

Bionicle Movie 2009

“Bara Nui”

(Working title)

(Full Outline)

Cast out of his own universe, his stature gone, Mata Nui fights to unite a devastated land and find the secret to reclaiming his own lost empire.

Story By:
Greg Farshtey

Written By:
Sean Catherine Derek

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(LEGO AND TINSELTOWN TOONS)

(NOTE: WEAPONS AND FIGHTING SKILLS ARE STILL TO BE ANNOUNCED ‘TBA’ – THE FOLLOWING ARE JUST SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE OPTIONS)

CAST LIST

MATA NUI – first seen briefly as the towering ruler of his empire – then he is cast out of his world, with nothing remaining of the former giant but his mask. **The Mask Of Life** creates/pieces together a new body for Mata Nui out of the scorched sands and stone of a desolate world called Bara Nui.

Now a mere seven feet tall, Mata Nui feels as awkward as a newborn. It is as if Hercules suddenly found he was the size of an ant... and not even the biggest ant on the hill. The irony of the situation is not lost on him, giving life to the *occasional* enigmatic quip. However, he is by no means a lighthearted hero; on the contrary Mata Nui feels the guilt of failing those who had trusted him to protect them, and he carries his emotional burden like a weight that threatens to crush him at times. But his will is powerful so he keeps focused on one goal at a time, the first being *learn how to survive... fast!*

While he has all the instincts and courage of a great warrior, Mata Nui has none of the skills... yet. He still wears the Mask Of Life and knows it has extraordinary powers; trouble is he isn't quite sure what they are or how to unleash them. He also has no idea how to get back to his own world, but his mission is clear: he is bound by honor and duty to succeed...or perish trying.

AKAR – the red gladiator was once the very best in all Bara Nui. But the years of battle have cost him an eye (possibly wears a riveted patch) and left him with deep scars, not only in his armor but down to his very core. Akar is like a fighter who knows he should hang up the gloves, but duty and pride force him to battle to the bitter end. His fighting skills are legendary; his shield (each gladiator has their own unique shield) has been battered by the best. Akar's weapon is (possibly) the most traditional of the group, a massive sword (with multiple blades) that he usually wields with both hands. But sadly, Akar no longer believes in what he's fighting for. He simply steps into the arena, risks life and limb to settle squabbles between villages. There is no passion or purpose to his life... until he meets Mata Nui and soon realizes that he does have something to give: knowledge. In return Mata Nui rekindles Akar's passion, which shows him that each and every being has purpose.

MARTA – the paladin-type blue clad gladiator. She's tough and cynical, *and no*, she does not have a heart of gold under that rough exterior. Not surprising, given the merciless world she's grown up in and the limited choices she's had. The way she sees it, there were only two: scavenge for scraps or learn to crack heads as a gladiator. *Hey, you still only get paid off in old junk and rotten food, but as a gladiator you get the most important thing: Respect.* There's one other thing Marta needs and wants: to get as far away from this forsaken wasteland as possible. Unlike most, she has always believed that

a better world exists and this belief is what keeps her fighting for her life. When she meets Mata Nui she finally has confirmation that her dream can be a reality.

Marta moves with snake-like speed, so she can slip under and around her opponents with amazing ease. (Possible weapon/tool: a large and unique boomerang with multiple bars that she can either swing or fling.)

But like the rest of the gladiators, Marta's weapon and shield are old and ready for the junk heap. Fortunately, once he masters his power, Mata Nui will use the Mask Of Life to improve their old weapons, transforming them into much more powerful versions of the same theme. When Marta joins Mata Nui it is for a single purpose - *he is her ticket out*. That's how it begins, but in watching Mata Nui and all that unfolds, her purpose, like everything inside her, totally changes.

GRESH – is a young novice Gladiator, who shares the duty of fighting for the same village as Marta. This charismatic youth is the antithesis of Akar in that it is all still so new and exciting for him; he exudes passion and can hardly wait for his next fight. Gresh's shield usually remains strapped across his back since he prefers to rely on his martial arts fighting style. (Possible weapon/tool: a long fighting stick with unique scythes on both ends.)

Gresh is the closest thing to a friend that Marta has ever had. But she treats him more like a little bother and can't help feeling protective of him. Gresh's shield (possibly) doubles as a kind of sand-surfboard that he uses to 'dune surf' around the sand chariots (of course this is when he's not injured).

BERIX – is a Morg, so given his size there's no way he could ever be seen as gladiator material – to anyone but himself. The fact that he's a gladiator wanna-be is oddly evident in his *costume*: the rusty ill-fitting helmet/mask and junked-weapon parts stuck all over his body, which is a treasure trove of hidden compartments. Everything he owns is rusty and battered to the point he even creaks when he walks and things are constantly falling off of him. Needless to say, no one would ever take him seriously as a gladiator, so Berix opted for being the *best scavenger in the business*. Trouble is there's a very fine line between scavenging and *stealing* and many villagers vehemently insist that Berix has crossed it for the last time! Consequently, Berix has recently been forced to survive as an outcast. However, he is not completely ostracized, since he does have something that the Morg need on occasion: his unique gift. Looking at this odd little guy, it is really hard to believe that *Berix is a healer*. But he definitely has the touch, given his understanding of the few, but powerful herbs found around Bara Nui. Unfortunately, that is not enough to convince Marta that Berix is not also the *duplicitous traitor* that has been informing the Skral when villages are most vulnerable to attack. Bottom line, Berix is a good guy with guts and amazing survival skills, plus super cool hidden compartments, so Mata Nui comes to respect and appreciate all he brings to the team.

THREE ADDITIONAL GLADIATORS – GREEN GLADIATOR (seen and defeated in act one – few lines only) and JOHMAD and DALIZ, who will join Mata

Nui's team towards the end. Beyond needing to be awesome looking fighters with super cool weapons, they are not key *characters*.

GALAX – is a Morg and the official *gladiator broker* for all the villages. He's got that smooth-talking agent thing down. Galax unabashedly admits he's in it for every comfort he can squeeze out of the villages. The villagers may balk at the size of his cut, but they appreciate his honest, no nonsense approach. Everyone agrees, Galax is a likable guy...but they are in for the rudest possible awakening.

GATHERERS AND SKRAL – are raiding nomads. The Gatherers are (probably) the same size as Skral, but shrouded in wrappings so they are never seen. The Skral are powerful warriors, some even larger than the gladiators, like **TUMA**, the *apparent* leader of the Skral. The Skral *MAY* ride on **VOROX**, vulture-like creatures with lethal fangs and claws. The Gatherers ride on **ROCK STEEDS**, mounts that look like they are made of stone.

(NOTE: On Vorox designs – still pending whether these beasts will be grounded or capable of short flight. A compromise might be possible if we give them panther-like leaping skills.)

RAANU are biomechanical rhino-esque beasts of burden that the gladiators use to pull their **SAND CHARIOTS**. They are fast and powerful benign creatures.

SCARBACS – biomechanical beetle-like creatures – one of them will be transformed into Mata Nui's *sentient* **GLADIATOR SHIELD** (more description to follow in text).

SAND RAY – a gigantic biomechanical desert stingray creature with a monstrous energy-crackling stinger.

SETS AND LOCATION

Bara Nui is a treacherous, primarily desert landscape, however it is by no means flat. There are high sweeping dunes, deep canyons, monstrous boulders and unearthly buttes and mesas and even a steaming hot spring. It is a world in ruin. There are remnants of long lost metallic structures protruding from the sand or rock like freakish skeletons. In order for the visuals to stay exciting, it is not all flat deserts. At the base of the mountains to the north is where the Skral nomad camp is found (description of cool 'mobile camp' in text).

NOTE: We will use times of DAY AND NIGHT to add variety to colors, shade and shadow.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. VAST EXPANSE OF WATER – DUSK

Dreamlike MISTS swirl just above the tranquil water for a beat, the mist parts as—

THE MASK OF LIFE dramatically shatters the surface its eyes AGLOW as we hear Mata Nui's 'narrator' voice sounding regal (**less cool and conversational than how it will sound in real time**): *Once I ruled a universe...*

Slowly, dramatically the figure of MATA NUI rises up from the water's depths as we hear: *Until it was taken from me...*

As he continues rising up, Mata Nui's extraordinary size is demonstrated by the force of the water cascading off of him. *Once I protected a people now lost to me...*

His towering height is made clear as his head breaks through the clouds. This giant seems invincible as we hear: *All that I had ever know was lost in an instant...*

Suddenly a brilliant <EXPLOSION> surrounds the towering Mata Nui, igniting upwards, and FILLING SCREEN as, we...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE-LIKE VOID – CONTINUOUS

A fiery golden *METEOR* streaks through shot as Mata Nui's voice is heard: *All that I had once been was shattered beyond recognition...*

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BARA NUI – DESERT - NIGHT

This is a scorched landscape ringed by distant mountains. The area is desolate except for the twisted remains of what might have once been a metal archway, or perhaps the rib bones of a giant metallic beast.

The flaming *meteor* streaks through the night sky and—

<CRASHES> into the sand <EXPLODING> into a fireball.

As the flames die around the *meteor*, it becomes clear that it is actually the still sizzling hot MASK OF LIFE. We hear Mata Nui's voice: *Yet somehow the Mask Of Life endured...*

As the searing hot mask begins to cool, we hear strange <CLICKING> and then reveal it is coming from—

The <SNAPPING> pincers of dozens of SCARBAC - biomechanical scarab-like creatures with glossy shells - all depicting the same glyph-like symbol: a unique EYE.

The Scarbac surround the Mask, their <CLICKING> becoming more intense as they begin to close in on it, but they suddenly scatter as—

The mask begins rising up, the sand around it swirling into a vortex that slowly begins creating/*piecing* together a shimmering BODY out of fragmented ashen stones and sand - in a dazzling display of FX - as we hear: *And out of the ashen sands...*

The form solidifies into a new seven foot tall MATA NUI – as we hear: *I was given new life, a second chance, which I must now use to find my way home and free my people.*

(End ‘narration’ voice - begin ‘real time’ voice - less regal, less distant, and more conversational in tone and attitude.)

Mata Nui touches his arms appraisingly, then he flexes them as he says: *All right... so maybe I’m not the giant I once was... but I’m alive—*

Mata Nui takes his first step and his knees nearly buckle under him as he finishes with a rye gasp: *I just hope I can stay that way long enough to get used to this new body.*

But before Mata Nui even has a chance to get his balance and bearings, suddenly there’s a piercing <SCREECH> and he looks up just as—

A monstrous, biomechanical, vulture-like VOROX is leaping towards him, its massive claws and fangs open and looking ominous. **(NOTE: Will stage this so that if it is decided that the Vorox don’t fly, it can be leaping through the air feline-style.)**

(MINI-BATTLE #1 – will visually establish Mata Nui’s limited abilities, but it is also clear that he has the spirit and courage of a great warrior, if not the skills yet.)

A SERIES OF DRAMATIC ACTION SHOTS - Mata Nui always on the defensive, blocking powerful blows from the Vorox talons/claws—

Narrowly avoiding being crushed by the Vorox lethal fangs—

Mata Nui being battered back—

Slammed to the ground with camera shaking force—

Mata Nui rolling clear an instant before being slashed by razor sharp claws that rip through stone—

Until finally, when it looks like Mata Nui is doomed, about to be crushed in the Vorox's jaws, suddenly—

The Scarbacs swarm the Vorox in mass, covering its eyes, blinding the beast—

The Scarbac's pincers <CLICK> frantically as the <SCREECHING> Vorox battles to hurl off the swarm.

Mata Nui uses the diversion to steady himself, but the vicious beast continues to lash out at him, even when—

The sand under the Vorox suddenly begins to churn and the Vorox sinks into what seems to be quicksand.

But before the beast goes under, it lunges out and grabs hold of Mata Nui, determined to drag our hero down with him.

Mata Nui struggles for all he's worth and finally manages to deliver a blow that not only frees him, but also connects with—

One of the Vorox's lethal fangs - <CRACK> - and the entire massive fang breaks free—

Mata Nui grabs it and uses the fang to stab solid ground and leverage himself to safety.

As Mata Nui watches, a MYSTERY BEAST pulls what remains of the Vorox under the sand - we glimpse only a freakish tentacle with eyes on it.

(NOTE: IF we decide to keep this *mystery beast*, we will reuse it in the finale. Otherwise, we can simply play this quicksand beat being created by the Scarbac churning the sand).

Mata Nui is using the Vorox fang for support after the exhaustive struggle, when he reacts to the Scarbacs' renewed <CLICKING>.

The Scarbac begin surrounding him, their <CLICKING> suddenly taking on a new rhythm, a lyrical <TONE> that resonates around the Mask Of Life and Mata Nui suddenly realizes: *Of course, this is how you communicate, your language. Somehow the mask must be translating it for me... since I understand... well... at least I think I do...*

One of the Scarbacs springs onto Mata Nui's arm as he says: *Listen, little friend, I have no idea if what you're proposing could actually work... or more importantly... if you fully understand the sacrifice you'd be making. Are you really sure...?*

Its answer comes as the Scarbac moves to touch the Mask Of Life, which begins to GLOW and then—

CU – MASK AND SCARBAC – seem to FUSE together, the EDGES of each turning into what looks like GOLDEN LIQUID LAVA.

(NOTE: We will reuse this method/FX whenever the Mask transforms anything.)

Then, in a brilliant FLASH: The Scarbac is transformed into—

A magnificent GLADIATOR SHIELD with the Scarbac glyph symbol, but this EYE suddenly BLINKS and Mata Nui realizes with awe: *The eye can see!*

Before Mata Nui can begin to fully grasp what has just happened, he suddenly hears then sees—

VEHICLE #1 - A SAND CHARIOT (crudely pieced together with salvaged parts) glides along on sled-like razor skis, pulled by a RAANU, a powerful, but surprisingly swift, uni-horned, biomechanical beast of burden.

At the reins is GALAX, who takes in Mata Nui, who intuitively assumes a defensive pose, while unconsciously twirling the Vorox fang like a veteran swordsman might.

As he gets closer, Galax also takes in scattered plumage from the Vorox on the sand and he says with an impressed chuckle: *Relax, stranger, I wouldn't dare take on anyone who just defeated a Vorox. But there are plenty a lot more daring than me... So climb aboard...unless of course you'd rather end up captured and enslaved by Gatherers or worse, the Skral.*

Gatherers... Skral? Mata Nui asks as he cautiously moves toward the sand chariot.

I'll explain once we have speed on our side. By the way, the name's Galax!

As he climbs into the sand chariot, Mata Nui introduces himself and Galax instantly slaps the reins, urging the beasts into a run, as...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT – NIGHT – MOMENTS LATER

The chariot speeds across the sand, past silhouetted ruins that look like bizarre sculptures in the silver moonlight, and we hear Galax saying: *It's pretty much the same all over Bara Nui these days. You have the Morg, peaceful villagers like myself, trying to survive in this ravaged land, while bands of ruthless nomads called Gatherers carry out raids for their warrior masters the Skral.*

IN THE SAND CHARIOT - Galax tries to get Mata Nui to say where he's from and what brings him here, but Mata Nui only reveals: *I've traveled far, but my journey has really just begun.*

Galax is clearly amused by this enigmatic stranger: *Not only did you defeat a Vorox, but you're wise enough not to trust the first Morg you meet.*

INTER-CUT between the ruin-dappled landscape, the thundering hooves of the Raanu and Mata Nui and Galax in the sand chariot as—

THE SUN BEGINS RISING beyond the distant mountains casting a fiery red glow on the scene as—

Galax explains: *As you can see Bara Nui is now little more than a decaying graveyard of a once prosperous world.*

When Mata Nui asks what happened, Galax shrugs: *What usually causes the downfall of a civilization? Complacency? Greed? You tell me?*

Mata Nui stares off and says almost in a whisper, his inner turmoil evident: *Evil.*

As they race along, we see—

A SMALL BAND OF GATHERERS – watching them from atop their ROCK STEED mounts as we hear Galax continue VO: *Sure, the villages used to have weapons and defenses against invaders, but these days they're either falling apart or half buried. And no one has the skills to repair them anymore.*

BACK IN THE SAND CHARIOT – Galax looks over Mata Nui's shield commenting: *Now if we had shields like yours, things might be different.*

Mata Nui doesn't take the bait and remains silent, so Galax just laughs: *Fair enough. Frankly, I don't really care what dark secrets you might be hiding. My job is to make sure the villages have replacement gladiators and you, my friend, look like you'd do fine in the arena.*

As Mata Nui starts to question what that means exactly—

Galax points ahead saying: *See for yourself.*

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNU (VILLAGE #1) - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

It is small village consisting of a giant metallic shelter, a few small dwellings made of rock and *bone*.

As Galax's sand chariot moves through the village, Mata Nui wonders why it seems abandoned.

Galax says: *There must be some new dispute between villages. Only one way to settle it... in the Gladiator Arena...*

Up ahead they can see MORG VILLAGERS beginning to <CHEER> as they gather around...

EXT. GLADIATOR ARENA (#1) - CONTINUOUS

This is a very crude arena in serious disrepair, but the jagged metal and skeletal shapes create a very cool effect, casting ominous shadows by dawn's glow on—

TWO GLADIATORS are <CLASHING> weapons (style TBA) in the center of the arena. One is obviously winning the contest—

AKAR, the red armored gladiator, is clearly a veteran warrior with extraordinary strength and stamina. His opponent is a GREEN clad gladiator who is being driven steadily back, his shield being battered by Akar's relentless blows.

WE INTER-CUT BETWEEN the battling Gladiators and Mata Nui and Galax – as they move in to watch the action.

Galax tells Mata Nui: *Akar, the red, was once the greatest gladiator in all Bara Nui, but he's burnt out, lost his taste for battle. His days are numbered.*

Just then, SACUU, the Morg village leader, comes to greet Galax and check out Mata Nui, assuming that the stranger is *a replacement Gladiator that the village leaders will be bidding on.*

Galax tells Sacuu to be patient, then he tells Mata Nui: *Like I said, this is how all the Morg villages settle their disagreements: one-on-one, Gladiator against Gladiator.*

IN THE ARENA, the Green Gladiator is so weak now he can hardly keep his shield up. Akar asks if he will concede, but the younger gladiator refuses.

Akar moves in close, slamming his shield against the novice's and whispering to him: *Don't be a fool; I don't want to hurt you.*

But the Green Gladiator refuses and shoves Akar back, then he swings his weapon and nearly downs Akar.

Akar sighs, he has no choice but to fight back.

ON THE SIDELINES - Galax tells Mata Nui: *So you see, each village needs to have at least one Gladiator at all times to settle disagreements and help protect against raids from the Gatherers and the Skral. Which is why I'm constantly on the hunt for new talent... like you... to fill the void as the old gladiators are defeated or lose face.*

(NOTE: IF it is decided that they have masks to surrender we will establish it here.)

Mata Nui says: *Thanks. But I have my own battles to fight and they're not here, not against people I don't even know.*

Suddenly, the villagers begin shouting excitedly.

IN THE ARENA - Akar is pressing his attack and knocks the Green Gladiator's weapon away, then he shatters his shield with a final blow that drives his rival to his knees.

Akar stands over the Green, saying: *Are you ready to concede now or is your pride still as thick as your head?*

(NOTE: Again, if we go with masks, Green will relinquish his here.)

Green concedes and Akar helps him to his feet saying quietly: *You did your best, there's no shame in losing.*

Green walks off unsteadily, muttering testily: *How would you know? You've never lost.*

Akar sighs to himself that it is just a matter of time now... *since victory has neither purpose nor honor anymore.*

AT THE EDGE OF THE ARENA - Galax intercepts Akar before he can leave the arena, saying that he'd like Akar *to test out the skills of this newcomer, see if he has what it takes to be a gladiator.*

Akar tells Mata Nui: *If you've got half a brain, you'll forget about fighting.*

Mata Nui replies: *Sound advice, unfortunately I doubt I'll be able to avoid it. But I didn't come here to become a gladiator.*

Galax refuses to give up: *Fine, but what does it hurt to get in a little workout against one of the best? Nothing formal, I promise, just an exhibition match.*

Mata Nui admits: *Actually, I could use the practice...* Mata Nui looks to—

Akar, who shrugs, admitting he's curious about Mata Nui's odd shield: *And... is that really a Vorox fang you've been twirling like a sword?*

Before Mata Nui can reply, Galax jumps in: *Excellent, then it's agreed! You'll fight tonight! That way the other village leaders will have time to get here too... just in case Mata Nui changes his mind.*

Akar turns to Mata Nui saying with a hint of humor, or perhaps it's a threat: *Get some rest... I promise you'll need all your strength.*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARNU – NIGHT

Campfires blaze all around the village and torches tower over the arena, as we hear Galax booming voice shouting: *The Gladiators are ready! Let the battle begin!*

CUT TO:

EXT. BARNU ARENA – CONTINUOUS

A <CHEERING> crowd of Morg surrounds the arena.

Mata Nui stands in the center of the arena facing Akar.

Mata Nui says: *Guess there's no way to convince Galax that no matter what, I'm never going to be one of his gladiators?*

Akar replies with a half laugh: *Oh I think he'll get it, once I lay you out on your back. So, you ready?*

Mata Nui nods and brings up his shield just as Akar delivers his first powerful blow, which slams Mata Nui right off his feet.

As Akar presses his attack, Mata Nui stumbles about, desperately blocking blows with the Vorox fang.

INTER-CUT BETWEEN THE ARENA BATTLE and—

THE SIDELINES - Galax watches the battle, distressed that his new prospect is turning out to be a major disappointment. Galax turns as—

A BLUE-CLAD GLADIATOR joins him. Only the voice betrays that this is a woman, her armor and attitude are pure androgynous warrior. MARTA can't hide her curiosity about this newcomer. *Even though he's pretty pathetic and obviously no match for Akar, there's still something about this guy...*

IN THE ARENA - Akar delivers a devastating blow and Mata Nui is slammed off his feet—

Mata Nui lands hard, flat on his back, the fang held protectively in front of him, as he waits for the inevitable final blow.

But as the fang rests against the brow of The Mask Of Life—

CU – MASK AND FANG – the mask begins to GLOW and then the strange fusing, LIQUID LAVA FX melds the two for a beat and then in a brilliant FLASH—

THE FANG is transformed into an extraordinary gleaming weapon (design TBA) that reflects its *organic* origin.

As EVERYONE, including Mata Nui reacts with awed surprise....

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. BARNU VILLAGE – GLADIATOR ARENA - CONTINUOUS

Startled by this sudden turn of events, Akar drops his guard and—

Mata Nui seizes the moment and brings the great red gladiator down with one sweeping blow—

Then before Akar can stop him, Mata Nui is over him, his new weapon poised for victory.

ON THE SIDELINES - Marta and Galax react with amazement, as do all the Morg watching:

Who is this gladiator? Where did he come from! Whose village will he fight for?

But it's Marta that is most intrigued and we hear her sotto sigh: *At last... this is who I've been waiting for...*

IN THE ARENA - Akar wishes that Mata Nui could just finish him... *better that than living life as an outcast.*

Akar starts to remove his mask.

(NOTE: again, need to decide if this is how we show a gladiator's defeat or if it is surrendering weapons or some other symbolic means – or we can just go with the 'notch' in the mask or belt, etc. showing another victory)

But Mata Nui refuses and offers his hand instead, saying: *I know what it is to be an outcast...*

Akar takes his hand. Mata Nui has won his first ally.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARNU VILLAGE - ONE OF THE CRUDE SHELTERS - LATER

Mata Nui watches as Akar is preparing to leave the village, saying: *I should have given it up sooner. A Gladiator past his prime is no good to anyone.*

Mata Nui rubs the back of his head saying: *Trust me, that's not your problem. My aching body can attest to that.*

As Akar laughs, Galax enters saying to Mata Nui: *I've spoken to Sacuu, the village leader, he'll pay us both handsomely if you agree to stay on and take Akar's place as*

Gladiator. Or if this place doesn't suit you, I'm sure I can make a deal with the village of your choice.

Mata Nui thanks him, but declines, saying: *Like I said, I have my own battles to fight... but first I need to find a way back to my own homeland.*

As Galax leaves shaking his head, Akar asks Mata Nui where he's from.

Mata Nui is reluctant, but admits: *You may think I'm mad... Okay... I once ruled an entire empire... but I lost it all to a powerful evil.*

Akar doesn't think Mata Nui's story is crazy... *At least not anymore than a guy stepping into the arena armed with just a fang, that he somehow transforms into the finest fighting tool I've ever seen. By the way, mind telling me just how you did that?*

As Mata Nui fingers his mask, he sighs: *Honestly? I'm not really sure. The only thing I'm certain of at this point... is that I have to find some way to return to my own world.*

At that moment, Marta steps out of the shadows saying: *I might just be able to help you with that... for a price of course.*

Akar introduces Mata Nui to Marta, saying reprovingly: *My headstrong friend here may like lurking around in the shadows eavesdropping... but as gladiators go, Marta's one of the best. You can count on her for a clean, fair fight... so I believe you can trust what she says.*

Mata Nui asks her to explain what she meant and Marta tells him: *I know about this place... a secret cavern filled with ancient equipment, charts, weird looking glyphs and stuff. I discovered it ages ago. It's what's kept me from going nuts all these years... believing there was another world, far from this miserable excuse for a wasteland.*

Mata Nui is anxious for her to take him there, but Marta says: *You want my help; first you have to promise to take me with you. Otherwise... no deal.*

Mata Nui says: *I can only promise I will... if it's actually possible.*

Marta studies him for a beat, then: *Good enough. But don't even think of pulling a fast one, pal, 'cause you're my ticket outta this stinkin' pit.*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARNU VILLAGE – DAWN

Akar and Mata Nui are in Marta's crude sand chariot speeding away from the village through dawn's blue mists.

INSIDE THE SAND CHARIOT – Marta has the reins and Akar is scanning the horizon for threats as Mata Nui asks where this secret cavern is located.

Marta replies: *Taajun, that's my village. It's on the other side of that deep canyon.*

As they head towards the distant canyon mouth - CAMERA PANS BACK TO:

A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE “THE TRAITOR” sneaking away from the village towards a cluster of boulders (we **cannot** see who it is in this light, only that size-wise, whoever it is, looks to be one of the Morg).

BEHIND THE BOULDERS - TWO GATHERERS wait astride rock steeds. The Traitor remains in shadow and speaks in hushed tones (so we **cannot** tell who it is) but the message is clear: *The Gladiators are heading for Taajun. Make certain they never arrive.*

The Two Gatherers understand.

As they race off on their Rock Steeds, we...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT CANYON – A LITTLE LATER - DAY

Marta's sand chariot is racing into the mouth of the canyon – DRAMATIC ANGLES – accentuate the almost reptilian texture, and colors of this unique canyon, its jagged rock walls looming high around them.

Akar looks around uneasily: *This canyon's ideal for an ambush.*

Marta just laughs: *Even the Gatherers are too smart to take on three Gladiators, it's not like we have anything much worth stealing.* She glances at Mata Nui's shield and weapon and adds: *Well, maybe you do, but there's no way they'd know it...*

Akar suddenly points ahead and the ground begins to <RUMBLE>: *We've got bigger problems than Skral!*

Just ahead, the sand seems to explode as—

A GIGANTIC **SAND RAY** suddenly rises up blocking their path, its lethal, <CRACKLING> stinger whipping ominously sending—

<BLASTS> of energy ricocheting all around the canyon like streaks of LIGHTNING.

Mata Nui is even more surprised when he realizes that Marta doesn't intend to stop - she's charging the chariot straight towards the towering beast.

But Akar understands and points behind them—

MOUNTED GATHERERS AND SKRAL are charging their Rock Steeds and waving their weapons at them. Akar shouts: *The Sand Ray is nothing compared to them! Gatherers are one thing, but most of those savages are Skral!*

Marta whips the reins charging the beasts towards a small gap between the Sand Ray and the canyon wall while shouting: *We have to try and make it to my village, there's another Gladiator there that can help us! We just have to make through that gap!*

The Sand Ray's lethal tail whips around closing the gap—

It looks like Marta is going to crash right into the <CRACKLING> stinger tail, but she suddenly yanks the reins to one side while shouting: *Hang on!*

The Raanu turns sharply, the beast <SNORTING> in protest, as the chariot spins around, nearly flipping, spitting up sand as it skids to a stop.

Akar and Marta instantly leap out, drawing their weapons as—

The mounted Gatherers and Skral continue charging towards them.

Akar shouts to Mata Nui: *Marta and I will try to fight them off! We'll let you have the Sand Ray.*

Thanks? Mata Nui groans as he draws his weapon and leaps from the chariot.

BATTLE #3 - UTILIZING HIGHLY DRAMATIC ANGLES – MARTA AND AKAR – doing battle against the MOUNTED SKRAL AND GATHERERS within a STORM OF FLYING SAND and <CRACKLING> streams of Sand Ray tail blasts that ricochet around the canyon.

CU - weapons clashing—

Akar knocking Gatherers off their Rock Steeds—

Rock Steed rearing and trying to crush Marta with its stone hooves—

Marta demonstrating her agility and her fighting skills, while not far behind them—

MATA NUI BATTLES THE SAND RAY – SERIES OF DRAMATIC ANGLES:

CU – Mata Nui's weapon and shield being hit with <BLASTS> of energy that narrowly miss charring our hero—

Mata Nui showing his ever increasing speed - as he leaps and flips trying to stay clear of the whipping <CRACKLING> stinger tail.

As Mata Nui struggles he hears, then sees—

Marta and Akar are losing ground in their battle. *We're finished unless we can reach my village.*

Mata Nui shouts to them: *Get to the chariot! There's one chance—*

Mata Nui sees the stinger tail whipping towards him, but this time he doesn't try to leap over it, but instead—

Mata Nui flings his shield and then leaps onto it just as the stinger whips within reach and—

Mata Nui, standing on his protective shield, lands on the <CRACKING> stinger tail and is instantly whipped up high into the air—

Mata Nui lands on a ledge outcropping, just above the Sand Ray and then—

Mata Nui stabs his weapon into the stone outcropping—

Then Mata Nui leaps clear just as—

The outcropping/ledge breaks free, causing an <AVALANCHE> of jagged stone and debris to cascade down on—

The Sand Ray – has no time to react before it is slammed by the avalanche rock and debris.

The stunned creature reels <SCREECHING> in anger and pain as—

Akar and Marta race the sand chariot towards a narrow gap between beast and wall and—

The chariot charges past the giant creature, just a moment before—

The Sand Ray collapses forward, right over—

The startled Gatherers and Skral and their mounts!

NEARING THE END OF THE CANYON - Marta and Akar look up just as—

Mata Nui is sliding down the side of the canyon towards them, grabbing up his fallen shield as he goes.

Marta slows just long enough for Mata Nui to leap into the chariot.

As they speed along toward the far end of the canyon, Akar slaps Mata Nui on the back, laughing at his *genius, not to mention the raw guts it took to try such a daring feat.*

Marta is laughing hard too: *Wonder how long it'll take them to crawl out from under the belly of the beast?*

But their joy and relief is short-lived. As they come out of the canyon, they react in stunned horror to what lies ahead—

EXT. TAAJUN VILLAGE (#2) – DAY – CONTINUOUS

The entire village is aflame, smoke blocking out the sun. The sounds of <CRACKLING> wood and overheated metal eerily blend with o.s. moans and cries for help.

IN THE SAND CHARIOT – Marta is desperately trying to get more speed out of the Raanu while berating herself: *This is my fault! I should have been here to help... Gresh!?* She suddenly remembers her fellow Gladiator with heightened panic. *We have to find Gresh! He's just a novice!*

Akar tries to calm Marta, but it's useless, she leaps out of the chariot while it's still moving and desperately begins searching through the smoldering ruins.

Mata Nui grabs the reins and slows the chariot as he spots movement just ahead through the flames and smoke.

GRESH, the young Gladiator is staggering towards them clutching his shoulder and gasping: *Go. Save yourselves... the Skral... coming back...*

Akar and Mata Nui rush to either side of Gresh just as he is collapsing, catching the injured Gladiator just as—

Marta comes running in, panicking at the sight of the unconscious Gresh.

He's still alive. Akar assures her as he looks O.S. and adds with a fatalistic tone: *But none of us will be for long if Tuma has his way.*

POV - TUMA - a towering Skral Gladiator – moving like a phantom through the smoke, his eyes as red as the fire all around them – as we hear Akar in VO telling Mata Nui that *Tuma is the savage leader of the Skral.*

As the smoke swirls in his wake, we see that Tuma is leading a battalion of Skral and Gatherers and shouting at them: *Destroy the gladiators!*

As they look towards the overwhelming force about to close the distance, Marta says: *It's hopeless, there's just too many of them.*

But Mata Nui suddenly sees a FLASH OF LIGHT IN THE EYE ON HIS SHIELD and hears a familiar <CLICKING> so he says: *There's always hope!*

Suddenly, the ground between the Skral and our heroes begins churning, filled with <CLICKING> Scarbac creating a SINKHOLE CHASM - between heroes and villains.

DUST mixes with the already SMOKY air, creating cover for our heroes to escape, with Marta telling them: *We'll be safe in the cavern...*

CUT TO:

A MASSIVE SLAB OF ROCK is just sliding closed over a hole in the earth, the secret entrance once again invisible.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

The downward passage is marked with GLYPHS AND SYMBOLS that Mata Nui wants to stop and examine, but Marta is anxious to help Gresh. *The cavern is just ahead.*

INT. SECRET CAVERN - CONTINUOUS

Marta leads them into a vast chamber filled with a myriad of bizarre looking, rusty machine parts, half-buried tools and weapons, all of it ancient. The layout almost looks like it once served as some kind of laboratory.

(NOTE: This was the testing ground used by the Great Beings and it is where the plans for the Giant Robot will soon be revealed.)

As he brings Gresh into the cavern, Akar suddenly draws his weapon, surprising Mata Nui and Marta as he stares into the shadows demanding: *Show yourself. Now.*

A tense beat, and then: BERIX rises into view, hands held out defensively as he stammers: *Okay, okay. Everything's cool, it's just me, Berix.*

Akar asks what Berix is doing down here, but Marta answers with venom in her voice: *Isn't it obvious? This sneak thief is the traitor! He's the one that's been telling the Skral when the gladiators are gone and the villages are defenseless!*

Berix insists: *First off, I'm not a thief, I'm a collector, and second I live down here. I haven't been outside in days.*

Mata Nui has no idea who's telling the truth, so he looks to Akar, who says: *True enough, I've heard rumors that Berix has sticky fingers, but I have no proof of that. What I have seen first hand is that he's a better than average healer.*

Berix replies with feigned modesty: *Actually I'm just a master at finding and applying rare medicinal herbs, which, from the look of your friend there, you could use at the moment... if you want him to survive.*

Marta still looks ready to pound on Berix, but Akar says: *Berix is right. Gresh is getting weaker by the minute.*

Marta begrudgingly agrees, but warns that if her friend doesn't pull through... *the little thief is toast.*

Great, no pressure, Berix groans as he opens a compartment in his chest (**or wherever model dictates**) and begins pulling out tins of herbs and creams, then he gets to work on Gresh, while—

Mata Nui finally takes a moment to look around the cavern, which *somehow feels remarkably familiar* to him.

Marta says with obvious contempt: *This place was obviously built by the old rulers, the ones that some fools still refer to as the Great Beings...Hmph, Great Destroyers is more like it.*

Akar tells Marta: *No one knows for certain what caused the collapse of Bara Nui* and before she can argue, Mata Nui steps in asking her to show him exactly what she brought him here to see.

Marta leads him to a half buried HATCH WITH THE 'YIN-YANG' SYMBOL ON IT.

Opening it, Mata Nui finds a small cache of more delicate ancient equipment and something that shakes him to his core: *The plans for a gigantic mechanical being...?*

Akar and Marta both suspect Mata Nui knows more about the Great Beings than he's letting on. *Maybe it's time you started sharing some of your secrets...?*

Mata Nui hesitates, glancing over at—

Berix – to make sure he is out of earshot – but of course the little scavenger is straining to hear everything, while he works on Gresh.

Mata Nui confides: *The truth...? I'm still not sure. But this place, these plans... it means I'm on the right track. But I still need more information to understand exactly where I came from and how I can get back home and reclaim the power I've lost.*

Marta catches Berix leaning even closer and snaps at the little snitch.

Hey, take it easy; I was trying to tell ya I've done all I can for Gresh... at least for now. But he'll need more treatments, so I guess that means I'm gonna have to tag along with you guys.

Marta suspects the little thief is lying, but they can't risk leaving him behind.

Akar says: *We have to get moving and warn the other villages that the Skral are increasing their attacks.*

Mata Nui agrees, they have their duty to perform and he has his: *It's time for me to resume my own quest.*

No way! Marta exclaims. *You're not leaving without me and I can't just walk out on my people in the middle of a war.*

Before Mata Nui can argue Akar steps in: *Trust me, friend, you aren't ready to go it alone. But I promise, if you'll stay and help us finish this, I'll teach you everything I know.*

Gresh moves unsteadily to join them and Marta chides him for not resting. Gresh assures her: *I'm all right, just a little weak still. But I'm well enough to know we aren't going anywhere unless Berix knows some miracle cure for our weapons too.*

Marta and Akar discover that Gresh is right, only Mata Nui's shield and weapon weren't lost or destroyed in the conflict.

Gresh sighs: *We run into another band of Skral, we'll all be cut down.*

Unless... Akar says as he and Marta both turn to look at Mata Nui. *We saw what you did with that Vorox fang.*

Marta adds: *Not to mention your shield has a real eye... So how about using your power to amp up our weapons too?*

Mata Nui touches his mask: *Truth is, I'm not sure how it happens, whether the Mask Of Life is deciding what it will do for me... or if I'm somehow giving it orders.*

Akar says: *I'm betting you're the one with the real power.*

Mata Nui says: *Let's find out. One thing I'm pretty sure of, whatever the mask transforms has to be at least in some part organic.*

Berix excitedly steps up, pulling a crude tool/weapon from another internal 'body' compartment, saying: *I could be a gladiator too if Mata Nui can transform this—*

Marta shoves him aside: *Keep dreaming, squirt.*

As a grumbling Berix backs off—

Marta excitedly hands Mata Nui her broken weapon and everyone watches in silent wonder as—

DRAMATIC – as Mata Nui touches the weapon to the brow of his mask and we see the same fusing, LIQUID LAVA FX, then the weapon is transformed (style TBA).

Mata Nui hands Marta her new awesome weapon and she holds it high in admiration: *Looks like we're back in business, boys, better and badder than ever... thanks to Mata Nui!*

As Gresh and Akar hold out their weapons and shields to Mata Nui, we...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. DESERT – DAY – NIGHT

OPEN ON THE SAND CHARIOT as Berix works the reins and Gresh, still leaning weakly, stands beside him admiring his new shield and weapon (style TBA).

Berix is grumbling that after all he's done: *I deserve a fancy new fighting tool too.*

WIDEN to reveal Marta, Akar and Mata Nui walking along beside the chariot, Akar saying: *Mata Nui isn't the only one that could use a few tips on fighting...* Before Marta can protest he adds: *And I don't mean with your mouth. Pay attention, you might just learn something.*

Akar suddenly whirls his weapon over his head bringing it down towards Mata Nui and forcing him to bring his shield up fast <CLANG> -

Mata Nui is sent slamming back into a startled Marta: *What the...!?*

First lesson: never drop your guard. Akar tells them.

As Berix and Gresh laugh, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS - TWIN VILLAGES (#3 and 4) – DAWN

ESTABLISHING SHOT – the Sand Chariot is nearing the top of a tall sand dune. Akar is riding on one of the Raanu keeping watch, while Berix is sprawled behind him, just waking up. Mata Nui, Marta and Gresh are in the chariot. Mountains loom in the near distance beyond. We hear Akar's voice rousing his sleeping companions, then adding: *The twin villages of Twi Anu are just over the rise.*

POV down on Twin villages – two small crude villages, mostly in ruin - are set close together - separated by **GLADIATOR ARENA (#2)**.

(NOTE: These two villages are shaped – not too obviously – so that they later can form two sections of an arm – with the arena forming the elbow.)

As our heroes head down, Marta says: *Looks like everyone's at the arena, a Gladiator contest must be about to start...*

CUT TO:

EXT. GLADIATOR ARENA – DAWN - CONTINUOUS

Galax is at the edge of the arena with Sacuu and two other VILLAGE LEADERS watching with the MORG/VILLAGERS. Galax comments to the local leaders: *This should be quite a contest; Johmad and Daliz are both at the top of their form.*

IN THE ARENA - COOL CYLINDER PODS - rise out of the ground on either side – each containing one of the two gladiators: JOHMAD AND DALIZ.

Mata Nui, Marta, Gresh (still leaning on Marta for support) follow Akar, who is marching angrily towards the edge of the arena.

Berix follows behind, looking around uneasily, so Marta says: *What's wrong, afraid you might run into someone you ripped off recently? Or are you looking for one of your Skral spies to tell them our plan.*

Berix reacts genuinely hurt, insisting: *I'm not a thief and I'm not the traitor either. I care about the villages just as much as you.*

Before Marta can retort, they reach the edge of the arena and Akar's disgust is palpable as he sees the two Gladiators facing off. *I cannot believe the Morg can't come up with a better way to settle disputes than risking the lives of these noble gladiators!*

IN THE ARENA - MINI BATTLE #5: A one-on-one conflict between Johmad and Daliz – equally matched, their crude weapons (styles TBA) sparking as they collide with brute force.

As Johmad is knocked off his feet by a powerful blow—

ON THE SIDE LINES – Galax shakes his head: *Looks like I may be in the market for another replacement before this is over.*

Akar steps in saying: *Not if I can help it.*

Mata Nui, Marta and Gresh move in as Akar steps up to stand on the arena rail so he can shout at the surrounding Morg: *The fighting between Gladiators must stop! Now and forever! We need to band together against our real enemies, not beat each other senseless in the arena!*

Sacuu and the other village leaders scoff and shout: *Mind your own business, you old fool! Maybe you've forgotten you lost face! You're not a true Gladiator anymore!*

IN THE ARENA - the two gladiators have stopped fighting and are moving towards Akar and the village leaders saying with respect: *If Akar has something to say, hear him out! Go head, Akar tell us what's on your mind.*

Akar's voice can't hide his pride at their display of respect: *The enemy has left us no other choice. If we do not unite against them, the Gatherers and Skral will wipe us out one village at a time!*

The Morg begins shouting like a fearful mob: *There's no way we can stand up to the Gatherers, let alone the more powerful Skral. It's madness!*

Marta can't believe it: *Aren't you listening? There isn't anything else we can do!*

Gresh shouts out: *Like it or not, eventually we'll have to fight back or wind up like everyone back at our village.*

But even Galax thinks the idea is madness. *Sure I understand how you feel, but uniting the villages is impossible. Even if we could learn to get along, there's no way we can pull it off.*

Akar addresses the crowd: *We expected you'd react this way, so we've asked our new friend here to give you a little demonstration of what he can do to help. Daliz give Mata Nui your weapon.*

Daliz complies and Mata Nui presses it to his brow and the same fusing, LIQUID LAVA-like FX transforms it into awesome new weapon (styles TBA).

The crowd gasps as the grateful Gladiator takes his new weapon and thanks Mata Nui.

Akar calls to the village leaders who are huddled together. *So, will you do it! Will you unite the villages?*

Sacuu speaks for the rest: *Under one condition: Mata Nui and the other gladiators must swear to stay and protect us.*

All the Gladiators turn to Mata Nui, who hesitates only moment, then says: *I'll stick until the battle is won... or lost.*

Then the Gladiators all answer as one voice: *We swear!*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TWIN VILLAGES – DAY - MONTAGE SEQUENCE

Morg and Gladiators working together, using the Raanu to haul boulders into position forming a—

A crude FORTRESS WALL—

Berix lighting a fuse – then running like mad as—

A series of <EXPLOSIONS> blast in a straight line forming—

A MOAT-LIKE TRENCH around the back of the villages.

Akar, Daliz and Johmad struggling to position an ancient looking cannon-like weapon between the rock wall and then—

Mata Nui moving to the weapon and pressing his brow against it and (fusing, liquid lava-like FX) the weapon is transformed (style TBA).

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE TWIN VILLAGES – NIGHT

We see the shadowy figure of the MYSTERY TRAITOR slipping away from the village towards the STEAMING hot springs just beyond the villages. A beat and then—

Another SHADOWY FIGURE is stealthily following him.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOT SPRINGS - MOMENTS LATER

As the MYSTERY TRAITOR nears the mist-shrouded spring, he is suddenly seized from behind and spun around by—

Marta, who is not at all surprised to be staring at—

Berix!

Marta spits out: *I knew you were the traitor, you rotten little--*

Before Berix can deny it, they both react to a hushed voice saying: *I was counting on at least one of you following, but two is even better.*

You!? They both gasp as they turn to face the *real traitor* - who they both clearly recognize (but we do **NOT** see him yet, he remains in the shadows).

Marta is about to pull her weapon, but Berix stops her as—

Dozens of mounted Gatherers surround them.

Berix sighs: *Well, at least you finally believe I'm not the snitch, not that it does either of any good now.*

Marta says: *Berix. I'm... sorry.*

As they're both grabbed, Berix yelps: *Me too! But I think we're both gonna be even sorrier real soon...*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE ARENA BETWEEN THE TWIN VILLAGES - NIGHT

Mata Nui, Daliz, Johmad and Gresh are watching Akar demonstrate a defensive move when Galax rushes in: *The Gatherers have kidnapped Marta and Berix!*

Our heroes react with concern and suspicion, Akar asking: *And how exactly do you know this?*

Sacuu steps forward and says: *I saw them being carried off with my own eyes!*

Mata Nui turns to his friends: *We have to go after them.*

Akar nods as Gresh volunteers to go too: *I'm totally healed and itching to get back in the fight.*

But the Morg begins shouting: *You cannot abandon us now! You gave your word! If you leave us unprotected, the Skral will surely wipe us out!*

Mata Nui addresses them: *I understand your fear. But I also know we can't turn our backs on Marta and Berix.*

Sacuu scoffs: *They are only two, they are not important.*

Mata Nui admits: *There was a time I used to think like you. When I ruled my empire I paid too little attention to the contributions of any one individual. But after fighting beside these brave gladiators and seeing each sharing their individual talents to help you rebuild your defenses...*

Mata Nui addresses the rest directly to Akar: *I realize how much difference a single being can make.*

Mata Nui turns to include Gresh as he adds: *I've also seen how much a team can accomplish when they truly believe in honor and duty.*

Mata Nui finishes, profoundly, to himself: *I know now that no man can survive as an island unto himself.*

Sacuu is unmoved and shouts: *But you cannot just leave us unprotected!*

Mata Nui nods: *I was once forced to leave my own people; I won't do the same to the Morg. So, the other gladiators will stay here to guard over you.*

Akar and Gresh start to protest, but Mata Nui holds up his hand saying: *I'll go after Marta and Berix alone. I won't abandon my teammates... my friends.*

Gresh insists that at least he should go with him: *Mata Nui doesn't stand a chance all alone.*

Akar looks at the EYE on Mata-Nui's unique shield, then Akar says: *Mata Nui isn't really alone... not as long as he wears The Mask Of Life!*

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LATER – HILL OVERLOOKING THE TWIN VILLAGES – DAWN

Akar is bringing a sand chariot up to the top of the hill where Mata Nui waits for him to point out the way to the enemy's camp to the north.

POV DOWN ON TWIN VILLAGES – as the Morg are using the powerful Raanu beasts and heavy chains to literally pull the two villages together.

Akar feints a jab and Mata Nui grabs his fist before it nears his face. Pleased, Akar laughs: *You've learned well, my friend.*

Mata Nui climbs into the sand chariot saying: *I had a great teacher.*

Suddenly, they hear a <THUNDERING BOOM> from down below and Akar says: *They've joined the two villages together.*

As they turn to look back, Mata Nui reacts to the sight as if he's seeing something truly astonishing. **(NOTE: We do NOT see what he is looking at.)**

Akar notices Mata Nui's reaction and asks: *What is it, Mata Nui? What do you see?*

No time to explain! Mata Nui whips the reins and the sand chariot races off.

As Akar looks curiously back towards the O.S. village and then at Mata Nui racing off in the sand chariot, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BASE OF MOUNTAINS – SKRAL/GATHERERS' NOMAD CAMP – DAY

A magnificent, GIANT SAND-SAIL VEHICLE that houses their entire camp – like a mobile fortress pieced together from wreckage. **(NOTE: It is actually the skull of the Giant Robot.)** A massive ship-like ramp leads up to the main *deck*, which is also an ARENA where—

Marta and Berix are hanging from the mast in canister-cages. They react with amazement to a commotion down on the sand, and then they are stunned to see—

Mata Nui approaches on foot and is quickly surrounded by mounted Gatherers who prod him towards the ship ramp where—

TUMA, the Skral leader (who we will recognize from the earlier scene) stands waiting on the deck: *I figured all the Gladiators would come, but it seems they're even bigger cowards than I thought.*

Mata Nui marches boldly up the ramp to face the towering Tuma who taunts Mata Nui by gesturing to the captives above—

Marta and Berix cannot believe Mata Nui really came ...*all alone*...?

Mata Nui challenges Tuma: *You and I. One-on-one combat... unless of course, the Skral leader is the real coward.*

The arrogant Tuma takes the bait, saying: *I will enjoy personally ripping that fancy mask off your face.*

EXT. SKRAL SHIPBOARD GLADIATOR ARENA – CONTINUOUS

As Mata Nui moves to enter the arena area, Tuma instantly attacks, slamming him from behind and propelling him inside.

The watching Skral and Gatherers cheer.

From their mast vantage, Marta and Berix watch helplessly, cursing the cheating Skral as—

Mata Nui has no time to recover; Tuma is on him in a flash, laughing as he mercilessly knocks Mata Nui around the arena as if he's no contest at all.

As they watch, Berix sighs that Mata Nui doesn't stand a chance.

Marta keeps her voice low and says excitedly: *No. He's just doing what Akar taught us... study your opponent's moves, find his weakness.*

Berix says: *Well he better find it fast, before he gets his skull—*

Marta interrupts: *Shhh! Watch!*

Mata Nui has started fighting back; effortlessly ducking all of Tuma's blows – which when missed throw the Skral slightly off balance – enabling Mata Nui to land powerful blows of his own.

Marta says excitedly: *That's it! Of course! Tuma's huge, but he's slow. Mata Nui is using Skral's own strength as leverage against him.*

As the battle continues, Tuma growls his rage at repeatedly missing his fast moving opponent. The Skral is just too slow to recover from missed blows, allowing Mata Nui to slip inside and start doing serious damage.

Mata Nui delivers a final sweeping blow that brings the huge Tuma crashing down.

The Skral and Gatherers gasp in shock as—

Marta and Berix cheer! Marta says: *Akar was right. Size matters a lot less than brains and skill.*

Berix beams: *Which proves what I've been saying all along, I'd make an awesome gladiator!*

As Tuma lays motionless, it seems that it's over, Mata Nui has won. But then a familiar laugh rings out and—

Galax strides into view, mockingly clapping and saying: *I could always pick a winner.*

Marta is stunned and outraged. *All this time Galax has been taking his cut from us; he's been selling us out to the Skral.*

Galax laughs: *Oh it's even better than that. I am the real leader of both the Gatherers and the Skral.*

But you're Morg...? Berix says, still not understanding.

True. But I realized long ago that my friends here had far more to offer me, and they realized I had the means to lead them to victory. The beauty of my plan was that I got the village leaders to help me eliminate their best gladiators by simply tossing them in the arena to destroy each other.

Galax turns to his troops adding: *And now it is time to destroy the rest, starting with these three pathetic losers.*

Just then, Gatherers begin shouting in alarm and pointing off towards the desert where—

Like a shimmering mirage – A GIGANTIC GLADIATOR is gliding across the sand towards them.

Galax shouts at the scores of frightened Gatherers racing away in terror—

But not all the Gatherers are running and there are still countless Skral mounting up and readying their weapons (**possible crude cross-bow-like ‘shooter’ weapons with multiple, explosive arrowheads**).

During the ensuing chaos, Mata Nui uses his weapon to slice through the chains holding the cage/cylinder—

It crashes to the deck and Marta and Berix race to join Mata Nui, asking: *What is that... thing?*

As the shimmering *giant* nears, we hear the familiar <CLICKING> and then—

Mata Nui glances at his shield and says with appreciation: *Loyal friends*.

THE ‘GIANT’ DISSOLVES, showering down into the sand and we reveal that—

A HUGE SWARM OF SCARBAC had created the illusion of the giant gladiator. No longer hidden behind it we now see THROUGH A SANDSTORM of movement—

Akar and Gresh charging forth with Johmad and Daliz, leading a united army of Morg (on foot as well as in sand chariots).

EXT. SKRAL & GATHERERS’ NOMAD CAMP/SHIP - CONTINUOUS

Just below the massive sand-sail ship the - **FINALE BATTLE #7** – begins – shown with SERIES OF DRAMATIC ANGLES including:

Mata Nui dodges a <BLAST> from one of the Skral’s shooter weapons, then—

Mata Nui slams a Skral off his mount, capturing his weapon.

Mata Nui holds the weapon to the brow of his mask – using the LIQUID FUSION FX – the weapon is transformed into a newer version of a ‘shooter’ weapon (style TBA).

Mata Nui shouts to Gresh fighting nearby, and then tosses him *a gift*.

The grateful Gresh fires his new weapon—

The <BLAST> hits low in front of a Rock Steed that <EXPLODES> into the air.

Mata Nui is just tossing a second new shooter weapon to Berix, who delights in *finally being treated like one of the Gladiators!*

As Mata Nui battles with another Skral he tells Berix: *You've earned it!*

THROUGH A VEIL OF WHIRLING SAND AND SMOKE FROM THE BLASTS we can see Mata Nui backing into Akar who shouts: *They have us outnumbered ten to one!*

Mata Nui replies with confidence: *Maybe, but we have the true power: We fight with honor and purpose! For unity!*

Marta and Gresh move in close, also battling fiercely with two Skral, who suddenly break and run. Marta shouts at Mata Nui: *You're right! The spineless Skral are running!*

Akar looks around amazed: *The tide's definitely turned... with a little help from Mata Nui's friends!*

Skral, mounted and on foot, are being swallowed in quicksand pits or—

Covered by swarming Scarbac.

Mata Nui spots something o.s. and says: *It's not over yet.* And he dashes off towards—

Galax is climbing into a sand chariot with two huge Skral, about to make their escape, when Galax sees Mata Nui charging towards them and shouts: *Destroy him!*

The two Skral don't have time to get off a shot before Mata Nui is on them, slamming them both so hard they sail o.s.

As Mata Nui moves towards him, Galax panics and bolts from the sand chariot, but he gets only a view yards when suddenly—

Galax is suddenly pulled under the sand, by the same mysterious creature (from act one).

(NOTE: Alternate option: if we do not use this creature – and perhaps less violent/brutal – we can just see that Galax is running straight into a crowd of Morg villagers, and as he pleads for mercy, we can just dissolve out of the scene, leaving it to the imagination.)

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLSIDE ABOVE TWIN VILLAGES – DAY

Mata Nui stands with Akar, Marta, Gresh and Berix looking down towards the o.s. village scene below. Akar says: *Morg from all across Bara Nui are pulling together... literally... uniting every village. Thanks to you, Mata Nui.*

POV ON VILLAGES – as Morg are using teams of Raanu and massive chains to drag ALL the villages together to unite with the first two.

ON THE HILL – Mata Nui says: *I was only one piece... He looks down towards the village. It took all of us to complete the whole.*

Akar says: *I guess there's nothing we can say to change your mind?*

Mata Nui shakes his head: *It's time for me to continue my own quest... wherever that may take me.*

(NOTE: as discussed, we will play it as if we are not sure if anyone, Marta or any of the others will be traveling with him.)

They all turn at the <THUNDERING> sound of the last of the villages coming together and the chains dropping.

POV DOWN ON SCENE - we see the final SHAPE of the united villages – each of the villages was a piece that had once formed the GIANT MECHANICAL MAN and has now been put back together (the Skral ship at the top, the skull).

ON THE HILL – the Gladiators look stunned. Marta says: *It looks like the plans from the Great Beings... like the giant mechanical being...*

The others agree, but they don't understand: *What does it mean, Mata Nui... What is it?*

Mata Nui says: *You're looking at a ruler, a servant, a peacemaker – but first he must be a warrior.*

CU Mata Nui: *And my war is just beginning...*

FADE OUT