Coming!

Zigzag absently sets Phido down on a brazier of glowing coals.

PHIDO:

SQUAAAAAAAAAWK!

EXT. AN ALLEY

The Thief sneaks out from a dark alley. He freezes, staring at the sky.

THIEF'S POV

The Three Golden Balls gleam in the dawn sun.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

The Golden Balls appear in his eyes. He sneaks back into the shadows.

INT. KING NOD'S CHAMBER

The Eunuchs are still calling Zigzag. The King wrings his hands, his face wreathed in anguish.

KING:

Oh! Oh! Oh!

ZIGZAG:(entering)

Oh Great King Nod - have no fear!

Zigzag your Grand Vizier is here!

KING:

Death and destruction, Zigzag!

My Kingdom will come to destruction and death!

ZIGZAG:

Be calm Serene Highness.

You must catch your breath.

What dawn of disaster?

Why speak you of death?

KING:

I've had a dream. A nightmare!

No! A-a-a vision! A vision of invasion!

A race of one-eyed men!

EXT. THE THREE GOLDEN BALLS

Flies BUZZ and the CAMERA pulls back to reveal the Thief in the palace courtyard. He holds a very long vaulting pole. He paces back and takes aim. The Thief begins his approach, gaining speed as he runs. He races to the base of the minaret but runs past it straight into a wall, pronging himself in the stomach with his pole. He hops around in silent agony.

INT. KING NOD'S CHAMBER

The King is frenzied with worry.

ZIGZAG:

Calm down, your Highness. Invaders? One-eyed?

But this is against

what has been prophesied.

For has it not been written - we are safe from any threat

as long as those three golden balls

are on the minaret?

He gestures out of the window.

KING:(giving up)

Yes...but...

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

The Thief paces backwards with his pole. He takes aim and runs - faster and faster. The pole goes down and he goes up vaulting gracefully toward the minaret. But the pole is too short to take him more than halfway up and there isn't enough momentum for his feet to touch the side. His toes, like little fingers, grab futilely at air.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack's eyes and hands are just visible as he files the second bar. He spies the Thief.

TACK'S POV

The Thief poised in mid-air, just visible over the palace courtyard wall. He falls down out of sight.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack winces at the offscreen THUD. He shudders and continues filing.

INT. THE KING'S CHAMBER

The King snaps awake - takes a few hysterical steps forward and yells.

KING:

The prophecy says - if the balls are
ever taken away - the City will fall
to destruction and death!

(screaming)

What if the balls are taken away?

He whacks Zigzag to the side.

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

The Thief has a professional stance now. He runs - faster, faster. The pole goes down, he goes up. This time his nose almost touches the side of the minaret. SPRONG! The pole and the Thief vibrate like a tuning fork, then he starts to spin downwards.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack looks up and winces again.

TACK'S POV

The Thief spirals down the pole behind the wall.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack hears the offscreen THUMP, shakes his head and keeps filing.

INT. THE KING'S CHAMBER

ZIGZAG:(shouting, but de-crescendoing to calmness)

A way has never been found to take them away.

What freak of nature could ever get
up to the top of that minaret?

What freak of nature could there be
to steal the balls while all could see?

Partially convinced, the King escapes into another nap.

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

Now the Thief has a very long pole indeed? He begins his approach. Very professional. Faster, faster, faster. Down goes the pole and he takes off in a perfect arc towards the top of the minaret. Under the dome is a window. He goes straight through it and out the other side.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack looks up, startled.

TACK'S POV

The Thief disappears down behind the wall.

EXT. CITY BUILDINGS

The Thief falls into an awning - RIP! He plummets down below and ricochets off awnings, drops through clothes lines, augmenting his costume in mid-flight with random clothing, underwear etc. A long awning smoothes his fall, gliding him safely to the courtyard where he skitters dizzily into the shadows. A rooster panics.

INT. THE KING'S CHAMBER

Zigzag leads the half-slumbering King towards his bedroom.

ZIGZAG:

*There's a good King, no reason to fret.
There hasn't been a problem that
we couldn't handle yet.*

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

The Thief is really determined now. His robes are pulled up above his pants and he has developed Olympic style. Off he goes, increasing speed. Faster, faster, faster. Down goes the pole and up he goes in a graceful arc making a perfect approach to the tip of the minaret and the balls. But he is just too high and he sails over them grasping at thin air.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack looks up and rubs his eyes in disbelief.

TACK'S POV

The Thief falls, continuing his perfect arc and vanishes behind the wall.

EXT. CITY BUILDINGS

Here he goes again; bouncing off awnings, shooting across balustrades, around corners. He goes through windows, through bedrooms, shutters banging open and shut, and comes out clutching more and more potted plants. Then he loses the lot and ends up on the same long awning as before, gliding backwards to the ground. He shoots off the end and collapses in the courtyard shadows. Baby chicks run around.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack files away like mad and the bar gives way. He pushes his head out and wriggles his way up and out of the tiny opening. Then he pulls up his ball and chain. But CLANK! The ball is too big for the opening. He looks around, frantic.

INT. KING'S BEDROOM

Zigzag glides the King towards the pink palanquin. The Maiden chortles from within and a purple hand chucks the King's chin. She offers him chocolates as Zigzag gently pushes him forward.

ZIGZAG:

*The King cannot be at his best
unless he takes a little rest.*

The King is swallowed by the curtains and Zigzag tiptoes away. Then the King pokes his head out.

KING:

I just have this funny feeling...

CLOSE SHOT - THE THREE GOLDEN BALLS

Flies BUZZ and the CAMERA pulls back to reveal the Thief balancing on one of the three guy wires leading from

smaller minarets which support the Ancient Minaret. He is very high up, using his pole as a balance. The wind blows as he steps out. His toes grab the wire like fingers and his legs shake as he sways from side to side. Bursts of wind billow out his robe. He swings back and forth crazily out of control and runs forward slipping and sliding. He drops the pole, falls off the wire, but catches it with one hand and loops himself back aboard. He runs the length of the wire to the golden onion dome and wraps his arms around it.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack looks around in panic - trying to free the ball. He smashes at the stone edges of the opening with his hammer and kicks and tugs.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

Slithering and sliding, he tries to get up on top of the onion dome. He gets up the convex shape, then pulls himself up on the spike that holds the balls. He stands triumphant.

INT. KING NOD'S CHAMBER

The King and Zigzag stare at each other.

KING:

But - but - but...

ZIGZAG:

But has it not been foretold
by the sages in days of old,
that as long as they stay -
and aren't taken **away** -
we're as safe as our balls of gold?

KING NOD: (giving up)

Yes...but...

The King's head falls on his chest and he is asleep.

During this and unnoticed by Zigzag and King Nod, the Thief is visible out the window. He works the balls off the spike. He puts the small and middle-sized balls between his knees and crotch, then works the largest and heaviest ball off. He is just able to stand up. Now how will he get down?

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack tugs and bashes at the ball. It just won't come through the opening.

INT. THE KING'S CHAMBER

King Nod smokes a hookah and slides into sleep. Another strand of hookah tubing goes into the palanquin beside him. Zigzag is tucking him into his bolsters.

ZIGZAG:

It's not time to get up. Too early to rise.
Too early to open the King's sleepy eyes.

At the same time, visible through the window, the Thief is flat on his back against the curve of the minaret dome. The big ball is between his knees. He cradles the other two under one arm, his other arm holding onto the spike. He is trying to lower himself towards the wire. The big ball between his knees falls onto the wire. Unaware of this, Zigzag tiptoes away from the sleeping King.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

Clutching the other two balls, the Thief slides out onto the wire and grabs the large ball between his feet. This leaves him lying on the wire with the two smaller balls in his arms and the big ball between his feet. He works the big ball underneath him and perches on it. But the weight of it pulls him sideways off the wire and he hangs upside down with his feet around the ball. By swinging back and forth upside down he shoots back up to the

top of the wire, and whips the large ball into the inner lining of his robe. Then he gets the other two balls inside and they hang, two on one side and one on the other. Now he is pinned to the wire as the weighted robe hangs below like a giant set of gonads.

He stands up, but the balls swing from side to side with a life of their own. Arcing towards and away from CAMERA the whole thing goes out of control - the Thief and balls flailing and the city swimming below. He somersaults as the balls fly up out of his robe towards the CAMERA and fall back down as he hangs by his hands from the wire and swings his legs in front to catch the three balls. He catches the little one in his crotch, the medium one between his knees, and the big one between his toes. They're slipping...

Hand over hand he 'clotheslines' himself to the minaret window and swings the balls inside.

CRASH! There is SMASHING and RINGING, the noise of the Thief falling down stairs as the CAMERA pans down outside the tower. CRASH! Out through a window flies the largest ball. SMASH! - through another window blasts the second ball. Down further and SMASH! the little ball bursts out.

PAN down to the courtyard. The front door of the minaret flies open and the Thief shoots out flat on his face. The balls bounce through the air and land in RINGING CHIMES.

Awakened and half-dressed people rush into the courtyard. The Thief exits backwards, unnoticed.

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW

Tack sees mounted guards coming at him and darts back inside the window. He zips the sawn-off bars back into place as they gallop past.

EXT. THE PALACE GATE

The huge gate opens and the Dying Soldier gallops across the courtyard up to the steps of the Throne Room.

INT. KING NOD'S CHAMBER

Yumyum rushes in, the Nurse following.

YUMYUM:

Father! Father! Wake up!

Something's happening!

KING:

What? What?

YUMYUM:

A messenger, Father! Come quickly!

INT. THRONE ROOM

The horse stops, the Dying Soldier slumped in the saddle.

Yumyum, the Nurse, and King Nod rush in.

Zigzag is already there with his minions.

The bouncing balls keep RINGING and CHIMING outside.

ZIGZAG: (to himself)

Is this opportunity ringing?

(to his minions) I think there are some **balls**

you should be bringing...

Get those balls! Keep out of sight!

Bring them to me late tonight!

GOPHER, GOBLET, SLAP and TICKLE:

Yes, Milord! Thy will be done! Yes, Master!

They slither off.

The horses knees buckle and it sinks to the ground. The Dying Soldier staggers over it towards the King.

NURSE: (surveying the scene)

Not good...Not good...

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

As the balls bounce and RING people run around in panic. A SECRET DOOR in the palace wall swings open and Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle run out into the throng. Goblet directs the other three as they leap around trying to retrieve the balls without being noticed.

INT. THRONE ROOM

Townfolk crowd in towards the Throne Room.

The Dying Soldier collapses at the King's feet and with a mighty effort pulls himself up, shaking.

DYING SOLDIER:

One...Eye...One...Eye...is coming!

He stiffens in a salute and expires. Thunder RUMBLES. The SCENE darkens.

ZIGZAG:

One? Eye?

YUMYUM:

One Eye?

NURSE: (squinting and putting on her glasses)

Eye?

She casts a protective arm across the Princess. Other people cry out.

KING:

ONE EYES!!! Oh my God!

King Nod rushes to the window and looks up at the empty spike on the minaret. Then he runs, bellowing.

KING:

THE BALLS ARE GONE!

MY KINGDOM WILL COME TO DESTRUCTION AND DEATH!

As the King screams, the CAMERA pulls back from his mouth in a fifty mile ZOOM as lightning flashes above the palace, above the City, above the landscape, showing a God's-eye view of the Golden Land, the mountains covered by approaching storms.

FADE TO BLACK AND FADE IN

EXT. TACK'S CELL WINDOW - MIDDAY

Tack looks out of his window slit at the pandemonium. He has removed the bars, but ducks back to replace them as soldier's feet run past. He removes the bars again and pokes his head out. He sniffs the air and recoils in distaste. He pops back in and replaces the bars.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK showing the Thief in a recess next to Tack's cell window. His back is to the wall and he slides towards the courtyard.

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD

The soldiers rush in behind the main Golden City army. The palace population - attendants, stableboys, cooks, servants, women and children - look on from the archways. There is a BUZZING of DISTRESS as they look up at the empty spire of the minaret. A HUSH falls as the King, backed by Zigzag, appears on the balcony.

KING:

My loyal generals! My brave soldiers!

The Three Golden Balls have gone!

TREMORS of AGITATION run through the populace.

KING:
Our City faces invasion!

The army BUZZES in response.

KING:
The Mighty **One-Eye** is coming!

The crowd gasps.

KING:
We must defend the City!

As the crowd RUMBLES the CAMERA moves down to show Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle tiptoeing through the edge of the ranks of soldiers. It is obvious from their hunched positions that they have the Golden Balls concealed in their robes. They try to appear carefree as they stagger under the weight.

KING:
According to the ancient prophecy
the City may **yet** be **saved!**
Take up your positions with my blessing!

He has a coughing fit as the crowd CHEERS.

CROWD:
Long live King Nod!
Long live the Golden City!

*The DRUMS BEAT and the army starts parading away.
Yumyum and her Nurse are at a window.*

YUMYUM:
Nanny, where could my Cobbler **be**?

NURSE:(eyes narrowing)
Try the prison...

YUMYUM:
What? Oh no! What goes **on** in this palace!

Yumyum runs out.

*INT. KING'S CHAMBERS
Zigzag pulls the drapes shut behind him, following the King.*

ZIGZAG:
Have no fear!
Zigzag, your Grand Vizier is here!

KING:
You're here, Zigzag! But **where** are the balls?

With a flourish three conjuror's balls appear in Zigzag's hand.

ZIGZAG:
Magicked away, my lord...

Zigzag shakes his hand and the balls disappear. King Nod drops his head in his hands.

KING:

Magicked away! Oh no...

Zigzag disappears the balls from his right hand. They reappear in his left. He swishes out his wand and balances the three balls on the tip.

ZIGZAG:

Oh, you mustn't look so tragic -
as if nothing could be done!
I am not unschooled in **magic**
and the day may yet be one...

KING:

You mean...**You** could use...magic?

Zigzag vanishes the balls in a puff of smoke and exits backwards into the curtains.

ZIGZAG:

I'll retire to my tower
to see what can be done.

EXT. COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

The Thief pokes his head out of the shadows and sees Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle sneaking into a small door in the palace. He sees the glint of the golden balls half concealed beneath the robes. He follows them into a dark hall. He looks around, but can only hear them running off. He follows in the direction of their voices, then suddenly sees a large crystal bottle filled with glowing emeralds. Mesmerised, the Thief approaches, his eyes lit up with the emeralds. He opens his robe and throws away a pile of his previous loot. Pots and jugs and brassware hit the floor with a loud CRASHING. Then he rolls up his sleeve and reaches his scrawny arm into the bottle and grabs the largest jewel. He tugs, but it is too big to come through the thin neck of the bottle. He keeps trying. Two monolithic palace GUARDS glide silently up behind him. He looks up at them, but goes back to yanking at the emerald. He picks up the whole bottle, takes a few steps away and keeps tugging. The Guards slide up to him, silently pick him up and carry him away - bottle, jewels and all - the Thief still tugging pathetically.

INT. DUNGEON CORRIDOR

Two Executioners flank Tack's cell door. Phido is pacing back and forth. He stops, looks down at his stomach. It GURGLES and RUMBLES. BOOM! A big door slams and Yummy rushes down the passage to the cell. Phido backs away HISSING as she runs up to the door. Tack looks out through the slot. Yummy hands him a red rose through the slot.

YUMMYUM:

Don't be afraid, my brave Cobbler!
Who put you in here?

Phido, looking like a miniature Zigzag, hops towards Yummy and HISSES.

YUMMYUM:

Oh I see who did it! (she stamps her foot)
Get away - bird of evil!

Phido backs up and sticks out his tongue. Yummy kicks his butt with the point of his slipper. Phido HISSES and flaps at her, but when she runs at him he scurries away down the corridor.

YUMYUM:
Get back to your master's tower!

Phido turns and skulks off. Yummy returns to the cell door slot and smiles sweetly in at Tack. He smells the rose and feels good.

YUMYUM:
What's your name?

The Cobbler holds up a tack.

YUMYUM:
Tack? Is that your name, Cobbler?

He nods, smiling.

YUMYUM:
Don't worry, Tack.
I promise I will get you out of here!

She turns, walks away and waves. Tack looks after her, smells the rose and sinks to the floor. The mouse comes out. SNIFF. SNIFF. They look at each other. The mouse SNEEZES. Tack takes out his tiny file and works on his ankle-chain with a vengeance.

EXT. PALACE COURTYARD - TWILIGHT

Two doors bang open revealing the Thief held between the two GUARDS.

GUARDS: (proclaiming)
Thief! Thief!

A crowd gathers as the Guards carry him up to a platform with stocks. The Thief draws his head into his coat like a turtle. One Guard lifts up the top of his stocks and the other pushes him forward, indicating where to put his hands. His hands tremble and withdraw up into his sleeves. The Guards push him up against the stocks, waiting for his hands to go in.

CLOSE-UP on the Thief.

He looks slyly at the Guards and leans forward to the stocks. From inside his sleeves he inserts the two jewelled backscratcher hands he stole from the Princess. The Guards raise their scimitars. The drums roll. The crowd GASPS and WHAP! WHAP! The blades flash down cutting off the little backscratcher hands. The Thief mouths a fake howl of pain - pulls the stump ends into his coat and hobbles on his knees across the platform - down the stairs, into the crowd and out of an exit from the square.

EXT. A BACK ALLEY

The Thief runs up, ducks into a niche in the wall - drops what's left of the backscratchers, checks that he still has his own hands, shudders and runs away up a flight of stairs.

EXT. ZIGZAG'S TOWER - EARLY EVENING

Phido circles and flies towards an 'eye' of Zigzag's vulture-tower.

INT. THE TOWER

Phido zooms in the window and makes a running landing flapping his great wings backwards to brake himself. He tries to stop at Zigzag's feet. Zigzag is receiving the three golden balls from Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle as Phido crashes into him. Zigzag whips out his telescopic wand with a flyswatter on the end and SWATS Phido on his sore bum. Phido HISSES in pain and jumps onto his globe.

ZIGZAG:
Gentlemen! Gentlemen! What a delight!

You bring me immeasurable pleasure tonight!
No doubt you were careful and kept out of sight?

He presses a button on his wand and it flicks into a long stiletto which he places under each chin. They respond with toothsome grins. Phido snickers - then his stomach RUMBLES. His beak waters as he looks at fat Gopher. He flaps over and bites Gopher's hand.

GOPHER:

Yeow! My finger! My finger!
He bit a piece out of my finger!

TACK'S CELL - EVENING

The mouse watches as Tack severs the ball from his ankle-chain. Tack and the mouse nod at each other. Tack climbs up his tack 'ladder', removes the window bars and squeezes out of the slit. The mouse comes out after him. It sniffs the air and sneezes.

*Tack works his way along the wall followed by the mouse. There is the SOUND of MARCHING FEET. Tack freezes. The mouse points to a small knob in the wall. Tack goes to press it. The mouse nods. He presses. There is a WHIRR and CLANK and VROOM! The SECRET DOOR in the wall opens and swings Tack **inside** the palace. Swinging out on the other side of the revolving door in the wall is a startled Zigzag, carrying the golden balls. He is deposited outside as two SOLDIERS arrive. He covers the balls with his cloak. The mouse sniffs in distaste, sneezes and runs. The Soldiers bow and scrape before Zigzag.*

SOLDIERS:

Evening Sir. Evening, your Grace.
Lovely evening, Milord!

Zigzag smiles all teeth and the Soldiers exit subserviently. Still puzzled, Zigzag looks round and reaches for the knob.

ZIGZAG:

What a bore.
Nothing works here anymore.

INT. THE PALACE PASSAGE

Tack looks both ways, runs down a passageway, and vanishes round a corner, just as Zigzag rides the secret door in the wall back inside. VROOM! He looks around, shrugs and goes in the same direction Tack went.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

posing as an eagle alongside four eagle statues. He zips down and sneaks along a wall behind a guard and looks towards the Throne Room.

INT. THE THRONE ROOM

A puff of green smoke bursts through the curtains and Zigzag stands posed as a stage magician.

ZIGZAG:

It is I! Zigzag! Your Chief of Staff!
To remind you of the **second half**
of the prophecy of the golden balls.

From his sleeve he unfurls a scroll and reads.

ZIGZAG:

"The City can be saved **before** it falls -
by the simplest soul -
with the simplest of things."

KING:

Yes, yes...And...?

ZIGZAG:

The words of the Ancients
are there in the scroll -

But **who**, you may ask,
is the **simplest** soul?

King Nod looks down at the City.

KING:

Who?

ZIGZAG:

I!

KING:(incredulous)

You?

ZIGZAG:

Whose existence is simpler than mine?
Pure service without any selfish design?

KING:

But how can **you** save the City?

ZIGZAG:

Observe!

(A green puff of smoke appears in mid-air)

Abacadabra!

(Electricity sparkles from the cloud as it grows)

Alakazoh!

The cloud is three times bigger than Zigzag. Lightning flashes from its centre, lighting the room in multi-colours.

The King is amazed. The cloud parts and a silver dove flies round its inner edge, a kind of mystic fire following it - then disappears as a glowing sun forms in the centre of the ring.

Zigzag points skyward - then at the sun.

ZIGZAG:

As above... then so below!

From below the golden 'sun' appears a mid-sized 'sun' and a smaller 'sun'. They rotate round so that they line up like the three golden balls. A transparent dome fades in under them. Zigzag bows.

ZIGZAG:

As you can see, I can restore you
the golden balls, though they be lost.

(The vision is fading)

*But to conjure them before you
could be at my great cost.*

He sucks his jowls in like a dead man. The King is being taken in.

KING:

I'll give you anything, Zigzag!

Just do it!

ZIGZAG:

As my peril will be dire...

you must grant my heart's desire!

KING:
Which is...?

Zigzag conjures again. A circular rainbow forms and in the centre appears a red rose.

ZIGZAG:
My desire is as simple as a rose...

Zigzag reaches inside his vision and brings the rose out. He waves his hands. The clouds vanish and he presents the rose to King Nod.

ZIGZAG:
...and just as red.
I require, Sire, your daughter,
Yummy, to wed.

The King's head jerks up in utter disbelief.

KING:(reddening and shaking with rage)
You...want...my...DAUGHTER?

Zigzag nods as if to congratulate the King on his great powers of comprehension.

KING:(exploding)
NEVER!

ZIGZAG:(shrinking)
...never?

KING:
NEVER! EVER!

ZIGZAG:(backing away)
Oh, well - I just thought I'd ask...

KING:
GET OUT! OUT!

The King's Ancient Manservant steps forward menacingly and Zigzag retreats through the curtaining.

EXT. THE CORRIDOR

In a fit of controlled fury Zigzag stamps away down a circular staircase, muttering through his teeth.

ZIGZAG:
We'll see who wins at the end of the day!
We'll see who ends up grieving!
I'll go to the One-Eyes right away.
I'm taking my balls and leaving!

Lightning flashes and distant thunder RUMBLES.

EXT. DARK MOUNTAINS HILLS

The sky is black with thunderclouds. Up over the sound of rolling thunder come heavy drums and marching feet. Between the hills appears the ONE-EYE ARMY advancing like a swarm of giant beetles. After the infantry come huge ramps of Leonardo da Vinci-like war machinery: crossbows the size of houses, colossal catapults, giant gear wheels, hoists, levers, pulleys - parts of an enormous machine of death. Then comes

the Mighty One-Eye, seated higher than the rest on human throne of interlocking One-Eye Women. As he lurches along, he gnaws at a leg of roast fowl and bellows.

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

I shall gnaw the Golden City to the bone
and I shall spit it out!

He slings the goblet of wine over his human throne, bringing shrieks and groans from his women. Roaring with laughter, he slaps them boisterously. Thunder and lightning BOOM and FLASH.

INT. OUTSIDE THE THRONE ROOM

The Thief looks out from a potted palm. Offscreen voices are heard.

KING:(VO)

Who knows what will happen here!
All hell is going to break loose!

The Thief wriggles out of the pot, rocking it noisily.

INT. THE THRONE ROOM

King Nod, wide awake, paces agitatedly in front of Yumyum and her Nurse. The room is darkening and the far thunder RUMBLES.

YUMYUM:

How can we help, Daddy?

KING:

I'm the King. Such as I am.
I've got to stay and fight.
But you must get away!

ANGLE - THE THIEF

back to the wall, sliding along the corridor towards the voices.

KING:(VO)

Listen carefully. I'm afraid the Golden Balls have been magicked away!

YUMYUM:(VO)

Magicked?

INT. THE THRONE ROOM

NURSE:

Magicked away? Hmph!
(mutters) It's more likely they were pinched.

KING:

We may have one chance.
There is a mad and holy old Witch,
who dwells at the top of the desert mountain...
You must go and seek out out this Witch!

ANGLE - TACK

coming up the circular staircase to the Throne Room.

KING:(VO)

Perhaps she can tell us how the City can be saved.

ANGLE - PILLARS

The Thief runs from behind one pillar to another. Lightning flashes.

KING:(VO)

Had I a son, I would send him on this perilous journey.

ANGLE - YUMYUM AND KING NOD

YUMYUM:

Father, I can handle it!

King Nod looks at her and his eyes fill with tears.

KING:

My daughter,...at the foot of the desert mountain...

ANGLE - THE THIEF

In close-up peering around a curtain, flies BUZZING.

KING:(VO)

...is a golden idol with a priceless ruby set in its forehead.

At "priceless ruby" the Thief's eyes ripple and turn into rubies. In each eye appears the forehead and eyes of a golden idol.

ANGLE - THE KING

KING:

I am told that when the desert sun is directly overhead, the reflection of the ruby falls upon a hidden door to a path up the mountain.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

behind his pillar, listening. Lightning flashes. A mirror is beside him and he looks at his reflection. He recoils in terror and runs out.

ANGLE - TACK

coming up the circular staircase towards the curtains.

KING:(VO)

A boat will be waiting to take you up the river until you are well clear of the city...

ANGLE - THE KING

KING:

Then you must cross the great desert. Go now! **Now!**

YUMYUM:

Just one thing, Father!

A certain person has imprisoned my Cobbler. Can I have him back now?

KING:

If you need him.

NURSE:

Sire, we need him.

YUMYUM:(spotting Tack in the shadows)
Father, we need a guide!

KING:
Yes, but who?

YUMYUM:
I know who.

She runs over to Tack and whispers.

YUMYUM:
How did you get free?

Tack smiles and holds up his little file. Yumyum beams at him and takes his hand, leading him to stand head bowed before the King.

KING:
Him? The Cobbler? (to Tack) Did you escape?

Tack nods.

YUMYUM:
He's resourceful.

She smiles at Tack, who straightens.

KING:
Can you trust him?

YUMYUM:
Yes.

Tack stands taller. The Nurse winks at Yumyum. Lightning flashes.

EXT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

Tack's face peers round a door in the palace wall. He tiptoes out, signals and four Eunuchs follow him, carrying a white palanquin. Yumyum and the Nurse peek out from the curtains. They hold a big jewelled casket. The Eunuchs load the palanquin onto a GONDOLA in the moat, filled with supplies and a camel. Distant thunder and lightning continue.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG

by an iron grating. He mounts a black horse and there are flashes of light as the golden balls clank together in a large rucksack. Zigzag jerks Phido's leash and Phido lands on the horse's rump - talons first. The horse WHINNIES and rears up in shock. A CRACK of the riding crop and the THUNDER of HOOVES as the horse, Zigzag and Phido gallop across the drawbridge. Tack, Yumyum and the Nurse all stare up in surprise.

YUMYUM:
What was that?

ANGLE - THE THIEF

darting from the shadows along the mooring rope. Almost to the gondola he falls - SPLASH!

HIGH ANGLE - THE CITY

There is a break in the clouds and Tack's gondola pulls into view on the river, crescent moon and stars reflecting in the water. Under the cloud-shadow and in the black shrouded part of the City gallop Zigzag, Phido and horse, riding toward the storm-ridden mountains.

Tack's boat winds up the river towards the desert.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BRIGANDS' CAMP - DAY

In the middle of the empty desert a colony of forty TATTERED BRIGANDS sit hopelessly, stultified, bored. The sun has bleached all the colour out of them and everything is in SEPIA except for the white bones and the white desert. They are huge, terrible-looking and monstrous, but chicken-hearted. They are heavily-muscled and have hoof-hands, peg-legs, ears stitched on backwards, dents in heads, eyes and teeth missing and scars. What clothing they have is made of remnants of bygone days: half a boot, a third of a hat, a piece of sock - all futilely stitched together. All they have for shade are clotheslines and umbrellas made of bones and string. A Brigand lies on his stomach HUMMING the tune of "Danny Boy" and building up a tall pile of bones - like a house of cards.

ANGLE - CHIEF ROOFLESS

The largest of the Brigands, with a slightly aristocratic beard and moustache. Part of the top of his head is missing and just half of his helmet remains. He draws maps in the sand, sifting it through his fingers, muttering to himself. GOOLIE, the smallest Brigand, shares his lament.

ROOFLESS:

Aye. Aye. Times has changed, Goolie.

GOOLIE:

Ah and indeed they have, Chieftain!

ROOFLESS:

Things is not what they used to be, you know.

GOOLIE:

It was different then.

The CAMERA pulls back to take in more, then all forty, of the Brigands.

BRIGANDS:

Aye, the old days were the best days. And Ali Baba, there wasn't a better man under the sun. Nothing lasts. Nothing.

The bone-building Brigand has a high pile now. On the horizon beyond him a tiny, running, shouting speck appears.

SGT. HOOK:

There's a caravan coming! Here comes a caravan! There's a caravan coming! **Here comes a caravan!**

SGT. HOOK runs up to SCREEN. His hook is on his foot. He smashes through the pile of bones and slides as if coming into home plate - into the main group of Brigands. He crashes into a tree made of bones and a vulture's skull lands on his head. He sits stunned as the others jeer and laugh.

BRIGANDS:

I don't believe it! Ah, will you stop going on?
Clear off! What d'you take us for?

HOOK:

It is! It is! It is a caravan!

ROOFLESS:

A caravan!

They leap around shouting.

BRIGANDS:
A caravan! Jewels! Horses! Food!
Drink! A-a-and **Women! Women!**

The Brigands LAUGH and CHEER, some breaking into bawdy laughter - others going into a dream.

HOOB:(lifting the vulture's skull as a cap)
Chieftain, what 'tis it that we do now, then?

BRIGANDS:
I thought you'd never ask!
Ah, he's right! What do we do now?

ROOFLESS:
May I remind you, Gentlemen, that when in doubt...

Chief Roofless reaches into an old gunny sack and pulls out a huge dusty book. Spiders and bugs scatter. The other Brigands stare in religious awe, as if the Holy Grail had been produced. Several fall to their knees, heads bowed. Mysterious music sounds.

ROOFLESS:
...consult...(dusts off the book)
The Brigands' Handbook!

BRIGANDS:
Aaaaaaaahh... The Boooooook!
'Tis the Book! 'Tis the Book...of words!

The book is opened and flies, gnats and bugs jump out. Roofless uses a skinny, tattered snake as a bookmark to find his line.

ROOFLESS:
"A"is for.....**Ambush!**

BRIGANDS:
Ambush! Ambush!

ROOFLESS:
"B"is for.....**Burglary!**

BRIGANDS:
Burglary.....Burglary.....

ROOFLESS:
"C"car ...a..van - **Caravan!**
Attacks on! Attacks on...caravan, right!

The Brigands all push forward to see.

ROOFLESS:
The...Brigands...will take up...po...po-si-shee-on...**Position**...behind...a rock!

The Brigands all look round for a rock.

BRIGANDS:
A rock? A rock? Where is a rock? Where?
Where's a rock? I don't see it!

I don't see a thing! Have you seen a rock?

GOOLIE:

There it is, over there! And isn't it looking well!

The CAMERA ZOOMS over and in on a small multi-coloured Persian rock.

ROOFLESS:

Right then! Take up your positions.

There is a terrible stampede, stumbling and falling, as all the Brigands stream off towards the rock, CHEERING.

The CAMERA pulls back until they are tiny and PANS left across the empty desert until it reaches the little figures of the approaching caravan. The river and the gondola are in the corner of the SCREEN and Tack's caravan is moving away from it. The CAMERA ZOOMS in. Tack leads the camel loaded with supplies and the Eunuchs following carrying the palanquin. At a safe distance behind stumbles the already exhausted Thief. It's HOT. He's on his knees, unfastening jugs, pots, caskets - a trail of abandoned loot behind him.

ANGLE - TACK

Looks back and sees Yummy smiling shyly at him from the palanquin. He smiles back, expands his height and recharges his steps with resolve.

The CAMERA pulls back from the little caravan and PANS across the desert to the Brigands and rock.

CLOSE SHOT - THE ROCK

Their heads are behind the tiny rock like ostriches with their bodies fully revealed, spilling and sticking out all over the place. They "SHHH" each other, groaning and struggling.

BRIGANDS:

Quiet! Shut up, you fool! Keep down!

There they are! Aye, they're there!

HOOK:

They're here, Chief! What does the Book say now!

ROOFLESS:

Ch-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-rge!

BRIGANDS:

Ch-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-rge! Ta da! Ta dah!

There is a tremendous scuffle as forty Brigands race out from the rock. When the whirl of sand, arms and legs and dust settles, a formation of Brigands grouped behind Roofless stands before the Cobbler. Tack pulls out his hammer. He and Roofless stare at each other. Pause.

ROOFLESS:

Er...er...

Sgt. Hook hands him the book and Roofless leafs through it until he finds something. He lowers the handbook.

ROOFLESS:

H-a-a-a-a-a-a-alt!

Roofless steps forward towards the palanquin. Tack steps forward to stop him. Roofless keeps moving, so that Tack is standing on Roofless' shoes as he approaches. As he goes to open the curtain, Tack zips down and WHAMS Roofless on the foot with his little hammer.

ROOFLESS:
Grunt.

Tack zips through his legs and clings to Roofless back. Roofless reaches for him and Tack shoots round the front again WHAMMING Roofless' toe.

ROOFLESS:
Hmm.

*Roofless grabs Tack by the neck and lifts him up, choking. Tack hangs there, unable to breathe, as the old Nurse slides out from the palanquin curtains and dodders up to Roofless.
WHAM! She whops him in the gut with a karate kick.
BOFF! She chops him in the back.
Still clutching Tack, Roofless tries to push her away.*

ROOFLESS:
Men! Men!

Three huge Brigands step forward to grab the old lady and WOOF! THUD! She throws the first in the air. BLAM! Slams the second onto his back. CRASH! Hurls the third to the ground.

ROOFLESS:
Reinforcements!

*Six giant Brigands step forward and just sit down on her - rendering her powerless.
Tack flails.
Yummyum steps gently out of the palanquin.
The Brigands gasp in astonishment.
She picks a desert flower and goes up to Roofless.*

YUMMYUM:
I am the Princess Yummyum -
Daughter of your King!

The Brigands react in awe.

YUMMYUM:
And that's my Nurse you're sitting on.

NURSE:
Indeed!

The Brigands apologetically get up off the old lady, who hobbles back to Yummyum.

YUMMYUM:
And who are you?

ROOFLESS:
Well...er...I am Roofless. The Chieftain!

She picks another flower. Tack still hangs, flailing, expiring. One of the Brigands helps Yummyum with a flower.

YUMMYUM:
You are ruthless?

ROOFLESS:
No, I am Roofless!

Still choking Tack, he takes off his half-helmet and points to his half-removed scalp. She is still picking flowers.

YUMYUM:
Roofless?

Roofless bends down and hands her a flower.

ROOFLESS:
Yes, I am Roofless and this is my band of Brigands. **They are ruthless!**

BRIGANDS:
Aye, quite right! You have her there, Chief!
Right, right! Ruthless! Ruthless! We are terrible! Merciless! Cruel!

All get worked up, repeating Roofless' boast; grunting, rattling bones, pounding hoof-hands, grinding teeth, growling and laughing evilly. While they do this they're starting to pick desert flowers - frail ones, little bitty ones - making a big bouquet.

Tack, gasping in Roofless' grasp, signals to Yumyum. He points to Roofless' battered shoes and at all the Brigands' terrible footwear - then points to himself and winks at Yumyum. Yumyum's eyebrow raises.

YUMYUM:
Your shoes! Look at the state of your shoes!

They all look at each other's shoes and their terrible feet.

ROOFLESS:
Well...er...argh...Ah well...things...
has not been too good lately, you know...

All mutter agreement, while handing her the flowers.

YUMYUM:
My Royal Cobbler will **fix** your shoes!

Roofless drops Tack to the ground, gasping. Tack takes a deep breath, theatrically hitches up his knapsack pants, displays his needle, and bows.

YUMYUM:
Your country is in great danger!
I hereby declare you my Royal Guard!

The Brigands are stunned. OOHS and AAHS.

ROOFLESS:
Royal Guard...Royal Guard...
ROYAL GUARD, BOYS!

The Brigands mill about, shouting orders at each other. Repairing shoes at an incredible speed, Tack glances up at Yumyum. She smiles lovingly.

ROOFLESS:
Right! Quiet! Quiet! **Quiet!**
I is the Commander of the Royal Guard!

BRIGAND:

Speech!

YUMYUM:

You will accompany us on our perilous journey to save our Golden Land!

The Thief's head appears over a sand dune. He crawls down over the rim towards the action. The sand slides down and overtakes him, burying him with a HISS.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ONE-EYE CAMP - DUSK

Close-up on a huge red eye. The CAMERA pulls back to reveal the One-Eye's one-eyed flag flapping high up in the mountains. Zigzag dismounts in the shadows by the flag.

ZIGZAG: (to Phido, hopping along after him)

The camp of the One-Eyes! How very nice!

I'm sure they'll be willing to pay my price!

He takes down the One-Eye flag and tucks it into his robe.

ZIGZAG:

This may be useful, you never know.

Perhaps as a prop for my magic show!

I'll have these barbarians kissing my feet.

And maybe we'll find you something to eat!

Eh, Phido?

Phido hops along, gasping, wings hooked round his stomach, starving. Suddenly four giant shields surround Zigzag and Phido. Four huge One-Eyes glare at Zigzag, their spears at his throat.

ZIGZAG:

Gentlemen! Gentlemen! What a delight!

To meet you all here on such a fine night!

INT. MIGHTY ONE-EYE'S TENT - NIGHT

The walls are lined with torches and one-eyed guards. Pigs turn on spits, women dancers gyrate. Mighty One-Eye reclines on a human divan of live One-Eye Women. They groan.

When Zigzag is pushed in Mighty One-Eye rises and SNAPS his fingers.

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

Throne!

The One-Eye Women forming his divan jump up and re-interlock, grunting and groaning, into a human throne. Mighty One-Eye sits on them and formally regards Zigzag. Zigzag is temporarily taken aback by the whole scene. It is more than he was expecting. He stares at Mighty One-Eye and his own left eye starts to blink - sort of keying himself into the scene.

Phido sees the roasting pigs and makes a run towards one, pulling Zigzag by the leash to the ground, flat on his face. Phido, flapping desperately, can't quite reach the pig spit.

PHIDO:

Oooooo! Oooooo!

ONE-EYE:

What is this?

Zigzag yanks the leash, throttling Phido, pulling him back.

ZIGZAG:

Forgive the behaviour of my wing-ed beast!
He's quite overcome by the sight of your feast!
Phido!

ONE-EYE:
Who **dares** enter the camp of the Mighty One-Eye?

ZIGZAG:
Oh, Mighty One-Eye, I...I...I am Zigzag the Great!
Of the Golden Land! And I was, **of late**
the King's right hand.
ONE-EYE:
And...?

ZIGZAG:
I am a magician - a sorcerer too!
And I'm in a position, I think, to serve **you!**

ONE-EYE:
Sorcerer? Magician? Very well...**amuse me!**

Zigzag leaps to his feet, leering. He sweeps his arms and green fire and smoke burst in front of him.

ZIGZAG:
I conjure demons!
(*a glowing mini-dragon appears*)
Charm beasts!
(*the dragon forms a hoop and bursts into flame*)
And birds of prey, too!
(*he holds out the flaming hoop*)
Phido!
On this cue, Phido jumps through the flaming loop and his tail feathers and arse burst into flames.

PHIDO:
Squaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaak!

Phido runs flaming out of the tent.

ZIGZAG:
But as you will see - that's not all I can do!

He shakes his handkerchief, which blossoms into the huge One-Eye flag.

ZIGZAG:
Ha Ha!

He rams the flagpole into the ground.

ONE-EYE:
Grunt.

Zigzag zips out a pack of playing cards and riffles the deck.

ZIGZAG:
I have power over people,
though they may appear complex.
For me they fall like playing cards

(fans the cards out over his heads)

And I control the deck!

The cards fly apart out of control, but Zigzag catches each one. Mighty One-Eye's one eye slowly shuts.

ONE-EYE:
HMMMMMMMMM...

ZIGZAG:
But all this is nothing, for now in my hand
(holds up his rucksack, surrounded by green sparks)
is the very key to the Golden Land!
For no man can take it - no matter how great -
unless he possesses these three balls of fate!

Electric sparks and the smoke clears and the three golden balls gleam on a red carpet at the Mighty One-Eye's feet.

ONE-EYE:
Humph! Magic! What use is that in the face of death? *(awful laugh)*
You say you can charm beasts?

Zigzag grins and nods.

ONE-EYE:
Throw him to the alligators.

ANGLE - THE TOP OF THE TENT VENT

Phido looks down, his own smoking tail mingling with the tent smoke, and watches Zigzag being dragged off. He wheezes in delight.

EXT. DESERT OASIS - NIGHT

Tack's caravan is camped at a beautiful oasis, a pool of water reflecting the stars, ringed by palm trees. The Brigands lie all over, using each other as pillows and foot rests, SNORING and WHEEZING in a ragged chorus. They SNORE Duke Ellington's "Caravan" as they roll over, gouging each other, making adjustments in their sleep. "Caravan" underpins the following action. The Eunuchs sleep beside the palanquin. In front lies Tack, fixing a pile of Brigands' shoes in his sleep. Flies land on his nose. Behind him, a striped tent moves over to a saddle bag. It vanishes into the tent, which moves to a water jug. It zips inside. The tent goes past the sleeping camel to the oasis pool - and sinks. GURGLING. At the bottom of the pool there is a frantic wiggling and a knife slashes the tent sides, showing the Thief pinned down by his stolen goods. At the surface, bubbles rise and pop. The camel wakes and sees the bubbles. The Thief pops up like a cork. His coat is full of subsiding air, ringing him in flatulating bubbles. The camel can't stand it. Gasping and heaving, he falls over helpless with laughter as the Thief claws his way out of the pool onto the sand.

ANGLE - TACK

A golden ray of sunlight strikes his face and he jumps up, staring. On the horizon is the Desert Mountain, lit by the rising sun. It is a giant golden arm with the hand outstretched, extending from desert to sky. The light reflects on the waking Brigands. They're overawed. The Thief peeks out. He stands against a palm tree. A thin jet of water passes from his robe against a tree. He turns, revealing that the water has come from his robe which he is squeezing out.

ANGLE - TACK

staring at the mountain. Yummyum looks out from the palanquin at the mountain and then over to Tack. He sees her. They smile - they're in this thing together.

INT. THE ALLIGATOR PIT

Eight alligators are lined up in two neat rows of four, jaws gaping.

ZIGZAG:

My friends...

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to see Zigzag behind a pulpit-shaped rock with the Alligators lined up before him like students. This is done as a MUSICAL GOSPEL NUMBER. THE ALLIGATORS' SEMI-VOICES CHANTING THE 'HALLELUJAHS' AND 'OH YEAHS'.

ZIGZAG:

My friends, it grieves me to see you fed on persons like me with no meat!

He reveals a scrawny arm. A few jaws SNAP. OH YEAH!

ZIGZAG:

You deserve something better,
like three times a day...

They thrash around excitedly. OH YEAH, YEAH MAN.

ZIGZAG:

...A succulent someone to eat!

The Alligators' jaws are SNAPPING - biting each other a little. Zigzag stretches out his hands like a preacher. They hang on his words.

ZIGZAG:

Yes, well, I'm just the fellow to see that you get
all the flesh you were never afforded.
Just help me a little and I won't forget
to see that you're amply rewarded!

SNAP! DROOL! SLOBBER! Getting out of hand. YEAH! YEAH! YEAH!

ZIGZAG:

Imagine the arms!

SNAP! SNAP!

And the legs!

SNAP! CLAMP! SNAP! OH YEAH!

And the thighs!

SNAP! DROOL! SLOBBER! SNAP! HALLELUJAH!

And the hips and the lips and all that!

They are jumping around out of control. HALLELUJAH! YEAH! YEAH! YEAH! Zigzag signals them to stop - and they do.

ZIGZAG:

And I guarantee you each day, a surprise
that is plump, portly, paunchy, and FAT!

They go mad, SNAPPING, biting air. ROAR! PRAISE BE! Fat! FAT! FAAAAAAT!!!!!!

They leap in the air in a frenzy. ROARING OH YEAHS and HALLELUJAHS.

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN

A close-up shot of the Brigands' marching feet. Each foot has a shoe on it, inventively made out of old braces, rope and sacking. Even the peg-legs have little shoes on them. As they march, the Brigands sing - different songs.

*Tack, who has the worst shoes of all, stops and the Brigands crash into each other. He looks up.
At the foot of the mountain sits the GOLDEN IDOL. In its forehead, the RUBY. The Idol is circled by armed
guards, protectors of the Ruby. They gaze indifferently at the arriving party.
Yummyum and the Nurse look out.*

ANGLE - TACK

*studying the whole scene. A third of the way up the mountain steps wind up one side, but there is no way to get up
to them.*

ANGLE - THE THIEF

appearing over a sand dune behind Tack. His eyes fill with the Ruby.

ANGLE - THE RUBY

*gleaming in the forehead of the Idol. There is a mystic darkening of the Idol and the desert as the Ruby begins to
glow.*

ANGLE - THE CARAVAN

*All gaze up at a mountain. Suddenly a ray of light from the sun beams vertically onto the Ruby. The Ruby glows
and sends out another ray of light, like a laser against the mountain.
Hidden doors in the mountain wall part, revealing an inner staircase.
Awestruck, the Brigands tiptoe away whispering.*

BRIGANDS:

Magic! 'Tis magic! 'Tis powerful magic!
Aye and indeed it is! Magic from another world!

YUMMYUM:

Please proceed, Cobbler

Tack leads the palnquin into the door of the mountain. As they go inside, Yummyum looks back at the Brigands.

YUMMYUM:

Will the Royal Guard proceed?

ROOFLESS:

Er...ah...the Royal Guard...will proceed!

HOOK:

Right! Proceed!

Reluctantly, they shuffle in.

BRIGANDS:

She's goin' in there now, lads.
You go first and we'll follow youse.
After you...no, no, after you.
Age before beauty. May the saints preserve us.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

*oblivious to everyone going inside, his eyes are on the Ruby set in the forehead of the Idol. He goes round the Idol,
searching for a way to get past the Guards. There is none. BAM! His head hits a sign. "NO PRAYERS PAST THIS
POINT". He backs away from the Guards and the Idol, his eyes still focused on the Ruby. Behind him, the last
Brigand enters the mountain and the doors close.*

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN

*Tack leads the way out of the tunnel onto the winding steps on the side of the mountaiin pinnacle. Roofless and his
men are flattened against the mountain wall, inching along sideways, although there is plenty of room between*

them and the edge.

ROOFLESS:

Careful, men. Don't get too near the edge!

BRIGANDS:

Don't look down! Don't look up!

Make your own arrangements. Saints preserve us.

Now I lay me down to sleep.

ANGLE - THE PALANQUIN

Yummyum and her Nurse peek out.

YUMMYUM'S POV

vertigo view of the drop.

ANGLE - THE MOUNTAINSIDE

Close-up on the Thief's foot against the vertical side of the mountain. The CAMERA ZOOMS back showing the Golden Idol below and the Thief making his way up the vertical slope, like a fly.

A LONG SHOT showing both sides of the pinnacle, Tack's caravan on one side going up the steps and the Thief on the other side, doing it the hard way up the cliff face.

ANGLE - TACK

struggling at the front. He looks back at Yummyum. They smile. His foot slips, but as he goes over the side he grabs the camel's leg. Without breaking rhythm, the camel swings Tack back onto the narrow stairs. Yummyum clasps her head.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

working his way upwards.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE ALLIGATOR PIT

Zigzag is in the same position and size as the Thief - only he is climbing a live alligator-ladder, using their legs as stairs. He steps carefully past their jaws. Jolly hymnal organ music underlays as they GRUNT.

ZIGZAG:

Oh, excuse me! I hope you don't mind!

Oh, I'm sorry...You're very kind!

Won't take long now...Soon be through!

That's a good fellow...Oh, how do you do?

Splendid! Splendid! Oh, pardon my clutch.

I thank you...thank you...I thank you too much!

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE - THE THIEF

In the same position and size as Zigzag, but climbing the rock face.

ANGLE - ATOP A LEDGE

the Thief drags himself up onto the surface. He notices two BANANA TREES perched on the ledge. He leans over the ledge and looks down.

THE THIEF'S POV

on the Idol, far below. The Thief is nearly up the mountain.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

Idea! He breaks a huge yellow leaf off the banana tree and inserts it into his sleeve. Then he puts another big leaf in his other sleeve. Adjusting his "wings" he stands at the edge.

The CAMERA LOOKS over him and down, down, down to the Idol below, ending CLOSE-UP on the Ruby in its forehead.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

CLOSE-UP on the Ruby in his eyes. He crouches, wings folded like a fly. He spreads his wings and hops out into space. He tries to flap but velocity pins his wings behind him and he nose-dives.

THE THIEF'S POV

palm trees and the ground rushing up at him. The stone floor around the Idol comes up to CAMERA and whips past.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

as he zooms one inch above the spear tops of the Idol's Guards. He's FLYING! He looks back at his wings and leers. He rocks, testing for control. Full of confidence, he banks away into the distance, loops the loop and comes back in the direction of the Ruby. Master of the situation, he does a victory roll as his shadow flashes over Tack's party below.

ANGLE - THE CARAVAN

Startled by the flashing shadow, they look up at the Thief's winged silhouette shooting past.

ROOFLESS and BRIGANDS:

A giant bird! Oh my God! Giant bird!

Giant bird! It's coming to get us!

They all boxcar into each other. The camel squats. He's had enough. Tack points ahead.

YUMYUM:

But we're here!

Steep steps lead up to a cleft at the top where green smoke hovers. The Brigands huddle behind Roofless.

BRIGANDS:

Can't go up there!

It's protected by a giant bird!

The Thief flashes past again.

BRIGANDS:

There it is again! Oh God!

Save us! Help!

ROOFLESS:

Ah...er...Princess...perhaps me and me men

ought to be stayin' here...Ah, to guard the way...against intruders!

BRIGANDS:

Aye...against intruders. Like, just in case.

*To protect the rear. Aye, the **Royal** Rear Guard!*

YUMYUM:

Yes, Roofless. You stay here.

Guard the exit. We're going up.

BRIGANDS:

And we'll let nobody out!

Inless they wants to go in!

Let nobody in lest they want to go out!

On guard! On guard!

Tack leads as the Eunuchs lift the palanquin over the squatting camel.

EXT. ONE-EYE CAMP

A whip CRACKS. From behind a rock, eight Alligators harnessed two-by-two pull Zigzag on a sled. Their little legs scurry frantically as they race at breakneck speed into the One-Eye camp.

ZIGZAG:

Faster! Faster! Take me to your master!

ANGLE - CAMP

seen from above as One-Eye soldiers surround Zigzag and his circling sled. The dust settles and the Alligators pant. Zigzag cracks his whip in front of the One-Eyes and shouts:

ZIGZAG:

One mistake will suffice!

Don't treat **me** lightly twice!

- Take me to your Master!

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN

Tack, Yummyum, Eunuchs and palanquin reach the top. A long shot shows that they are in a valley between the thumb and forefinger of the mountain "hand".

Atop the hand and above the cloud sails the Thief. Yummyum steps out of the palanquin.

YUMMYUM:

Oh Tack, I knew you'd get us here!

He blushes.

NURSE:

Careful, laddie.

Green smoke coming from a three-inch urn turns into a beckoning hand. Tack follows it up to the urn and stops as the smoke-fingers disappear under the lid. He gingerly lifts the lid and looks inside. An EYEBALL peers out at him. He jumps back.

ANGLE - THE URN

The Eyeball has risen and looks out at them. Yummyum addresses it.

YUMMYUM:

Oh Mad and Holy Old Witch?

I am Princess Yummyum of the Golden City.

The Eyeball retracts into the urn and FADES OUT. Then the ancient WITCH HALF-MATERIALISES squatting beside the urn. She has huge mouse-like ears and white hair drawn into a bun on top of her head with a knitting needle in it. Her face is like a road map.

YUMMYUM:

Oh, Great Witch, we have travelled from far across the desert to find you.

WITCH:

Aaa-r-r-r-gh...

Her arms and legs go boneless like spaghetti and she FADES away.

YUMMYUM:

Oh Great Seer of Mysteries!
Our Golden City is going to be under attack!
My father says you could tell us **how** we can save our city!

The Witch fades in slightly, muttering to herself.

WITCH:
It'll cost you, dearie.

YUMYUM:
We'll pay!

The Witch pops in solid. Her spaghetti arms stiffen with bones.

WITCH:
Pay! Pay! PAY ME!

YUMYUM:
Yes!

WITCH:
OK...OK...Save your city...
Have we one here who can save your city?

She peers myopically at the Nurse.

WITCH:
You? Uh-uh.

Then at the Eunuchs.

WITCH:
Not likely...

Then at Tack.

WITCH:
Not looking good.

She covers her eyes. WHOOSH! The Thief's 747 shadow flashes across the ground. The others look round startled.

WITCH:
Let's see...perhaps one of you has hidden depths.

(She spins.)

WITCH:
Eenie, meenie, minie - **mo!**

She points at Tack, then opens her eyes. Everyone looks at him. Tack has a "who me?" expression.

YUMYUM:
Tack! Can Tack save our city?

The Witch just stands there. She looks round at everyone waiting for her to do something. So she jumps her hands right up to CAMERA in a hypnotising position. Then she goes into a coy little girl pose. Suddenly she YELLS, flails her arms and pulls out a stethoscope, pops it round her neck and walks over to Tack.

He backs away. She yanks him down into a squat and WHACKS him on the knee. His leg flies out taking the Witch up with it.

WITCH:
Good reactions...

She plonks the stethoscope over his heart and it pumps furiously. She nods and climbs up on his knee.

WITCH:
He's got a big heart...

She lifts his eyelid and peers in. Silhouetted in his eyeball is a belly dancer gyrating in jungle rhythm. She slams the lid shut.

WITCH:
There's a lot going on in there...

She jumps down.

WITCH:
I think I can transform him but it's going to be very costly.

Through a cleft in the rock and unnoticed by them, the Thief flies by.

YUMYUM:
Oh, but I don't want you to **change** him!

WITCH:
Well, we'll not change him dearie.
We'll just bring out the real **him**.

Yummy is torn.

YUMYUM:
Tack, how do you feel about it?

Tack GULPS. Straightens. Nods.

WITCH:
Right. Money in front!

Yummy claps her hands. The four Eunuchs place a golden treasure chest in front of the Witch. She opens it. It's full of gleaming jewels.

WITCH:
Ahhhhh-h-h-h-h! For you, I will make a special price. And take a special trip.

She winds up and runs, leaps into the air and lands on a trampoline in a pit, which flings her into a somersault high up the cliff face where she grabs a rope and swings around the mountain shrieking like Tarzan.

WITCH:
A-A-A-A-A-A-YEEEEEEEEEAHHHHHHHHH!

On the other side of the mountain, the winged Thief suddenly appears, coming towards her on a collision course. WHAM! She crashes into him with her feet and he spins away out of control. BAM! She blasts through a bat's nest and CRASHES into a gong hanging from a tripod over a cleft in the earth. THUD!

EXT. MOUNTAIN

His damaged wings hanging in bits, the Thief flaps frantically as he slides down the side of the mountain. He has just enough wing control to break the fall and avoid certain death.

ANGLE - THE WITCH

She turns a steering wheel attached to a pipe leading into a cleft in the earth. Multi-coloured gases rise up through the fissure making mystic symbols which come and go as they rise. She strikes a match. BOW-WHAAAAM! She rises up into the air on a column of gas. They all stare as she inhales.

WITCH:

With acid, fumes and gas combined,
I will start to blow my mind!

She sits on a mushroom cloud, reaches within it and brings out a checkered table cloth, a champagne glass and a bottle of wine.

WITCH:

Mystical Elixir! The most ancient celestial wine!

She pops the cork and pours purple liquid with gases rising into the glass. The table top and glass appear in front of Tack.

WITCH:

Drink this! It ought to bring out the real youuuuuufzzgrzub (tongue tangles) Er...ah...Sorry!...Start again!

She does it again but this time like a TV commercial. Her appearance even becomes kind of glamorous.

WITCH:

Mystical Elixir! The most ancient celestial wine! Drink this! It ought to bring out the real **you**!

Tack gingerly takes the glass and drinks. His eyes widen and everybody and everything swims and distorts before him. His body swells and a column of multi-coloured flames ROARS from his mouth. Tack has an internal earthquake, his parts distorting and his colours changing. It climaxes as he flips over and lands as a big green FROG in Cobbler's clothes. His throat expands.

TACK:

CROAK!

YUMYUM:

What have you done?

The Witch bursts into hysterical laughter like a small naughty child.

WITCH:

Must have been a bad year.

She looks at the label on the bottle and tosses it away. BWAAAM! It explodes taking away a piece of the mountain. Yummy, Nurse and Eunuchs duck pieces of falling debris. Yummy runs over to the Cobbler/Frog.

YUMYUM:

Oh my poor Cobbler! Bring him back! Please!

EXT. THE BASE OF THE MOUNTAIN

The Thief sits between two shrubs, oblivious as bits of mountain drop around him. He has made some vines into spring coils, which he fastens on his feet. Using the trees as a brace, he stands pressing on the coils - and he's off. He makes little bounces then gathers momentum and height, gaining control from hop to hop. He goes higher and higher, bouncing as the ground comes and goes and the Idol gets closer.

ANGLE - THE IDOL

on its platform surrounded by Guards. SPRONGGGG! The Thief bounces over them and drops into the Idol. THUD! He is plastered against the Idol, embracing it and pumping his spring-feet like crazy. His kicking becomes more feeble as the Guards' spears encircle his throat.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP

YUMYUM:

(hugging the frog) What are you going to **DO**?

WITCH:

Mm-hmmmm...Let's see now-
perhaps True Love's Kiss?

Yumyum gently kisses Tack's frog face. Nothing happens. The Witch takes out a cupid's bow with a heart arrow and shoots it at Yumyum. SPRONG! It lands in her derriere.

YUMYUM:

Ooooo!

Yumyum vibrates with an internal earthquake, jiggling like a belly dancer. Everything swims and POOF! Beside the Frog now sits a Lady Frog.

The Nurse hobbles up to the Witch's cloud.

NURSE:

What on Earth have you done?

DO something! **DO** something!

The Witch pulls out her knitting needle and uses it as a wand.

WITCH:

Mmmmm-ah...let's see now. Ah!

Magic forces in the air!

Change the creatures sitting there!

Into what they really are!

And make sure they are similar!

Electricity shoots from her wand. Tack and Yumyum vibrate and WOOF! Yumyum turns into a beautiful Unicorn. Tack turns into a Rhino in Cobbler pants. The Nurse is frantic.

NURSE:

Oh no! Oh no!

WITCH:

Arrgh! Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

She runs up some steps in the cloud to an old railway signal lever.

WITCH:

Forces of the Universe!

Things seem to be getting worse!

She pulls the lever and WHOOM! The cloud explodes and she runs in a gale force wind from cloud to cloud YELLING.

WITCH:

Whirling wind and rushing fire!

Turn them into their desire!

Lightning flashes from her wand. A whirlwind encircles the Unicorn and Rhino. BWHOOOM! It subsides revealing a beautiful Peacock and a big Turkey in Cobbler dress.

NURSE:

Oooooooh, **Noooooooooohhhhhhhh!**

WITCH:

Argh! Not so good. Not so good.

Magic Day and Mystic Night!

Change them till they get it right!

The Nurse is frantic, the Eunuchs fascinated. Yummy turns into a lovely butterfly as Tack becomes a big caterpillar. Then WOOF! - a moth.

WITCH:

No! No! Change again!

Yummy becomes a white Swan and Tack a Duck-billed Platypus.

WITCH:

One more time!

Yummy becomes a white Cockatoo and Tack a Dodo.

WITCH:

(thoroughly exasperated)

Oh, horsefeathers!

Yummy becomes a white Pegasus Horse and Tack a broken-down Plough Horse covered in feathers. The Nurse rolls up her sleeves revealing her huge muscled arms.

NURSE:

You bring them back now, or **else** I'll...

WITCH:

(snapping her knuckles)

I've got it! I've got it! - **Princess!**

POOF! Yummy turns back into herself.

NURSE:

Oh praise be!

WITCH:

And now - Handsome **Prince!**

POOF! Tack turns back into himself.

YUMMYUM:

Oh, Tack! Thank heavens!

WITCH:

Handsome **Prince!**

Nothing happens. The Witch shoots electricity at him.

WITCH:
Handsome **Prince!** Handsome **Prince!**

Nothing happens.

YUMYUM:
Oh, Great Witch, leave him be!
We are happy with him as himself!

Tack breathes a huge sigh of relief.

WITCH:
You're happy with this?

YUMYUM:
Yes, oh yes! **But**, Oh Mad and Holy Old Witch
Our city will soon be under **attack!**
How will we stop the attack?

WITCH:
Oh yes, attack. Attack? A...tack. Tack?

Tack steps nervously forwards. The Witch commands.

WITCH:
Tack!

*He offers her one of his tacks. She is so small it looks large. She displays it. It gleams in a beam of sunlight.
(Mysterioso music).*

WITCH:
A tack? See?
But...it's what you DO with what you GOT!

Tack is puzzled.

WITCH:
Get it?

She hands it back to him. He blinks.

WITCH:
Got it?

Tack nods.

WITCH:
GOOD.

She pats and cups his hand conspiratorially. The colours darken and the witch grows larger and more dignified.

GIANT WITCH:(quietly)
Soon your city will be under attack.

She holds out a pointing finger towards the city. The wind rises and her hair billows out. She is attaining heroic proportions. Her voice rises in a crescendo till it BOOMS. Lightning flashes.

GIANT WITCH:
One here can SAVE THE CITY!
GO HOME! NOWWWWWWWWWWWW!

HIGH ANGLE - THE MOUNTAIN
A black thunderstorm engulfs the mountain top and an earthquake starts.

ANGLE - TACK'S PARTY
running away, leaving the palanquin behind as they dodge falling rocks.

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS AND THE CAMEL
HOWLING, racing down the mountain as pieces of it crash down.

ANGLE - THE MOUNTAIN
The 'hand' at the top turns into a clenched fist and the mountain looks like it will take off or fly to pieces any second. Then the clenched fist majestically turns into a pointing hand, indicating the way home.

ANGLE - THE THIEF
stamping towards us, his robe in shreds, paying no attention to the RUMBLING above him. He's in a terrible temper and he kicks his foot trying to kick off a remaining spring. He barely notices the boulders landing beside him.
Suddenly the mountain doors open and Tack's party all tumble out. The doors close behind them.

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS
rushing around colliding with each other. They stop and look up.

ANGLE - THE MOUNTAIN
as it was at first except that now the sun is setting. Perfectly calm. Tranquil.

ANGLE - TACK
Looking up, bewildered. Yummy, the Nurse, Eunuchs and Brigands all look at each other as if to say "did it really happen?"

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS AND YUMMYUM

YUMMYUM:
Gentlemen! The Witch says one of us here can save the City. We must make haste and return at once!

NURSE:
It's a long way back to the City - and we forgot the palanquin.

ROOFLESS:
Er...yer majesty...not meaning to brag...But if there's one thing meself and me men are **good** at...

YUMMYUM:
Good at?

ROOFLESS:
Makin' a getaway. We're good at makin' a getaway!

GOOLIE:
Aye! Running! We're good at running!

BRIGANDS:
Aye! Aye! Runnin' **away**!

ROOFLESS:

We'll have you home before you know it! Mount up!

Everyone looks at the camel, who makes a "who-me?" expression. Roofless and Hook link hands making a "step". Yummy and the Nurse mount up. Roofless smiles at Tack and tucks him under his arm like a football.

ROOFLESS:

Right Sir! Briga-a-ands! Fall in!

The Brigands line up shoulder to shoulder, taking up various start positions like football players, swimmers and racers.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

looking over a sand dune at them.

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS

ROOFLESS:

When I give the signal, you will advance to the Golden City at full speed - without stopping! Get ready! Get set! GO!

They all take off running like crazy, shrieking and howling.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

He looks behind him and sees the Ruby Temple Guards coming at him. He runs forward flailing after the Brigands.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE ONE-EYE TENT - NIGHT

The Mighty One-Eye lies back on his throne of women. They groan. Zigzag sits on a pillow across from him.

Between them is a table made of three women on hands and knees so that their backs form the table. They grunt with discomfort.

Across their backs is a map of the Golden Land. The Three Golden Balls stand on a spike beside the Mighty One-Eye. Zigzag is winking and blinking, trying to look like a kind of One-Eye person.

ZIGZAG:

And here is the weak point
in the wall of the City...

He pokes the map and the Women snarl.

ZIGZAG:

Shall we trample and break it
and not show pity?

ONE-EYE:

I say who lives and who dies!
None shall escape!

ZIGZAG:

Except for the Princess - that we agreed!
She is the price for my traitorous deed!
(lascivious eyes)

ONE-EYE:

Grunt.

ZIGZAG:

Their soldiers will cower behind these walls

when they see that **we** have the Three Golden Balls.

ONE-EYE:
Tomorrow...I **strike!**

He smashes his fists onto Zigzag's hands.

ZIGZAG:
Oh! Oh! Oooo! Aha!

Zigzag retracts his injured hands, his eye flickering and fingers twitching. He tries to smile. The Mighty One-Eye leans forward.

ONE-EYE:
And **you** shall ride at the front...sorcerer.

The smile falls off Zigzag's face.

*EXT. THE GOLDEN CITY - PREDAWN
ANGLE - THE KING'S WINDOW*

King Nod, wringing his hands, paces before his aged generals. On receiving his orders they scurry out.

KING:
You take the right flank! You take the left flank! Right turret! Gate! Drawbridge! You take the women! Children! Old people! Safe in the Temple! Medical Corps! Ready the Physicians!

The King is left alone. He's cracking.

KING:
My City will come to destruction and death!
Where are the Golden Balls?
Where are the Golden Balls?

The King stops pacing at the SOUND of a distant RUMBLE - the sound of an advancing army and heavy machinery.

*ANGLE - THE KING'S POV
looking down and across the Golden City at his army stationed along the wall. Across the river and the plain are the darkening foothills. Rain clouds build. There is a golden gleam in the distant shadows. The CAMERA ZOOMS in to a cleft in the foothills. The Three Golden Balls rise up into the first ray of the sun. They come forward on a tall pike. As the pike rises into the sky, the One-Eye flag comes into view, flying beneath the Golden Balls. It rises higher and higher as the SOUND of the One-Eye army and machinery builds.*

*ANGLE - THE KING
terror filling his face.*

*EXT. THE DESERT - PREDAWN
The Brigands are running like crazy, as is the camel.*

ROOFLESS:
Faster! **Faster** - you fools!

They run past CAMERA. As the thunder of their stampede dies away in the distance, there comes the sound of flies and laboured breathing. The Thief, a dishevelled wreck with bursting lungs, moves into FRAME. He still wears a half-spring on one foot causing him a little extra bounce as he runs, falls, gets up and runs on.

EXT. THE PLAIN - DAWN

In front of the foothills, a giant war contraption is being assembled. Above it all shine the Three Golden Balls atop the pole that flies the One-Eye flag. The One-Eye soldiers look as if they're made of metal - alien - dehumanised. The rain starts.

Everything fits together with clinical precision as a vast inter-locking machine of death is constructed. Enormous Leonardo da Vinci-type machinery is brought up and placed in tiers. It is a complex of assault towers, battering rams, catapults, mangonels, pincers, turrets, archers, horsemen, drummers, footsoldiers, elephants and oxen. In front of it all on a nervously pacing horse, sits Zigzag.

ANGLE - MIGHTY ONE-EYE

looking down at the scene below from atop a hill. He sits on his women and BELLOWS at Zigzag through a Tibetan horn.

ONE-EYE:

This is **One-Eye** magic, Sorcerer! Haw! Haw! Haw!

Zigzag smiles grimly up at him.

EXT. THE WALLS OF THE GOLDEN CITY

The rain stops, revealing the completed Death Machine. The soldiers stand with their mouths open. Women, old men, children look on - awestruck. Gopher, Goblet, Slap and Tickle stare out - terrified.

ANGLE - KING NOD

standing on his balcony, his mouth hanging open.

EXT. THE DESERT OUTSIDE THE CITY

The Brigands run directly at us like a cavalry charge.

ROOFLESS:

I see it, Princess. 'Tis the City itself!

'Tis **two** cities!

HOOK:

'Tis one black and one gold!

BRIGANDS POV

The horizon rising and falling as they run, with the top half of the two "cities" visible - the black death machine and the golden city.

ANGLE - BRIGANDS

Roofless runs with Tack under his arm. Beside him the camel runs with Yumyum and her Nurse leaning out.

YUMYUM:

It must be the One-Eyes!

NURSE:

MOVE IT BOYS!

ROOFLESS:

Faster, faster! We must avoid disaster!

ANGLE - ZIGZAG:

in front of the machine as the last pulleys, hoists and paraphernalia lock into place. The drums stop and there is an ominous SILENCE. The Mighty One-Eye shouts through his horn.

ONE-EYE:

ONE-EYES! ATTACK!

Organs BLAST. One-eyed men leap on giant drums, making THUNDER.

Great gears GRIND and a relentless CHANT begins among the troops.

ONE-EYES:

A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack!

Tank-like mechanisms are propelled forward by men walking inside huge wheel drums. Advanced troops whirl maces. The One-Eyes advance carrying colossal crowbars and spears. In front, leading it all is Zigzag.

WIDE SHOT - ONE-EYE ARMY

advancing slowly across the plain to the City. The CAMERA PANS to reveal the Brigands as tiny dots approaching fast from the desert.

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS

ROOFLESS:

Once more into the breach, boys!

NURSE:

CHAAAARGE!

BRIGANDS:

Ch-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-ar-r-r-rr-ge!

ANGLE - ONE-EYE ARMY

Sections of the machine go into launching position. The heavily armoured soldiers move like automatons.

ONE-EYES:

A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack!

ANGLE - MIGHTY ONE-EYE

high up on the hill bouncing up and down on his human throne. Lightning flashes behind him as he chants with his army:

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack!

ANGLE - THE PLAIN

From behind the clouds the sun strikes the Brigands' formation. They run in a beam of light onto the field in front of the One-Eyes.

ANGLE - THE BRIGANDS

sliding and falling to a halt in total confusion.

ROOFLESS:

Ladies to the rear!

YUMYUM:

(gulps) No.

NURSE:

...Thank you.

Yummy and the Nurse step in front, forming a spearhead for the inept phalanx of Brigands behind them. Tack stands by Yummy.

The Brigands try to look formidable, SNARLING. The camel sees the odds, shakes his head and walks out of the line of fire.

Tack looks at Yummy. She tries to smile at him - holding back tears. Strengthened by love, he smiles confidently at

her, straightens up taller and goes to put his arm protectively around her. He stops short, remembering she's the princess.

ANGLE - THROUGH KING NOD'S TELESCOPE

His telescope PANS down the advancing enemy death machine and moves in close to show the huddled group of defenders - Tack and Yumyum in front.

KING:

Oh, my God! My daughter!

He bolts out followed by aged guards and runs through the streets.

KING:

My daughter! Oh, my God! My child!

Help me! Help me to help her!

A tiny child in the street listens sympathetically. Old people come out to help with shovels, brooms, pots and pans.

ANGLE - TACK

jumps out in front and makes a sign that means 'formation, men'.

ROOFLESS:

Formation, men!

The Brigands form a football scrimmage line facing the machine.

ROOFLESS:

Hut - one - hut - two - hut - **three!**

They all change position.

ANGLE - MIGHTY ONE-EYE

MIGHTY ONE-EYE:

A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack!

ANGLE - TACK

He swallows hard and sort of unfolds as he stands up in front of the advancing machine. It's clear that he is a very tall young man. (He's been mostly semi-folded up and bent over working until now).

Yumyum tries to stop him.

YUMYUM:

Tack! Tack! Please! No! You don't know what you're doing!

She throws herself at him in an embrace. He's thrilled but embarrassed. He gently but firmly hands her over to the Nurse and steps out.

ROOFLESS:

Hut - four - hut - five - hut - six!

The Brigands change position behind Tack, but they stay well back.

Tack starts in surprise as he sees Zigzag at the front of the One-Eyes.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG

surprised, as he sees Tack.

ZIGZAG'S POV

of Tack, with the Brigands still switching positions behind him. The CAMERA ZOOMS in on Tack's face as the One-Eye drone increases. Tack turns to his little army. He looks longingly at Yumyum. His eyes fill with tears. Then he goes out alone towards the machine. Yumyum stands there, hand on heart, crying.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

as he comes onto the battlefield - a shredded, gasping wreck.

THE THIEF'S POV

the black sky and the sunlight glinting on the Golden Balls.

ANGLE - THE THIEF

The Three Golden Balls panning through his eyes...

ANGLE - TACK

advancing towards the machine. Yumyum and the Brigands far behind. The CAMERA MOVES IN on Tack's face, staring at Zigzag.

TACK'S POV

on the moving gantry and Zigzag staring back at him.

CLOSE SHOT - TACK

the "A-ttack! A-ttack!" chant BOOMS as if in Tack's mind. He takes on a faraway expression as he feels absently in his pocket.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG

smiling devilishly, lowers his spear and charges out to skewer Tack. As he aims for the Cobbler's chest, Tack suddenly ducks to knee-level. Zigzag flashes past and slashes away half of Tack's knapsack-like pants - tacks, spools and spindles flying.

Yumyum screams and runs forward. Zigzag's spear cuts away part of her dress.

Zigzag turns his horse around and heads back for the Cobbler. He charges again - aiming for the heart. Again, at the last second, Tack ducks down and Zigzag slices away the other half of his pants - spools and tacks flying. Wild-eyed, Yumyum runs forward but as Zigzag's horse shoots past he knocks her flat in the mud, slicing away more of her dress. The Nurse hobbles out in front of Zigzag's horse as it turns and comes up on the return attack.

NURSE:

GERONIMO!

Her leg flashes out tripping the horse, which goes straight down into the mud. Yumyum and the Brigands CHEER. Zigzag furiously forces his horse up again. The Nurse hobbles round it and delivers a hefty kick to its privates.

NURSE:

Sorry, Dobbin. Nothing personal!

The horse rears up WHINNYING. Yumyum and the Brigands laugh at Zigzag. Red with rage, Zigzag aims his horse at Tack and heads in for the kill. Yumyum and the Brigands stop laughing and stare wild-eyed.

Tack stands up very straight and tall. With his balloon-like clownish pants cut away he has lost his cobbler disguise and stands revealed as a hero. In his shredded 'lederhosen' he has the heroic look of Robin Hood or Gunga Din. Zigzag gallops closer, gaining speed.

ONE-EYES:

A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack! A-ttack!

Suddenly Tack squats down and starts making a cats-cradle from string, similar to the construction he made to hammer Yumyum's slipper.

Zigzag speeds closer and closer.

Tack is making something like a tiny rollercoaster made of string, pliers, spools and tweezers. He works feverishly. Zigzag is almost upon him. The Cobbler puts a single glinting TACK on a lever and stands up.

**YUMYUM:
TACK! TACK!**

Zigzag slashes at the Cobbler, who snaps down into his working position. The spear tears half his shirt away, goes on down and cuts the string releasing the TACK.

*Zigzag tries furiously to turn his horse for a return try.
The TACK spins and swings crazily through the cats-cradle.
The death machine comes closer and closer.*

Zigzag gallops up again just as the TACK flies into the death machine. SPRONG! It misses Zigzag but hits a shield, PING! Then ricochets round the inside of a trumpet and out again striking a spoon-shaped pincer. It boomerangs straight into Zigzag's horse's arse. The horse rears in pain. Zigzag's lance goes down goosing a footsoldier in front of him, whose blade lurches forward cutting the rope on a small catapult which tosses a big rock backwards cutting the release rope on four huge catapults. Four rocks fly forward releasing one huge rock which is hurled backwards landing on a spring-mechanism which fires upwards. This spills boiling oil and sends sheets of flame shooting into the wooden structure. The rock lands on a massive crossbow which fires a tree hard into the base of an assault tower, ramming the mobile platform into giant pincers which crush it.

Relentlessly the Machine destroys itself from inside, collapsing from within. Guns go off the wrong way. Arrows shoot their own men. It is a symphony of self-destruction built on chain reactions. Nothing can stop it. Horses, elephants, bullocks stampede away, trampling the army. Firestorms rage as the machine tears itself apart.

Into all this goes the Thief in pursuit of the Golden Balls atop the mast. He leads a charmed life as he makes his way unimpeded through this colossal hell of destruction.

On the hilltop the Mighty One-Eye is going crazy as his army and Death Machine destroys itself and he can do nothing to stop it.

**ONE-EYE:
Attackattackattackattackattack!**

ANGLE - THE KING AND HIS SOLDIERS
arriving on the plain, stop in front of the raging devastation.

ANGLE - TACK
standing amazed in front of the inferno, as bits of machinery and One-Eye soldiers drop nearby.

Still after the Golden Balls, the Thief appears on stilts made from the legs of a destroyed siege tower. He rides up an escalator and snatches one Ball. Then he gets his stilts blown from under him and falls in a heap onto a spring as a catapult goes off firing him into the air towards the remaining two Balls. The Thief picks up the second ball as he passes over and goes down into the destruction again. He rides catapults, shoots through rings of fire, spins round turnstiles, gearwheels, missing death between pincers, shooting across the top of boiling oil and flying back up as if from a giant diving board.

The Thief grabs the third Ball and disappears again into the chaos below and emerges unnoticed onto the battlefield clutching all three Balls.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG
unseated, standing helplessly at the front. Tack stands awestruck. The Brigands are still leaping about changing positions.

ANGLE - MIGHTY ONE-EYE

ONE-EYE:
Magician-a-a-a-an!! Make your magic! Or I'll make your death!

ANGLE - ZIGZAG

his face filled with terror. The noise subsides. Tack stands in awe. The Brigands haven't a clue what's happened. All look at Zigzag. He takes off his cap, pulls it inside out and it telescopes up into a tall point becoming a black sorcerers hat with magical symbols on it. He zips out his wand and runs around the destroyed army, drawing a circle in the earth. He incants:

ZIGZAG:
Beelzebub! Lucifer! Sathanas!

He throws down sulfur clouds which billow forth in green smoke.

ZIGZAG:
By the power of your legions!
I command that day be night!
Thunder! Lightning! Wind! And Rain!
Bring the dead to life again!

Everything blackens. The Earth RUMBLES and shakes. Fire and smoke stream through crevices. Blue guts and tentacles leap out of slits in the earth. Bits multiply in sections, little bits uncoiling from big bits, growing and expanding. There is a ROAR of steam, fire and wind and the apparition leaps into the air like a gigantic kite or tent taking the wind.

Hovering above is a colossal oriental DRAGON with giant wings. It CRACKS and SNAPS like a tent in the gale. The Brigands freeze with terror. Even the Mighty One-Eye is aghast. Zigzag roars with laughter. The Dragon is even bigger than the War Machine. It advances on Tack. Yummy faints.

ANGLE- TACK
resolutely glued to the spot. The loop of sound runs through his mind:

"A-ttack!...A-tack!...A...tack!"

He grabs a stick and ties a TACK on the end like a spear. As the dragon towers over him belching smoke and snorting fire, he steps out to meet it. Huge feet come toward him and Tack strikes a toe. There is HISSING and yellow-green gas comes out, choking him. As he stabs the dragon's foot, it deflates like a tent of flesh, falling on him and trapping him underneath. The suffocating Cobbler goes wild with fear and tears his way out. He stabs another foot. More gas escapes. Another foot grows out just above it to replace the first. It traps him on his back and the dragon leans forward to finish him.

TACK'S POV
As the chest and head bear down on him, he sees a clearly labeled heart on the dragon's chest and summons his last ounce of strength to throw his tack-spear at it. There is a muffled explosion. WHOOMP! The dragon's face goes from horrid to weird to goofy to depressed. It collapses, HISSING.

ANGLE - ZIGZAG
revealed behind the deflating Dragon, pumping old-fashioned bellows and running from pump to pump making new growths wherever he can. But the entire edifice is caving in on itself.

ANGLE - MIGHTY ONE EYE
He shakes his fist and screams at ZigZag.

ONE-EYE:
No man fails the Mighty One Eye and lives!

He YELLS so loud he has a coughing fit. Stepping back and reaching for his Woman-Throne, he feels nothing there. He turns round and sees his One-Eye Women standing with their arms crossed, staring at him. He stops coughing and there is SILENCE. He realises there are a great many of them.

SNAP!

Oh! My bottom! Oh! My top!
Greedies! Don't you ever stop!

ANGLE - PHIDO

*with his beak open wide, zooming down from above. CLUNK!
He holds Zigzag's head like a nutcracker around a walnut. Zigzag is disgusted.*

ZIGZAG:

You too, Phido? Man's best friend?
For Zigzag then, it is the end.

Phido's beak closes. SNAP!

ANGLE - THE COLLAPSED DRAGON

The Brigands running around confused. The smoke is clearing.

BRIGANDS:

He's skedaddled! He's disappeared!
He's magicked himself away!

HOOK:(pointing to a movement under the Dragon)

What's **that** then?

THE BRIGANDS POV

There is a lump moving beneath the cloth - flies BUZZ over the top of it. The lump pauses then wriggles along further. All forty Brigands converge on the lump in a flying tackle. The lump squirts away. Tack crouches in anticipation of the lump moving towards him.

YUMYUM:

Oh! Tack! Be careful!

The Brigands tackle the lump again. It squeezes out from under them until it is under the deflated head of the Dragon. The Dragon head rises like a comic version of its former self and out of its mouth shoots the Thief running at top speed carrying the Golden Balls. He runs smack into Tack. They stop, recognising each other. Then the Thief darts into the smoke. Tack makes a flying tackle, bringing him down. They wrestle for the Balls, going into entangled positions as at the start of the picture.

Tack wrestles all three Balls away from the Thief but he gets stranded on a piece of teeter-totter wreckage above a pit. Tack teeters on the edge holding the Balls aloft. All the Thief has to do is push him. They look into each others eyes. Deeply.

The Thief reaches for the Balls and goes to push Tack, just as the smoke clears to reveal the vast panorama of destruction. The Thief sees it for the very first time. He is stunned.

Then the Balls LIGHT UP. The Thief looks in the direction of the light towards the City, where a sunbeam bounces off the empty golden spike of the Ancient Minaret and reflects all the way down to the Balls held by Tack. The enormity of it all dawns on the Thief.

With a "you can have them - life's too short" gesture, he turns and walks away from it all into the smoke, leaving Tack holding the Balls aloft in the sun. The Brigands can just see Tack and are amazed.

ROOFLESS:

We've done it, men! **We've** got the Balls!

HOOK:(pointing to Tack)

He's got them!

BRIGANDS:

The **Man!** 'Tis the **Man** himself has them!

YUMYUM:

Oh Tack! My Cobbler!

My wonderful Cobbler! I love you!

Yumyum runs up and wraps herself around him.

BRIGANDS:

Hooray! Hooray for our side!

And isn't he looking well! (RAZZ)

KING:

(running up through the smoke)

Oh, my daughter! My daughter!

Oh, my wonderful daughter!

They embrace in tears.

ROOFLESS:

Royal Guard! We has won the battle!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE PALACE - DAY

King Nod sits on his throne, Yumyum at his side.

Tack lays the Three Golden Balls down in front of the King and bows. The Brigands are lined up behind him, proud, magnificently uniformed, their chests thrust forward.

KING:

Our City is saved! The Prophecy is fulfilled!

My City owes you a great debt of gratitude, Oh Cobbler!

Yumyum whispers in the King's ear.

YUMYUM:

Father...Father.....(whisper, whisper)

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CHEERING POPULACE

gathered at the base of the minaret in tremendous celebration. Musicians, dancing, fountains. On a platform the Eunuchs CHANT:

DWARF:

(zipping from pant leg to pant leg)

Long live the Golden City!

EUNUCHS:

Long! Live! The! Golden! City!

The CAMERA CRANES UP the minaret. At a window King Nod is beside the pink palanquin, kissing the female hand extended with grapes from the curtains. CHORTLES. Goblet enters.

GOBLET:

Oh Great King Nod - have no fear!

Goblet - your Grand Vizier is here!

KING:

Guards! Remove **him**...permanently!

Goblet is carried out wailing.

GOBLET:

But I only wanted to help, your Majesty!
I was only doing it for you - I only wish to serve!

The CAMERA PANS UP to another window. The music swells. Yummyum is in white, her dress and train are adorned by flowers. Tack stands beside her. His clothes are in full colour and we realise he has been mostly in black and white and greys up until now.

The Nurse hobbles round humming "Here Comes the Bride".

A flower falls in front of the little mouse. He sniffs it and SNEEZES.

Yummyum suddenly hunches into an imitation of the Witch gesturing magically at Tack. She mimics the Witch's voice.

YUMMYUM:

Handsome **Prince!**

Yummyum laughs. Tack grins.

YUMMYUM:

I love you!

She moves to kiss him but two tacks are in his mouth. He removes them and straightens up to his full height.

TACK:

(Sean Connery's voice)

I...LOVE YOU!

Out comes this deep voice. He is as surprised at it as we are. They embrace.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK and CRANES UP to the Golden Balls gleaming in the setting sun and ZOOMS back taking in the minaret and palace.

The words "THE END" appear in letters made of glittering jewels. The music SWELLS UP with the full Hollywood symphonic ending, choirs SINGING, bells RINGING.

At the side of the SCREEN the Thief's head, with flies, appears. He sneaks over and puts each jewelled letter of "THE END" inside his coat. Once these are gone he starts to tug at the edge of the film frame.

The soundtrack SPUTTERS and SNAPS into SILENCE as the Thief literally steals the picture out of the projector. He winds up the film and stuffs it inside his coat, looks at the audience, grins, turns and runs into the distance. He's gone.

(Production Note: All the credits were on the front, above the Crystal Ball, and are much shorter and fewer than today's fashion).