Dungeons and Dunces
by Devon Armer

Act I
Scene 1

Setting: Deep underground in a dark and dank dungeon. The room shows several skeletons scattered around a central dais on which sits a stone tablet.

At Rise: The trio of heroes enter the chamber from a door on the left taking in the scene before them. They are crouched low and staying quiet. EVANDRA leads the group in with a dagger out, cautiously.

(The characters freeze while THE GAME MASTER speaks)

THE GAME MASTER
Creeping forward cautiously into the chamber, our group of heroes are met with a macabre display. Skeletons litter the floor around a dais of carved stone, upon which rests a circular stone tablet. At the far side of the room lay a large stone door with a circular impression at its center. It seems our heroes have encountered their first obstacle. (EVANDRA, a slim, fair-skinned elf in dark clothing steps forward cautiously inspecting the room before turning to her companions)

EVANDRA
Okay guys we've done this sort of thing before. Looks like we need to use this odd stone tablet to open the way forward. I don't like the look of those skeletons, the dais must be trapped.

(Once more the characters freeze in position as THE GAME MASTER speaks)

THE GAME MASTER
Okay Evandra Greenleaf, the young elven thief with an eye for gold and a mind for planning. As the undisputed brains of the group, there's not a lock in the world that can repel her nor a trap that escapes her keen eye.

(THORDREN, A short stocky dwarf with a long-braided beard appraises the room nervously)

THORDREN
(Speaking in a thick accent)
I don't like this one-bit Evandra, me danger alarm is goin oof somethin fierce. Maybe we'd be better ta jus leave it be an try ta find another way past.

(Once more the characters freeze)

THE GAME MASTER
The stout dwarven figure of Thordren Stoneborn says with concern. Cleric that he is, Thordren, serves as the group's moral center as well as the healer, bringing his comrades back from the brink of death time and again. While not the bravest warrior around there's no denying that this old dwarf is the heart and soul of-

(THORDREN is cut off by the powerful voice of ARAYA, a strong, dark-skinned human woman in heavy armor)

ARAYA
Well what are we waiting around for? We know the drill by now. Evandra, you check for traps and steal the tablet thing, me and Thordren will make sure nothing jumps on you. (EVANDRA and THORDREN nod and mutter in agreement.)

(ARAYA is again cut off by THE GAME MASTER)

THE GAME MASTER
Araya Strongblade says, a paladin of the church, Araya is strong in both body and spirit. The fearless leader of the group, Araya's unshakable spirit and powerful sword arm have never yet failed to lead her companions to victo-

(ARAYA finishes)

ARAYA
You heard me, right? Hop to it, we got a lot more of this cave to search if we want to find that dragon that's been terrorizing the village.
The Quatrain

EVANDRA steps forward toward the dais inspecting it carefully while THORDREN draws his axe and keeps watch with ARAYA.

EVANDRA
Alright, alright, no need to get snippy. I've got this.

(All freeze)

THE GAME MASTER
(Notably irritated)
Approaching the dais cautiously, Evandra pulls forth her thieves’ tools to check for traps. The dice shall determine her fate.

(The sound of a dice rolling can be heard. The audience is shown a paper with the number five on it.)

Unfortunately, Evandra fails to notice the delicate mechanism upon which the tablet sat. Satisfied that her search turned up no danger she snatches the tablet from its-

(Araya grabs Evandra’s hand as she reaches for the tablet.)

ARAYA
Wait, what are you doing? You can clearly see that’s a pressure plate.

EVANDRA
(Sounding confused)
Yeah... huh. I don't know why I did that; it's like I was just compelled to. Thanks, Araya.

THE GAME MASTER
Decides instead to tempt fate and mess with the dangerous trap. Being as careful as possible Evandra attempts to slip the tablet free while replacing it with the heavy stone.

(Dice are heard once more. The audience is shown a ten)

Still rattled from her previous near failure as well as her companion Araya’s surprisingly detailed knowledge of traps...Evandra still cannot meet the required number to disarm the-

(EVANDRA slips the tablet off, nothing happens.)

EVANDRA
Hey you were right. These old traps don’t have to be precisely weighted after all.

THE GAME MASTER
Yes of course. That sure is lucky for Evandra and her companions since that trap would have KILLED YOU ALL!

THORDREN
Le’s git a move on, lass. Somethin about this room is givin me a bad feelin. There’s a bitterness in the air.

THE GAME MASTER
Bitterness? You smug-

ARAYA
Somethings always giving you a bad feeling, old man.

(The three place the tablet into the door which opens. They exit the stage together)

(The moment pause)
THE GAME MASTER
(Sighing in frustration)

And so, deeper into the darkness they delve, unaware of the danger that awaited them farther down. For deep within this cave lay the great red dragon, Voarmodal!

(End Scene)

Act I
Scene 2

Setting: A much larger stone chamber filled with piles of gold. In the center of the room lay VOARMODAL, a huge red scaled dragon.

At Rise: The three heroes enter the chamber, weapons drawn. VOARMODAL lies before them snoring loudly.

THE GAME MASTER
Stealing forth into the chamber our heroes freeze in shock, as before them lies the vast sleeping body of Voarmodal, the scourge of the north. The sight of the beast surrounded by mountains of stolen gold is almost overwhelm-

ARAYA
It’s a lot smaller than I was expecting.

THE GAME MASTER
What? No, it’s not. The dragon before you is-

ARAYA
It kinda looks like a dude in a costume. You guys see that, right?

THE GAME MASTER
(Very frustrated.)

THE DRAGON BEFORE YOU IS HUGE AND TERRIFYING AND DOES NOT IN ANY WAY RESEMBLE A MAN IN A COSTUME!

EVANDRA
We should kill it while it’s sleeping.

THORDREN
Ay, lass, best not to wake it. Araya, you got tha strongest arm ere. Give the scaly bastard a good whack.

THE GAME MASTER
NO! Listen you can’t just… Fine. Fine Araya walks forward toward the beast in her heavy clanking armor. A difficult task considering it’s a HUGE SCARY DRAGON! Lets just see what the dice have to say about it.

(He huffs in frustration as ARAYA walks over to the dragon.)

THE GAME MASTER
The beast lays quiet before you, his neck clearly visible for the blow. Raising her mighty blade, Araya strikes down at the creature. Rolling to hit…

(A more dice rolls heard. The audience is shown a number one.)

HA! A critical failure. That’s what you get! In her rush to deliberately break the rules, Araya’s sword slams into the ground beside the beast, waking it from-
ARAYA

(Looking up at the sky.)

Wait, what? It’s asleep, how could I possibly miss?

THE GAME MASTER

Are you…talking to me? You can’t talk to me, you don’t know I exist. As I was saying.

ARAYA/THE GAME MASTER

I just think it’s dumb that anyone could miss that attack. I’ve been doing this for... Araya misses the dragon and it wakes up roaring in anger!

(VOARMODAL leaps up and roars. Araya stabs him. VOARMODAL yelps and whimpers, pulling away from Araya sadly.)

THE GAME MASTER

NO! YOU CAN’T JUST STAB HIM! THERE’S A SPECIFIC SET OF RULES ONE MUST FOLLOW WHEN-

(He groans in frustration.)

THORDREN

AY, ITS AWAKE, LE’S KILL EM!

(Dragon roars halfheartedly, looks confused. EVANDRA and THORDREN rush at it, pausing when THE GAME MASTER speaks.)

THE GAME MASTER

STOP! Everyone just stop! This is my story and I make the rules. The dragon wakes up and roars, it is NOT stabbed, it DOES lash out at Araya, biting her. Roll to hit…

(Dice are heard. Audience sees another one)

Are you kidding me…

EVANDRA

You know I must agree that it’s dumb Araya missed that.

THORDREN

Ay, me as well.

(VOARMODAL shrugs and mutters in agreement.)

THE GAME MASTER

VOARMODAL, DON’T AGREE WITH THEM THEY’RE TRYING TO KILL YOU! As for you three, you all do realize you’re about to die? It’s a dragon! You should be terrified! Voarmodal bite Araya.

(VOARMODAL steps toward ARAYA who holds her sword up stopping him. VOARMODAL looks up and whines. Everyone stands around in a circle confused.)

THE GAME MASTER

(Sounding defeated.)

I just wanted to tell an epic tale about heroes risking their lives to help others. You can’t just not… Actions have consequences. This dragon is going to kill all of you and there’s nothing you can do to-

(VOARMODAL clears his throat.)

VOARMODAL

Actually, I’m a vegetarian.

(There is a long pause.)

THE GAME MASTER

You’re… WHAT! Fine. Fine! I didn’t need to tell a story. It’s not like I wanted to entertain anyone anyway. You did it, you managed to peacefully ensure the dragon won't harm anyone else. Now get out of my dungeon.
(Heroes walk off stage left chatting. VOARMODAL off right. 
Fade to black.)

ARAYA
Hey what’s down this way?

THE GAME MASTER
OUT!

(End)