

JAMIE O'HARA

DARK ALLIANCE

TREATMENT BY ROBERT SETHI

TRAILER APPROACH

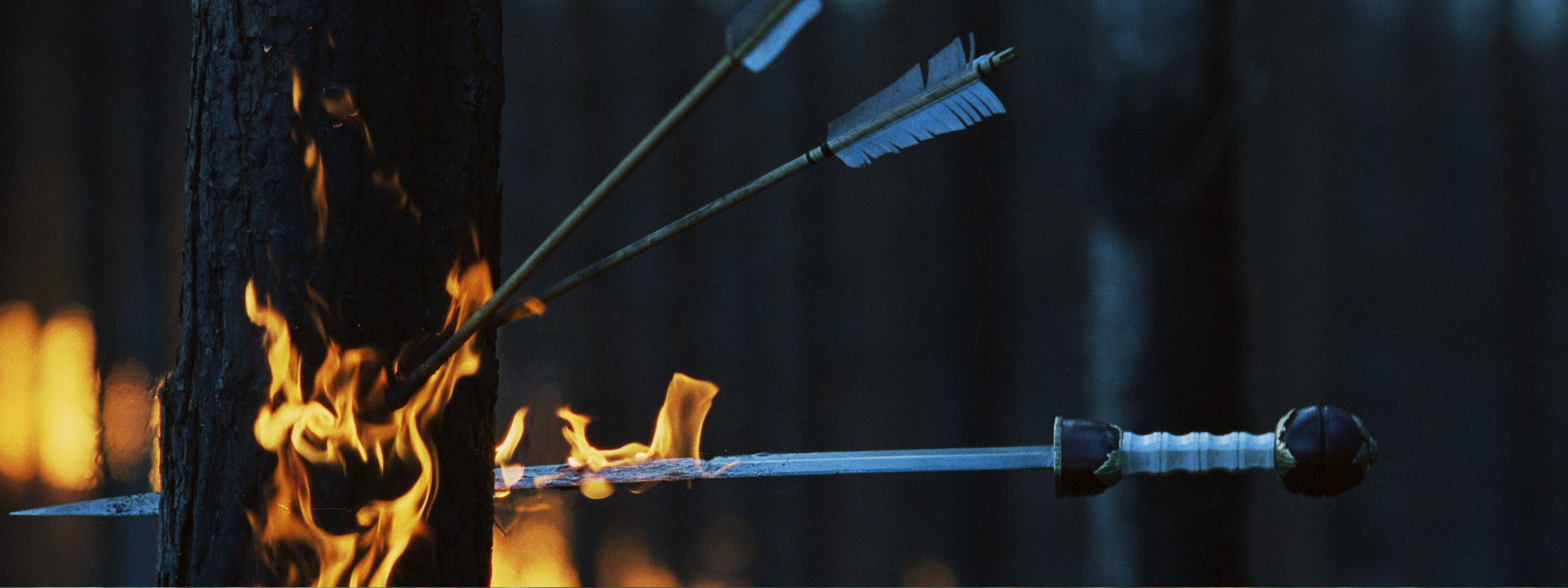
We've developed TWO different scripts for the trailer, with both concepts using the same premium approach to methodology and cinematic tone. Since we can only choose ONE, each script strikes a unique balance between 'Guardians of the Galaxy' swagger and the heaviness of real-life danger. It's an all-out good time, but the stakes are as high as they come. We care about the characters and see EPIC battles, but don't give away too much. We might not always see our heroes winning, and at times they even retreat; this helps us find authenticity. The goal is to TEASE the game, even in the trailer, building intrigue and anticipation for when the audience can finally join the fight.

All that being said, we, of course, are champions of creative collaboration- and look forward to refining the story together through boards and previs once we've settled on the best approach.

CONCEPT 1

ANYTHING YOU CAN DO I CAN DO BETTER

It's all about the Heroes – A high-energy action film set to a familiar yet unexpected track that puts a smile on the audience's face while celebrating the innate competitiveness between the heroes and our players.



TRAILER CONCEPT 1: ANYTHING YOU CAN DO I CAN DO BETTER

This team knows each other intimately...ehh, but not like that. We see their strong bond, and yet, how they can't help but compete with one another, almost like siblings- it's a constant ebb and flow of one-upmanship and friendship. The flow of dialogue, action, edit, and surprising track builds into a massive crescendo, a music video-like frenzy. The monsters and battles grow in intensity, flowing from one location to the next. It all happens effortlessly, organically. Even though vignettes are told from one heroes' perspective, highlighting that character's abilities, we also highlight the need for team play, with each scene leading to bigger and bigger challenges. Inside this continuous, balletic sequence, we also find room to let it breathe and feature smirks and just the right amount of trash-talking that doesn't take away from the track— less is more here. The juxtaposition of the song with intense medieval-style violence alone creates the perfect atmosphere for comedy. Of course, we can explore tweaking the lyrics slightly to better fit our world, but keeping it simple and easy to follow, feels like the right approach. In the end, this film is all about COMEDY BEATS and PUNISHING ACTION seamlessly interwoven through music.

MUSIC REFERENCE

TRAILER CONCEPT 1: SCRIPT

On an overhead shot, we spiral down towards a raging battle as a familiar yet unexpected melody kicks in. Our heroes, sandwiched between the edge of a cliff and a sheer rock face, mostly hold their own. We cut in closer to Wulfgar's chest plate. In slow-motion, we see it's covered with soot, gouges, and a large dent. A spear pierces his exposed side. Tilting up, we find the cracked visor on his helmet. We push in on the eyes that we know must be in there... About to be taken overwhelmed, arrows rain down from above.

He sneaks a peek, holding the minions off. Catti-brie races almost horizontal across the rock face, launching arrows with ease, hitting each enemy precisely where they need to. The last arrow goes right through a minion's skull, squirting blood on Wulfgar's face. He's not amused.

From the front angle, and in a single motion, she snatches the arrow from the skull and gives Wulfgar a wry smirk. Rejoining the fight and calling back to him.

Catti-brie
Thought you could use a hand.

His expression says, 'I was fine.' Rushing back into battle the LYRICS and the music fully kick in. And we're off!

We match cut with his movement to a battle with Akar Kessell, an even bigger fight on hand. Wulfgar checks to see if Catti-brie notices his moves. He's fighting overly hard, with almost total abandon as he spirals his hammer, smashing Akar's chest. He even blocks Bruenor from striking a potentially fatal blow, taking the honor for himself and raising his arms.

Catti-brie rolls her eyes, and Bruenor shrugs it off, until...

Wulfgar (to Bruenor)
Step it up, old man!

Close on the Dwarf's eyes narrowing. We pull out to reveal them fighting against the Frost Giant Kelvin. Bruenor rushes in, screaming with rage. Maneuvering around his teammates who fight in unison, putting them in a compromising situation, Drizzt, especially. Guenhwyvar takes a hit and is wounded. Drizzt falls back to defend her.

Bruenor's axe smashes down on the Frost Giant's skull, splitting open his head and sending the hulking mass stumbling back and falling over.

Drizzt, and Guenhwyvar have had enough.

Smash cut to the panther pouncing onto the neck of Icewind, the tempo of the track builds, even she's getting into the competition. As the Dragon tries desperately to shake her off, Guenhwyvar digs her claws in deep before biting down into the tough scaly hide with razor-sharp teeth. Drizzt follows it up with an array of melee attacks. His blades scattering light and blood, really putting on a show, dancing gloriously with the music, the tempo. He rolls under the Dragon's tail as it lashes, slicing at Icewind's belly, fighting like crazy. Our other three heroes have the slightest beat to take notice; it's almost too much.

Catti-brie (to herself/others)
Okay...



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TRAILER CONCEPT 1: SCRIPT (CONT.)

Catti-brie dodges a swipe of Icewind's claws. Bruenor absorbs a stream of fire with his shield. Wulfgar smashes back a swinging tail. The fight is still at full-tilt.

On instinct, Catti-brie fires a few arrows towards Wulfgar, who deflects them effortlessly into the belly of the beast as it tries to conjure up more fire. Pure teamwork. The ballet of action happens instantaneously, a flurry of combat and swagger. They still have quick moments to show off as our camera roams, but now it's just about having fun. Drizzt, who is still in full-blown killer mode, leaps over Bruenor, flying through the air with both blades bearing down on the wounded Dragon's head, we...

...match Cut to Drizzt landing next to the team on the catacomb floor of Hagedorn's lair. We give them a half-beat, the music rests, Hagedorn rises from the darkness. A standoff ensues. We cover them as singles as they share looks, and the feeling of real camaraderie comes over them. But, just before the music swells, Wulfgar is Wulfgar and can't himself as he's the first to rush off.

Wulfgar

Wulfgar!

The other three react almost in unison as they join him. Catti-brie scoffs to herself. Drizzt can't help but shake his head and last Bruenor.

Bruenor

Children... I fight alongside children.

Finishing the line, he raises his axe and rushes in as the music peaks.

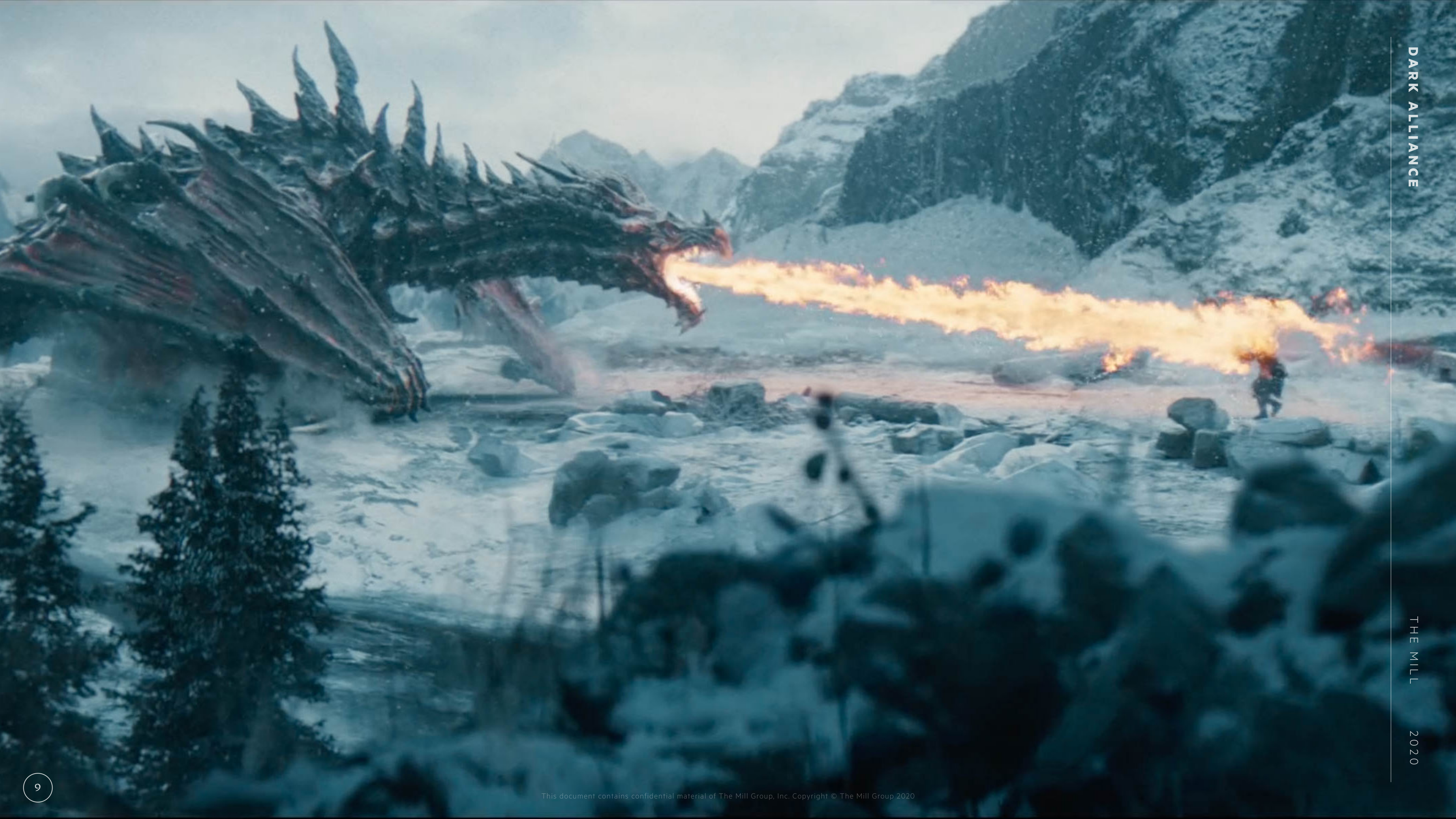
SMASH CUT TO END CARD.



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CONCEPT 3

WEAPON OF CHOICE

A clever and stylish action-packed film showcases both the game and our heroes as they take on impossible bosses and battles. Told through a narrative that focuses on their weapons and abilities, witty dialogue delivers the humor and team-play drives the camaraderie, leaving the audience eager to join the fight.



TRAILER CONCEPT 3: WEAPON OF CHOICE

Walking across the frozen tundra, the group lets their guard down a little bit; it's a relatable human moment amongst friends. Wulfgar holds his hammer in front of him, admiring it. Describing its incredible power, we cut directly into a series of action sequences showing Wulfgar and his hammer in action. Of course, each hero won't be outdone and has a take of their own, but it doesn't really matter who's right because we get to enjoy their friendly, albeit insanely violent competition. We juxtapose beautiful, almost product-shot closeups of the weapons with visceral battles that ultimately rely on teamwork. This gives us the perfect opportunity to focus on their weaponry and abilities and how they directly translate to kills within the game. We want to see it, not hear it, so it's all up to the action. Catti-brie would never say how she shot six trolls in the head and then slashed the throats of two more with the sword of a fallen goblin, but hey, we'd love to see it. Although, it's not all action. They're a tight bunch, and that's where the comedy lies; it's familiar. The fight choreography is, well, you know, EPIC.

TRAILER CONCEPT 3: SCRIPT

We open on our heroes, walking down a tundra pathway. On an easy to follow path, they've let their guard down a bit; it's relatable. Wulfgar holds his hammer, admiring it, showing off its detailed stippling to the group.

Wulfgar

You really can't compare it. Just look at that detail.

Cut to a beautiful product-style closeup shot of Wulfgar's hammer whistling through the air, spinning in suspended motion with an ultra-shallow depth of field, a minion comes into our frame, and it splits through its head. We ramp to full speed and emerge onto a fierce battle. Wulfgar continues to wax poetic about his hammer as he puts on a punishing display of hammer combat against a horde of trolls. Of course, the others hold their own in the fight as well, but this is his time.

Wulfgar (V.O.)

The craftsmanship, the power. (beat) It's virtually indestructible. Yep, nothing else like it.

Our perspective shifts and we become the POV of Akar Kessell just as the impressive hammer crushes us-- taking us to black. We fade up on cue, back on the trail as Drizzt dismisses him. *We cut back just briefly after this scene to establish the cinematic language. From this point, we may go back to the conversation, but in even shorter moments. The journey on the tundra is told through stellar cinematography to grip you.*

Drizzt

Are you serious? It's A HAMMER.

Cut back to the battle with a flash. Akar's regained his footing. Everyone holds their own, but Drizzt starts to get the upper hand, turning the tide of the battle. Wulfgar's not impressed.

Drizzt (V.O.)

I have like, six hammers... in my woodshop...

Catti-brie, gives an odd look, mouthing the words 'woodshop?'

We cut to them now facing off against Icewind.

Drizzt (V.O.) (cont.)

See, what I have IS next level.

We cover his swords' craftsmanship as the great Dragon lurches towards them, hissing, conjuring a fireball within her. Snapping his blades, he summons Guenhwyvar. We cover her briefly, showcasing the weapon she is, until she pounces, saving Wulfgar from near-certain death; she shows no fear. Springing onto the belly of Icewind and latching down with her claws, the Dragon screeches in retreat, but not before she spits a massive fireball. Drizzt jumps and spins, narrowly scaling the flames as our camera tracks with him. In a continuous piece of combat, he slashes into the belly of the beast as the team joins him.



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TRAILER CONCEPT 3: SCRIPT (CONT.)

A deep chuckle comes over the scene as they fight the Dragon-- a voice we haven't heard yet. It's Bruenor, laughing to himself softly.

Back to the tundra Catti-brie glances over at him.

Catti-brie
Let me guess...

Bruenor cuts her off.

Bruenor
My axe...

Catti-brie (V.O.)
Yep, here we go.

Cut to an intense battle against Utaar/Kelvin, Bruenor's axe is definitely up to the task. He smashes the double-edged blade into his chest, spins to dodge a strike, and attacks again.

Bruenor (V.O.)
There's no use gabbing about it, okay.

He clangs his axe against his shield, conjuring a shield for his team. With Utaar on the other side.

Bruenor (V.O.)
My axe, and we all know it.

Bruenor moves outside of the shield, swinging his axe wildly, forcing the Frost Giant to retreat, saving the others. Catti-brie joins him and lodges a series of arrows under Utaar's armor. Spinning Kelvin to face her, Bruenor attacks, severing one of Kelvin's massive horns, but he's still in the fight.

Bruenor (V.O.)
Has always, and I repeat, always... been there when we needed it.

Catti-brie stops on a ledge in the middle of the fight against the Frost Giant, she gives Bruenor a look. *Maybe we get a piece of the dialogue back on the trail, but we can also keep the action coming since we've established the convention*

Catti-brie (V.O.)
Been there when we needed it? That's it?

She springs into action on the ledge, firing volley after volley at the Giant beast, making her way closer and closer. There's a determination in her— you can see it as she pulls the bow, the arrows razor sharp. We romanticize her arrows and bow with our lens (as with the other weapons) She also has a bit of fun with it, shooting as she moves.

Catti-brie (V.O.)
By the time you move around, get into position and lift that thing, I've shot like, three, four arrows.





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TRAILER CONCEPT 3: SCRIPT (CONT.)

Still writhing from his severed horn, the Beast sets his sights on Bruenor. On a reverse angle, we see Catti-brie closing in above the giant. As she drops down towards camera, in an epic, heroic shot, she launches three arrows straight into the giant's gaping mouth-- silencing his booming scream. She lands on his shoulders as he falls back, using his collapsing body as a ramp of sorts-- coolly stepping back down to join her team.

Bruenor (V.O.)

It was my axe that saved us against the wraith warriors, against the goblins, against Akar. It was my axe that...

*Back on the trail, Bruenor realizes they've stopped and turns to face them.

From behind him, the massive silhouette of Hagedorn rises. He turns to face THE BEHOLDER as his teammates join his side. They all look to their weapons, showing them with pride, then to one another with a smile.

On beat, they charge in with ferocity, coming directly at camera in slow motion. Relishing the chance to prove which weapon is superior, we cover them and their weapons in heroic closeups. Ending on Wulfgar, he gets in the final word, flipping his hammer in his hands, we RAMP TO REAL-TIME.

Cutting to an over the shoulder of Hagedorn he screams out.

Wulfgar

Wulfgar!

SMASH CUT TO END CARD.



HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION

Slaying huge monsters is a hazardous occupation, but it's also a rush of adrenaline, and frankly, a kickass time, which is exactly where we'll find our heroes. Our teams are always excited to work on killer creative assignments, but once we mentioned Dungeons and Dragons, everyone's ears perked up. It isn't every day something truly legendary knocks on your door. In a way, it really sharpens our creative tools. Dark Alliance already looks fantastic, so we have a great starting point and it has such a rich history behind it, we honestly can't wait to dive in.

At its core, this film will be beautiful and downright savage— as far as we can take it. However, within all the beautifully depicted violence, we see that for our heroes, life in Icewind Dale is tough, so why not have a good time and, while you're at it, a dark, sarcastic sense of humor. They share it, and we can feel it. Between the witty banter, that's one part smack talk, one part camaraderie, and one part modern gamer; it's clear they have a long track record of saving one another as they fight the forces of evil.

The tone of this film, described in two words, simply put, BADASS, EPIC, FUN, okay three words. As intense as some scenes will be, it's essential to always have a smile in there, giving it a chance to breathe. The audience will be excited because it's cool, with fight scenes that are total madness but also hooked through quick, witty moments, keeping the experience surprising.

MORE F#CKING ACTION

Overall, I see the main film as a combo between a blockbuster trailer and a stylish cinematic. It's not just exposition or a straight action montage; it's showcasing humanity in our HEROES, savagery in our MONSTERS, and tying it all together in EPIC FASHION. We will achieve both character study and thrilling combat scenes through stunning cinematography, art direction, sound design, and editorial. Each of those key elements must be executed to the highest standard and work in perfect harmony to make these films truly unforgettable! Here's how we get there.

Action, action, and MORE F#CKING action. We're inspired by the messiness and suffocating intensity of Battle of the Bastards, chaos, and bloodshed all around it, dirty and brutal. But, interwoven with that will be the teamwork and individual heroism in Gladiator. Here though, it's a lot funnier than Russel Crow's Maximus. There's really something at stake, the odds are impossible, but the team fights anyway-- we can feel that intensity. We want to put the audience in the film and subsequently in the game at the same time. We'll emphasize their bravery and swagger within a collage of combat. It's BIG spectacle fight choreography, nuanced character work, injected with comedy. We want to put the audience in the film and subsequently in the game at the same time.



CINEMATOGRAPHY

To keep us with the characters and to keep us grounded in reality, we'll base the film on real-world camera angles and naturalistic lighting— as if we are filming practically. Angles and lens choices that accentuate the size of the beasts compared to our heroes. Low angles to give us scale and towering over the shoulder angles from the Bosses perspective provide us depth. Real, soft sources of light, like the reflection of full moons, a torch-lit hallway, a vibrant sun diffused by the clouds, all layer the film in an authentic, cinematic look.

No, Chivo, aka Emmanuel Lubeski, won't be shooting it, but he might as well be. We'll draw from his ability to suck the audience in with the camera, burying them in the story and making them one with the action. To do that, we'll put our lens amidst the carnage, and let it get speckled with blood, snow, or dirt-- the last breaths of a frost giant fogging up the glass as the morning sunlight flares.

Of course, even though highly personal, this doesn't mean we are always tight on our characters; more so, our camera is alive and free. We might track with our hero as they rush into the fight and then whip pan across the battlefield to find another hero going for the kill. It's about using our camera to explore a scene taking place, rather than placing a scene in front of our lens. However, I have to say, that's not a hard and fast rule. Epic wides, helicopter shots, etc. are still fair game; it's about crafting great cinema. That level of execution, combined with 'Guardians of the Galaxy' style comedy, ultimately wins the day.



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EDITING

As critical as any component of this film, the edit is monumental. At times the narrative will be the edit's core driver allowing us to feature longer shots that draw the audience in, but it's by no means slow. Just as we have to give it time to breathe, naturally, the edit will ramp up and be carefully choreographed with the action, driving up the scene's intensity. A fully realized edition allows us to feel the landscape's incredible scope beyond the frame; we can feel the heat of the battle as it intensifies around us. I also can't over-stress finding the right balance between the impression of large-scale monsters, stunning locations, and the intimate shots between characters. The edit will be all about managing the relationship between story, action, and the grand visuals of the D&D world; we can't lose that.

MUSIC & SOUND DESIGN

Sound design and music will enhance the film's visceral sensation, creating an emotional hook and escalating the action by accentuating the mayhem. Each script would, of course, get a slightly different musical approach based on the story, but the function of the score holds true regardless. By juxtaposing the familiar and upbeat, 'Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better,' with amazing legendary action, the comedy almost writes itself by being so unexpected. And, if we want our characters to try their hand at singing, it's right there in front of us. For 'Weapon of Choice,' we'd want an epic score that feels more traditional while allowing for beats of comedy. Stylistically, it's important to note that we want the sound design to capture the scenes' intensity while mimicking sounds in the game. What an axe sounds like snapping through a goblin's head in the game should ring true or be taken even further in the film. We need it to be authentic yet, still allow for some cinematic license.

CG ASSETS

From an Art and Technical point of view, we want to use your assets as a foundation to build from. To accomplish a fully ownable look, we'll create new HIGHRES models that closely match your concepts to allow for a premium level of execution. The same thinking applies to any of our locations. Again, based heavily on your design but enhanced by our artists, our goal is to blow people's minds and push the visuals to their highest possible level. Visually, the bar is that of the next summer blockbuster, albeit one that is a vast, violent spectacle; anything less won't do.

PERFORMANCE

Performance-wise, let's lean into camaraderie, familiarity, with a heavy dose of swagger - a medieval / fantasy version of 'Guardians of the Galaxy.' There's a matter of fact quality to their delivery and no hesitation as they rush off into an explosive battle. No matter the situation, they portray supreme confidence, almost to the point of oblivion, even if they're slaying beasts of unbelievable size and power. A Frost Giant possessed by an ancient king, sure. A powerful undead wizard who's made a deal with the devil, why not. Or, a dragon the size of a football stadium, bring that shit on! It's of no consequence to our heroes; they always fight with complete earnest. Throughout this entire audacious display of supreme confidence, we're just a fly on the wall-- as they keep it 100% real. Of course, once we know more about the characters, we can tailor their lines/performances to fit better, but cool, conversational, and current feels like the right place to start. Maybe it's funny to drop a pop-culture reference?



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TEASER APPROACH

While our trailer focuses more or less on our heroes, the teasers are all about the BOSSES. Well, mostly anyway.

To build excitement for the game, we want to focus on how awesome the bosses are and, at the same time, create an 'it's you against the monsters' vibe. In seeing their size, powers, weaponry, etc. we see what our heroes face, and in turn, the challenges within the game. You WANT to play it because you WANT to face a dragon or giant. By introducing and covering our main bosses, almost romanticizing them, we also do more than highlight their capabilities; we own the characters. This is a different world than what you've seen before. This isn't Game of Thrones or Lord of the Rings; this is an entirely different beast. Our camera might track with a battle-worn axe as it gouges the tundra. Wider, we see the giant beast's lower-torso as the axe lifts--the details are insane, footsteps causing the ground to shake. With a final heavy step, he stops. Over his hulking shoulder, we see our hero standing their ground, undeterred. On a reverse OTS, we play up the size disadvantage even further. Just as that feeling of impossibility sets in, they charge forward, becoming even smaller as they approach Kelvin, and near-certain death. For Icewind, we might open by gliding over glistening scales, stationary at first, they move. A horned tail drags with punishing weight. A powerful claw tightens around a rock, crushing it beneath its grasp. A nose breathes out boiling steam. Over Icewind's shoulder is our hero, miniscule but unmoved. On the reverse, we reveal Icewind, stalking slowly towards them, the ground cracking beneath her weight, MASSIVE. As the dragon fills her lungs with fire, our hero rushes forward; we cut just as the fireball explodes.

In-kind, our other bosses would get the same type of treatment--showcasing the threat and challenge that lies ahead, but also not giving away too much. We love the strategy of dropping the teasers one by one to keep the hype and excitement building before blasting the audience with the full trailer.

We were too excited, and we couldn't help ourselves, so we did a little teaser of how the [teaser](#) could go down.

 **PLAY TEASER**



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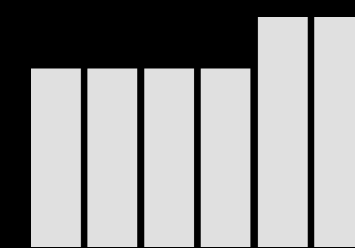
THANK YOU

Thank you so much again for considering us and hearing out our approach. We would be humbled and are eager to create a beautifully epic and funny trailer with you. Above all, we want our audience to truly invest in these films, the characters, and the carnage. Films that take on a life of their own and resonate long after they're seen. So vivid, the viewer can't wait to get home and pick up the controller.

Cheers

x

Robert & the Mill Team



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