

DRAGONSLAY

A ten-minute comedy by
Robin Pond

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

ADVISOR, male or female, sage, well-meaning, a parental figure, has the Prince's best interests at heart.

PRINCE SIMON, noble, serious, unsure of himself.

PRINCESS EPHEMERAL, open, friendly, capable of inspiring admiration.

DRAGON, male or female, gruff, crusty, wizened by age.

NOTE

The roles of Advisor and Dragon may be performed by the same actor.

(The stage is empty except for a single table and chair upstage. There is a large bowl sitting on the table. The ADVISOR enters, downstage right, carrying a newspaper.)

ADVISOR: I wish there really were dragons,
Great beasts of ravenous prey,
And every living thing on earth
Would scurry and scamper away
When the miry, and wiry, and fiery old dragon,
Raised up his menacing head,
And breathed out scorching hot flames,
All smoking and smoldering red.

Yes I wish there really were dragons,
Great beasts that tower above,
For a dragon's whole purpose for being,
Is to be slain in the name of love.

And if there aren't any dragons,
Fearsome foes to all who dare,
How then can we show our feelings?
How then can we show we care?

(PRINCE SIMON enters.)

Prince Simon has a problem.

SIMON: *(Nodding:)* A really big problem.

ADVISOR: He can't find a dragon anywhere.

SIMON: I've searched, and searched. I've looked in all the likely places, down back alleys, in the darkest parts of the castle, even at the local bowling alley.

ADVISOR: All the spots where a nasty brute like that might hang out. But without success.

SIMON: Dragons have become really scarce. I even tried advertising for one. I took out an ad in the personals section of The Chain Mail, the local newspaper.

ADVISOR: (*Opening up the newspaper:*) Ah yes, what have we here: "Young Prince seeking Dragon, for purposes of battle, to win heart of fair maiden." Any responses so far?

SIMON: Several very strange individuals, but no real dragons.

(PRINCESS EPHEMERAL enters, carrying a bunch of flowers.)

ADVISOR: Yes, and speaking of the fair maiden, here comes Princess Ephemeral now.

EPHEMERAL: (*Passing by:*) Hi Simon. Aren't these beautiful? They're for my mother.

SIMON: Uh, I, uh...

(Prince Simon reaches out and pokes Princess Ephemeral on the arm.)

EPHEMERAL: Ow! What the — ?

SIMON: Made you wince!

EPHEMERAL: (*Rolling her eyes:*) Boys!

(Princess Ephemeral exits.)

SIMON: It's no use. It's hopeless. I've tried everything, but I can't get her to really...you know...relate to me.

ADVISOR: Have you tried talking to her?

SIMON: I can't do that.

ADVISOR: Why not?

SIMON: Well, for one thing, Princesses usually travel in packs. They're always whispering and giggling and glancing

sideways at the Princes. I can't talk to one without having the others as an audience, making comments. And besides, I can never think of anything interesting to say. But I've tried doing all my best stuff: handstands in front of her, shooting spitballs at her, even making funny faces at her, but she remains unimpressed.

ADVISOR: That is strange.

SIMON: I know. So there's only one solution...I need to show her I'm really brave, and courageous, and valiant –

ADVISOR: And humble?

SIMON: Right. I've got to slay a dragon for her.

ADVISOR: Well, dragons certainly are scarce, but I do have it on good authority that there's still a dragon living up in the mountains, up in the North Country.

SIMON: Good authority, you say?

ADVISOR: Yes. I heard it from a friend who had a friend whose second cousin's friend knew a man who had heard from another man that there is an old dragon living in a cave high up on Peril Mountain.

SIMON: That is good authority. But how will I find this dragon?

ADVISOR: No problem. I'll get you a guidebook.

SIMON: (*Enthusiastically:*) Great. I'll set out immediately.

(Prince Simon exits quickly.)

ADVISOR: And Prince Simon did set out immediately, after packing numerous lunches of jam sandwiches and chocolate chip cookies, along with his sword and shield, several bottles of water in case he needed to put out some dragon fires, and, of course, a change of underwear, always important when setting out on such a long and perilous journey.

(The Advisor exits and Prince Simon enters, wearing a backpack and carrying his guidebook.)

SIMON: *(Moving forward slowly, checking the guide book:)* According to Fodder's Guide to the Locations of the 100 Most Popular Dragons, this should be the place. This one gets a four-star rating. "Fierce, with a classic sense of impending doom."

(He stops and listens.)

But I don't hear any roars or anything. Maybe he's sleeping.

(Simon sniffs the air.)

Wait...I think, no I'm sure, I can smell stale smoke. That's a sure telltale sign of a fierce, fire-breathing dragon.

(The DRAGON, possibly the Advisor in a dragon costume, enters, carrying an over-sized spoon.)

(Drawing his sword out of his backpack:) Halt. I am Prince Simon, oh fearsome dragon. Prepare to be slain in the name of love.

DRAGON: *(In a low, growly voice:)* Yeah, yeah, yeah. If it's all the same to you, kid, I'll eat my cereal first. I just poured the milk on it, and I don't want it to get all mushy.

(The Dragon sits at the table, hunches over the bowl, and stirs the contents of the bowl with his oversized spoon. Prince Simon approaches cautiously and stares down at the bowl.)

SIMON: Golden honey bran flakes? What sort of dragon eats bran flakes?

DRAGON: They're good for you. A good source of dietary fiber.

SIMON: But you're supposed to breathe fire and roast things alive.

DRAGON: Times change. Everyone's more health conscious these days. I don't breathe a lot of fire anymore. All that barbecued meat is too high in cholesterol. Besides, when you get to be my age, you become more concerned with what's comin' out the other end. The bran keeps me regular. You don't want any fire in the hole, if you know what I mean.

SIMON: (*Suspiciously:*) You don't fool me, appearing all harmless. As soon as I lower my guard, you're going to rear back and shoot out a big burst of flames.

(The Dragon starts to cough, a loud, hacking cough, and little puffs of smoke come out of the fist that the Dragon holds over his mouth.)

Aha! You do breathe fire.

DRAGON: (*Sputtering:*) Just a smoker's cough. Never smoke, kid. It's a nasty habit. I'm on the patch myself, tryin' to quit. But I've still got a really bad cough.

SIMON: (*Becoming frustrated:*) Enough of this nonsense! I came to slay a dragon, and that's what I'm going to do. (*Brandishing his sword:*) It's time for battle.

DRAGON: (*Sighing:*) Is this really necessary?

SIMON: Yes. I've got to slay you to impress Princess Ephemeral.

DRAGON: I don't think a dead dragon's gonna to do it for your Princess, kid. Why don't you try candy, or flowers, or maybe some jewelry? How about a nice handcrafted necklace? There's a gift shop just down the road.

SIMON: She could get those things from anybody. I have to give her something that no one else can. Something that takes great courage.

DRAGON: (*Smiling:*) The only thing you can give the Princess

that no one else can...is yourself. And believe me, kid, that takes great courage.

SIMON: (*Determinedly waving his sword:*) I won't be put off. In the name of Princess Ephemeral and fair maidens everywhere, prepare to do battle.

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