

BIG THINGS
(Episode 8)

"An Absent Friend."
By Byron Dunbar

Big Things Created by David Hill and Byron Dunbar

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - NIGHT

The TIDE splashes over the coast, as injured MONSTERS crawl onshore.

ZIRA appears, and glances back at the ocean. She sees WAR SHIPS approaching, including BATTLESHIPS, CRUISERS, and MINESWEEPERS. In the sky, MILITARY AIRCRAFTS follow, mainly FIGHTER JETS and BOMBERS. HARVEY walks through the water, ahead of them.

Zira GROWLS, and tries to return to the water, but stumbles. She HISSES in pain, and clutches her chest.

A giant PORCUPINE FISH bobs out of the water, and looks at Zira. It's covered with long SPIKES. It WINKS at Zira. She nods to it, and returns to shore. The porcupine fish DISAPPEARS underwater.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

IDA ULRICH rides on a TROOPSHIP, near soldiers. She stands at the front, holding a MEGAPHONE. Sheldon taps her on the back.

SHELDON

Do you think we're safe in—?

A SPIKE bursts up from underwater, and goes through a battleship. It SINKS, as soldiers scramble onto LIFEBOATS.

Harvey dips into the water. He notices another spike SHOOTING UP, and CATCHES IT. Then he rises above water, and holds the spike out for Ida to see.

IDA ULRICH

(into megaphone)

**Lieutenant Campbell, get underwater
and—!**

Ida's sentence is cut short, as a SPIKE TEARS THROUGH HER TROOPSHIP, and it SINKS as well. Harvey tries to pick it up, when

more spikes BURST out of the water in front of him. Harvey steps back, narrowly avoiding them.

A spike SPLITS Ida's troopship in two, and each half CAPSIZES. Sheldon PANICS.

SHELDON

It'll shoot us too!

Sheldon tries to dive into the water. Ida GRABS his shirt collar.

IDA ULRICH

Stay put, soldier!

(to Harvey)

Get underwater, stop it!

Harvey salutes, then DISAPPEARS underwater.

INT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Harvey looks around, but doesn't see anything.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Sheldon continues struggling.

SHELDON

We're sinking!

Sheldon BREAKS FREE from Ida, and LEAPS off the boat.

INT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Harvey notices Sheldon SPLASH into the water. Then Harvey sees something. It's a spike, SHOOTING toward Sheldon! Harvey SWIMS in front of the spike. He tries to grab it, but it STABS his laser. The laser FIZZLES, and an ELECTRICAL EXPLOSION follows.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The EXPLOSION BURSTS UP from underwater. Fighter jets are thrown off course, and boats capsize. The water calms. Harvey is nowhere to be seen.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - NIGHT

ZACK is surrounded by MONSTERS, but FRANK and CINDER stand guard

over him. They all stare at a SILHOUETTE, lurking in the shadows.

The silhouette walks forward, and Frank steps in front of Zack. Cinder backs away. The EXPLOSION is heard from OFF-SCREEN. Zack and the monsters look in that direction. While they're distracted, the silhouette APPEARS next to Zack, and puts a hand on his shoulder.

Zack CRIES OUT, and looks up to see MAROWIT. Cinder retreats into the shadows.

MAROWIT

(to Zack)

Calm yourself, Zack.

(to the monsters)

Scope out the area; deal with anyone you find. Then report back to me.

ZACK

How do you know my name?

MAROWIT

As 'Frank's' former caregiver, I consider it my duty to recognize his new guardian.

Zack's eyes narrow, and he looks Marowit over.

ZACK

You're Marowit, right?

Marowit walks past Zack, to Frank. Frank retreats into the shadows, near Cinder.

MAROWIT

Clever. You discerned that from my journal?

Zack walks around in front of Marowit, attempting to appear confident.

ZACK

I learned lots of stuff from it.

MAROWIT

About directing creatures? I must say, you-

ZACK

I **didn't** learn why you'd wanna kidnap mom. Where is she? Tell me.

MAROWIT

I assure you she's comfortable.
(gestures to Frank)

Unlike him. Why don't we see to his wounds?

ZACK

No. Give me back my mom, then we're leaving.

MAROWIT

Zack, it's impressive you were able to take charge in my absence. But look around...

Marowit gestures to Cinder and Frank, who both look terrified.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

You're no longer holding the cards.

Zack steps forward, resolute. Marowit SIGHS and shakes his head.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

I wish your mother would've told me how to approach you. It'd be better for us all.

ZACK

If you wanted to talk, you should've come to me first.

MAROWIT

Perhaps, but—

ZACK

Take. Me. To. Her.

Marowit stops to think. Then he speaks:

MAROWIT

If I do... will you hear me out?

Zack places his hand to his chin, and considers Marowitz's offer. Then he looks up.

ZACK

Deal.

EXT. BEACH - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

JALEEL, DORIS, TYLER and MERYL walk toward NEW HAVENFIELD.

MERYL

I, I sure hope Z-Zack's okay...

DORIS

Chin up Meryl ol' girl, I bet he's doing great, just **great!**

JALEEL

Yeah, I hear the afterlife is lovely this time of-

TYLER

Yo, is that Zack's dad?

TYLER'S P.O.V. He sees two ROBOTIC STILTS entering the ocean. The camera TILTS UP, revealing GIBSON using them. He looks embarrassed.

GIBSON

Um... hello children.

TYLER

Dude, what're you doing?

Gibson sighs, and turns around. He steps back onto the shore.

GIBSON

It's no use. You've seen me.

Meryl blinks for a moment, confused.

MERYL

Uh...

Meryl closes her eyes, TIGHT. The others GROAN at her.

DORIS

Wow Mr. Campbell! So, you're gonna

help Zack, huh?

GIBSON

Hmm? What about Za-?

DORIS

You can't go using those! They're too, like...

JALEEL

Too conspicuous?

DORIS

Yeah, conspicu-

GIBSON

Wait, what's this about Zackery?

TYLER

He took off after that cloaked thing.

GIBSON

(turns back to ocean)

That's it; I'm going!

DORIS

But they'll see you in that!

GIBSON

(snorts, sarcastic)

I suppose you have a superior means of transportation?

JALEEL

(looks to kids)

Well, there is still the canoe.

Gibson looks intrigued.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE SHORE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Ida and the soldiers are onshore, salvaging weapons while the fighter jets ARRIVE above. Sheldon lays on a STRETCHER, as a MEDIC tends to him.

Harvey EMERGES from underwater. His chest is damaged and his laser is destroyed. Ida opens her mouth to speak, but Harvey waves his

hand.

BRAD (O.S.)

It's not as bad as it looks. Laser's busted, but other than that, we're cool.

IDA ULRICH

Alright, well, we're salvaging munitions, so make sure whatever's firing those spikes is-

BRAD (O.S.)

Way ahead 'a ya.

Harvey PLUNGES his fist underwater. He pulls out a singed, unconscious porcupine fish.

BRAD (O.S., CONT'D)

Anyone for sushi?

EXT. HILL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

The monsters that Marowit sent ARRIVE on a hill. They look down, and see Harvey holding up the porcupine fish. They exchange angry looks, and CHARGE down the hill.

INT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

CHLOE sits in her cell, when she hears the sound of WINGS FLAPPING. She looks up, and sees Marowit entering through the cave opening. He holds Zack in his arms.

ZACK

Mom!

Zack LEAPS out of Marowit's arms, and runs to Chloe's cell. He sticks his hands through the bars. Her fingers interlock with his, as she smiles lovingly into Zack's eyes.

Zack turns to glare at Marowit.

ZACK

Is Frank gonna end up in a cage too?

MAROWIT

I told you, the pterodactyl took him

to the medical-

CHLOE

Pterodactyl? You mean Cinder?

Marowit is confused, but ignores Chloe and looks to Zack.

MAROWIT

If you require proof, we'll join them.

ZACK

Let mom out first.

MAROWIT

(approaches cell)

Very well. But should you think of trying my patience further...

Marowit SMASHES the bars to bits with his claw, then turns to Zack.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

I'd advise you to reconsider.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE SHORE - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Harvey and the troops await orders, as the fighter jets circle above them. A soldier approaches Ida.

SOLDIER

The tanks're sunk, but the jets are in position.

IDA ULRICH

And the troops?

SOLDIER

They're all accounted f-

Ida hears something, and signals for the soldier to be quiet. RUMBLING is heard. Ida and the soldiers ready their weapons. Harvey steps in front of them. The ground SHAKES as the MONSTERS APPEAR. Ida speaks into a COMMUNICATOR.

IDA ULRICH

Aerial, what's your status? Over.

VOICE ON COMMUNICATOR (O.S.)

All fighter jets, standing by. Over.

IDA ULRICH

Excellent; draw the monsters apart!

The jets FIRE LASER BLASTS at the monsters. They split up, but three attack Harvey. Harvey GRABS the first, and tosses it at the second. The second DODGES, while the third attacks. Harvey tries to punch it, but it WHIPS Harvey with its tail.

Harvey SPINS in the air, before crashing down. Ida and the soldiers RUN, narrowly avoiding Harvey as he SMASHES into the ground. Harvey rolls over onto his back and tries to fire his laser at the third monster as it charges at him. The laser only FIZZLES.

Harvey LIFTS HIS FEET, which JAM into the third monster's stomach. Next, Harvey KICKS OUT, as he hoists himself up with his arms. This sends the third monster CRASHING into the second.

The first monster gets up, and LUNGES at Harvey. Harvey grabs it by the head, and SMASHES it against the side of a mountain, then tosses it to the ground, unconscious. The other two monsters attempt to attack again, but two fighter jets drive them off.

Harvey observes the fighter jets HERDING the monsters apart with their laser blasts. Then he sees Ida and the soldiers attempting to reach a DITCH to take cover. He steps forward, when a SPLASH OF GUNK halts him. More splashes follow.

Harvey SHIELDS himself with his arms, but notices that the gunk has dried rapidly. His arms are STUCK TOGETHER. Harvey looks, and sees a giant PRAYING MANTIS spitting gunk at him.

Harvey tries to approach the mantis, but can't move. He looks down, and sees that the dried gunk is also on his legs and feet, holding him in place.

Ida and the soldiers arrive in the ditch. They watch Harvey struggling to move, as the mantis closes in on him. What they don't notice is a GIANT SPIDER, about six feet tall, sneaking into the ditch behind them...

CUT TO:

Gibson and the children arrive onshore in the same CANOE from *Jaded Jaleel*. They observe the battle, until they see the spider sneaking

up on Ida and the soldiers. Gibson and the children CALL OUT to warn them, but their voices are lost amongst the sounds of battle.

Tyler runs ahead, grabs a rock and TOSSES it at the spider's head. It HISSES in pain. The soldiers hear. They turn and SCREAM, as Ida whips out her laser gun and FIRES at the spider. The soldiers fire back, holding the spider off, although it doesn't retreat.

Gibson and the children arrive over the ditch. Gibson sees a six-foot-tall BOULDER nearby. If it falls into the ditch, it will hit the spider. He PUSHES at it with the children's help

The mantis STABS Harvey with its claw. The mantis retracts its claw, and prepares to strike again. Harvey DEFLECTS the blow with his hands, and the mantis inadvertently SMASHES the gunk fusing them together. Harvey PUNCHES the mantis, knocking it out.

Ida runs out of ammo, and looks worried. Gibson and the children continue PUSHING. The spider steps forward. The boulder FALLS and PINS THE SPIDER TO THE GROUND! The spider STRUGGLES to get free, as Ida nudges one of its legs with her boot, then GLARES UP at Gibson and the children. Gibson grins nervously.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Marowit holds a TORCH, and leads Chloe and Zack down a STAIRCASE.

CHLOE

That pterodactyl he mentioned. It's Cinder, right?

ZACK

Hmm?

(remembers)

Oh yeah, it was. It was Cinder.

CHLOE

So, he tried to help you 'n Frank out?

ZACK

Well, to be honest, at first, at first I thought he was gonna attack, but I remembered how he was with you, so...

CHLOE

(beams)
So, you showed him some kindness?

ZACK

Not really. I just told him I saw you
in trouble; I told him we could help.

CHLOE

Still proves my point! Everyone has
good in 'em.

Zack looks skeptical, and nods toward Marowit.

ZACK

Everyone?

Chloe looks at Marowit. His back is turned to them.

CHLOE

Some folks just need a little help
finding it.

MAROWIT

We've arrived.

Marowit arrives at the bottom of the stairs, and opens a door.
LIGHT spills out. Zack and Chloe walk through the door. Zack GASPS!

INT. MONSTER HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT - CONT'D

SICK MONSTERS lay in BEDS, groaning. Among them, lies MERC. Zack
and Chloe look horrified.

ZACK

How'd this happen?

Marowit SNAPS his fingers. The BAT flies up to Zack, carrying a
bucket around its neck. Within the bucket, Zack sees WASTE.

ZACK

Pollution, I knew it! It was
pollution!

MAROWIT

Yes; from New Havenfield. Look what
it's done.

Zack looks away. At the back of the room, he sees Frank's bed. Zack approaches, and places a hand on Frank's claw. Frank's pupils roll across his eyes to meet Zack's gaze. Frank smiles weakly. Marowit and Chloe approach Zack and Frank.

MAROWIT

Hurts to see him in pain, doesn't it?

Zack PAUSES. Then he nods. Marowit gestures to the other monsters.

MAROWIT

That's how I feel every day.

Zack bows his head in shame. Marowit walks closer to Zack.

MAROWIT

Do you know why I came to the Cove?

ZACK

You didn't want the monsters to fight in that war.

MAROWIT

Indeed. Now look what they've been forced to do.

CHLOE

Wait, someone wanted your monsters for—?

MAROWIT

They're **not** 'my' monsters. But yes. I refused. Lost everything.
(looks away)

Everyone.

Chloe looks pained. Marowit looks at Zack, who in turn looks at Frank.

ZACK

You mean that dragon, right?

MAROWIT

(reflects for a few beats)
As he passed away, he shed his scales. They became my shield...

CLOSE UP: Marowit lifts his CLAWED HAND.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

...my flesh.

ZACK

That's why you wear that thing?

Marowit is silent for a long time. Then he speaks.

MAROWIT

When your kind commits atrocities,
you call each other monsters. But
I've found far more kindness, far
more 'humanity,' amongst creatures
you deem monstrous. I'd rather live
as one of them, than as what passes
for 'human.'

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE SHORE - NIGHT

Gibson helps Ida crawl out of the ditch, as the soldiers follow.

IDA ULRICH

Disobeying orders is one thing.
Bringing children here is another.

GIBSON

I... I'll accept full
responsibility, General Ulrich.

IDA ULRICH

Oh, you better believe you w-

A fighter jet lands. A LIEUTENANT hops out, and runs up to Ida.

LIEUTENANT

The monsters are retreating!

IDA ULRICH

Excellent. Anything else to report?

LIEUTENANT

Recon spotted a winged creature
entering a mountain. It carried what
appeared to be a child.

GIBSON

Zackery!

IDA ULRICH

Mm. Any further details?

LIEUTENANT

That mountain seems to be the island's base. Right now, we're working on freeing the H.R.V. unit from that substance, but once we do-

Harvey STOMPS UP.

BRAD (O.S.)

You oughta pay 'em extra. They're done already.

(notices Gibson and children)

Dad? What're you doing here?

GIBSON

That thing, it's got Zackery!

BRAD (O.S.)

Shoot... y'know, I got spooked when I heard it was carrying a kid.

Harvey kneels down, and extends his hand for Gibson and the children to walk onto.

BRAD (O.S., CONT'D)

C'mon, you deserve front row tickets to this.

Gibson and the kids walk onto Harvey's hand. He lifts them up. Ida is angry.

IDA ULRICH

Those are children, they'll be in-!

BRAD (O.S.)

(Harvey points to spider)

Danger? Looks like they'll be in more danger down there, especially unarmed. Plus, the big monsters are all creamed. The rest 'a this'll be cake.

Ida looks displeased, but nods.

IDA ULRICH

Alright, but keep 'em away from the battle, and don't come after us unless I give specific orders!

(looks to lieutenant)

Inform the ground troops that we're attacking the mountain. As for you and the fighter pilots, I want additional recon on the rest've the island, so we don't get any nasty surprises.

The lieutenant NODS.

INT. MONSTER HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Chloe and Zack sit near Frank's bed. Cinder perches on it. Chloe strokes Frank, and rests her other hand on Zack's shoulder. Marowit watches them, before speaking to Zack:

MAROWIT

I'd like you to walk with me.

Zack turns to look at Marowit, but says nothing. Zack seems uncomfortable.

CHLOE

Go on Zack, I'll keep an eye on Frank.

Marowit looks to Chloe, confused.

MAROWIT

You trust me?

CHLOE

(warmly)

I do.

ZACK

(gets up, unconvinced)

Yeah, sure. Lead the way.

Marowit walks toward a door, separate from the one they used to

enter the room. Zack follows, and takes out his whistle. He studies it, then stares up at Marowit, whose back is turned. Zack slips the whistle back into his pocket.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Zack and Marowit leave the mountain, and walk into the forest.

ZACK

Are we checking out that explosion?

MAROWIT

Not yet.

ZACK

I doubt I'm the only one here.

MAROWIT

Agreed. I imagine the scouts I sent have your comrades at their mercy.

ZACK

Well, maybe my 'comrades' will surprise ya.

MAROWIT

Perhaps.

(stops walking)

Or perhaps you'll surprise them.

Zack stops walking as well, and stares back at Marowit quizzically.

ZACK

Huh?

Marowit lifts his head, and looks past Zack. He stares at an OPENING amongst the trees, which leads into some kind of STRUCTURE.

MAROWIT

(walking through opening)

In here.

Zack looks uncertain, but follows Marowit into the structure.

INT. STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Marowit and Zack walk through the structure. At first it appears

to be a cave, but with a series of long, slit-like GAPS in it, resembling those of a...

ZACK

(in disbelief)

...rib cage. We're in a rib cage.

MAROWIT

(not turning around, calm)

Keep walking.

Marowit and Zack continue walking until they're out of the rib cage. However, they continue walking down a VERTEBRAL COLUMN as though it were a bridge. Soon, they approach a PELVIS. It's clear that they're walking through a GIANT SKELETON.

The camera slowly TRACKS OUT...

EXT. STRUCTURE - NIGHT - CONT'D

...revealing that this giant skeleton has WINGS—it's the skeleton of a dragon.

INT. PELVIS - NIGHT

Marowit and Zack ENTER the pelvis; it's large enough to house them both, but still very CONFINED. And inside, Zack and Marowit see an OBJECT, hidden under a SHROUD. Moreover, Zack notices that whatever this object is, it's about his height...

ZACK

(pointing to object)

What's tha-?

MAROWIT

(interrupting Zack)

Patience.

(gestures around)

We're in the bones of my dragon companion.

ZACK

(a little creeped out)

Geez...

MAROWIT

Mm.

(wistful)

This is where I go to be alone. Save for myself, you're the first to enter here.

(gestures to shrouded object,
a little nervous)

I, I thought it'd be a good place to give you this.

(nods at Zack)

Please remove the shroud.

Nervously, Zack complies. Underneath the shroud, he finds a WINGED, DEMONIC SUIT, resembling Marowit's—except it's just the right size for Zack!

MAROWIT

I um, I used some leftover dragon scales to make this for you.

Zack stares at the suit, as his voice trembles:

ZACK

I... I don't understand.

MAROWIT

(long pause)

You understand perfectly.

Zack stares at Marowit with fear; a quiet sort of fear, which he subsequently masks with confidence:

ZACK

Look, I'm not gonna dress up like I'm your sidekick or-

MAROWIT

-or my apprentice?

ZACK

(takes a step back)

Uhhmm...

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

For your age, you're quite capable when it comes to instructing monsters. However, you have much to learn; knowledge you could only

acquire from one such as myself.

ZACK

(uncomfortable)

R-i-i-i-ght.

(thinks)

And what would I use that knowledge
for, hmm?

(grimaces)

Attacking New Havenfield?

Marowit looks away for a moment. Then he looks back at Zack.

MAROWIT

Yes; it's our moral obligation.
Unless of course, they were to stop
polluting. But that won't happen;
humans can't be reasoned with. You
know that Zack, you've read my journ-

ZACK

Yeah, I read your journal, so what?
That doesn't mean I'm suddenly
siding with you.

MAROWIT

Then why did you keep it to yourself?
I'm sure it would've been of value
to your military.

Zack is taken aback, and his expression becomes vulnerable again.

ZACK

W-well, uh, how do you know I didn't,
I didn't, uh... didn't give it to-

MAROWIT

(leans in closer to Zack)

Because your military lies to you,
your colony shuns you, and your
family ignores y-

ZACK

My family loves me!

MAROWIT

Then why do you always choose Frank

over them?

Zack looks like he wants to reply, but is silent.

MAROWIT

I know what it's like. Back home, I was lied to by my family; betrayed by the state. You've experienced the exact same thing.

Zack turns away from Marowit, but Marowit continues speaking:

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

From the moment Frank came to New Havenfield, your military used him as a weapon.

ZACK

(interjecting)

Well, so do y- uh, you do that t- with the monsters here, you-

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

-and now they're weaning you off him.

That hits Zack like a ton of bricks; he knows it's true.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

(becomes emotional)

I don't want to let that happen to you; to you or to Frank. All I want is to protect him; him and all the other monsters.

(exhales)

And I know you want that too. And that's not all you want, you want-

Marowit abruptly stops talking, as he remembers something. Marowit turns away from Zack. Now Zack turns to look at Marowit.

ZACK

...what?

Marowit THINKS for a moment. Then he turns back to Zack.

MAROWIT

(remembering what Chloe said)

You want a friend.

(pause)

And I want one too. I'm... I'm lonely here, Zack. Yes, I love these creatures. Dearlly, I do. But... but I need more than that now. I need someone I can talk to. *Really* talk to. I need someone who can respond, who can understand me. And you... you need someone who understands you too. Can't you see that I'm the only one who does? That I'm the only one could possibly understand?

ZACK

(thinks)

Look, there's truth in what you've said. But my parents, they do care, it's just...

MAROWIT

Regardless, they're always busy. Frank's the only true friend you have. Do you really want to stick around for the day when you're separated from him forever?

ZACK

(tightens lips)

I have other friends! Not a lot, but, but... um... there's these kids, these kids from school, they-

MAROWIT

Without your celebrity, they'd carry little regard for you.

Zack stares at Marowit for a moment, then looks away. His eyes water.

ZACK

But, I just, I just... wanna go home. I wanna, I wanna g-go-

Marowit puts a hand on Zack's shoulder.

MAROWIT

Zack... you are home.

ZACK

I-

Zack slumps to the ground; he's crying his eyes out now.

ZACK (CONT'D)

I'm so lonely. I'm so, so lonely all the time...

As Zack cries, Marowit takes a seat next to him on the ground. Upon doing so, his head is blocked by the top of the frame. Marowit lifts off his helmet and hands it to Zack.

MAROWIT

Stay here, and you'll never be lonely again.

Zack's EYES WIDEN as he stares up at Marowit's face, which remains blocked by the top of the screen. A beat passes. Zack wipes tears from his eyes and chokes back sobs.

ZACK

(voice trembling)

If I agree... will ya, I mean... will ya at least try talking things over with New Havenfield? I mean like, just try making peace? Just, just...

MAROWIT

(sighs)

I'll try. Once.

Zack nods. Then he shakes Marowit's hand. Marowit gestures to the suit he made for Zack.

MAROWIT

The suit. Put it on.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Ida APPEARS from behind a log and takes out a pair of BINOCULARS. Through these binoculars, Ida observes MAROWIT'S MOUNTAIN. Then she scans the land surrounding it, checking for monsters.

IDA ULRICH

Looks clea-

Ida goes silent as she notices the DRAGON SKELETON. She looks shocked, and ZOOMS IN closer with her binoculars. Then she notices something moving around in one of the openings in the pelvis...

IDA ULRICH

What the...?

Ida's voice trails off into a murmur. Within the pelvis, she sees the back of Marowit's head as he slips the helmet back on. Ida sees Zack in there too: he's putting on the suit that Marowit made for him.

INT. PELVIS - MOMENTS LATER

Except for his helmet, Zack is fully clothed in the suit. In his hand, he's holding his whistle.

ZACK

(staring at whistle)

Is there like, a pocket or something in this thing? I mean, like-

(lifts whistle)

-somewhere that I can put this?

MAROWIT

(grunts)

What do you need it for?

ZACK

W-well my mom, she, it's from her. I mean, like... it was a gift, it-

MAROWIT

Throw it away. You're not one of them.

ZACK

But-

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Through the binoculars, Ida observes Marowit and Zack talking. From his body language, it's clear that Marowit is agitated. Ida shakes her head, then turns to the woods and exclaims:

IDA ULRICH

Attention!

SOLDIERS emerge from the woods, holding laser guns.

INT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

Marowit's hand is outstretched, beckoning for Zack's whistle.

MAROWIT

Give it to me then, and I'll get rid of it!

ZACK

But it's just for calling Frank!

MAROWIT

You won't need to call Frank here; you'll be with him always.

ZACK

Well... it's, it's also so I can... well, I wanna keep it so I can...
(looks down, whispering)
...so I can remember mom.

MAROWIT

(indignant)

Indeed.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Ida is in the midst of briefing the soldiers:

IDA ULRICH (CONT'D)

(to soldiers)

...looks of it, we're dealing with a human. So, wait for my signal; then we'll surround 'em. Once we do, the first order of business'll be to retrieve Zack... whatever the heck he thinks he's doing.

SOLDIER

Should we contact the fighter pilots?

IDA ULRICH

No, I still want 'em keeping tabs on the rest've the island.

SOLDIER

What about Lieutenant Campbell?

IDA ULRICH

Hmm. I'll give him an update, but I think it's best he protects the civilians.

The soldiers nod, and Ida turns her back on them as she lifts a COMMUNICATOR.

IDA ULRICH

(into communicator)

Lieutenant Campbell, do you read me? Over.

BRAD (O.S.)

(voice coming from communicator)
Yeah, what's up? Over.

IDA ULRICH

(into communicator)

Just thought I'd give you an update: that winged thing? It's human. So don't worry; we'll have no trou-

BRAD (O.S.)

(voice coming from communicator, interrupting)
Whoa! Do ya need me? Over.

IDA ULRICH

Uh, negative. Over.

BRAD (O.S.)

(voice coming from communicator)
Wait a sec, we didn't know an actual guy was involved in all this, maybe I should-

IDA ULRICH

Just stay put. Over 'n out.

Ida turns off the communicator, cutting Brad off. Then she motions forward. Ida and the soldiers advance on the skeleton...

INT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

A close-up of Marowit:

MAROWIT

We made an agreement!

A close-up of Zack:

ZACK

My whistle wasn't part've it!

EXT. FOREST - SAME TIME

Ida and the soldiers emerge from the shadows of the forest...

INT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

An EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Marowit:

MAROWIT

If you're going to help me, that means you have to follow orde-!

An EXTREME CLOSE-UP Zack:

ZACK

Hah! Orders? This is just like being back at H.O.T.C.

(scowls)

Or maybe the 'state?'

That INFURIATES Marowit.

EXT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

Ever so slowly, Ida and the soldiers surround the pelvis. The moonlight SHINES through the trees; the soldiers' laser guns are poised to strike...

INT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

An EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Marowit:

MAROWIT

Never accuse me of being like them!
NEVER! If you EVER do that again,
I'll-

EXT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

Moonlight REFLECTS across one soldier's laser gun.

INT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

The REFLECTING MOONLIGHT catches Marowit's eye. He TURNS. Through an opening in the pelvis, Marowit LOCKS EYES with the soldier!

EXT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

The soldier PANICS, and fires wildly at Marowit!

INT. PELVIS - HALF-A-SECOND LATER

Marowit grabs his helmet, and PUSHES Zack out of the line of fire. The boy tumbles out of the pelvis and onto the vertebral column, along with his whistle. The camera PANS toward Marowit, as he slips the helmet back on. The audience JUST MISSES his face.

EXT. PELVIS - SAME TIME

IDA ULRICH

Hold your fire, you'll hit Zack!

Ida's too late. The soldiers all fire at Marowit, and their blasts SHATTER the dragon's pelvis.

MAROWIT

(from inside the pelvis)

STOP!

Marowit's too late. He can only stare as the pelvis SHATTERS around him. Meanwhile, a soldier takes the opportunity to fire another laser blast at Marowit. The impact knocks Marowit down, and BLOWS OFF part of the breastplate on Marowit's suit.

From the ground, Marowit stares at his wound, dumbfounded.

MAROWIT

(shocked, staring at his wound)

You hurt me...

(gets up, enraged)

You hurt me!

(spreads wings, menacing)

That's all any of you ever do!

Furious, Marowit SWOOPS forward, and CRUSHES the soldier's laser gun with his left claw. The soldier FALLS BACK, terrified, but Marowit LIFTS HIM INTO THE AIR with his right claw, and TOSSES AWAY his laser gun.

The soldiers lift their guns laser guns to shoot Marowit, but Ida signals for them to stop.

IDA ULRICH

(pointing at soldier)

No, you'll hit both of them!

Reluctantly, the other soldiers lower their weapons, as Marowit continues holding the soldier in midair, as he RANTS:

MAROWIT

He shed his own scales for this suit!

Now look! Look what you've done!

Marowit TOSSES the soldier RIGHT DOWN ONTO THE SPINAL COLUMN, next to Zack. Then Marowit SWOOPS up to the spinal column, RAISING HIS CLAW to STRIKE at the soldier. Zack looks horrified.

ZACK

WAIT!

Marowit pays no mind to Zack. In panic, Zack grabs his whistle, and BLOWS INTO IT! Marowit FREEZES in place upon hearing the noise; so do Ida and the soldiers.

INT. MONSTER HOSPITAL - SAME TIME

Frank hears the whistle, and LEAPS out of bed. Chloe FALLS over, and Cinder flies up a few feet, startled. Frank CRASHES through the mountainside.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Frank follows the sound of the whistle through the forest, until he sees Marowit, still poised to strike the soldier. But because Marowit's turned to look at Zack, it appears to Frank like he's about to hurt the lad! Frank steps back, looking nervous. Then he

SCOWLS.

Frank LUNGES at Marowit, and SMASHES THROUGH the dragon skeleton to get at him! Marowit instinctively SWOOPS INTO THE SKY as Frank LEAPS OVER ZACK and THROWS A PUNCH at Marowit, but MISSES!

Thanks to Frank's rampage, the skeleton SHATTERS; its bones cascade down—RIGHT ABOVE ZACK! Zack SCREAMS, and shields his face with his arms as THE FALLING BONES CRASH DOWN ON TOP OF HIM!

Marowit FREEZES in midair, looking horrified as he watches Zack disappear under SHARDS OF SMASHED BONE!

The soldiers GASP! Ida grits her teeth... they all stare at the smashed mound of bones that covers Zack. In midair, Marowit TREMBLES.

...and Frank **ROARS IN TORMENT!**

In an act of savage vengeance, Frank LEAPS UP INTO THE AIR, and BITES MAROWIT IN HIS CHEST!

Frank shakes Marowit around in his jaw, and then TOSSES Marowit away! Marowit SMASHES against a tree, and it breaks. Immediately, Marowit gets up to face Frank, who RUSHES at Marowit, RAGE BURNING in his eyes!

Marowit gestures with his claws, and various ROCKS and BOULDERS CONTORT, then LEVITATE as they FLY right at Frank! Soon, they're PUMMELING HIM!

At first, Frank doesn't slow down; he rushes at Marowit, mouth open wide to BITE HIM. But as the boulders continue firing and contorting, they also COMBINE TOGETHER. In moments, a newly formed MONSTER-SIZED BOULDER SMASHES INTO FRANK! On impact, Frank FALLS face-first into the ground, literally BITING THE DUST.

MAROWIT

(guilty, but resolute)

I'm sorry, Frank.

Marowit continues gesturing with his hands. Another boulder forms, and is about to HIT Frank, when a LASER BLAST from off-screen blows off a part of the armor sheathing Marowit's shoulder. This ruins Marowit's hand gesturing, and throws the boulder OFF COURSE, so it only grazes Frank.

Marowit looks in the direction the laser blast came from. He sees Ida directing the soldiers to FIRE LASER BLASTS AT HIM! Marowit flies through the air, dodging laser blasts, and returning fire by FIRING BOULDERS at the military, using his magical hand gestures.

Frank takes the opportunity to LUNGE at Marowit, but Marowit notices him in his peripheral vision, and makes a boulder BURST UP FROM UNDERGROUND, right below Frank! That THROWS Frank off balance, and he HITS the ground again—but not before he lands a PUNCH on Marowit! That punch sends Marowit HURLING to the ground himself.

Both the soldiers and Frank get up to attack again, when Marowit THRUSTS both his arms up into the air, which causes MORE BOULDERS TO BURST UP FROM UNDERGROUND! That sends Frank and the military to the ground once more.

Marowit continues gesturing with his claws. The stones CONTORT as they rise up into the air, and begin COMBINING into one giant rock, that Marowit is just about to send HURLING at Frank and the soldiers, when—

Harvey DASHES ON-SCREEN, and lands a PUNCH on Marowit! That sends him TUMBLING OFF-SCREEN, in the direction of the mountain.

Frank, Ida, and the soldiers look up to see Gibson and the children arriving from the same direction as Harvey.

BRAD (O.S.)

I knew something was up!

In moments, Cinder swoops onto the scene as well, carrying Chloe. He gently lowers her to the ground. Chloe runs up to Ida.

CHLOE

(panicking)

Where's Zack?

Ida glances nervously from the remains of the dragon skeleton to Chloe, and then back again. Her voice quivers, as she says:

IDA ULRICH

He's, he's... um, he's...

Chloe's eyes widen in HORROR... she understands.

Gibson bolts past Chloe, and kneels down before the bones, with tears in his eyes. His fingers clasp the bones as he WEEPS.

Gibson turns around as he hears Chloe approaching. She kneels down next to him, and stares into his eyes. Chloe's eyes water too, and her lips tremble. Slowly, she draws Gibson into a hug as he lets out a series of SOBS.

A close-up of Ida reveals the guilt on her face; soldiers gaze at Gibson and Chloe with sympathy; Harvey's head POPS OPEN, revealing the terror and loss in Brad's expression. Brad's hands hover over Harvey's controls, but Brad quivers too much to maneuver them.

Frank lies on the ground, still recovering from the rocks that Marowit hurled at him. Frank stares at the bones; tears form in his eyes as well.

Doris bolts away from the kids, and shouts:

DORIS

ZACK!

Doris arrives at the bones and kneels down, as she starts DIGGING through bone fragments.

DORIS

Guys, help me! Help me find 'im!

No one responds to Doris. Ida bows her head in shame. Chloe cradles Gibson like an infant, as they both continue weeping. Cinder swoops down next to them, and nuzzles Chloe with his beak. She sniffles, nuzzles Cinder back, and hugs Gibson tighter.

Jaleel lets out a hopeless SIGH, and slumps down onto the ground. He's doing his best not to cry. Meanwhile, Meryl lets her tears flow freely as she wanders about, directionless.

Tyler walks up to Meryl, and places his hands to her shoulders. When they catch each other's eyes, she sees that he's crying too. Tyler nods compassionately, then draws Meryl into a hug.

After a few moments, Ida lifts her head. She nods to the soldiers, then calls to Brad as she gestures toward Gibson, Chloe, and the children.

IDA ULRICH

Lieutenant Campbell, get 'em
somewhere safe.

From the open cockpit, Brad looks down at Ida. He's pale, and still shaking.

BRAD

Buh-buh-but Zack, h-he's, he's-

IDA ULRICH

He's gone, but your parents are still-

GIBSON

(still crying, spiteful)
Yes, he's gone.

Gibson gets up from Chloe's lap, with tears still in his eyes. He approaches Ida, POINTING at her viciously.

GIBSON (CONT'D)

And it's all your fault! You're the reason he's, he's...

Gibson's voice wavers. He places his hands to his head. His eyes shut TIGHT; the words die in his throat. Gibson wanders off toward the woods, sobbing. Ida bites her lip, and looks away.

DORIS

(still digging through bone fragments)

Guys, don't give up! Not now! Zack could still be okay, we've just gotta have-

JALEEL

(holding back tears)

Doris... don't. Not now. Please.

At first, Doris looks wounded. She stops digging. But just for a moment. Then she turns around, and gets right back to it!

Meryl and Tyler watch. Then they rush to the bone fragments, and dig as well.

MERYL

Muh-muh, maybe, m-maybe, maybe Zuh-Zack could be alive!

TYLER

Yeah!

JALEEL

(voice shaking)

Guys, that whole thing collapsed over him... he's- he's-

CHLOE

I'm helping too.

In seconds, Chloe is digging through the bones as well.

JALEEL

(voice cracking)

This is stupid! You're just making it harder on yourselves! You're-

They continue digging, paying no mind to Jaleel.

JALEEL (CONT'D)

(lips trembling,
voice stammering)

You're... you're...

Jaleel abruptly goes silent. Tears finally pour from his eyes. He runs to the bones, and helps the others dig.

Brad watches Chloe and the children dig, and slowly breathes in through his nose and out through his mouth. After a few moments, he stops shaking. After a beat, Brad maneuvers Harvey's controls.

BRAD

L-let me...

Harvey walks up to the bones. Chloe and the children back away. The robot kneels down, and Brad directs its massive hands to shift through the large fragments of bone, until he uncovers...

Zack.

Still.

Lifeless.

Like a shroud, Zack's arms remain draped over his face. Brad's eyebrows crease with sadness, as he struggles to speak:

BRAD

Nuh-n-

Suddenly, Zack removes his hands from his face, and GASPS for breath!

CHLOE

(hugs Zack)

You're okay!

GIBSON

Zackery?

Gibson's face is contorted with trepidation, but genuine hope glimmers in his eyes. When he sees Zack alive, his face LIGHTS UP with joy.

GIBSON

Zack!

Gibson RUNS to Zack's side. Zack turns to look at him.

ZACK

D-Dad?

GIBSON

(kneeling down next to Zack)

Oh! Oh Zack! You're alive! Alive!

Gibson kneels down, and strokes Zack's cheek. His eyes remain moist.

GIBSON

Oh, my son. My dear, dear son...

Gibson HUGS Zack tight. Zack hugs him back, as well as Chloe. Jaleel stares at them both in disbelief.

JALEEL

He should be... I mean, how is he-?

TYLER

Lookit what he's wearing!

Zack looks down at his suit. It's scraped, but holds together, despite the falling bone.

ZACK

Dragon scales; it's made've dragon scales... it, it shielded me...

MERYL

Whuh-where did you get it fruh-fruh-fruh-?

DORIS

(interrupting Meryl)

I knew you'd be okay! I knew it, I knew it, **I KNEW IT...**

Doris continues babbling as she scampers up to Zack, while Chloe and Gibson continue hugging him.

DORIS (CONT'D)

...**I KNEW IT, I KNEW IT, I-**

Zack pulls Doris into the hug! Doris calms. Now, and only now, tears fill her eyes. Doris hugs Zack closer, and drapes her head over his shoulder as he rests his chin on hers.

Tyler smiles at Jaleel, then joins in on the hug himself. Jaleel looks embarrassed for a moment. Then he allows himself to SMILE and join in himself.

Up in Harvey's cockpit, Brad stares down at the hug. Happy tears stream down his chin. He smiles the most genuine smile we've ever seen out of him.

Nearby, Cinder and Ida watch, along with the soldiers. After a moment, Ida approaches Zack. She doesn't join the group hug, but she does rest a hand on Zack's shoulder.

IDA ULRICH

Zack. I'm sorry.

Zack stares up at Ida and he places his hand over hers. He smiles. Ida's eyes moisten; she knows that she's been forgiven.

Then beyond Ida, Zack notices Frank. He's approaching the group hug slowly, looking relieved that Zack's okay, but... but also a little worried? I mean, he's never seen Zack accept the affection of so many other people before, and-

Suddenly, *RUMBLING* is heard in the distance!

Everyone turns to look, and sees that the rumbling's coming from MAROWIT'S MOUNTAIN BASE. Next, a series of TREMORS emanate from the mountain.

Everyone falls over. Brad just has time to hit a lever to CLAMP Harvey's head down over the cockpit, so he doesn't fall out as Harvey TUMBLES OVER. Brad BANGS against the interior of Harvey's head, just before it CLICKS SHUT.

Meanwhile, Harvey nearly crushes Zack and the others as he falls. But just in time, Cinder swoops in, SCOOPS THEM UP and FLIES AWAY.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MOUNTAIN - SAME TIME

The mountain RECONFIGURES, and soon, a set of LEGS AND FEET, appear on its bottom. The mountain walks forward, leaving the monster hospital exposed.

The camera TILTS UP to the mountain's opening, revealing Marowit operating CONTROLS within it! The camera ZOOMS OUT, as the mountain CHARGES FORWARD!

Harvey is still down. Meanwhile, Cinder flies Zack and the others past Frank, as the soldiers retreat on foot. However, Frank looks DETERMINED. He stands his ground to fight! The incoming mountain is off-screen...

...until a STONY CLAW GRABS Frank by the throat and LIFTS him into the air! The camera PANS from the claw, and down a STONY ARM growing out of the mountain, up to the opening in its top, where Marowit controls the dragon. The opening RECONFIGURES into two MENACING EYES.

The camera TRACKS OUT, revealing that the mountain has transformed into a giant STONY DRAGON.

It **ROARS!**

Frank attempts to fight back, but this mountain-borne dragon is too large for him, and he's already weakened and exhausted. It easily SHAKES Frank into submission.

EXT. MOUNTAINOUS AREA - NIGHT

Cinder lands on a MOUNTAIN. He still carries Gibson, Ida, Chloe, and the children, and lets them down. Ida lifts her communicator and nods to Gibson and Chloe.

IDA ULRICH

Find cover; I'm gonna call the
fighter pi-

Zack BOLTS AWAY from the group, pointing forward and yelling:

ZACK

It's got Frank!

Zack sees the dragon from behind; it dangles Frank in its claw, as it advances toward Harvey.

Harvey gets up off the ground, FACES the dragon, but is immediately PUNCHED DOWN again. The dragon places its foot on top of Harvey to prevent him from getting up.

MAROWIT (O.S.)

(calling from inside the dragon)
Z-a-a-a-a-ck!

A look of determination crosses Zack's face, and he LEAPS OFF THE MOUNTAIN! Cinder and the humans GASP IN HORROR! Then they see Zack, GLIDING THROUGH THE AIR, using the wings on his suit! He's flying awkwardly, but manages to get pretty close to the dragon... unfortunately, that's exactly when Zack starts FALLING!

WHOOSH! The stony dragon's claw ZIPS forward, and catches Zack! Then it lifts him up to its hollow eyes. Inside those eyes, Marowit is seen operating the controls. Relieved, Marowit speaks to Zack:

MAROWIT

You're okay! I-

ZACK

(gesturing to Frank and Harvey)
Let 'em go!

MAROWIT

(chortles nervously)
Zack, be reasonable; they'll just
attack again if-

Zack GLARES at Marowit.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

Very well; I'll let 'Frank' go.

Reluctantly, the stony dragon releases Frank onto the ground, near the bone fragments. Frank GASPS for breath, and tries to get up, but he can't. He needs to rest.

MAROWIT

He's too weak to fight anyway... we really ought to get him back to the hospital; he'll need-

ZACK

You said you'd try talking to 'em!

MAROWIT

To who, those soldiers? They attacked me!

ZACK

You've won, so talk to 'em now!

MAROWIT

(frustrated laughter)

What do you suggest I say to them? That everything will be fine, just so long as we both promise to 'play nice?' Look what just happened!

INT. HARVEY - SAME TIME

Through Harvey's video feed, Brad observes the stony dragon. Brad sees that it's motionless but can't see Zack in the dragon's hand. He also can't hear Marowit talking to him. Brad's eyes narrow. He reaches for the controls...

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - SAME TIME

Zack still sits in the stony dragon's hand, arguing with Marowit.

ZACK

But you said-

MAROWIT

I said I'd try, and only if you

cooperated! But twice you've turned on me! Twice! Just like everybody el-

ZACK

But-

MAROWIT

I'm not finished! And even now, I'm offering you another chance!

ZACK

You're...?

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

Think, boy! I could crush you right now if I wanted to! I could do anything, but I choose to show you mercy! Can't you see the-

Harvey grabs the dragon's stony leg and PULLS! This causes the dragon to SLIP, and Zack IS THROWN OUT OF ITS CLAW!

The dragon FALLS DOWN ON TOP OF HARVEY. As a result, the robot is SEVERELY DENTED.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HARVEY - SAME TIME

The screen playing Harvey's video feed SMASHES. The front of the cockpit slides MERE INCHES away from Brad; it's nearly squashing him, but not yet. The lights within Harvey GO OUT.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - SAME TIME

Zack uses the wings on his suit to glide toward the ground, hoping to find a soft place to land. He doesn't. He's headed straight for the heap of smashed dragon bones!

Frank FLAILS UPWARD, trying to CATCH Zack, but he's too weak to do it. Zack misses Frank, and continues heading toward the bones. Zack lifts his arms over his face, bracing for impact, *annnnnd-*

CRASH!!!!

Zack looks up from the shards of dragon bones. Once again, his suit has protected him. Zack looks around, hoping to find Frank. Instead, he sees the stony dragon: still collapsed over Harvey, but REACHING TOWARD HIM!

In terror, Zack scrambles through the bones, when Frank appears, and THROWS HIMSELF ONTO THE HAND, preventing it from getting Zack!

The dragon kneels up, attempting to SHAKE FRANK off, but as he does so, he frees Harvey. Harvey gets up himself, and tears his own head off, revealing Brad in his cockpit.

Just as Frank is about to be thrown off the stony dragon's arm, Brad maneuvers Harvey forward, to GRAB the DRAGONS'S ARM, PULLING IT to the ground.

The dragon kneels up once more, and LIFTS ITS OTHER CLAW to slash off Harvey and Frank. Then he observes Brad in the open cockpit. Brad stares up at the dragon. Brad knows that if the dragon strikes, he's dead.

Brad refuses to budge, but turns his head away in fear. That causes Brad to meet eyes with Frank. They both know they're probably going to die, but if it's to protect Zack, they're at peace with that. In that moment, they finally understand and respect each other. Brad smiles at Frank, and Frank smiles back.

Meanwhile, Zack still crawls away through the bones, when-

MAROWIT (O.S.)

ZACK!!!!

Zack pauses and turns his head. He sees the stony dragon poised to STRIKE both Frank and Harvey from its arm. He sees Brad in the open cockpit and hears Marowit calling from inside the dragon:

MAROWIT (O.S.)

Frank MIGHT survive this! Your brother most certainly will not! But come to me willingly, and I'll let them live!

Zack looks away and shuts his eyes TIGHT. Then he opens them, and turns his head.

ZACK

I don't believe you'd hurt Frank!

MAROWIT (O.S.)

**Perhaps I wouldn't! But even if you
want to risk that, I ASSURE you, I
have no such affection for your
brother!**

Zack PAUSES. He looks away. He closes his eyes again. When he opens them, the FEAR OF A CHILD is on his face. Like a coward, Zack crawls away through the bones again, when... it's a miracle. There's no way he should have been able to find this, but...

The whistle. Zack sees the whistle! It glistens in the moonlight, amongst the shattered bone fragments. It's like God himself placed it there for Zack to find.

The fear leaves Zack's face. He reaches out and CLASPS the whistle in his hand. Then he turns around and gets up. He walks toward the stony dragon as it moves its claw away from Harvey and Frank. Instead, it outstretches its claw for Zack to walk onto.

BRAD

(panics)

Huh? Hey wait! Wait! No!

Brad pulls a lever, and Harvey attempts to grab the dragon's other claw. With Harvey off its arm, the dragon SHAKES the weakened Frank off, and SWATS Harvey away. Harvey flies a few feet back, and FALLS OVER. This time, Brad tumbles out of the cockpit.

The dragon attempts to GET UP and tower over Harvey but-

ZACK

Don't hurt him!

Zack RUNS UP to the dragon's eyes and leaps into the air! Using the suit's wings, Zack SWOOPS in through its hollow eyes.

INT. STONY DRAGON - CONT'D

The first thing Zack sees upon entering the dragon is Marowit at the controls. Zack's right hand is already curled into a FIST, clutching the whistle. But his other hand is free, and Zack SLASHES at Marowit!

As Zack is wearing the same kind of suit as Marowit, both his hands are encased within clawed gloves. That means that Zack's blow is

strong enough to actually affect Marowit. He's knocked off balance, and JERKS the controls...

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - SAME TIME

...causing the dragon to SMASH into the ground before it's able to rise.

INT. STONY DRAGON - SAME TIME

Marowit and Zack tumble about. When the dragon settles, Zack wastes a split-second looking around to find out why. It seems that in reconfiguring from a mountain into a dragon, Marowit's chamber has shrunk. It's even more confined than the pelvis was.

Marowit takes advantage of Zack's distraction: he KNOCKS the boy down, then PULLS a lever.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - SAME TIME

Before Brad can re-enter Harvey, the dragon's massive claw CRUSHES HARVEY!

INT. STONY DRAGON - SAME TIME

Marowit manipulates the levers once more, when Zack SLASHES at him again. Marowit stops trying to manipulate the controls, and turns to look at the boy. Then he turns back to the controls. Zack slashes at him yet again. Marowit stops to stare at the boy.

Marowit motions toward the controls a third time. Once more, Zack SLASHES at him, but this time, Marowit has a plan. Marowit makes a hand gesture, and the back wall of the chamber CONTORTS and knocks Zack forward. The boy SMASHES into the levers.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - SAME TIME

The dragon CONVULSES.

INT. STONY DRAGON - SAME TIME

Marowit GESTURES with his hands, which makes the contorting walls close in on both him and Zack. They're both PRESSED AGAINST opposite sides of the controls.

Zack raises a hand to slash the controls, but Marowit reaches out and grabs BOTH of Zack's hands, including the curled fist that

holds the whistle.

Due to Marowit's lack of hand gesturing, the walls cease contorting and also stop closing in. But now the chamber is too small for them move around, except to escape through the dragon's hollow eyes.

Neither Zack nor Marowit are willing to do that. Instead, Zack struggles to free his hands and destroy the controls, but Marowit holds Zack's hands steadfastly. Without thinking, Zack uncurls his fists, to use his clawed gloves to attempt to SLASH at Marowit. This inadvertently leads Zack to release the whistle, startling both himself and Marowit.

In surprise, Marowit loosens his grip a little on Zack, who DIVES out of the dragon's eyes, after the whistle. Marowit GRASPS at the boy, trips, and falls out as well. When they arrive on the grass below, Zack immediately grabs the whistle, while Marowit gets up and tries to re-enter the dragon when, ZAP a laser blast strikes him to the ground.

It's Ida and the soldiers! Before Marowit can react, more blasts follow. In moments, Marowit's suit is TATTERED and his wings are completely destroyed; only his helmet is left fully intact. Marowit tries to get up, but FALLS back down. He is SPRAWLED against the stony dragon.

Marowit gestures with his hands in an attempt to attack with the rocks once again. But he's too weak; the rocks only quiver, before Marowit's hands fall to his sides. Ida GRINS, RELOADS her laser gun, and walks toward Marowit. She places her foot under his neck, and aims the gun at his exposed flesh. She prepares to fire, when...

ALL THE ISLAND'S MONSTERS APPEAR, led by MERC! Even the sick ones from the hospital are there. They're all badly injured, but stand together, growling bravely. And not only that: some of them carry destroyed FIGHTER JETS, while others clutch the fighter pilots in their claws, keeping them prisoner!

Ida isn't fazed. She LIFTS her gun into the air, and fires a laser blast, then points it back down at Marowit.

IDA ULRICH
Stay back, or I'll shoot!

The monsters comply, but GROWL and hold up the pilots, revealing

that they have leverage too. Ida bites her lip worriedly. Then she notices something SWOOPING above!

IDA ULRICH

Stop, I said s-

It's Cinder! Gibson, Chloe and the kids are riding on his back.

CHLOE

It's us!

Cinder LANDS, and looks at Marowit guiltily. Cinder lets the humans get down off his back, then takes a step forward, but Ida HOLDS UP her hand to halt him.

IDA ULRICH

I don't care, everybody stay ba- HEY!

While Ida was speaking, she missed Zack RUN UP and use his body to shield Marowit.

ZACK

Wait, wait! We can still talk about this, we c-!

IDA ULRICH

Get off of him!

ZACK

No, you don't understand, we can talk, we-!

Ida takes a moment to SCOWL at Zack.

IDA ULRICH

Zack, we've had this conversation before, but on opposite ends of the table. You refused to understand Jian's point of view then. What makes this differ-

MAROWIT

Power.

Everyone is taken aback by Marowit, and looks down at him.

ZACK

Wha...?

MAROWIT

That's what this has always been about for Zack, don't you see? He doesn't want me to live for my sake, he wants me to live so I can instruct him.

ZACK

Hey, that's not-

MAROWIT

Before you arrived, he agreed to stay with me... train with me. At the time, I thought it was because he was lonely. And maybe that's partly true. But now I know that he doesn't want to end his loneliness if it means he must give up those he wields power over. Be it me.

(to Ida)

Or you.

(to Gibson/Chloe/Kids)

Or you.

(to off-screen character)

Or you, Frank.

The camera TRACKS OUT revealing Frank hobbling into frame, cradling Brad in his right arm.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

Yes; Frank. That's your name now, isn't it?

(points at Zack)

Because you're his. His in a way that I never made you mine.

Frank looks SHOCKED. Then realizes that it's true. Marowit then places his hands to his helmet, and lifts it off.

MAROWIT

But it matters not.

Marowit removes his helmet. Underneath, is the face of an old man; Ida looks guilty upon registering Marowit's withered features.

IDA ULRICH

Er... D-Don't, don't expect me to back down on you, just because, because you're...

MAROWIT

Destroy me. I have nothing left.

Ida considers Marowit's words.

IDA ULRICH

No...

(scowls)

No! You're the only leverage we have over those monsters.

(grabs at Marowit's throat)

You're escorting us back home, then-

The monster GROWL, and TIGHTEN their grips on the fighter pilots. Ida loosens her grip on Marowit's throat, but keeps her laser gun pointed at him.

MAROWIT

Seems we've arrived at a stalemate. But go ahead, fire away. Then there will be nothing to stop these creatures from defending themselves.

IDA ULRICH

By destroying us?

MAROWIT

Precisely.

ZACK

(voice quiet, guilty)

Wait.

Marowit looks at Zack.

ZACK

Why don't you try talking to her now? Whatever else happens, what harm can it do?

MAROWIT

You can tell her if you like.

ZACK

Me?

There's an awkward silence, then:

IDA ULRICH

I'm... I'm listening, Zack.

ZACK

(nervous)

I..., I er, the monsters, they're...
Marowit sent 'em attacking because,
the pollution, we dump it in the
Cove, it...

GIBSON

(steps forward)

A serious accusation. Is there
proof?

CHLOE

(steps forward)

Actually...

(puts hand to Gibson's arm)

There's tons. I've seen it.

(looks to Ida,

nods at Zack)

We both have.

Ida continues aiming her gun at Marowit, but she extends a hand to help him up.

IDA ULRICH

(stern)

Well, we'll look into it... after
we've brought you to book in New
Havenfield. So, call off your
monsters, and-

MAROWIT

I'm still not leaving; at least not
alive. And like I said, kill me with
my blessing; we both know what
happens next.

IDA ULRICH

You're bluff—

MAROWIT

No, I'm not. Your robot's destroyed; so are your military resources. Frank is worn out and injured and you're on an entire island of behemoths. You should have been more thoughtful about how you disposed of your waste, now there's nothing you can—

ZACK

You're right. Whether you live or die, you're not at our mercy; we're at your mercy. That's how it's been this entire war... we've just been too dumb to realize it.

(shuts eyes, tight)

I've been too dumb realize it.

Everyone looks confused—except Marowit.

MAROWIT

No Zack. You are cunning, even brave, despite your ultimate selfishness. But I see now that I was wrong about you; like the other humans, you value power above all else.

Zack opens his eyes, and strokes his whistle.

ZACK

You think that's what I wanted this?

MAROWIT

Why else?

ZACK

Maybe I did want power. Maybe that's what this is all about. But maybe you were right about me before as well. Maybe I want power because I'm...

Zack looks toward his family/friends and goes silent for a moment. Then he resumes talking. He's still looking at them.

ZACK (CONT'D)

That moment when you guys dug me outta the bones... when you proved you cared about me. I realized that I didn't have to make you care. You... you chose to care. And in that instant, I had everything I ever wanted. Everything I already had. But I hadda... had to almost, almost die just to see that. And...

Zack looks away. He's run out of words.

Marowit breathes in and out through his nose.

MAROWIT

I see. Well, if you've truly had such an insight, let me ask you this.

Marowit gestures to Zack's family/friends.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

If the choice was between them and Frank, who would it be?

ZACK

Wait, what do you...

MAROWIT

I don't care if I die, because either way, you have nothing to defend yourselves with now. Except perhaps Frank. When he heals, of course. That's why if I were to let you go... he'd have to stay here.

The humans look to one another, uncertain. Marowit eyes them.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

Then if you started polluting again... I could crush you in an instant, as you'd have zero defense.

Marowit eyes Zack.

MAROWIT (CONT'D)

What do you say? Frank or them. Make your choice.

Zack stares at Marowit, with a listless expression upon his face.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE: EIGHT MONTHS LATER.

FADE TO:

EXT. NEW HAVENFIELD - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The camera PANS DOWN from a beautiful blue sky, to the city below. It's fully repaired and people walk the streets without fear.

The camera TRACKS for a bit, revealing the happy goings-on in New Havenfield; a MARKETPLACE has been set up, where citizens trade food and goods; trees are planted in the middle of the street, in contrast to barren concrete that dominated the city before.

DORIS, JALEEL, TYLER, and MERYL walk on-screen—without Zack! But they look happy nonetheless. As they pass by the marketplace, Doris eyes some DONUTS for sale and attempts to grab one—but Jaleel slaps her hand!

DORIS

Aw, c'mon Jaleel; what gives?

JALEEL

Puh-leeze, Doris, do you really think you'll have an appetite when we get ta Jörg's if you eat now?

When Tyler hears that, he snorts with laughter as he ribs Meryl and points at Doris's plump stomach.

TYLER

You think she won't have an appetite?

Meryl stifles guilty laughter, while Doris just grins widely at Jaleel. Jaleel looks disgusted.

JALEEL

Pfft! Y'know what? Don't answer that. Just don't.

The kids continue walking, until they arrive outside BUTTGEREIT'S

CHOCOLATE SHOPPE. Inside the window, they see JÖRG serving some guests. He SMILES at the kids, and they smile back. Then they enter the Shoppe...

INT. BUTTGEREIT'S CHOCOLATE SHOPPE - LATER

The kids sit at a table, nursing sodas and a mostly-eaten cake. They don't look unhappy, but they're a bit more meditative than usual. Eventually, Tyler speaks:

TYLER

I still can't believe he's gone.

JALEEL

Yeah. Zack actually-

ZACK (O.S.)

Actually what?

Zack walks on-screen; he's just arrived in the Chocolate Shoppe.

TYLER

Uh, hey Zack. We were just talking about-

(looks to kids)

I mean, is it okay if we talk about, I mean, in front of Zack, should we be...?

ZACK

(taking a seat)

You mean Frank, right?

MERYL

(stares down at lap)

Y-yuh-yeah...

ZACK

(taking a seat)

Well, honestly, I wasn't 'sposed to tell anyone about this, I mean, at least according to dad, but... well, I'm gonna go visit him today.

DORIS

Oh yeah, that's right! The bridge is done today, huh? You're gonna use

that, aren't'cha, huh? Aren't'ch-

MERYL

Bruh-bruh-bridge...?

(thinks, remembers something)

Ohhh...

EXT. OCEAN - ESTABLISHING - DAY

The camera pans down a long bridge, starting at Forbidden Cove, and leading to New Havenfield. At both ends, are CROWDS: one of monsters at Forbidden Cove, and one of humans in New Havenfield.

EXT. NEW HAVENFIELD - DAY

Now the camera is amongst the humans, who congregate before the bridge. A bunch of soldiers stand at the front, along with Ida. They're preventing anyone from crossing the bridge.

Ida smiles, when she sees Zack and his friends emerge from the crowd.

IDA ULRICH

(smiling warmly)

I said that you were going to be the first to cross the bridge, Zack Campbell.

ZACK

(rubs neck)

Heh. Yeah, but-

IDA ULRICH

(smiling warmly)

Don't worry about it, it's not like I can give you official orders. Technically, I'm not in charge anymore, although I gotta handle stuff like this until we elect our first prime minister.

ZACK

Yeah, yeah. Elections're starting next month. I haven't heard the end 'a it...

IDA ULRICH

(smiling warmly)
Mm. With your mom running, I expect
not.

The other kids LAUGH. Zack looks embarrassed, but smiles.
Meanwhile, Ida looks away from the kids, and stares across the
ocean.

IDA ULRICH

(content)

I can't believe after just six
months, we started trading resources
with 'em. And now after another two,
we've built a bridge.

(turns around,

kneels down to face Zack)

We've got you to thank for that,
kiddo.

ZACK

Well uh, you're welcome. I guess.

Ida chuckles to herself.

ZACK

What?

IDA ULRICH

It's just funny. Even after
everything that's happened, it's
only just now that I feel like we
know each other.

Zack stares at Ida quizzically. She just ruffles his hair. Then
she waves the soldiers guarding the bridge aside.

IDA ULRICH

Okay guys, let's let Zack do the
honors of using this bridge for the
first time...

(smiles at kids)

And his friends.

ZACK

Actually guys, I uh, I think this is
something I kinda need to do alone.

The other kids look at one another, then nod. They watch as Zack walks across the bridge.

EXT. FORBIDDEN COVE - DAY

As Zack walks through the Cove, he sees monsters peacefully grazing, and playing together. Most of the monsters here look happy, except for Zira and Hunch; they're isolated from the others and fight each other. Cinder on the other hand, is warmly accepted by the other monsters, and even a little feared. He's proven he can move beyond their gang mentality, and he's admired for it.

In accordance with the new abundance of nature in New Havenfield, now Forbidden Cove has more technology; there are manmade geysers, heated spring pools, and electronic lights for when night falls.

Zack looks around, taking it all in. Then a number of feet away he sees... Frank, standing next to Marowit, whose suit is repaired. Both of them are silhouetted by the sun, and cast long shadows.

An awkward silence follows. Zack lifts his hand, and waves.

ZACK

Hey.

Marowit nods to Zack.

MAROWIT

Greetings, Zack.

There's another awkward pause. Frank stands next to Marowit, hesitant to leave his side; he seems pretty attached to him now.

Marowit attempts to break the silence:

MAROWIT

I have to admit, I never expected this to happen. Not only have you ushered in peace between our people, but mutual prosperity.

Marowit gestures for Zack to approach him. The boy looks hesitant for a moment... then he approaches. But he does so with his head lowered. He can't bring himself to meet eyes with Frank.

ZACK

Frank... I'm sorry. I'm sorry I had

to give ya up. I mean, I know it's
done a lot of good and stuff, but...

Frank lifts Zack's chin with a single finger. He stares into his eyes, smiling. Zack doesn't smile back, but they comfortably share a moment's silence. Then Marowit speaks:

MAROWIT

Not all friendships last. But it
doesn't follow that those
friendships lack meaning.

Zack nods, and hugs Frank's snout. Then he takes a step back and runs his hand down Frank's snout.

ZACK

I brought something for ya, Frank.

Zack reaches into his pocket and takes out his whistle. Frank's eyes widen and grow moist. Zack touches Frank's claw, and pulls at one of his fingers. Frank turns to look at his claw, then slowly opens it. Zack places the whistle in Frank's palm. Then he smiles at him. Tears run down Frank's snout. Zack sniffles a little.

ZACK

I want you to keep this. Keep it so
you can remember me and remember how
much ya helped me. I want you to
continue helping anyone you can
here.

(tears begin flowing)

You're the teacher Frank, not me. You
always were.

Frank opens his mouth and licks Zack's cheek. Zack giggles a little; a low, melancholic sound. Then he gives Frank a little kiss on his snout as well.

Frank and Zack stare at each other for a beat longer. Then Zack turns around and walks away. After walking for a while, Zack pauses. He turns to look back at Frank and Marowit. He wipes his tears away, and SMILES at them. He's not sad anymore.

INT. CAMPBELL FAMILY HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - LATE AFTERNOON

Zack arrives home. Chloe, Gibson and Brad are out on the lawn, having a picnic; they've been waiting for him. They get up, run to

Zack's side and embrace him!

GIBSON

You're back!

BRAD

Aw, c'mon dad! He was barely gone an hour.

CHLOE

Sweetie! How was Cinder doing?

ZACK

Really good mom, ya woulda been proud 'a him.

The hug ends. Zack's family leads him to their picnic on the lawn.

CHLOE

Great, great! That's great! Oh! And check this out!

Chloe gestures to a specific area on the PICNIC BLANKET: there's some PHOTOGRAPHS there.

CHLOE

We got these back from the developer; shot on film, old-fashioned style! Just how ya like 'em!

Zack kneels down, and smiles at the photographs. From ZACK'S P.O.V. we see that each one shows him with someone: one talking to Brad, one where he's between Gibson and Chloe, many with his friends from school. In each subsequent picture, Zack is closer—both physically and emotionally—to his friends and family.

Zack SMILES.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE: The End.