The Princess Bride by William Goldman. © The Princess Bride Ltd. All Rights Reserved. A Video Game On A Computer Screen. The game is in progress. As a sick coughing sound is heard Cut To This Kid lying in bed, coughing. Pale, one sick cookie. Maybe he's seven or eight or nine. He holds a remote in one hand, presses it, and the video game moves a little bit. Then he
s hit by another spasm of coughing, puts the remote down. His room is monochromatic, greys and blues, mildly high-tech. We're in the present day and this is a middle class house, somewhere in the suburbs. Cut To The Kid's Mother as she enters, goes to him, fluffs his pillows, kisses him, and briefly feels his forehead. She's worried, it doesn't show. During this -- Mother:
You feeling any better? The Kid: A little bit. Mother: Guess what. The Kid: What? Mother: Your grandfather's here. The Kid: (not overjoyed) Mom, can't you tell him that I'm sick? Mother: You are sick, that's why he's here. The Kid: He'll pinch my cheek. I hate that. Mother: Maybe he won't. The Kid shoots her an "I'm sure" look, as we Cut To The Kid's Grandfather bursting int
o the room. Kind of rumpled. But the eyes are bright. He has a wrapped package tucked under one arm as he immediately goes to The Kid, pinches his cheek. Grandfather: Hey! How's the sickie? Heh? The Kid gives his Mother an "i told you so" look. The Mother ignores it, beats a retreat. Mother: I think I'll leave you two pals. (And she is gone. There's an uncomfortable sile
nce, then-) Grandfather: I brought you a special present. The Kid: What is it? Grandfather: Open it up. The Kid does. He does his best to smile. The Kid: A book? Grandfather: That's right. When I was your age, television was called books. And this is a special book. It was the book my father used to read to me when I was sick, and I used to read it to your father. And today, I'
m gonna read it to you. The Kid: Has it got any sports in it? Cut To The Grandfather. Suddenly passionate. Grandfather: Are you kidding? Fencing. Fighting. Torture. Revenge. Giants. Monsters. Chases. Escapes. True love. Miracles. Cut To The Two Of Them as the Grandfather sits in a chair by the bed. The Kid: (manages a shrug) It doesn't sound too bad. I'll try and stay aw
ake. Grandfather: Oh. Well, thank you very much. It's very nice of you. Your vote of confidence is overwhelming. All right. (Book open now, he begins to read.) The Princess Bride, by S. Morgenstern. Chapter One. Buttercup was raised on a small farm in the country of Florin. Dissolve To The story he's reading about, as the monochromatic look of the bedroom is replaced by
the dazzling color of the English countryside. Grandfather: (off-screen) Her favorite pastimes were riding her horse and tormenting the farm boy that worked there. His name was Westley, but she never called him that. (To The Kid) Isn't that a wonderful beginning? The Kid: (off screen): (doing his best) Yeah. It's really good. Grandfather: (off-screen) (reading) Nothing gave
Buttercup as much pleasure as ordering Westley around. Cut To Buttercup's Farm. Day. Buttercup is standing, holding the reins of her horse, while in the background, Westley, in the stable doorway, looks at her Buttercup is in her late teens; doesn't care much about clothes and she hates brushing her long hair, so she isn't as attractive as she might be, but she's still prob
ably the most beautiful woman in the world. Buttercup: Farm boy. Polish my horse's saddle. I want to see my face shining in it by morning. Westley: (quietly, watching her) As you wish. Westley is perhaps half a dozen years older than Buttercup. And maybe as handsome as she is beautiful. He gazes at her as she walks away. Grandfather: (off-screen) "As you wish" was all
he ever said to her. Dissolve To Westley, outside, chopping wood. Buttercup drops two large buckets near him. Buttercup: Farm Boy. Fill these with water-(a beat)-please. Westley: As you wish. She leaves; his eyes stay on her. She stops, turns-he manages to look away as now her eyes stay on him. Grandfather: (off-screen) That day, she was amazed to discover that when
he was saying, "As you wish," what he meant was, "i love you." Dissolve To Buttercup In The Kitchen. Dusk. Westley enters with an armload of firewood. Grandfather: (off screen) And even more amazing was the day she realized she truly loved him back. Buttercup: (pointing to a pitcher that she could reach herself) Farm Boy, fetch me that pitcher. He gets it, hands it to her
; they are standing very close to each other gazing into each other's eyes. Westley: As you wish. (Now he turns, moves outside.) Dissolve To Westley And Buttercup, outside his tiny hovel in the red glow of sunset. They are locked in a passionate kiss. The Kid (off-screen) -hold it, hold it- Cut To The Kid's Room. The Kid: What is this? Are you trying to trick me?-Where's the
sports?-Is this a kissing book? Grandfather: -wait, just wait- The Kid: -well, when does it get good? Grandfather: Keep your shirt on. Let me read. (reading again) Westley had no money for marriage. So he packed his few belongings and left the farm to seek his fortune across the sea. Cut To Westley And Buttercup. They stand near the gate to the farm, locked in an embrace
. Grandfather (off-screen): (reading) It was a very emotional time for Buttercup- The Kid (off screen): (groaning) I don't be-leeve this. Buttercup: I fear I'll never see you again. Westley: Of course you will. Buttercup: But what if something happens to you? Westley: Hear this now: I will come for you. Buttercup: But how can you be sure? Westley: This is true love. You think thi
s happens every day? He smiles at her, she smiles too, throws her arms so tightly around him. They kiss. Then as Westley walks away, Buttercup watches him go. Grandfather: (off-screen) (reading) Westley didn't reach his destination. His ship was attacked by the Dread Pirate Roberts, who never left captives alive. When Buttercup got the news that Westley was murdered-
The Kid: (off-screen) (perking up just a little) -murdered by pirates is good- Cut To Close Up: Buttercup, staring out the window of her room. Grandfather: (off-screen) She went into her room and shut the door. And for days, she neither slept nor ate. Buttercup: (no emotion at all in her voice) I will never love again. Hold On Her Face, perfect and perfectly sad. Dissolve To Flo
rin Castle. Day. The main courtyard of Florin replete with townspeople, livestock, and a bustling marketplace. Grandfather: (off-screen) (reading) Five years later, the main square of Florin City was filled as never before to hear the announcement of the great Prince Humperdinck's bride-to be. Cut To Prince Humperdinck, a man of incredible power and bearing, standing in hi
s royal robes on a castle balcony. Three others standing behind him: an Old Couple with crowns, the aging King And Queen, and a dark bearded man who seems the Prince's match in strength: this is Count Rugen Humperdinck: (raises his hands, starts to speak) My people. ..a month from now, our country will have its 500th anniversary. On that sundown, I shall marry a la
dy who was once a commoner like yourselves-(pause)- but perhaps you will not find her common now. Would you like to meet her? And the answering Yessss booms like summer thunder. Cut To A giant staircase leading to the Crowd and as a Figure just begins to become visible, Cut To The Crowd, as they see the Figure. (We haven't yet.) And if there is such a thing as co
llective action, then this Crowd, collectively, holds its breath. Cut To The Staircase, as the figure appears in the archway. It is Buttercup. And she is resplendent. Humperdinck: My people...the Princess Buttercup!! She descends the stairs and starts to move amongst the people. Cut To The Crowd, and they do a very strange thing: with no instruction at all, they suddenly go t
o their knees. Great waves of people kneeling and- Cut To Buttercup, terribly moved. She stands immobile among her Subjects, blinking back tears. Hold on her beauty for a moment. Grandfather: (off-screen) Buttercup's emptiness consumed her. Although the law of the land gave Humperdinck the right to choose his bride, she did not love him. Cut To Woodlands -and Butt
ercup, barreling along, controlling her horse easily. Grandfather: (off-screen) Despite Humperdinck's reassurance that she would grow to love him, the only joy she found was in her daily ride. Cut To A Wooded Glen, Close To Sundown. Lovely, quiet, deserted. Buttercup suddenly reins in. Voice: A word, my lady? Cut To Three Men, standing close together in the path. Beyo
nd them can be seen the waters of Florin Channel. The Three Men are not your everyday commuter types. Standing in front is a tiny man with the most angelic face. He is Sicilian and his name is Vizzini. Beside him is a Spaniard, erect and taut as a blade of steel. His name is Inigo Montoya. Beside him is a giant. His name is Fezzik. Vizzini: We are but poor, lost circus perfor
mers. Is there a village nearby? Buttercup: There is nothing nearby; not for miles. Vizzini: Then there will be no one to hear you scream- He nods to the giant, Fezzik, who merely reaches over, touches a nerve on Buttercup's neck, and the start of a scream is all she manages-unconsciousness comes that fast. As she starts to fall- Cut To A Tiny Isolated Spot At The Edge Of
Florin Channel. A sailboat is moored. It's dusk now, shadows are long. Inigo, the Spaniard, busies himself getting the boat ready. Cut To The giant Fezzik carries Buttercup, unconscious, on board. Vizzini rips some tiny pieces of fabric from an army jacket and tucks them along the saddle of Buttercup's horse. There is about the entire operation a sense of tremendous skill a
nd precision. Inigo: What is that you're ripping? Vizzini: (not stopping or turning) It's fabric from the uniform of an Army officer of Guilder. Fezzik: Who's Guilder? Vizzini: (pointing straight out) The country across the sea. The sworn enemy of Florin. (slaps the horse's rump) Go! The horse takes off. They start for the boat. Vizzini: Once the horse reaches the castle, the fabric
will make the Prince suspect the Guilderians have abducted his love. When he finds her body dead on t he Guilder frontier, his suspicions will be totally confirmed. Fezzik: You never said anything about killing anyone. Vizzini hops onto the boat. Vizzini: I've hired you to help me start a war. That's a prestigious line of work with a long and glorious tradition. Fezzik: I ju
st don't think it's right, killing an innocent girl. Vizzini: (whirling on Fezzik) Am I going mad or di d the word "think" escape your lips? You were not hired for your brains, you hippopotamic land mass. Inigo: I agree with Fezzik. Cut To Close Up: Vizzini, in a fury. Vizzini: (We only thought he was in a fury-now he's really getting mad.) Oh. The sot has spoke
n. What happens to her is not truly your concern-I will kill her-(louder) And remember this-n ever forget this- Cut To Inigo And Fezzik, as Vizzini advances on them. Nothing shows on Inigo's face, but Fezzik is panicked by Vizzini. Vizzini: (to Inigo) - when I found you, you were so slobbering drunk you couldn't buy brandy-(now to Fezzik, who retre
ats as much as he can while Vizzini advances)-and you-friendless, brainless, helpless, h opeless-Do you want me to send you back to where you were, unemployed in Greenland? Vizzini glares at him, then turns, leaves them. During this, Inigo has gone close to Fezzik who is very distressed at the insults he's just received. As Inigo casts off I
nigo: (softly) That Vizzini, he can fuss. (a slight emphasis on the last word) Fezzik: (lo oking at Inig o) ... fuss ... fuss...(Suddenly, he's got it again, emphasis on the last word.) I think he likes to scream at us. Inigo: Probably he means no harm. Fezzik: He's really very short on charm. Inigo: (proudly) Oh, you've a great gift for rhyme. Fezzik: Yes, some of
the time. (He starts to smile.) Vizzini: (whirling on them) Enough of that. As they s ail off, we hear t heir voices as the boat recedes. Inigo: Fezzik, are there rocks ahead? Fezzik: If there are, we'll all be dead. Vizzini: No more rhymes now, I mean it. Fezzik: Anybody want a peanut? As Vizzini screams we Dissolve To The Sailboat Racing Across The Dark
Waters. Inigo is at the helm, Fezzik stands near the body of the princess-whose eyelids flutter slig htly-or do they? Vizzini sits motionless. The waves are higher, there are only occasional flashes of moon slanting down between clouds. Vizzini: (to Inigo) We'll reach the Cliffs by dawn. Inigo nods, glances back. Vizzini: Why are you doing that? Inigo: M
aking sure nobody's following us. Vizzini: That would be inconceivable. Butter cup: Despite what yo u think, you will be caught. And when you are, the Prince will see you all hanged. Vizzini turns a cold eye on the Princess. Vizzini: Of all the necks on this boat, Highness, the one you should be worrying about is your own. Inigo keeps staring behind the
m. Vizzini: Stop doing that. We can all relax, it's almost over- Inigo: You're su re nobody's following us? Vizzini: As I told you, it would be absolutely, totally, and in all other ways, inconceivable. No one in Guilder knows what we've done. And no one in Florin could have gotten here so fast. Out of curiosity, why do you ask? Inigo: No reason. It's only, I j
ust happened to look behind us, and something is there. Vizzini: What? An d suddenly the Three w hirl, stare back and as they do- Cut To The Darkness Behind Them. It's hard to see; the moon is behind clouds now. But the wind whistles. And the waves pound. And suddenly it's all gone ominous. Cut To Inigo, Fezzik And Vizzini squinting back, trying
desperately to see. At this moment, they are all holding their breaths. Cut To The Darkness Behin d Them. And there's still nothing to be seen. It's still ominous. Only now it's eerie too. Then- The moon slips through and- Inigo was right something is very much there. A sailboat. Black. With a great billowing sail. Black. It's a good distance behind them,
but it's coming like hell, closing the gap. Cut To Inigo, Fezzik And Vizzi ni staring at the other boa t. Vizzini: (explaining with as much logic as he can muster) Probably some local fisherman out for a pleasure cruise at night through eel-infested waters. And now as a sound comes from their boat they turn as we- Cut To Buttercup, diving into the water,
starting to swim away. Cut To The Boat, and Vizzini screaming. Vizzini: Go in, get after her! Inigo : I don't swim. Fezzik: (to the unasked question) I only dog paddle. Vizzini: Veer left. Left. Left! Cut To Buttercup, still close to the boat, switching from a crawl to a silent breast stroke. The wind dies and as it does, something new is heard: a not-too-distan
t high-pitched shrieking sound. Buttercup stops suddenly, treads wat er. Cut To The Boat. Vizzin i: Do you know what that sound is, Highness? Those are the Shrieking Eels-if you doubt me, just wait. They always grow louder when they're about to feed on human flesh. Cut To Buttercup, treading water, still not far from the boat. The shrieking sounds
are getting louder. And more terrifying. Buttercup stays silent. Cut T o The Boat. Vizzini: If you s wim back now, I promise, no har m will come to you. I doubt you will get such a n offer from th e Eels. Cut To Buttercup, a nd she's a gutsy girl. The shrieking s ound is louder still, but she doesn't make a sound. Behind her
now, something dark and gigantic slithers past. She's scared, sure, petrified, who wouldn't be, but she makes no reply- -and n ow a Shrieking Eel has zeroed in on her- -a nd now sh e sees it, a short dist ance away, circlin g, startin g to close- -and Buttercup is frozen, trying not to make a mov
ement of any kind- -and the Eel slithers closer, closer- - and Butter cup knows it now, there's no thing she can do, it's over, all over- -and now the Eel opens its mouth w ide, and it 's never made so ch a noise, a nd as its great jaws are about to clamp down- Grandfather: (off-screen
) She doesn't get eaten by the Eels at this time. And the second w e hear him: Cut To The Sick Kid's Room. The Kid looks th e same, pale and weak, but maybe he's gri pping the sheets a little to o tightly w ith his h ands. The Kid: What? Grandfather: The Eel doesn't get her. I'm
explaining to you because you looked nervous. The Kid: Well, I wasn't nervous. His Grandfat her says nothing, just waits . The Kid: Well, maybe I was a little bit conc erned. Bu t that's not the same th ing. Gr andfathe r: Because I can stop now if you want. The Kid: No. You could
read a little bit more...if you want. (He grips the sheets again, as the Grandfather picks up the book.) Grandfather: (readi ng) "Do you know what that sound is, Highn ess?" Cut To Vizzini. We 're back in t he bo at. Vizzin i: Those are the Shrieking Eels. The Kid: (off screen) We're pas
t that, Grandpa. Cut To The Sick Kid's Room. The Kid: You read it already. Grandfather: Oh. Oh my goodness, I did. I'm sorry. Beg your pardon. Cut To Buttercup, t reading w ater. Grandfat her: (off-sc reen) All right, all right, let's see. Uh, she was in the water, the Eel was coming a
fter her. She was frightened. The Eel started to charge her. And then - And we're back wher e we were at the last mom ent we saw her, Buttercup Frozen, The Shri eking Eel, jaws wide, ab out to clam p down a s we - C ut To A Giant Arm, pounding the Eel unconscious in one move,
then easily lifting Buttercup. Pull Back To Reveal The Boat And Fezzik, Buttercup being de posited on the deck. Viz zini: Put her down. Just put her down. Cut To Inigo, pointing behi nd them. Ini go: I think he's gett ing closer. Vizzini, tying Buttercup's Hands. Vizzini: He's no con
cern of ours. Sail on! (to Buttercup) I suppose you think you're brave, don't you? Butterc up: (staring deep at hint) O nly compared to some. Dissolve To The B oat At Da wn, being follo wed closely by the black sailboat , which we can see for the first time is being sailed by a Man In
Black, and his boat almost seems to be flying. Inigo: Look! He' s right on top of us. I won der if he is using the sam e wind we are using. Vizzini: Whoever he is, he's t oo late-(poi nti ng ahead of them)-see? (big) The Cliffs of Insanity. And once he's said the name, Cut To The Cliff
s Of Insanity At Dawn. They rise straight up, sheer from the wat er, impossibly high. Cut To The Two Sa ilb oats in a wild rac e for the Cliffs and the Man In Black is closing fa ster than ev er, but not fa st enou gh, the lead w as too great to overcome, and as Inigo sails with
great precision straight at the Cliffs - Cut To The Boat being pu rsued. Vizzini: Hurry u p . Move the thing! U rn...tha t other thing. Move it! (star ing back now) We 're e safe-only Fezzik is str ong eno ugh to go u p our way-he'll have to sail around for hours 'til h
e finds a harbor. There is much activity going on, all of it swift, expert, economical. Fe zzik re aches up a lo ng the Cliff face, grabs a ju tting ro ck, reac h es behind it. Suddenly t here is a thick rope in his hands. He drops back to the boat, giv
es the rope a freeing swing and Cut To The Cliffs. The rope goes all the way to the top . Cut To In igo hurrying to Fezzik He s traps a harn es s to hi m, then lifts Bu tte rcu p and Vizzini in the harness. Finally, he himself g
ets in the harness. All three are strapped to Fezzik like papooses . And he star ts to asc end th e rope, carrying them all along o The Man In Black, sailing in toward the Cliffs of In
sanity, watching as Fezzik rises swiftly through the first moments of daw n. Cut To The Top Of The Cliffs, Looking D own. FE ZZIK's Group is on ly fa intly visible far below. This is the first time we've gotte
n the real vertigo feeling and it's a gasper. Cut To Fezzik Climbing O n. Butterc up is almos t out of her mind with fear Cut To The Ent ir The Cliffs. Fezzik is m oving rig ht along; however high they are, he's already over a third o
f the way done. Cut To The Alan In Black, leaping from his ship to the rope, startin g to climb. He's im possibly far behind, but the way he goes you'd think he di dn't know that bec ause he is flying up the rope , hand over ha nd like lightning. Cut To Vizzini And The Others. Inigo: (looking d
own) He's climbing the rope. And he's gaining on us. Vizzini: Inconceiva ble! He prods Fezzik, who nods, increases his pace. Cut To The Man In Black, roaring up the rope, and Cut To Long Shot-th e Cliffs -and the Man In Black is cutting deeply into Fezzik's lead. Cut To Vizzini And The Others. Vizzini: (shrieking) Faster! Fezzik: I thought I was
going faster. Vizzini: You were supposed to be this colossus. You were this gr eat, legendary thing. And yet he gains. Fezzik: Well, I'm carrying three people. And he's got only himself. Vizzini: (cutting throug h) - I do not accept excuses. (shaking his head) I'm just going to have to find myself a new giant, that's all. Fezzik: (hurt) Don't say that, Vizzini. Pleas
e. And his arms begin moving much more slowly. Cut To The Man In Black. His arms still work as before. If anything, he has speeded up. Fezzik's lead is smaller and smaller. Cut To The View From The Top Of T he Cliffs. Maybe a hundred feet for Fezzik to go. Maybe more. Cut To Vizzini And The Others, and it's getting too close now. Vizzini: Did I make it clear t
hat your job is at stake? Cut To The Man In Black, less than a hundred feet behind them. And gaining. Cut To The Cliff Top As Fezzik Makes It! Vizzini leaps off and takes out a knife, begins to cut the rope whic h is tied around a great rock while Inigo helps the Princess to her feet and Fezzik just stands around, waiting for someone to tell him to do something.
Nearby are some stone ruins. Once they might have been a fort, now they kind of resemble Stonehenge. Cut To The Man In Black, 75 feet from the top now, maybe less-maybe only S0-and his pace is as daz zling as before, and Cut To Vizzini, cutting through the last of the rope and Cut To The Rope, slithering across the ground and out of sight toward the C
hannel, like some great serpent at last going home. Cut To Fezzik, standing with Inigo And Buttercup by the cliff edge. Fezzik: (to Inigo-impressed) He has very good arms. Cut To The Man In Black, hangin g suspended hundreds of feet in the air, holding to the jagged rocks, desperately trying to cling to life. Cut To Vizzini, stunned, turning to the Others, look
ing down. Vizzini: He didn't fall? Inconceivable!! Inigo: (whirling on Vizzini) You keep using that word-I do not think it means what you think it means. (looks down again) My God! He's climbing. Cut To Th e M an In Black, and so he is. Verrrry slowly, he is picking his way upwards, sometimes afoot at a time, sometimes an inch. Cut To The Group At The Top, ST
aring down. Vizzini: Whoever he is, he's obviously seen us with the Princess, and must therefore die. (to Fezzik) You, carry her. (to Inigo) We'll head straight for the Guilder frontier. Catch up when he's d ead. If he falls, fine. If not, the sword. Inigo nods. Inigo: I want to duel him left-handed. Vizzini: You know what a hurry we're in. Inigo: Well, it's the only way I
can be satisfied. If I use my right-tch-over too quickly. Vizzini: (turns abruptly, starts off-screen) Oh, have it your way. Cut To The Man In Black, still creeping his way upward. Cut To Fezzik, who goes t o Inig o. Fezzik: You be careful. (Gravely)-people in masks cannot be trusted. Vizzini: (calling out) I'm waiting! Fezzik nods, hurries after Vizzini. Cut To Inigo. H
e watches them depart, then turns, peers down over the Cliffs. He watches a moment, then paces, shaking his hands loose. He practices a few of his honed fencing skills. He is a taut and nervous fell ow, an d has never been one for waiting around. Cut To The Man In Black, climbing on. He must be six inches closer to the top than when last we saw him. Inigo
Is Watching. Cut To Inigo, walking away. Finally he goes back to cliff edge, starts to talk. It's instant death if the Man In Black falls, but neither gives that possibility much credence. This is our two he roes m eeting. They don't know it y et; but that's what it is. Inigo: (hollering down) Hello there. The Man In Black glances up, kind of grunts. Inigo: Slow
going? Man In Black: Look, I don't mean to be rude, but this is not as easy as it looks. So I'd appreciate it if you wouldn't distract me. Inigo: Sorry. Man In Black: Thank you. Inigo steps away, draws h is swo rd, loosens up with a few perfect thrusts. Then resheathes and looks eagerly over the edge again. Inigo: I do not suppose you could speed
things up? Man In Black: (with some heat) If you're in such a hurry, you could lower a rope, or a tree branch, or find something useful to do. Inigo: I could do that. In fact, I've got some rope up here. But I do not think that you wil l accept my help, since I am only waiting around to kill you. Man In Black: That does put a damper on our relation
ship. (He finds another hold a few inches higher.) Inigo: But I promise I will not kill you until you reach the top. Man In Black: That's very comforting. But I'm afraid you'll just have to wait. Inigo: I hat e w aiting. I could give you my word as a Spaniard. Man In Black: No good. I've known too many Spaniards. And he just hangs there in space
, resting, gathering his strength. Inigo: You don't know any way you'll trust me? Man In Black: Nothing comes to mind. And on these words, Camera Zooms into a Close Up of Inigo. He raises his righ t hand high, his eyes bl aze , and his voice takes on a tone we have not heard before. Inigo: I swear on the soul of my father, Domingo Monto
ya, you will reach the top alive. Cut To The Man In Black There is a pause. Then, quietly: Man In Black: Throw me the rope. Cut To Inigo. He dashes to the giant rock the rope was originally tied to. Cut To The Man In Black as his grip loosens a moment, trying to cling to the side of the cliff. Cut To Inigo, now with a small coil of rope, hurries b
ack to the edge and hurls it over- Cut To The Rope. It hangs close to the Man In Black. He releases the rocks, grabs the rope, hangs helplessly in space a moment, then looks up at Inigo and- Cut To Inig o, straining, forcing his bo dy aw ay from the cliff edge and- Cut To The Man In Black rising through the early morning light, slowly, steadily, and as
the cliff top at last comes within reach- Cut To Inigo, watching as the Man In Black crawls to safety, then looks to Inigo. Man In Black: Thank you. (pulling his sword) Inigo: We'll wait until you're ready. Man In Black: Again. Thank you. The Man In Black Black sits to rest on the boulder that once held the rope. He tugs off his leather boots and is amazed to see sever
al large rocks tumble out. The Man In Black wears gloves. Inigo stares at them. Inigo: I do not mean to pry, but you don't by any chance happen to have six fingers on your right hand? He glances up-the question clearly baffles him. Man In : Do you always begin conversations this way? Inigo: My father was slaughtered by a six-fingered man. He was a
great swordmaker, my father. And when the six-fingered man appeared and requested a special sword, my father took the job. He slaved a year before he was done. He hands h is sword to the Man In Black. Man In Black: (fondling it-imp ressed) I have never seen its equal. Cut To Close Up: Inigo: Even now, this still brings pain. Inigo: The six-fingered
man returned and demanded it, but at one-tenth his promised price. My father refused. Without a word, the six-fingered man slashed him through the heart. I loved my father, so, naturally, challenged his murderer to a duel ... i failed ...the six-fingered man did leave me alive with the six-fingered sword, but he gave me these. (He touches his scars)
Cut To The Man In Black, looking up at Inigo. Man In Black: How old were you? Inigo: I was eleven years old. When I was strong enough, I dedicated my life to the study of f encing. So the next time we meet, I will not fail. I w ill go u p to the six-fingered man and say, "Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die." Man In Bl
ack: You've done nothing but study swordplay? Inigo: More pursuit than study lately. You see, I cannot find him. It's been twenty years now. I am starting to lose confidence . I just work for Vizzini to pay the bills. There's no t a lot of money in revenge. Man In Black: (handing back the great sword, starting to rise) Well, I certainly hope you find him
, someday. Inigo: You are ready, then? Man In Black: Whether I am or not, you've been more than fair. Inigo: You seem a decent fellow. I hate to kill you. Man In Black: (walki ng away a few paces, unsheathing his sword) You seem a decent fellow. I hate to die. Inigo: Begin! And on that word- Cut To The Two Of Them. And what we are starting now
is one of the two greatest swordfights in modern movies (the other one happens later on), and right from the beginning it looks different. Because they aren't close to each oth er-none of the swords-crossing "en garde" garbage . No. What we have here is two men, two athletes, and they look to be too far away to damage each other, but each time one
makes even the tiniest feint, the other counters, and there is silence, and as they start to circle- Cut To The Six-fingered Sword, feinting here, feinting there and- Cut To The Two Men, finished teasing, begin to duel in earnest. Their swor ds cr oss, then again, again, and the sound comes so fast it's almost continual. Inigo presses on, the Man In Black retreating
up a rocky incline. Inigo: (thrilled) You're using Bonetti's defense against me, ah? Man In Black: I thought it fitting, considering the rocky terrain- Inigo: Naturally, you must expect me to attack with Capo Ferro- And he shifts his style no w. M an In Black : (coping as best he can) -naturally-(suddenly shifting again)-but I find Thibault cancels out Capo Ferro, don't
you? The Man In Black is now perched at the edge of the elevated castle ruin. No where to go, he jumps to the sand. Inigo stares do wn at him. Inigo: Unless the enemy has studied his Agripp a- And now, with the grace o f an Olympian, Inigo flies off the perch, somersaults clean over the Man In Black's head, and lands facing h
is opponent. Inigo: -which I have. The Two Men are almost flying across the rocky terrain, never losing balanc e, never comin g close to stumbli ng; the battle rages with incre dible finesse, fir st one and then the other gaining the advantage, and by now, it's clear that this isn't just two athletes going at it,
it's a lot more that that. This is two legendary swashbucklers and they're in their prime, it's Burt Lancaster i n The Crimso n Pirate battling E rrol Flynn in Robin Hood an d then, incred ib ly, th e action begins going even faster than before as we Cut To Inigo. And behind him now, drawing closer all t
he time, is the deadly edge of the Cliffs of Insanity. Inigo fights and ducks and feints and slashes and it all w orks, but no t for long, as grad ually the Man In Black keep s the advantag e, kee ps forcing Inigo back, closer and closer to death. Inigo: (happy as a clam) You are wonderful! Man In Black:
Thank you-I've worked hard to become so. The Cliff edge is very close now. Inigo is continually being forc ed to ward it. Inigo: I admit it -you are better than I am. Man In Black: Th e n w hy are you smiling? Inches from defeat, Inigo is, in fact, all smiles. Inigo: Because I know something you do
n't know. Man In Black: And what is that? Inigo: I am not left-handed. And he throws the six-fingered sword into his r ight hand and im mediately, the tide of battl e turns. Cut To Th e Man In Black, stunned, doing everything he can to keep Inigo by the Cliff edge. But no use. Slowly at first, he
begins to retreat. Now faster. Inigo is in control and the Man In Black is desperate. Cut To Inigo. And the si x-fin gere d sword is all but i nvisible now, as he incre ases his attack, th e n suddenly switches styles again. Cut To A Rocky Staircase leading to a turret-shaped plateau, and the Man I
n Black is retreating like mad up the steps and he can't stop INIGO-nothing can stop INIGO-and in a frenzy t he Man In Black makes ev ery feint, tries every thr ust, lets go with a ll he has left. But he fails. Everything fails. He tries one or two final desperate moves but they are nothing. Man I
n Black: You're amazing! Inigo: I ought to be after twenty years. And now the Man In Black is smashed into a s ton e pillar, pinned ther e under the sixfingere d sword. Man In Bla ck: (hollering it out) There's something I ought to tell you. Inigo: Tell me. Man In Black: I am not left-handed eith
er. And now he changes hands, and at last, the battle is fully joined. Cut To Inigo. And to his amazement, h e i s b eing forced back do wn the steps. He tries o ne style, anothe r, b ut it all comes down to the same thing-the Man In Black seems to be in control. And before Inigo knows it, the si
x-fingered sword is knocked clear out of his hand. Inigo retreats, dives from the stairs to a moss-covered b ar s us pended over t he archway. He swings out, lands, and scr ambl es to his sword and we Cut To The Man In Black who watches Inigo, then casually tosses his sword to the landin
g where it sticks in perfectly. Then the Man In Black copies Inigo. Not copies exactly, improves. He dives to t he b ar, swin gs completely ov er it like a circus per fo rmer and dismou nts with a 9.7 backflip. Cut To Inigo, staring in awe. Inigo: Who are you?! Man In Black: No one of c
onsequence. Inigo: I must know. Man In Black: Get used to disappointment. Inigo: Okay. Cut To Inigo, movi ng l i ke lightning, a nd he th rusts fo r ward, s lashes, d arts back, all in almost a single movement and- Cut To The Man In Black. Dodging, blocking, and ag
ain he thrusts forward, faster even than before, and again he slashes but- Cut To Inigo. And there is never a mo ve a nyone ma kes he doe sn' t rememb er, and this time he blocks the slash, slashes out himself with the six-fingered sword. On it goes, back and
forth across the rocky terrain, Inigo's feet moving with the grace and speed of a great improvisational danc er. Cu t To T he Six t is knocked free, arching up into the air, and- Cut To Inigo catching it again. And something terribl
e is written behind his eyes: he has given his all, done everything man can do, tried every style, made every maneu ver, but it wa s n't eno ugh , and on hi s face for all to see is the realization that he, Inigo Montoya of Spain, is going to lose. Cut To The M
an In Black, moving in for the end now, blocking everything, muzzling everything and Cut To The Six-fingere d Sword , sent flying from Inigo's grip . He stan ds help less only a moment. Then he drops to his knees, bows his head, shuts his eyes. Inigo: Kill me quickly. Man In Blac
k: I would as soon destroy a stained glass window as an artist like yourself. However, since I can't have you f ollowing m e either- And he clunks Inigo's head with his heavy swor d handle. Inigo pitches forward unconscious. Man In Black: Please understand, I hold you in the highest respect. He grab
s his scabbard and takes off after the Princess and we Cut To Close Up: Vizzini. Vizzini: Inconceivable! Pull Ba ck To Reveal Vizzini, staring down from a narrow mountain path, as far below the Man In Bla ck can be seen run ning. Fezzik, carrying the Princess, stands alongside. It's a little later in the morning. Vizzini: Give her to me. (g
rabs Buttercup starts off) Catch up with us quickly. Fezzik: (starting to panic) What do I do? Vizzini: Finish him, finish him. Your way. Fezzik: Oh, good, my way. Thank you, Vizzini. (little pause) Which way is my way? Cut To A Couple Of Rocks. Nothing gigantic. Vizzini points to them. There is a large boulder nearby. Vizzini: Pick up one of those rocks, get behind the boulde
r, and in a few minutes, the Man in Black will come running around the bend. The minute his head is in view, hit it with the rock! As Vizzini And Buttercup hurry away. Fezzik: (little frown; softly) My way's not very sportsmanlike. He grabs one of the rocks and plods behind the boulder and we- Dissolve To The Man In Black, racing up the mountain trail. Ahead is a bend in the
trail. He sees it, slows. Then he stops, listening. Satisfied by the silence, he starts forward again and as he rounds the bend-a rock flies Into Frame, shattering on a boulder inches in front of him. Cut To Fezzik. He moves into the mountain path. He has picked up another rock and holds it lightly. Fezzik: I did that on purpose. I don't have to miss. Man In Black: I believe you-S
o what happens now? Fezzik: We face each other as God intended. Sportsmanlike. No tricks, no weapons, skill against skill alone. Man In Black: You mean, you'll put down your rock and I'll put down my sword, and we'll try to kill each other like civilized people? Fezzik: (gently) I could kill you now. We gets set to throw, but the Man In Black shakes his head, takes off his sw
ord and scabbard, begins the approach toward the Giant. Man In Black: Frankly, I think the odds are slightly in your favor at hand fighting. Fezzik: It's not my fault being the biggest and the strongest. I don't even exercise. He flips the rock away. Cut To The Mountain Path And The Two Men. The Man In Black is not now and has never been a shrimp. But it's like he wasn't eve
n there, Fezzik towers over him so much. There is a moment's pause, and then the Man In Black dives at FEZZIK's chest, slams him several tremendous blows in the stomach, twists his arm severely, slips skillfully into a beautifully applied bear hug, and in general makes any number of terrific wrestling moves. Fezzik just stands there, kind of taking in the scenery. Finally th
e Man In Black pushes himself away, stares up at the Giant. Man In Black: Look, are you just fiddling around with me or what? Fezzik: I just want you to feel you're doing well. I hate for people to die embarrassed. They get set to begin again. Then suddenly- Cut To Fezzik, as he jumps forward with stunning speed for anyone his size and reaches for the Man In Black who dro
ps to his knees, spins loose, and slips between the Giant's legs. Fezzik: You're quick. Man In Black: And a good thing too. Fezzik: (getting set for another onslaught) Why do you wear a mask? Were you burned by acid, or something like that? Man In Black: Oh no. It's just that they're terribly comfortable. I think everyone will be wearing them in the future. Fezzik considers th
is a moment, then attacks, and if he moved quickly last time, this time he is blinding and as the Man In Black slips down to avoid the charge, Fezzik moves right with him, only instead of twisting free and jumping to his feet, this time the Man In Black jumps for Fezzik's back and in a moment he is riding him, and his arms have Fezzik's throat, locked across Fezzik's windpipe
, one in front, one behind. The Man In Black begins to squeeze. Tighter. Fezzik: (standing, talking as he does so) I just figured out why you give me so much trouble. Cut To Fezzik, as he charges toward a huge rock that lines the path, and just as he reaches it he spins his giant body so that the entire weight of the charge is taken by the Man In Black. Cut To The Man In Black
. And the power of the charge is terrible, the pain enormous, but he clings to his grip at FEZZIK's windpipe. Man In Black: (his arms never leave Fezzik's throat) Why is that, do you think? Fezzik: (his voice just beginning to get a little strained) Well, I haven't fought just one person for so long. I've been specializing in groups. Battling gangs for local charities, that kind of thin
g. Cut To Another Huge Rock On The Other Side Of The Path. Again Fezzik charges, slower this time, but still a charge, and again he spins and creams the Man In Black against the rough boulder Cut To The Man In Black. And the punishment is terrible, and for a moment it seems as if he is going to let go of Fezzik's windpipe and crumble, but he doesn't, he holds on. Man In
Black: Why should that make such a difference? Fezzik: Well... (And now his voice is definitely growing weaker.)...you see, you use different moves when you're fighting half a dozen people than when you only have to be worried about one. Again Fezzik slams the Man In Black against a boulder, only this time his power has diminished and Fezzik starts to slowly collapse.
Cut To Fezzik. And there isn't much breath coming. Cut To The Man In Black, holding his grip as Fezzik tries to stand, halfway makes it, but there is no air Back to his knees befalls, holds there for a moment, and pitches down to all fours. The Man In Black increases the pressure. Fezzik tries to crawl. But there is just no air No air Fezzik goes to earth and lies still. Cut To Fez
zik, as the Man In Black turns him over, puts his ear to Fezzik's heart. It beats. The Man In Black stands. Man In Black: I don't envy you the headache you will have when you awake. But, in the meantime, rest well.. .and dream of large women. And he nimbly scoops up his sword with his foot, catches it and as he dashes off up along the mountain path- Cut To Prince Humper
dinck, as he slips his boot into a footprint in the sand. Count Rugen mounted, watches. Behind him, half a dozen armed Warriors, also mounted. A Great White Horse waits riderless in front. Humperdinck is all over the rocky ground, and maybe he isn't the best hunter in the world. Then again, maybe he is. Because, as he begins to put his feet into strange positions, we reali
ze that what he is doing is miming the fencers. Humperdinck: There was a mighty duel-it ranged all over. They were both masters. Rugen: Who won? How did it end? Humperdinck: (looking down in the position where Inigo fell unconscious) The loser ran off alone. (points in the direction Vizzini and Fezzik took) The winner followed those footprints toward