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Opening extract from

Borgon the Axeboy and the Prince's Shadow

Written by

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Meet the savages!



BORGON,

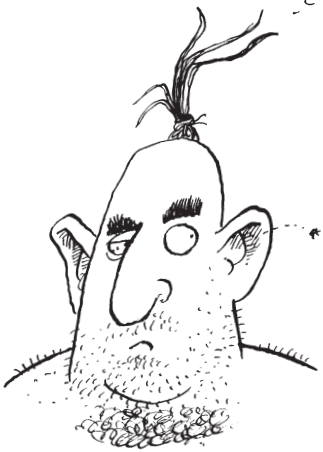
our hero!



GRIZZY,

Borgon's annoying

next-cave neighbour



FULGUT,

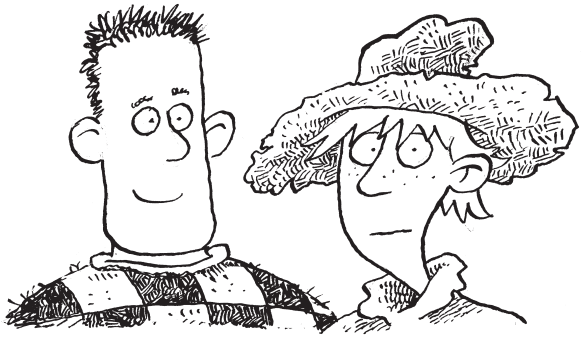
Borgon's dad

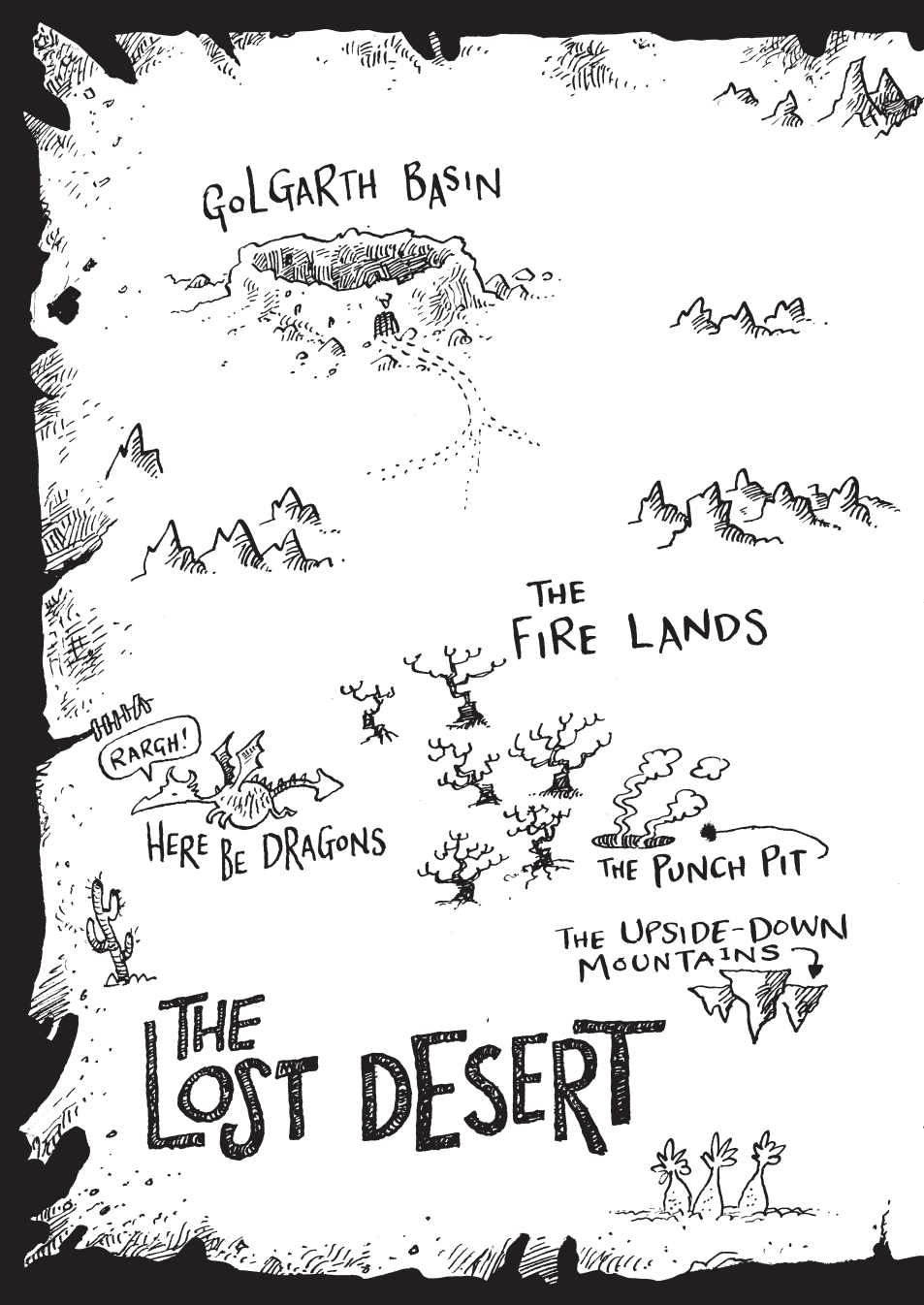


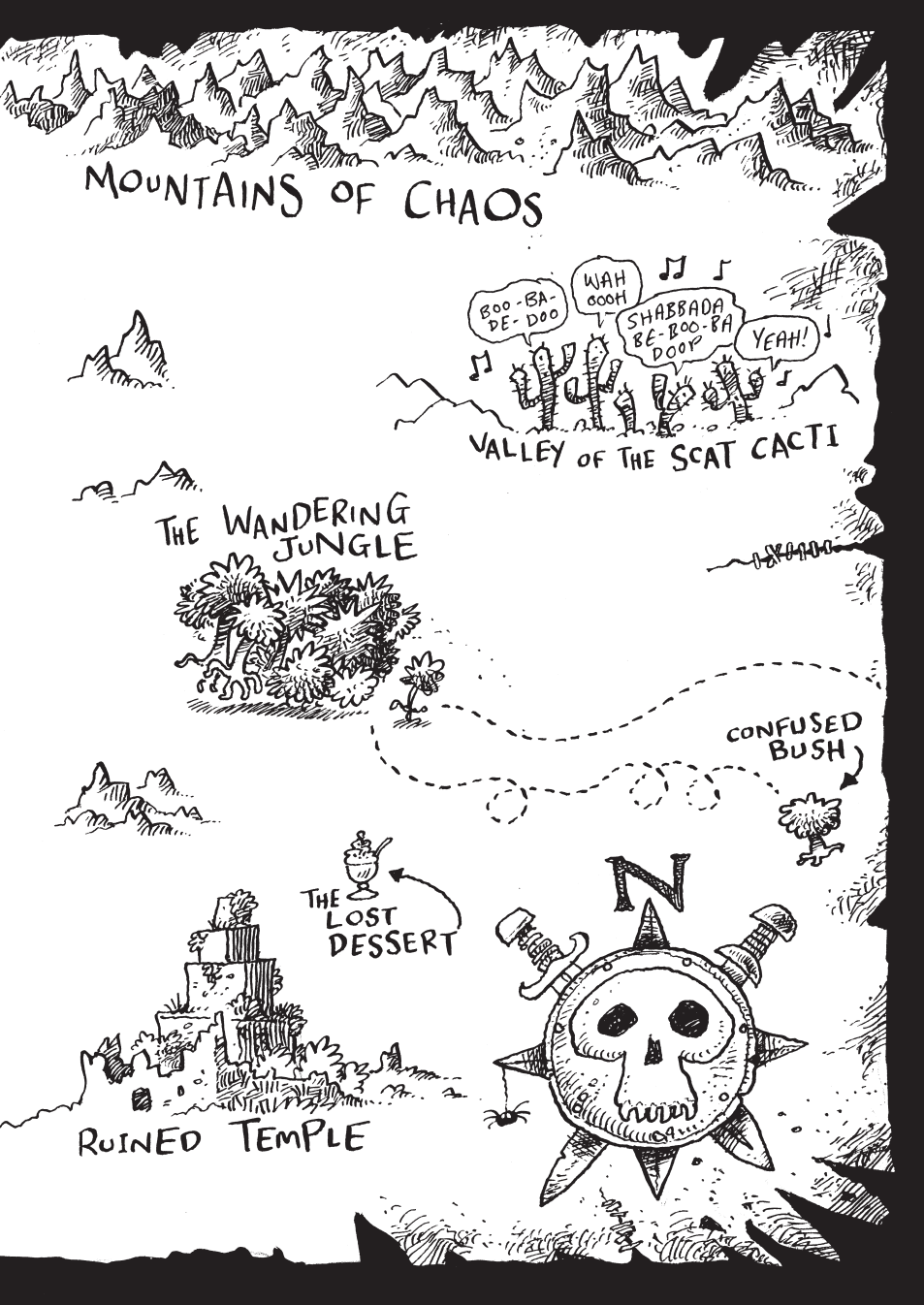
FULMA,

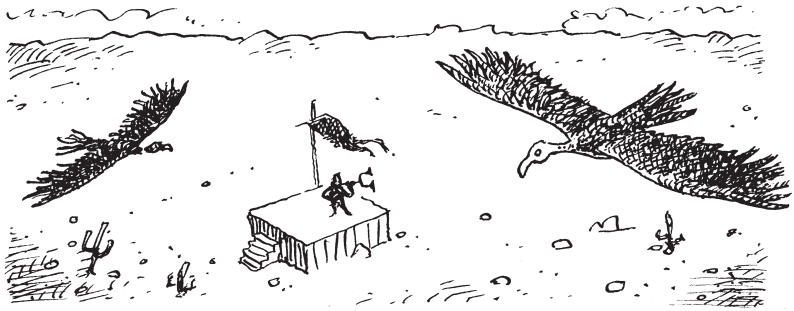
Borgon's mum

MUNGOID and **HUNJAH**, Borgon's pals




GOLGARTH BASIN
THE FIRE LANDS
RARGH!
HERE BE DRAGONS
THE PUNCH PIT
THE UPSIDE-DOWN MOUNTAINS
THE LOST DESERT


MOUNTAINS OF CHAOS
BOO-BA-DE-DOO
WAH OOOH
SHABBADA BE-BOO-BA DOOP
YEAH!
VALLEY OF THE SCAT CACTI
THE WANDERING JUNGLE
CONFUSED BUSH
THE LOST DESSERT
N
RUINED TEMPLE



The Vultures' Surprise

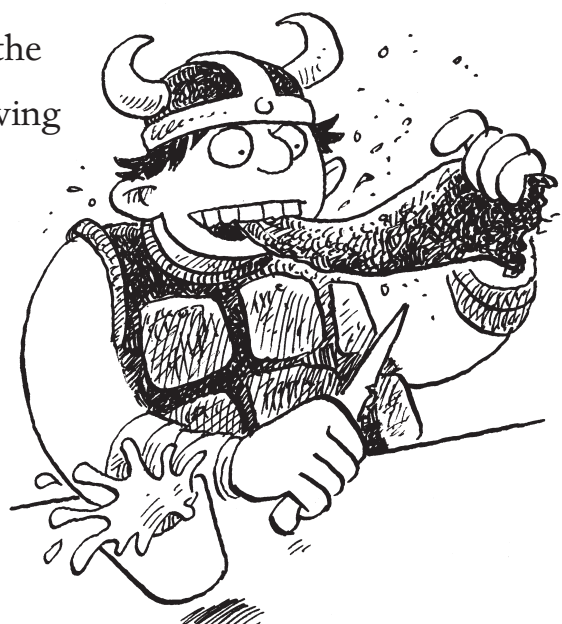
TUB-ARP TUB-ARP!

It was early morning in the Lost Desert, and high up in the yellow sky, two ragged vultures were looking down to see what was making all the noise. They were hovering above a wide stone plain known as Golgarth Stretch. A wooden stage had been set up in

the middle and standing on it was a fat blue slave with a two-headed trumpet. He gave it another mighty blast . . .

TUB-ARP TUB-ARP!

The sound echoed across the desert and slipped into the cave where Borgon the Axeboy was having his breakfast. Borgon was a barbarian, so he always ate his breakfast the barbarian way. This



meant chopping lumps from a fat elephant tongue with his axe, and shoving them into his mouth as quickly and as messily and as noisily as he could.

CHOP CHOMP SLURP!
CHOP CHOMP SLURP!

The elephant tongue was exactly how Borgon liked them. It was burnt on the outside and juicy in the middle, but most importantly it was a BIG elephant tongue. If Borgon was going to eat something, he didn't really care how hot it was or even how dead it was, just so long as it was big.

TUB-ARP TUB-ARP! came the noise again.



Borgon's mum came hurrying out from the back of the cave. Fulma was a tall slim savage with long fingers, mad spiky hair and dark narrow eyes.

'Did you hear that?' she asked. 'I wonder what it is?'

'Whatever it is, it's very bad manners,' said Borgon, doing a **BURP**. 'I can hardly hear myself eat.'

TUB-ARP TUB-ARP!

Borgon's dad came out of the back of the cave to join them. Fulgut was a very big sleepy old savage.

'I know that noise,' he said. 'It's the fanfare for the Shadow Trials.'

'The what?' asked Borgon.

'It's a competition that the palace organise,' explained Fulgut. 'They do it whenever they need a new bodyguard for the prince. The winner

has to stay with him day and night, so they call him the Prince's Shadow.'

'Why does the prince need a bodyguard?' asked Borgon. 'The whole palace is built like a castle. Nobody can get inside.'

'That's not the problem!' chuckled Fulma. 'The danger's already there.'

'I thought the palace people were all harmless,' said Borgon. 'You told me they just lie around all day inventing laws that everybody ignores.'

'Yes, but some of them can't be trusted,' said Fulma. 'They'll be nice to you in the daytime, but then they'll murder you in your sleep.'



‘What, without having a good fight first?’ said Borgon. ‘That’s cheating!’

‘Dead right,’ said Fulgut. ‘But that’s what posh people are like. All cheats and liars.’

‘Why don’t they get one of the palace guards to be the Shadow?’ asked Borgon.

‘Are you kidding?’ said Fulgut. ‘They’re too soft and lazy. The palace need a savage for the job.’

‘Then you should have a go, Dad,’ said Borgon.

‘Me?’ laughed Fulgut. ‘We’re barbarians, son. We’re far too rough and smelly for the palace. They’d never want the likes of us in there.’



'That's their problem, not ours,' said Borgon. 'If they want the best bodyguard, then that's you. You've always been the fiercest, toughest and scariest savage in the desert. Come on, Dad, where's your pride? Get out there and show them what a real barbarian can do!'

'They won't be interested,' said Fulgut. 'The only savages the palace like are those flashy Raggahoos.'

'The Raggahoos are hardly savages,' giggled Fulma. 'They use soap!'

'Soap?' asked Borgon. 'What's that?'



'It's something you rub

on your skin,' said Fulma. 'It's like having a flower be sick on you.'

'YUK!' said Borgon. 'That settles it. Dad, you're going to compete in the trials, and you're going to win.'

'I'm too busy,' said Fulgut, with a big lazy yawn. 'It's turned a bit chilly this morning. I need to find my thick socks.'

'Thick socks?' moaned Borgon.



'Dad, you're a BARBARIAN! You should be fighting six-headed bulls, you should be walking through fire, you should be attacking whole armies on your own. You should NEVER be looking for a pair of thick socks. Tell him, Mum!'

But Fulma was staring in the cracked old mirror hanging on their wall. She was pulling a bone comb through her hair, which suddenly snapped. Her mad hair immediately knotted itself up to look like an old bird's nest.

