

DRAGON'S LAIR



**The Rescue of
Princess Daphne**



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Dirk the Daring Saves Princess Daphne

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The old castle is dark and grim. Dirk the Daring knows that within its walls the beautiful Princess Daphne is being held captive. Whatever lies ahead, he will be brave.

The castle's dark walls are covered with thorns and brambles that reach out to grasp him. A ghostly light shines from a sliver of moon overhead. Dirk the Daring must be ready for the terrible task ahead.

He knows that his courage and daring have never never failed him. Whatever awaits, he is ready. He must be, for the beautiful Princess Daphne's safety is at stake.



“Yikes!” Dirk has barely set foot across the drawbridge when he finds himself locked inside a room full of terrible green tentacles. The tentacles writhe and slither across the floor, like snakes.

The tentacles whip around Dirk, looking for his arms, his legs, his neck. If just one captures him, it will squeeze him to death in a second. And there are thousands here!

“Saving Princess Daphne may be tougher than I thought,” Dirk says to himself as he rushes toward the stairs, slashing his way through the long green arms.

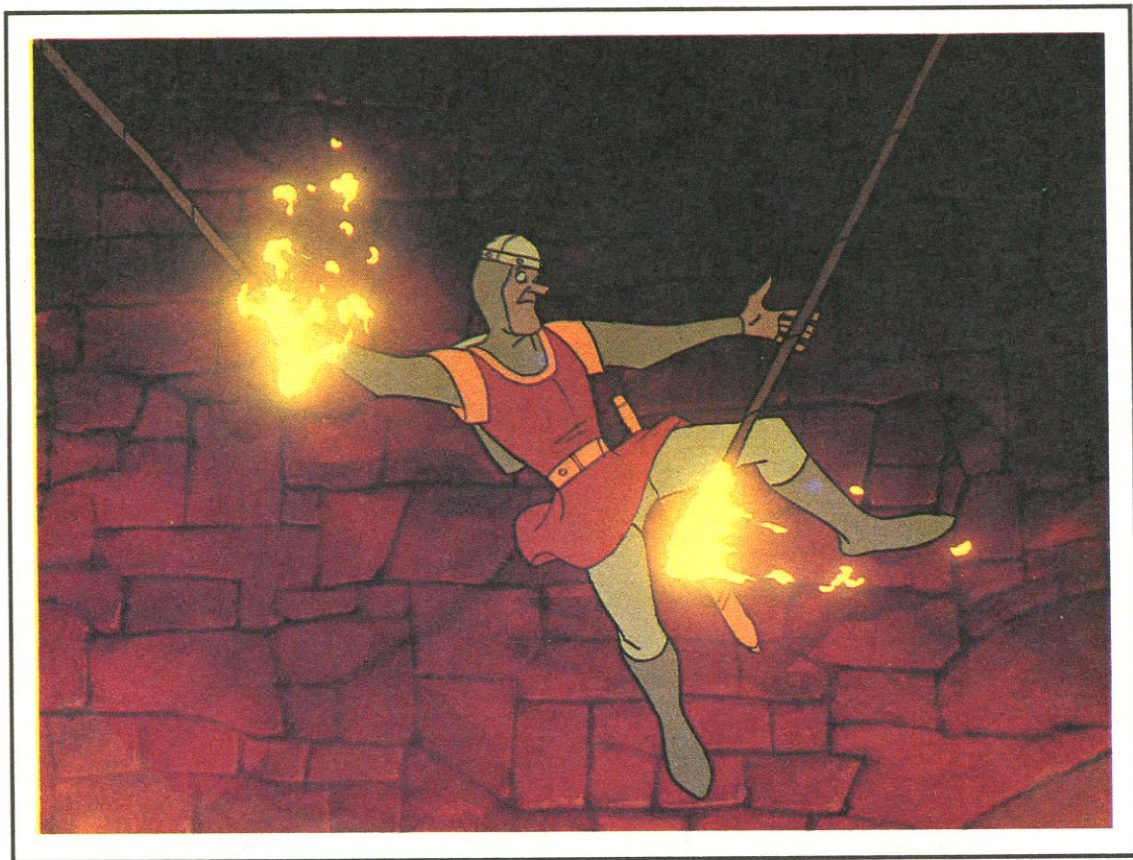
“Splat! Sloosh!” The sound is terrible. Dirk cuts through the wriggling forest of arms to reach the top of the stairs.



Dirk flings open a door and finds himself looking down into a deep pit filled with flames! And the door behind him has slammed shut. The only way out is across the fiery pit. He stands on a tiny ledge, plotting his escape, when suddenly the ledge begins to disappear from under him.

There is no time to think! The smoke and heat are choking him! He must move quickly — or perish!

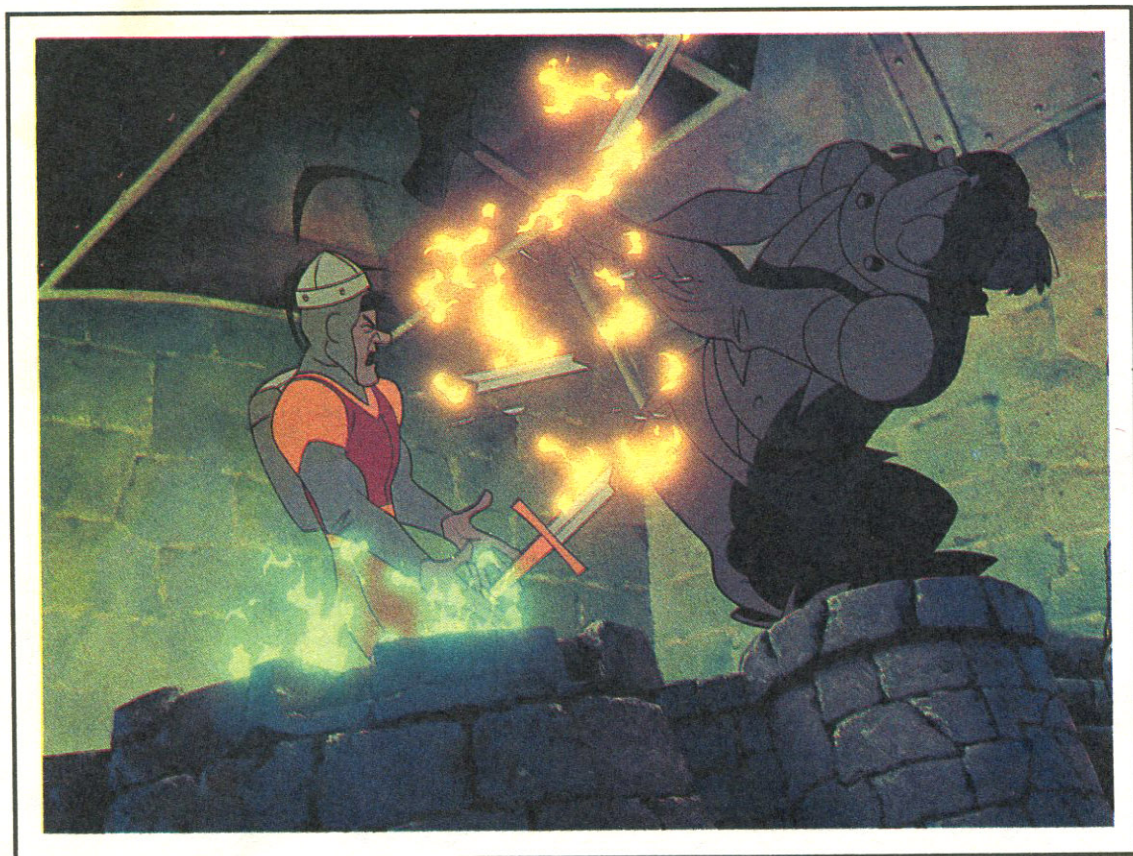
A flaming rope swings toward him. He must grab it and swing toward the other side, even though the rope is burning in his hand. Just as he must let go, there's another one! And another! Hand over hand, grasping one fiery lifeline after another, Dirk must fly across the pit to safety.



Dirk stumbles into a room. It is cool and dark — what a relief after the terrible heat of the flames. Dirk takes a deep breath. “This is more like it,” he thinks.

Just as his eyes adjust to the darkness, the room bursts into flame! Dirk is in a blacksmith shop and the floor is alive with fire! He whirls into the air, hopping above the lapping flames, only to meet red hot flying swords, anvils, chains — all tools of the silent Smithee who stands asleep on a pedestal.

But not for long! In a flash, the air is also filled with the terrible whirring of the Smithee’s huge hammer. He charges, smashing at Dirk’s head. Dirk lunges with his trusty sword. If he doesn’t win this one, it will be all over for him!



Dashing down a dark tunnel, Dirk hopes he is on the right path. There is still no sign of the beautiful Princess Daphne.

He rushes down the corridor, brushing against clanking chains, when suddenly there is a small light up ahead. Is it a vision?

No! It's Daphne! The beautiful Princess Daphne, floating like a cloud at the end of the tunnel ahead.

"Save me! Oh, please, won't someone save me!" she cries.

That's all the encouragement Dirk the Daring needs. He races toward the princess. But as he approaches, she disappears.

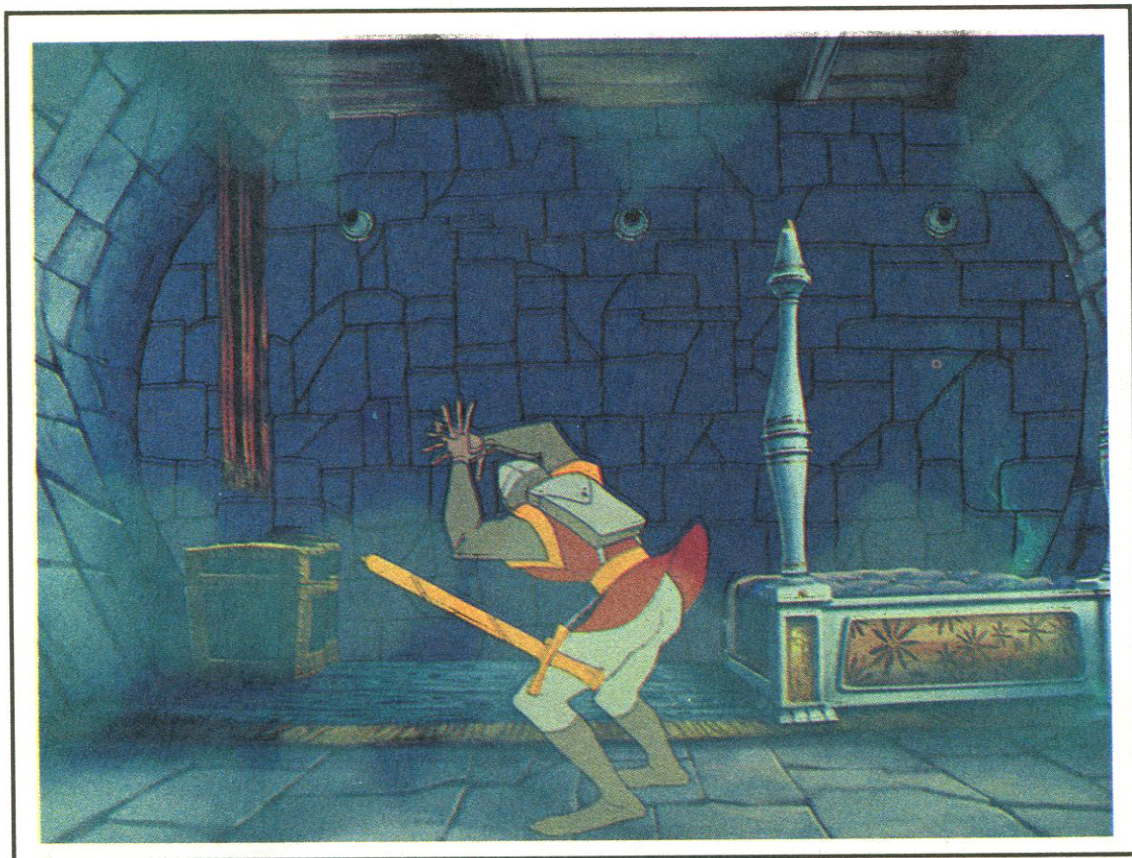


His heart pounding, Dirk races through a door at the end of the corridor. It slams behind him. This must be it, Princess Daphne's chamber. A soft bed fills one side of the room. Dirk looks around the room wildly. He searches in every nook and cranny. He even looks under the bed. The beautiful Princess Daphne has escaped him again!

Dirk is exhausted. The bed looks so comfortable. What harm would it do if he rested for just a few moments and took a tiny little nap?

Just as Dirk is about to relax into the bed's pillowy softness, he hears a hissing sound.

Suddenly Dirk feels even sleepier than he did before. He can hardly keep his eyes open. He looks up and he realizes that gas, poisonous gas, is pouring into the room from nozzles above. He must get out of this room!



Still exhausted from the gas, Dirk is delighted when he sees the statue of a horse ahead. A place to rest for just a moment.

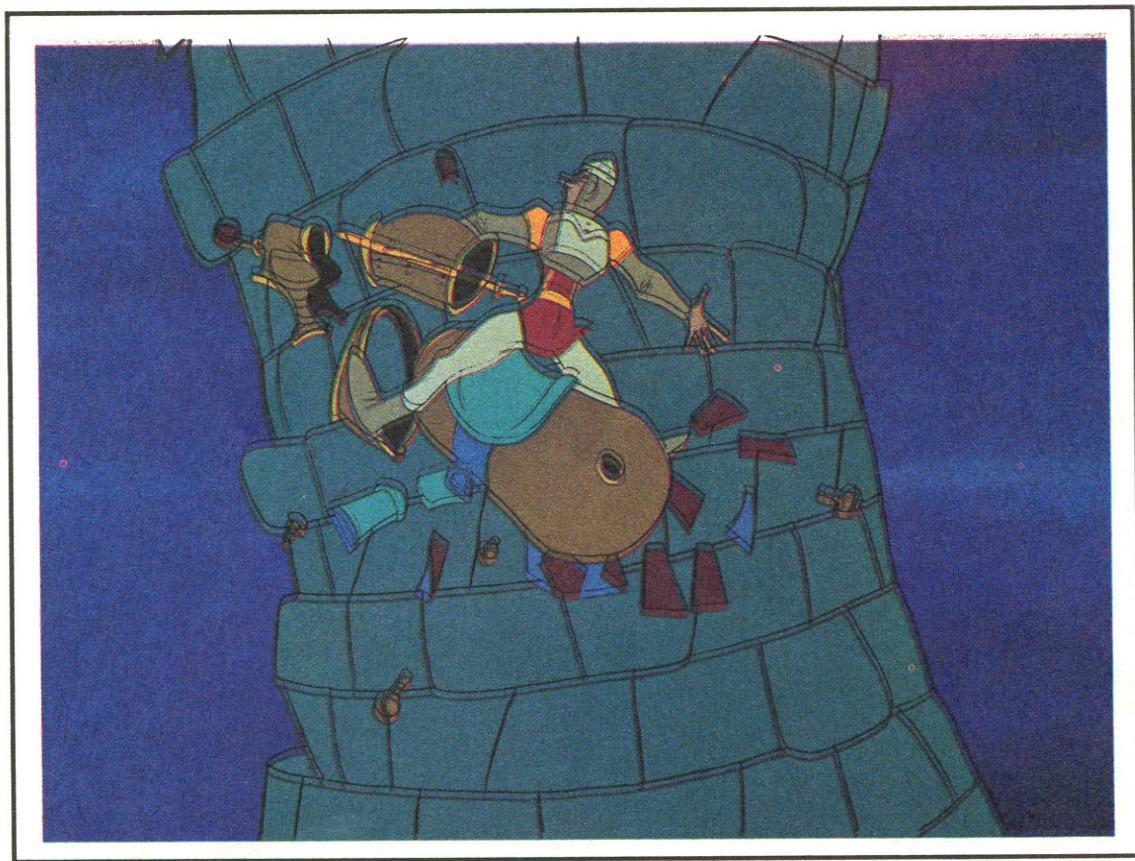
But just as Dirk mounts the iron horse, it turns into a monstrous flying steed. No matter how hard Dirk pulls on the reins, the horse continues on its flight.

“Whoa! Whoa!” Dirk shouts. But the horse pays no attention, flying through flames, brushing closer than Dirk can believe to towering walls.

Ahead Dirk sees a gigantic stone tower. Closer and closer it looms as the horse gallops faster, faster, faster.

“I must jump off! I must! I must!” Dirk thinks. But he can’t.

“Crash!” The sound of the impact echoes throughout the castle as the horse, Dirk, and the stone tower make contact. How can Dirk possibly survive?



Across a tall chamber looms The Black Knight, tall as a mountain, holding a silver sword, as big as a tree in his gloved hand.

Between Dirk and The Knight is a floor in squares like a checkerboard. The Knight strikes a square with his terrible sword. Sparks fly and a pattern of squares become electric, hot with current.

“Bang! Bang! Bang!” The Knight’s sword strikes again. The squares around Dirk are alive with electricity. He jumps high over the board to escape them.

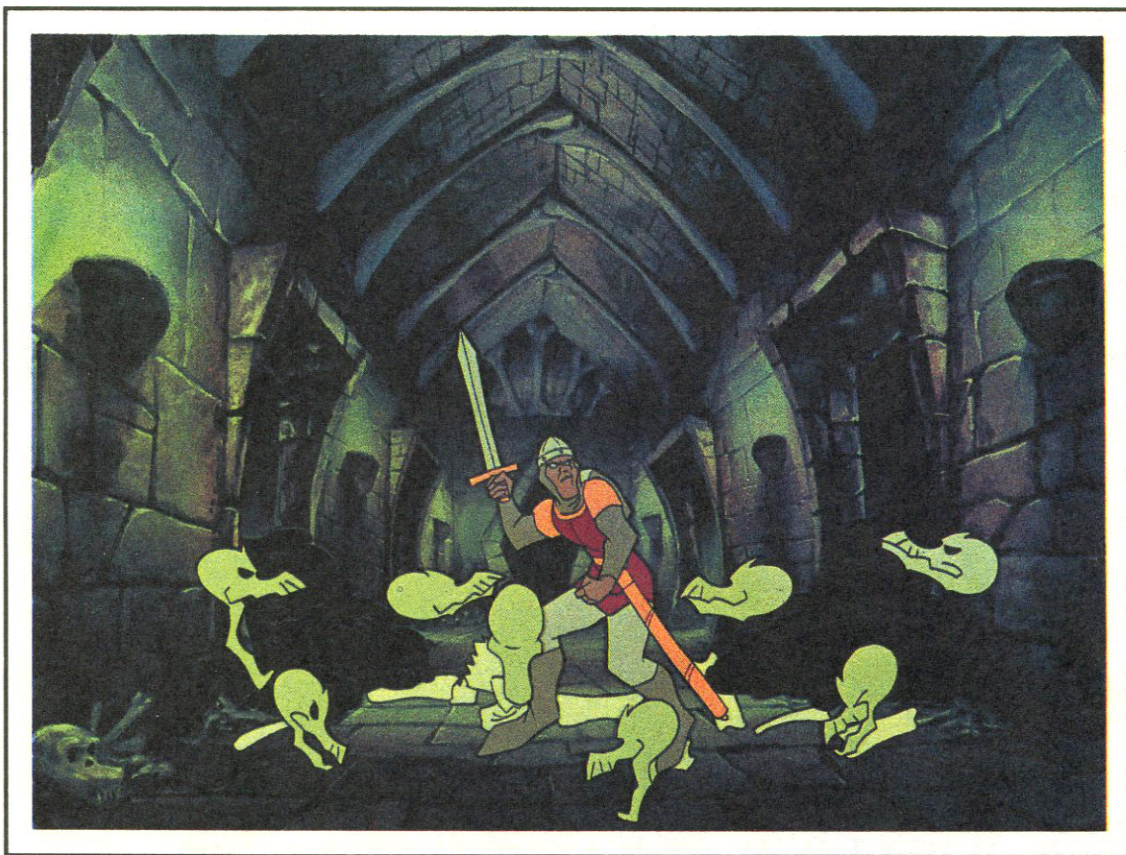
Wherever Dirk lands, The Knight lights the squares with his awful power. The game The Black Knight is playing is for Dirk’s life! Will Dirk win or lose?



Dirk wins! He hurls himself off the Board of Death into a long dark passageway. Princess Daphne, where could she be? Is she just at the end of this passageway?

Dirk has no more time to wonder! The air is filled with skulls whooshing and cackling as they crash into Dirk's face.

"Yuck!" Dirk cries. Crypt Creeps tickle his ears and whisper, "Come with us, come and join us." Then they laugh, chilling Dirk's blood. He struggles to escape, and something black and sticky oozes out the tombs, grabbing at his feet.



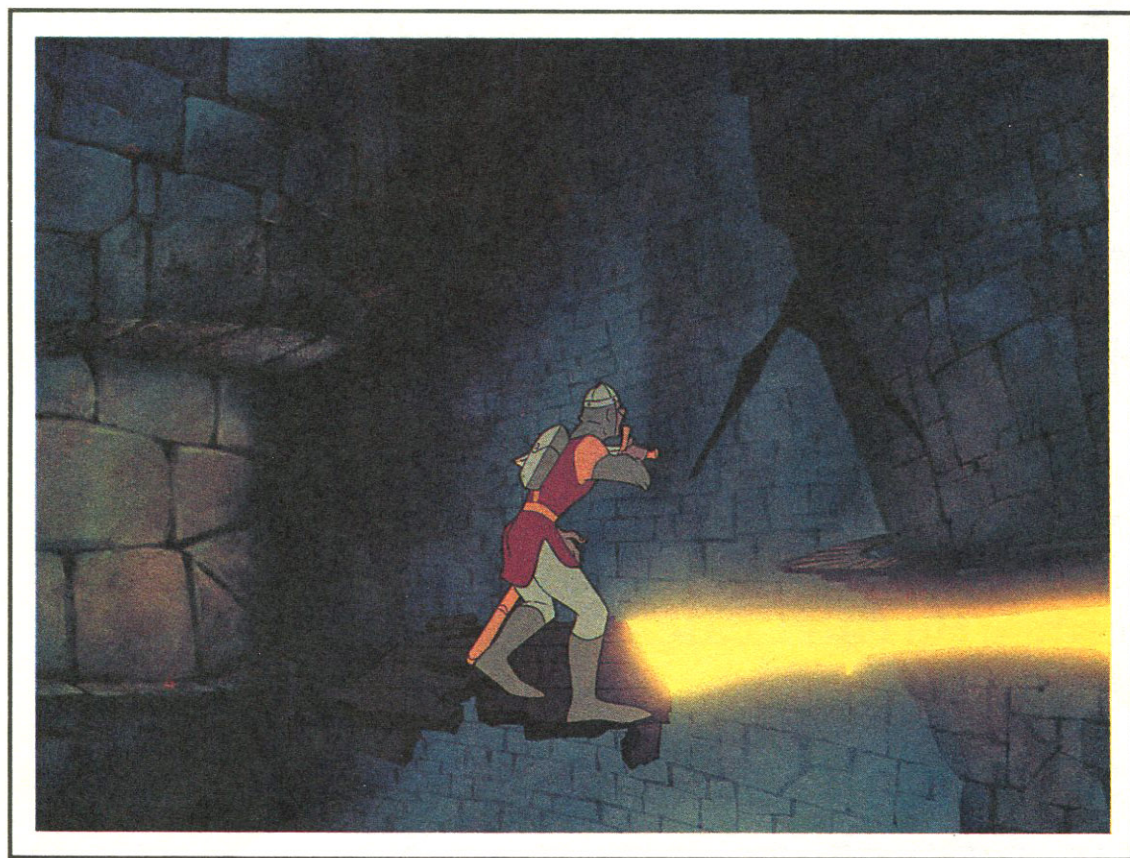
He races ahead seeking the fair Princess Daphne. Surely she must be just ahead.

Wrong! Just ahead is a walkway of boards, that begin to crumble and crash into the deep pit below.

“Backwards, jump backwards!” Dirk hears himself yell, but there is nothing behind him, as the walkway has disappeared. He is suspended on a tiny platform of rotting boards, growing tinier by the second. And beneath him, nothing!

Something brushes against his mouth. What is it? Arrrrgh! Dirk knows the answer. BATS! All around him. Fluttering their creepy dusty wings in his eyes.

Dirk fights them with his sword, slicing into the flying black mass. The remaining bit of board — the only thing between him and the bottomless pit, is suddenly on fire! Jump, Dirk! Jump!



He leaps high into the air and lands in a tiny boat in a rushing river of water.

Before he can blink, he nearly crashes into huge rocks that jump up to smash him and his boat to smithereens.

Then he sees the rapids! It's like going over Niagara Falls!

But the worst is just ahead. Whirlpools are inches away from his boat, which is leaking. He's up to his waist in freezing water and the whirlpools are spinning him around and around. He can't catch his breath.



Dirk swims through the whirling water and falls into a land of bubbling lava. All around him are pools of steaming, boiling lava, threatening to explode at any moment.

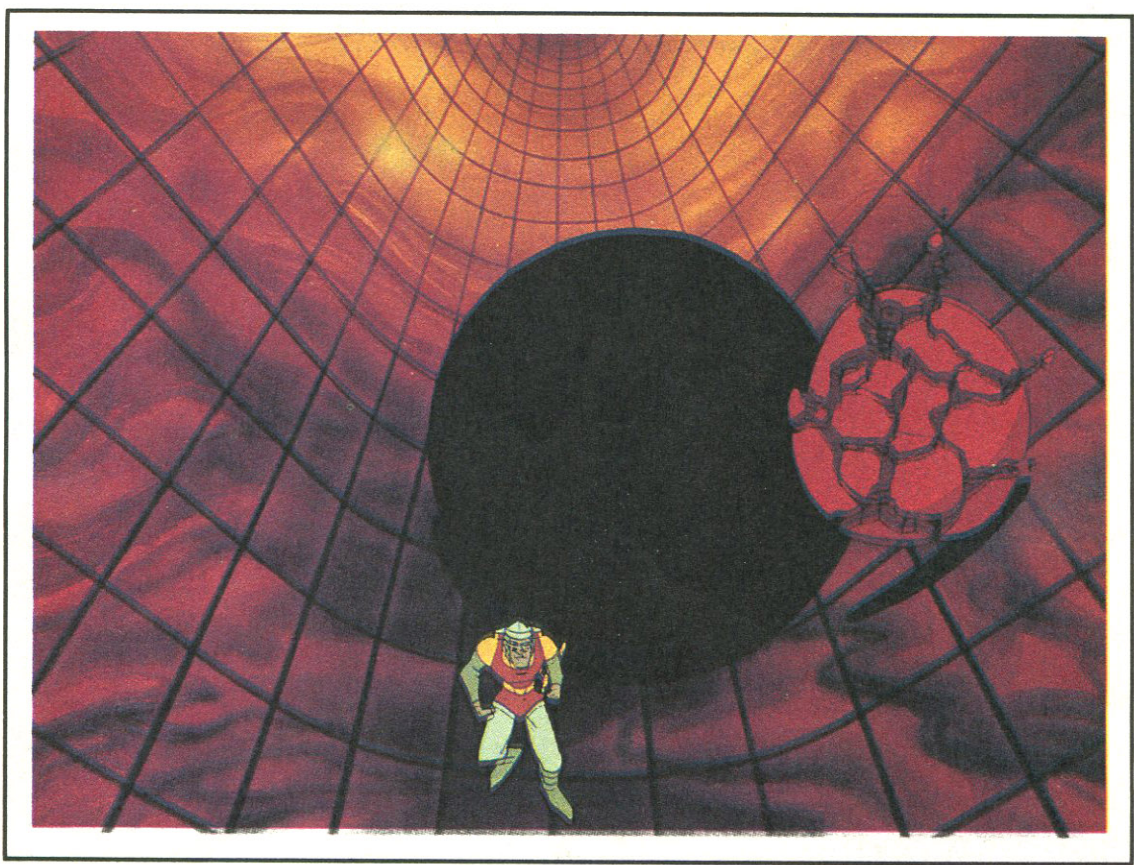
Suddenly from one of the pools, four bursts of lava take the form of Lava Monsters. They are great big creatures who grunt like pigs. Back, back they push Dirk, closer and closer to the edge of a cliff. At the bottom of the cliff is a bubbling pool of lava. If Dirk falls, he will be melted before you can say Lava Monster!



He falls! But somehow he doesn't land in the lava. Was it just a vision? He lands in a hallway.

Ahead he can see a long U-shaped tunnel. Its bright pretty colors attract Dirk. Maybe this is where he'll find Princess Daphne.

Dirk strolls through the tunnel, whistling. Then from behind him there's a loud roaring sound. It sounds like a train. He looks back over his shoulder and sees a gigantic ball rolling down the tunnel toward him. He suddenly realizes he's inside the world's biggest pinball game! The ball rushes closer, closer. Another ball moves in from the side. He's going to be crushed between them. There's no way out!

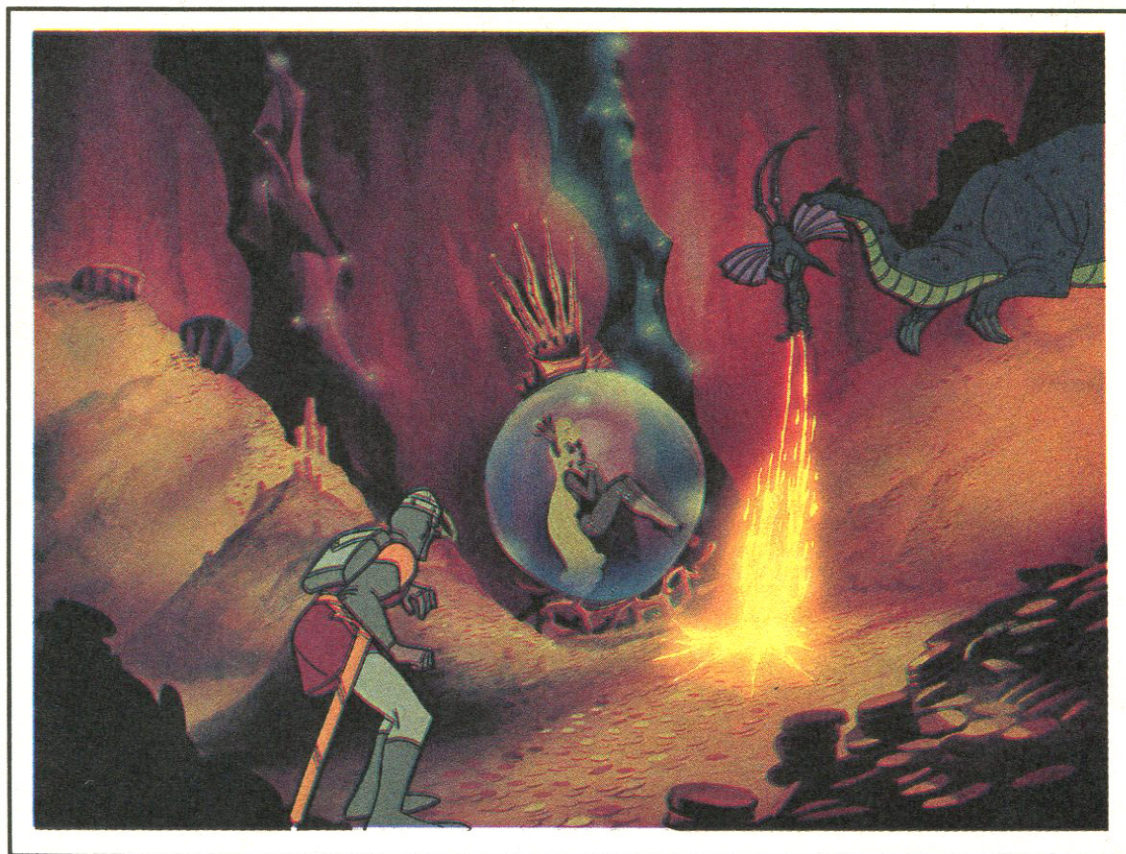


Dirk shuts his eyes and waits for the sound of the balls banging together. But it doesn't happen. When he opens his eyes he's in a magical chamber filled with diamonds, rubies, pearls. And there is the beautiful Princess Daphne! She's held captive in a crystal ball guarded by a hideous fire-breathing dragon.

"Oh, please save me!" Daphne cries. Dirk's heart pounds. She is more beautiful than he ever thought possible, and she is just inches away. He will do anything to set her free.

"The dragon keeps the key to the crystal ball around his neck," Daphne tells him. "You must kill the dragon with the magic sword!"

Daphne's cries wake the dragon. He flies toward Dirk in a fury, slashing his terrible claws at Dirk's neck.



In one fell swoop, Dirk grasps the magic sword, stabs the dragon, grabs the key from around its neck, and sets free the beautiful Princess Daphne.



“**A**y hero!” she sighs and gives him a big kiss.

A grin lights up Dirk’s face.

“Oh, it was nothing,” he says.



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