

# « THE SWORD FROM THE STONE »

**By Sam Pinnell**

*Draft as at 25 Feb 2015 (Sam Pinnell)*  
*Simplified 26 May 2015 (Lucille O'Flanagan)*  
*Final corrections 12/6/15 (Thomas Le Cam)*

**CAST: 3 actors :**

**ACTOR ONE:**

- MERLIN: an old and wily wizard. He is also a little vain.
- SCHOOL TEACHER: long suffering
- MRS GRIMLY, the lodging house lady
- COMMENTATOR: at the tournament

**ACTOR TWO:**

- ARTHUR: a baby given to Sir Ector to raise as his son
- UTHUR: Arthur's real father (seen only in Merlin's flashback)
- SIR ANNICK: a knight at the tournament, formal uptight sort of chap
- VOICE FROM THE CROWD

**ACTOR THREE:**

- KAY: Sir Ector's son. Destined to be a knight, sadly a bit thick.
- SIR ECTOR: a middle aged knight, he is a little vague and eccentric
- ARCHBISHOP: stuffy and suspicious
- IGRAINE: Arthur's real mother (seen only in Merlin's flashback)

VARIOUS KNIGHTS/SUBJECTS/RABBLE: the audience

## Scene 1: The French court

2 ACTORS ARE SEATED WITH THE AUDIENCE. MERLIN ENTERS. HE HOLDS UP HIS HANDS FOR SILENCE.

MERLIN

Bienvenue ! Chers amis de la cour et chers émissaires de France !

CHEERS FROM THE CROWD.

MERLIN (CONTINUES)

Je suis Merlin, conseiller du grand Roi Arthur d'Angleterre et je suis, à n'en pas douter, l'un des plus célèbres sorciers que le monde ait jamais connus. Vous avez, bien sûr, déjà entendu parler de moi...

SILENCE

MERLIN (CONT)

Oh ! Je vois. Eh bien, disons simplement que je suis super-célèbre au Royaume-Uni. Oui, mais alors : SUPER-CÉLÈBRE ! Mais je m'égare. De nombreux émissaires de la cour de France nous ont demandé de venir leur expliquer comment notre nouveau roi a bien pu accéder au trône britannique.

CRIS OF « YES » / « WHO IS ARTHUR? » FROM THE AUDIENCE.

MERLIN (CONT)

C'est le roi Arthur, lui-même, qui m'envoie vous conter les mystérieux événements qui l'ont conduit à devenir souverain de Grande-Bretagne. Pour vous raconter mon histoire, je vais devoir invoquer des visions du passé et les matérialiser devant vous. N'ayez pas peur de ma magie. J'ai seulement besoin de deux volontaires...

MERLIN PICKS THE TWO OTHER ACTORS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

MERLIN (CONT)

Humm oui, ils feront très bien l'affaire. J'aurai aussi peut-être besoin d'ensorceler le reste d'entre vous, de temps à autres, pour mieux raconter mon histoire.

Je vais maintenant nous transporter dans une autre époque et dans un lieu différent. En Angleterre. Vous comprenez tous l'anglais, j'espère ? C'est forcément une langue facile puisque même les Anglais réussissent à la parler ! Alors, préparez-vous mes amis pour une histoire typiquement britannique de courage, d'enthousiasme et de magie ! Avec beaucoup de tasses de thé ! Où vais-je donc commencer mon histoire ? Humm, oui, ce jour-là, je pense qu'il s'agissait d'un vendredi, si je me souviens bien, ou était-ce un mardi ? Non, nous avions mangé du poisson, c'était donc certainement un vendredi. Un vendredi mémorable, Ce jour où un vieil homme (enfin je veux dire, un homme quelque peu âgé mais cependant toujours attrayant et très élégant) vint rendre visite à son bon ami Sir Ector. Un fidèle chevalier, d'un certain âge lui aussi, qui avait pris sa retraite en son domaine campagnard.

IN ENGLISH FROM NOW ON EXCEPT WHERE INDICATED

## Scene 2: Sir Ector's house, Britain

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER : FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED LIKE A MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT : **SIR ECTOR'S HOUSE, BRITAIN**

SIR ECTOR IS WORKING AT A DESK

MERLIN

Hello there? Anyone home?

SIR ECTOR

Hello, who's there?

MERLIN

Merlin.

SIR ECTOR (BIT DEAF)

Martin?

MERLIN (LOUDER)

No, Merlin.

SIR ECTOR

Mervyn? We don't need any more brushes Mervyn, not today thank you.

MERLIN (LOUDER)

No, not Mervyn, Merlin!

SIR ECTOR

Marilyn?

MERLIN (ENTERING THE ROOM)

Really now Sir Ector, do I look like a Marilyn?

SIR ECTOR (STARES FOR A BIT)

Well you don't know Marilyn. Fine figure of a woman. Freakishly tall. Not unattractive in her way. Nice beard. Oh but bless my shiny armour it's Merlin the wizard. My dear fellow, sit down, sit down. You must have some tea.

MERLIN (WITH AN I TOLD YOU SO LOOK TO THE AUDIENCE)

No time for tea, Ector. I come on serious business.

SIR ECTOR

No tea? Good grief what could be so urgent that there is no time for a cup of tea? I'll just boil up a quick pot for us. And some cake. Can't have tea without cake. And you'll take some cucumber sandwiches? Or perhaps a scone?

MERLIN

You're too kind Ector.

SIR ECTOR

It's been a long time Merlin. I don't get up to court as often as I should. How's the wizard trade going?

MERLIN

Well not too bad Ector. Bit of casting spells for King Uther, some prophesying here and there. You might want to store some of your wheat by the way. There are 5 terrible winters coming to the land. Yes, a time of cruel snows and scarce crops will soon come to pass. And also flared

tunics are coming back. Strange times. Anyhoo, there's some upheaval at the court and factions are forming. Nothing for you to worry about but I come here to ask a favour from you.

SIR ECTOR

Anything Merlin, anything. Just name it. Although I must tell you I don't have any money on me this time.

MERLIN

No, Ector, it's not money I need today but simply a favour. I didn't come here alone. Outside with your servant woman I left a small bundle. Let me fetch it.

SIR ECTOR

Of course, of course.

MERLIN EXITS AND RE-ENTERS CARRYING A BABY WRAPPED UP IN A BLANKET

SIR ECTOR

Oh Merlin. A little baby, how lovely. Is it yours? Is there a Mrs Merlin? We haven't been introduced. I knew you wouldn't stay an old bachelor forever.

MERLIN

No, no Sir Ector the child is not mine. I cannot tell you anything about this little boy, but will you trust me that it is important that you keep him safe and hidden here? I know it is a lot to ask, but trust me when I tell you it is very important.

SIR ECTOR

Well Merlin, I don't know what Mrs Ector will have to say about all this. We have a young boy of our own to look after now after all. Who is this child and why is he so important to you? This is a mighty fancy blanket he's wrapped in. Is that cashmere?

MERLIN

I am asking for your trust, your discretion and your loyalty Ector. And surely you could use another hand about the place. The boy can work as he gets older. And your own boy will need a squire. Someone who can polish the armour, groom the horses. Make the tea.

SIR ECTOR

Make the tea you say? Well that is a persuasive argument. I suppose my own boy Kay, could do with a companion. When will you return for the child?

MERLIN

I cannot say. But trust me that all this will make sense in time. The future of the child is not yet clear to me, but this I do know: he will be safe here and it is important for the future of England itself that this child be saved.

SIR ECTOR

I understand, Merlin. I have just one more question: what do you call the boy?

MERLIN

His name is Arthur.

SIR ECTOR (REACHING FOR A SURNAME)

Arthur....?

MERLIN

Just Arthur for now. Yes, plain Arthur will do.

SIR ECTOR

Very well Merlin. I humbly accept the custody of little Arthur.

MERLIN

And keep this a secret between us good Sir Ector, I do not want Arthur to know anything about our arrangement.

SIR ECTOR

Of course of course.

MERLIN

And now there is one last, very important, thing,

SIR ECTOR

Yes, Merlin?

MERLIN

I'm still waiting for that cup of tea.

### Scene 3: Merlin recaps in French

MERLIN

Ah oui ! Voici exactement comment cela se passa. C'est bien ce jour-là que je donnai le jeune bébé Arthur à Sir Ector. Je savais qu'Ector était la personne idéale pour cette mission. Son propre fils, Kay, n'avait que quelques mois de plus qu'Arthur et les deux garçons pouvaient grandir ensemble. Ensuite, je dois avouer que je dus m'occuper des grands enjeux de notre royaume et que je ne revis pas Arthur pendant plusieurs années. Cependant, grâce à la puissance de ma magie, je fus capable de l'observer et de voir comment il progressait dans ses études. À dix ans, il était déjà bien plus avancé que le fils de Sir Ector. Bien que je sais que ce genre de choses ne se dit pas trop...

### Scene 4: Sir Ector's house, Britain

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER : FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED LIKE A  
MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT : **SIR ECTOR'S HOUSE, TEN YEARS LATER**

SIR KAY AND ARTHUR ARE NOW 10 YEARS OLD AND SITTING AT SCHOOL  
DESKS. ARTHUR CONCENTRATING, KAY BORED.

SCHOOL TEACHER

And that is how the Ancient Greeks won the battle against the Persians at Marathon. One of the four great battles that –

KAY (INTERRUPTING)

Oh this is so boring! All the battles are the same. I hate this subject. Why does history keep repeating itself?

SCHOOL TEACHER

Perhaps because you weren't listening the first time Kay.

ARTHUR LAUGHS

SCHOOL TEACHER

What's so funny young Arthur?

ARTHUR

Nothing Sir. Apart from your joke of course. That was really funny, I thought.

SCHOOL TEACHER (NOT PACIFIED)

Hmm. Right are we ready to continue?

KAY

I can't bear this. I wish I was born 5000 years ago,

ARTHUR

Why?

KAY

Just think of all the history I wouldn't have to learn.

SCHOOL TEACHER

Concentrate Kay! Now where was the Greek peace treaty signed?

KAY

Err, at the bottom?

ARTHUR

Sir, could we move on from history? I think we've understood the importance of the Ancient Greeks' defence against the Persians.

SCHOOL TEACHER

Well you may have done young Arthur, but frankly I don't think that Kay has been listening at all. Let's try some maths. Now Kay think hard: if have 5 apples in my right hand and 8 apples in my left hand, what do I have?

KAY

Really big hands?

SCHOOL TEACHER

No, boy! 13 apples, the answer is 13 apples! You would try the patience of the archbishop himself.

KAY

But I want to be a knight. What's the point of school? I'm going to fight for the King when I grow up. And I'll be brave and good on a horse and good with a sword and you know what I'll say to him if he asks me about apples and the boring old Greeks? I'll say: I may not know much about history and algebra....actually what is algebra? Is it a country? What was I saying? Is it lunchtime? My leg hurts.

SCHOOL TEACHER

Oh good grief! I despair of you. Yes, go to lunch. But after lunch it's geography. Actually make that double geography. I've just got a new map. The whole world is now known to us: England, the Holy Land, and that big bit full of dragons right on the edge.

ARTHUR  
Will this be in the exam Sir?

SCHOOLTEACHER  
Oh yes Arthur, it most certainly will.

### **Scene 5: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN  
Le jeune Arthur était un garçon gentil et intelligent. Le voir grandir auprès de Kay, qu'il traitait comme un frère, me rendait particulièrement heureux. Néanmoins, je sais que, de temps à autres, il se posait des questions sur ses origines et ses vrais parents.

### **Scene 6 : Sir Ector's house**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**SIR ECTOR'S HOUSE**

ARTHUR  
Sir Ector, can I come in?

SIR ECTOR  
Who's there?

ARTHUR  
Arthur.

SIR ECTOR  
Martha?

ARTHUR  
No, Sir, Martha's in the kitchen. It's Arthur, it's me!

SIR ECTOR  
Tea? I don't mind if I do.

ARTHUR COMES TO FACE SIR ECTOR

ARTHUR  
I'll get you a cup in a moment Sir.

SIR ECTOR  
Very good, young Arthur, very good. I'm glad we had this little chat.

ARTHUR  
Actually Sir there was something else.

SIR ECTOR  
Was it a biscuit?

ARTHUR  
Not exactly Sir. I wanted to ask you about my parents.

SIR ECTOR



Your parents?

ARTHUR

Yes Sir.

SIR ECTOR

Are you happy here Arthur?

ARTHUR

Oh yes Sir, of course, I love it and I'm so grateful to you for letting me go to school with Kay. But now I'm a bit older I've been wondering about my real parents. Who were they and why did I end up living with you?

SIR ECTOR

Well young Arthur, I'm sorry to say I can't tell you.

ARTHUR

But surely Sir I have a right to know.

SIR ECTOR

You misunderstand me Arthur. I said I can't tell you. Not I won't tell you. I can't tell you because I simply don't know.

ARTHUR

But then how did I get here?

SIR ECTOR

Well Arthur, let's just say an old family friend brought you here and asked me to keep you safe. I promised him I'd keep you secret and raise you in my own family. And I will never ever tell you his name. I made a promise and I would never be foolish enough to break a promise to Merlin the Wizard.

ARTHUR

So a wizard called Merlin brought me here?

SIR ECTOR

How do you know? Who told you?

ARTHUR

Don't worry Sir. I guess I must have heard it somewhere. Do you think Merlin the Wizard will ever come back for me?

SIR ECTOR

I don't know, Arthur, I don't know. But you'll always have a home here my boy.

ARTHUR

Thanks Sir.

SIR ECTOR

Now wasn't there something else?

ARTHUR

A cup of tea and a biscuit Sir?

SIR ECTOR

Brilliant idea Arthur, what on earth made you think of that?

### Scene 7: Merlin recaps in French

MERLIN

Alors qu'Arthur grandissait tranquillement à la campagne, il y avait beaucoup d'agitation au sein du royaume. Notre grand roi, le roi Uther, était mort et il n'y avait personne pour prendre la relève. Nombreux étaient les Lords qui se battaient pour sa succession.

Personnellement, restai-je tout d'abord à l'écart de la cour. Mais je dus finalement abandonner la tranquillité de ma retraite quand je fus convoqué par l'archevêque de Londres. Comme je m'en souviens, il y avait dans la cathédrale une foule bruyante et tapageuse.

Il y avait de nombreux chevaliers sur la droite ... un peu comme vous ici. Et tous criaient : **It is time for a new King!**

TEACH THE KIDS ON THE RIGHT TO SHOUT THIS

MERLIN

Il y avait beaucoup d'autres chevaliers sur la gauche qui criaient : **We will go to war**

TEACH THE KIDS ON THE LEFT TO SHOUT THIS

MERLIN

Et encore au milieu, on pouvait entendre des chevaliers crier : **I want to be King**

TEACH THE KIDS IN THE MIDDLE TO SHOUT THIS

MERLIN

Oui, nous sommes bien d'accord, c'était l'anarchie, le chaos...

Laissez-moi maintenant vous montrer ce qu'il se passa.

### Scene 8: inside the cathedral

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER. FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED LIKE A MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT : **INSIDE THE CATHEDRAL**

ARCHBISHOP

Welcome Merlin. You come to us in troubled times.

MERLIN

Good day Archbishop. (TO THE AUDIENCE WITH A LITTLE BOW) My Lords and Ladies.

ARCHBISHOP

Now I must call our assembly to order. People of Britain, as you all know our great King Uther is dead. We must have a new King. My Lords to the right, what say you?

AUDIENCE SHOUTS LIKE THEY'VE BEEN TOLD.

*AUDIENCE*

*It is time for a new King*

THE THIRD ACTOR CAN ORCHESTRATE THIS....PERHAPS POINTING TO THE WORDS ON A SIGN / AND OR CONDUCTING THE THREE GROUPS WHEN TO SHOUT THEIR LINE.

ARCHBISHOP

And good people to my left, what do you have to say?

*AUDIENCE We will go to war*

ARCHBISHOP

We have no clear agreement. What do the people in the middle want?

*AUDIENCE I want to be King*

ARCHBISHOP

You see Merlin. This is a disaster, there is no agreement between all the Lords in our kingdom. I fear we will descend into a terrible war if a man cannot be found to lead us. You, Merlin, were King Uther's wizard. And a wise man. Can you not look into men's hearts with your magic and tell us who will be our true and rightful King?

MERLIN

Archbishop I fear that even if I could name the new King that the anger of all the Lords who press their claims would not be calmed. For what do the Lords on the right say?

*AUDIENCE: it is time for a new King*

MERLIN

As I feared. And you the Lords on the left?

*AUDIENCE: we will go to war*

MERLIN

But surely you, the good Lords in the middle can agree?

*AUDIENCE I want to be King*

MERLIN

Hmm. As I say. The court is divided. Archbishop I cannot give you the answers you seek. But I will say this.....I hear the cries of the country:

AUDIENCE : ALL THREE GROUPS SHOUT TOGETHER.

MERLIN

Silence! All of you. I bring you not a King but a prophecy. Let us step outside the cathedral and we will see what there is to be seen.

### **Scene 9: The cathedral steps**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**OUTSIDE THE CATHEDRAL**

THERE IS A BIG STONE WITH A SWORD IN IT AND SOME WRITING AROUND  
THE BASE OF THE STONE

ARCHBISHOP

What trickery is this Merlin? This was not here this morning.

MERLIN

This is no trickery. Read aloud the words at the base of the stone.

ARCHBISHOP

“Who shall pull the sword from the stone is the rightful King of England.” Well hah Merlin! If that’s all it takes then I shall be the new King.

THE ARCHBISHOP STEPS FORWARD AND GRASPS THE SWORD HILT. HE STRUGGLES WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH TO PULL IT FREE BUT HE CANNOT.

ARCHBISHOP

The sword is stuck fast. I swear no man would have the strength to pull it free.

MERLIN

Let any man who thinks he has claim to the throne of England step up and test his worth.

BOTH ACTORS (NOT MERLIN) NOW TAKE IT IN TURNS TO TRY TO PULL THE SWORD FROM THE STONE. CHANGING HATS/ACCENTS/BEARDS EACH TIME THEY DO SO. FAST AND FURIOUS THIS BIT, WITH SOME MUSIC. AT LAST A SMILING MERLIN CALLS A HALT

MERLIN

Enough! There is no man in our company then who can claim the throne of England.

ARCHBISHOP

I declare that any knight in the land may win the chance to pull the sword from the stone. We shall organise a great tournament, with jousting and sword fighting and all the winning Knights will be given the opportunity to pull the sword from the stone. Our grand tournament will take place here in London on New Year’s Day.

MERLIN

So be it then. A tournament. But meanwhile here stands the challenge until the rightful King comes along. I bid you good day my Lords and Ladies.

### **Scene 10: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN

Aucun homme de la cour ne fut donc en mesure de retirer l'épée de la pierre. Tout comme l'archevêque l'avait promis : les chevalier qui voulaient tenter leur chance devaient concourir au grand tournoi de Londres au prochain jour de l'An. Un choix bien maladroit, car chacun sait combien il est difficile de trouver une place de parking un jour férié. Vous seriez surpris de voir la place dont on a besoin pour garer un cheval décent.

Il y avait dix-sept ans maintenant que j'avais laissé le jeune Arthur dans les bras de Sir Ector et je ne pouvais résister à l'envie de découvrir ce qu'il était devenu. Mais vous me connaissez, je préfère rester discret, je revêtis donc l'un de mes déguisements les plus réussis : celui d'un pauvre vieillard.

MERLIN PUTS ON JUST ONE ADDITIONAL THING, A HAT OR A CLOAK FOR EG

MERLIN (PLEASED WITH HIMSELF)

Oui ! J'étais complètement et superbement transformé ! Me dirigeai-je alors vers les bois près du domaine de Sir Ector en espérant y rencontrer Arthur et Kay...

### Scene 11: the forest

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED: **THE FOREST**

ARTHUR AND KAY ARE SWORD FIGHTING

ARTHUR

Come on Kay! Keep your guard up. I've won the last three fights.

KAY

We don't need all this practice, I'm a brilliant sword fighter and I'm going to be a brilliant knight. My dad says.

ARTHUR

Yeah yeah sure you are.

ARTHUR DISARMS KAY AND LAUGHS

ARTHUR

Do you want your sword back Sir Kay, the greatest Knight in the Forest!

KAY

Very funny. You wait till I'm a proper Knight at Court, just like my father. You can be as good at sword fighting as you like but you'll only ever be my squire.

ARTHUR

Ssshhh!

KAY

Don't tell me to ssshh! I'm going to be a Knight.

ARTHUR

No, no. I mean ssshh, I can hear someone in the bushes.

KAY

There's no-one there. You're crazy Arthur!

ARTHUR RUNS FORWARD

ARTHUR

Hello? Who's there? I know you're there, come out.

MERLIN

It's only an old man taking a walk in the forest.

ARTHUR

Show yourself.

MERLIN

Here I am, here I am. Goodness me, no need to be so sharp. Now what have we here? Who are you young fellows?

KAY

I am Kay and this is my Squire young Arthur.

MERLIN

Young Arthur indeed. And how are you both this fine day?

ARTHUR

We're practising our sword fighting.

MERLIN

Sword fighting you say. Very impressive. The country has need of fine Knights like you right now.

KAY

Yes, my father says that there is trouble at court but I don't understand why. If I was a Knight I'd be super-happy all the time. I'd wear my shiny armour, and ride my big horse and swing my sword all over the place –

MERLIN (DUCKING JUST IN TIME)

I see.

KAY

*And* I'd ride my big horse.

MERLIN

Yes, so you said. And what about you Arthur? Do you understand what is going on in London?

ARTHUR

Well, since King Uther passed away there is no heir for the throne and the Lords are disputing who shall be the new leader. There is much squabbling and we all fear there may be war throughout the land, unless a true King can step forward and prove himself.

MERLIN

Bravo young Arthur, you go to the heart of the problem.

ARTHUR

I don't mean to be rude Sir, but you seem awfully well-informed about the ways of the London court for an old man who wanders the forest.

MERLIN

Do I indeed? Well perhaps there is more to me than meets the eye.

ARTHUR

Are you a knight?

MERLIN

Bless me no. Not a Knight. But perhaps I do know something about the workings of the court.

ARTHUR

If I didn't know better Sir, I would guess that you were a wizard.

MERLIN

What on earth makes you say that? Is it my glittering eyes?

ARTHUR

No.

MERLIN

My powerful presence? My lustrous beard?

ARTHUR

No. No.

MERLIN

My stylish cloak?

ARTHUR

No. It's not that.

MERLIN

Then what?

ARTHUR

You're carrying a wand Sir.

MERLIN

Oh my stars and buckets, so I am! Perhaps I am more of an absent minded old man than I thought. And perhaps young Arthur you are right.

KAY

If you're a real wizard can you do card tricks? Or saw a lady in half? Or pull a rabbit out of a hat?

MERLIN

I'm not a conjurer at a children's party, Kay.

ARTHUR

No, you're a wizard. Does that mean you can see the future?

MERLIN

Well, young Arthur, let us just say that I can see some things that are yet to come to pass. I see that a young man here in this very forest, for example has great things ahead of him.

KAY LOOKS VERY EXCITED

KAY

See Arthur, I told you I was going to be a great knight one day.

MERLIN

And that young man will prove to be a great deal more than he seems.

KAY

Absolutely! Yeah! That's what I'm saying!

MERLIN

The mists of time can hinder the sight of prophecy but my eyes are sharp and I can see a sword, a crown and a stone.

KAY

No, sorry, you've lost me.

MERLIN

Kay, there is to be a great tournament in London on New Year's day. You should go there, with young Arthur your squire and seek to prove your worth.

KAY

A tournament in London on New Year's Day? And you know all this because you used your magical powers to see the future?

MERLIN

Yes that, and the fact that it's on this poster right here.

HE HANDS KAY THE POSTER

MERLIN

Perhaps I will see you both at the tournament? Good luck.

ARTHUR

Good luck to you Sir, safe journey on the long road to London.

MERLIN

Thank you young Arthur. Oh and Kay. One last thing: lend me your hat.

KAY PASSES HIM THE HAT

MERLIN PRODUCES A RABBIT FROM KAY'S HAT

KAY

You said you couldn't do conjuring tricks!

MERLIN

Never trust a wizard Kay. Never trust a wizard.

## **Scene 12: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN

Ah ! Comme c'était plaisant de revoir ce cher Arthur, devenu si grand et si fort ! Et quelle bonne impression laissai-je sur les deux jeunes gens grâce à ma présence imposante, à mon don pour la prophétie et à mon autorité naturelle !

## **Scene 13 The Forest**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER, FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:

**BACK IN THE FOREST**

ARTHUR

Well, I think that bloke might be completely mad!

KAY



But he said I was going to be famous, and have a sword and a bit of old stone...or something like that.

ARTHUR

Exactly my point. Wizard indeed! Why would we listen to what a wizard has to say?

KAY

I don't know: why?

ARTHUR

I'm not telling a joke Kay.

KAY

Oh go on. Tell me a joke about wizards.

ARTHUR

Kay, you never get jokes.

KAY

I will this time I promise,

ARTHUR

What's the first thing a wizard does in the morning?

KAY SHAKES HIS HEAD

ARTHUR

He wakes up.

KAY LOOKS CONFUSED, THEN FAKE LAUGHS TO PRETEND HE GETS IT

ARTHUR

What do you call a wizard from outer space? A flying sorcerer.

KAY IS STRUGGLING TO UNDERSTAND

ARTHUR

What do you call a wizard in the desert?

KAY

I don't know

ARTHUR

Lost again!

KAY

Well however stupid and mad you think wizards are, I'm going to go to that tournament. Are you coming with me?

ARTHUR

I'll think about it. Now here's one for you: how do you keep Kay in suspense?

KAY

I don't know.

ARTHUR  
I'll tell you tomorrow.

ARTHUR EXITS WITH KAY STRAGGLING BEHIND SAYING: NO GO ON TELL ME NOW ETC

#### **Scene 14: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN  
Hum, quel impertinent cet Arthur. Des blagues de sorciers... je lui en donnerai, moi, des blagues de sorciers, tiens :

Que dit Gandalf à un élève qui n'a pas révisé ses examens ?  
VOUS NE PASSEREZ PAS !

Mais je m'égare... Quoi qu'il en soit, Arthur et Kay firent chemin vers Londres afin que Kay puisse prendre part au tournoi du jour de l'An. C'était, pour tous les deux, la première fois qu'ils visitaient la capitale et vous pouvez imaginer leur excitation.

#### **Scene 15: A London Lodging House**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**LONDON LODGING HOUSE**

OLD LADY  
So young Sirs, this is your room. Number viii.

SHE HANDS THEM AN ENORMOUS KEY WITH A TAG WITH "viii" LETTERED ON IT

ARTHUR  
Thank you madam.

OLD LADY (PROUDLY SHOWING THEM ROUND)  
This is one of our deluxe rooms. Hardly any rats. Straw stuffed mattresses there on the floor. Your bedside light.

SHE HANDS ARTHUR A CANDLE ON A SAUCER

OLD LADY (CONT)  
And of course your en suite bathroom.

SHE HANDS KAY A CHAMBER POT.

KAY  
Amazing Arthur look. An inside toilet. We're in the big city now all right!

ARTHUR  
Thank you so much Mrs Grimly, I'm sure we'll be very comfortable here.

OLD LADY  
Breakfast is served from 7am to 11am. Lunch from 12 to 2pm and dinner from 5-9pm.

KAY

But Arthur, we won't have any time left over to see the sights.

ARTHUR

I'm sure we'll manage Kay.

OLD LADY

We run a respectable house here, so no beer, girls or horses in the rooms. Make sure you're back by 10pm and don't empty the chamber pot out of the window. Tip it onto the pavement outside like civilised people.

ARTHUR

Yes madam.

OLD LADY

First time up in London?

KAY

Yes. We're here for the tournament, I'm going to be a knight.

OLD LADY

Well I wish you good fortune with that my young sir. The whole city is full of knights who've come to test themselves in the New Year's Day Tournament. Will you be joining us for dinner this evening? Our menu is quite respected in the city. Fresh meat every night.

KAY

Sounds brilliant, what did you have last night?

OLD LADY

We had boar.

KAY

Wild?

OLD LADY

Well I don't suppose he was too pleased about it.

KAY LOOKS PUZZLED

ARTHUR

Well thanks again Mrs Grimly. I'm sure we'll have a most enjoyable stay.

## **Scene 16: London Town**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**LONDON TOWN**

KAY

Wow, look Arthur some of these buildings are two or three storeys high. It's crazy!

ARTHUR IS READING FROM A GUIDEBOOK: "LONDON TOWNE"

ARTHUR

Do you know Kay, over thirteen thousand people live here in the city of London?

KAY

And not one of them has said hello since we've been here. I think I prefer the village at home. At least my father owns most of that and all the peasants have to be nice to me.

ARTHUR

That's what big cities are like Kay. Remember we learned at school about Rome? And Athens?

KAY

No, not really. I remember we learnt about a dancing frog who told me that the moon is made of cheese.

ARTHUR

I think that was a dream Kay,

KAY

Was it? That's disappointing. Why do people want to live in the city Arthur? It's noisy and crowded and it smells awful. Or is that you?

ARTHUR

It does smell awful but what about the shops?

KAY

There are a lot of shops. Look, whilst you were in the pie shop I bought a pair of the latest fashionable shoes.

HE SHOWS ARTHUR A COMICAL PAIR OF VERY LONG POINTED SHOES

ARTHUR

You can't wear those to the tournament. You'll fall over and break your neck.

KAY

Don't be ridiculous Arthur.

HE PUTS ON THE SHOES, TAKES TWO STEPS AND IMMEDIATELY FALLS OVER  
ARTHUR HELPS HIM UP

ARTHUR

Maybe keep them for best Kay?

KAY

Hmm. Maybe you're right. I wouldn't want to get them dirty at the tournament. They were expensive. But wait till I get back to the countryside, everyone will be pointing at me and saying: "look at Kay in the latest London fashions".

KAY ATTEMPTS A CATWALK SWAGGER AND TURN AND FALLS OVER AGAIN

ARTHUR

Well, they'll certainly be pointing at you.

HE HELPS KAY UP

ARTHUR (CONT)

Let's go and see some of the tourist attractions. How about the Tower of London?

KAY

Oooh that sounds fancy, is it new?

ARTHUR

Yes, pretty new, and Westminster Abbey we should go and see that.

KAY

All right, and then can we get a souvenir in the gift shop, and some cake in the café?

ARTHUR

Yes, of course. But first we're going to properly look round and learn something.

KAY

Bor-ring!

ARTHUR WALKS OFF CONSULTING THE GUIDEBOOK

KAY (CONT)

Wait for me Arthur, wait for me!

### **Scene 17: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN

Ah ! Londres ! Je me souviendrai toujours avec le plus grand plaisir de mon premier voyage à Londres. Cependant Kay a raison : l'odeur y est absolument terrible ! Et c'est cher ! Et il y a beaucoup de rats ! Mais à part tout cela c'est un endroit délicieux ! Mais assez parlé de Londres et de ses charmes, arriva le matin du tournoi...

### **Scene 18: The Tournament**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER, FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:

**The Tournament**

ARTHUR

Come on Kay, you'll be late for your fight. It's taken us ages to get here. The traffic was murder! And don't get me started on the parking. I've had to leave the horse miles away.

SIR KAY

Don't fuss Arthur, I'm ready. Did you see the crowd? I bet I'm going to be famous when I win. I'm brilliant at sword fighting. I hope there's a proper prize, not just some rubbish stone or whatever that mad old bloke was on about.

ARTHUR

Right come on now. Have you got everything?

KAY

Right, quick check: armour, (HE PATS HIS BODY) yes.

Helmet, (HE KNOCKS ON HIS HEAD) yes,

Handkerchief, (HE PRODUCES ONE AND BLOWS HIS NOSE) yes.

So all set. I'm ready. Let's go.

ARTHUR

Haven't you forgotten something?

KAY (PATS HIS BODY, KNOCKS ON HIS HEAD, BLOWS HIS NOSE AGAIN)  
No, that's definitely everything.

ARTHUR  
Where's your sword?

KAY  
My sword?

KAY PUTS HIS HAND TO HIS HIP WHERE HIS SWORD SHOULD BE

KAY (CONT)  
I definitely had it. I remember back at home when you said "keep it safe" and I thought good idea I'll keep it safe so I locked it up in the downstairs cupboard next to the kitchen. Oh, whoopsy!

ARTHUR  
You've forgotten your sword?

KAY  
It's your fault, you said "keep it safe"!

ARTHUR  
But I meant, keep it safe by keeping it with you and – oh never mind we haven't got time for that now.

KAY  
So if there's one good thing to come out of this absolute disaster it's that you admit that it's completely and utterly your fault.

ARTHUR  
How is it my fault?

KAY  
It *is* your fault, You said "keep it safe".

ARTHUR  
But I meant, keep it safe by keeping it with you and oh – this is ridiculous we're going round in circles.

KAY  
What are we going to do now? I've got to fight. Otherwise the wizard's prophecy can't come true and I won't be epic-ly famous or whatever it was he promised me.

ARTHUR  
Stall them. I'll be back as soon as I can.

KAY  
What do you mean stall them?

ARTHUR  
Play for time, cause a delay, say anything...

KAY

Oh good idea, I'll tell them I've forgotten my sword.

ARTHUR

Say anything but that. Say your squire has the sword and he'll be here in a minute. I'll be right back, someone somewhere must have a sword we can use.

KAY

Right ho. I must say I thought I'd be nervous but it all seems to be going pretty well.

### **Scene 19: Merlin recaps in French**

MERLIN

Ce garçon est vraiment totalement stupide. Arthur partit donc à la recherche de quelqu'un qui lui eût prêté une épée, mais personne ne le fit. Les chevaliers avaient tous pris grand soin de leur équipement. Les épées étaient toutes bien astiquées et prêtes pour les combats. Personne ne voulut confier à un simple écuyer une arme si précieuse. Arthur était au désespoir, bien qu'il sût que Kay n'était pas très bon épéiste, il voulait qu'il puisse au moins tenter sa chance. Quoi qu'il en soit, Arthur courut jusqu'à se retrouver sur les marches de la cathédrale, désertées par la foule qui s'était rendue au tournoi.

### **Scene 20 : the cathedral steps**

ACTOR HOLDS BANNER, FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**THE CATHEDRAL STEPS**

ARTHUR RUNS ON AND STRAIGHT PAST THE SWORD IN THE STONE.  
THERE IS A PAUSE.  
HE RUNS BACK ON.  
HE STOPS AT THE STONE AND LOOKS AT THE SWORD.

ARTHUR

Hello? Hello? Is there anyone there?

HE LOOKS AROUND, THERE IS NO-ONE.

ARTHUR (CONT, CALLING OUT TO ANYONE WHO MIGHT BE THERE)

I need to borrow a sword. I'll bring it straight back, honestly. I wouldn't take it but it's really important. My friend Kay is going to fight in the tournament and he needs a sword just for an hour or so.

So if no-one's here I'm just going to borrow this one. Back by teatime, promise.

ARTHUR TAKES HOLD OF THE SWORD AND PULLS IT SMOOTHLY FROM THE STONE,

ARTHUR (CONT)

Hmmm....nice sword.

HE RUNS OFF

### **Scene 21: the tournament**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A SIGN, FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:

**The Tournament**

ARTHUR (OUT OF BREATH)

Kay? Kay! I'm here, I'm here, oh god I hope I'm not too late.

KAY

Too late for what?

ARTHUR (PANTING)

The fight, the tournament, the stone, the prophecy.

KAY

Oh that. No there's ages. It got to my turn and I remembered you said "say anything" so I said: "let's have a nice cup of tea" and the whole tournament's been stopped for a good hour now. Everyone seems fine and the tea is delicious.

ARTHUR

Perfect. Right well, here you go. I borrowed a sword and it looks like a really good one. Look at the fancy handle.

KAY

That is a good one. Thanks Arthur. I've got a good feeling about all this. I think it's my lucky day. Try not to be too jealous when I win the tournament and get loads of prizes and girls and stones and whatnot.

ARTHUR

Yes, I'll try.

KAY

Right! Wish me luck. See ya later, in the winner's tent. I mean, because I'll be in the winner's tent. Not that I'll see you because you'll be there. Because why would you be in the winner's tent? But then if you're not in the winner's tent how will you see me in the winner's tent? What is wrong with you Arthur? Why won't you come and see me in the winner's tent?

ARTHUR

I will Kay, I promise. Good luck out there.

KAY SWAGGERS OFF

**Scene 22: the tournament**

COMMENTATOR

And now, after that lovely tea break, it's time for fight number 17. In the left corner young Kay, age 18, novice to the tournament scene versus in the right corner Sir Annick, age 30, so very close to compulsory retirement age but nonetheless a formidable opponent. Gentlemen take your positions.

KAY

This is exciting isn't it?

SIR ANNICK (TRYING TO CONCENTRATE)

Yes, I suppose so.



KAY

Don't feel bad about the losing and everything. It's just that I'm brilliant at sword fighting and I'm going to be a proper Knight, and there's like more to me than meets the eye. An old man told me that in the forest. So it must be true. And he magicked me a rabbit out of my hat. It was brilliant. And then we ate it in a pie. The rabbit, not my hat.

SIR ANNICK

What is this babble? Draw your sword sir.

KAY DRAWS THE SWORD. SIR ANNICK FALLS TO HIS KNEES.

SIR ANNICK (CONT)

The sword from the stone. The boy has the magic sword from the cathedral stone. How can this be?

COMMENTATOR

Well some unusual tactics here from Sir Annick. He appears to be begging for mercy before the match has even started.

SIR ANNICK

Shut up you fool. This boy has the sword. The boy has the King's sword!

KAY IS DELIGHTED AND PRANCES ABOUT WAVING THE SWORD UNTIL HE DROPS IT.

SIR ANNICK

You dare to drop the precious ancient sword?

KAY

Ohh whoops sorry, at least it wasn't a new one.

SIR ANNICK

Where did you get this sword boy? Did you draw it from the enchanted stone outside the cathedral?

KAY

Err....well um...

SIR ANNICK

For if you did you are the rightful King of all England and we must all kneel before you.

KAY

Come again?

SIR ANNICK

Did you pull the sword from the stone? I say again, if you did then you are our rightful King.

KAY

Yes. Yes I did then. Right out of the stone. It was in the stone and I pulled it out. It was ever so hard, or was it quite easy? I can't recall. But anyway I pulled it out and now I get to be the King. I knew today was my lucky day.

COMMENTATOR

Well this is a surprise result. Sir Annick and Sir Kay are leaving the ring. Not a sword stroke dealt and now the rest of the crowd are pouring out of the arena. Looks like we're all going to the cathedral steps to see if this young boy really is the King of England. Incredible scenes here at the New Year's Day Tournament. They think it's all over; it is now.

### **Scene 23: the Cathederal steps**

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH THE FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED:  
**THE CATHEDRAL STEPS**

SIR ANNICK APPEARS, DRAGGING KAY BEHIND HIM

SIR ANNICK (ADDRESSING THE AUDIENCE)

Quiet everyone! We've all come here from the great tournament for one reason only: this young boy has pulled the enchanted sword from the stone and so as the prophecy says he must be the rightful king of England.

VOICE FROM THE CROWD (Merlin in a hat probably or the Stage Manager!)

If he is the rightful King then let him prove it!

SIR ANNICK

Of course. Boy, you pulled the sword from the stone?

KAY

Err well I think so.

SIR ANNICK

Don't say "I think so". You need to be sure.

KAY

Ok. What do you want me to say?

SIR ANNICK

Just tell me: are you sure?

KAY

Err, I think so.

VOICE FROM THE CROWD

The boy is an idiot! We want proof.

SIR ANNICK

Very well. I will put the sword back in the stone.

HE DOES SO

SIR ANNICK (CONT)

There! The sword is back where it was.

HE TRIES TO REMOVE IT. HE CANNOT

SIR ANNICK (CONT)

The sword is stuck fast again. Only the true King can remove it.  
Go ahead my Lord. My rightful King.

KAY  
What, now?

SIR ANNICK  
Yes now!

KAY STEPS UP AND STRUGGLES WITH THE SWORD.  
HE CANNOT BUDGE IT

SIR ANNICK  
The boy is a fraud. But if not him, then who did remove the sword?

MERLIN STEPS OUT OF THE AUDIENCE

MERLIN  
Sir Annick, please step aside. Ladies and gentlemen it is I, Merlin, and I say to you that this cannot be the boy who pulled the sword from the stone.

SIR ANNICK EXITS

MERLIN (CONT)  
Kay, I may look a little frightening but I am a kind old wizard at heart. Tell the truth now. No-one will be angry with you. How did you come by this sword?

KAY  
My squire, Arthur, gave it to me.

MERLIN  
And how did Arthur, a humble squire come by the sword?

KAY (VERY FAST, LAUNCHING INTO A LONG STORY)  
Well: we were at the tournament you see and I'd forgotten my sword, although really it was Arthur's fault because he told me to keep it safe so I locked it up in the downstairs cupboard at home next to the kitchen, and then Arthur said he'd go and borrow a sword and then he came back with this one. And then Sir Annick said draw your sword and I drew my sword but it wasn't my sword and then Sir Annick said I was the king and that was pretty exciting and then we came here and Sir Annick put the sword back and I couldn't get it out again and then you said that if someone else pulled the sword from the stone you wouldn't be angry with me if I said who it was and I said it was Arthur and then you said how did Arthur get the sword and I said : well we were at the tournament and I'd forgotten my sword although really it was Arthur's fault –

MERLIN (HOLDING UP HIS HAND TO STOP KAY)  
Yes yes. Thank you Kay. But where is Arthur?

ARTHUR (FROM THE AUDIENCE)  
I'm here Sir.

MERLIN  
Then step up Arthur. And let us see if you can draw the sword from the stone.

ARTHUR

So. You are the famous Merlin the Wizard. I've waited a long time to meet you. I think you may have a story to tell me.

MERLIN

All things in their proper time Arthur. First, let us see: are you the man who can draw the sword from the stone?

ARTHUR APPROACHES THE STONE. JUST AS HE PULLS THE SWORD FROM THE STONE KAY TUGS AT MERLIN'S CLOAK SO THE WIZARD SPINS ROUND AND MISSES THE MOMENT

KAY

Merlin, can I ask you a question?

MERLIN

Not now, Kay. Go ahead Arthur draw the sword.

ARTHUR HAS THE SWORD IN HIS HAND

MERLIN

What's this now? (TO AUDIENCE) Did the boy pull the sword from the stone? Did you see him do it?

AUDIENCE: Yes, it was him etc

ARTHUR

I did Merlin. Honestly.

MERLIN (STERNLY)

This is important Arthur! I can't believe I missed it. Right put the sword back in and do it again.

ARTHUR PUTS THE SWORD BACK AND PREPARES TO DRAW IT AGAIN JUST AS HE DOES KAY TUGS AT MERLIN'S CLOAK AGAIN. AS HE TURNS AWAY ARTHUR DRAWS THE SWORD

KAY

Merlin?

MERLIN

Shhh Kay for goodness sake. I've waited a long time for this moment.

MERLIN TURNS BACK TO FIND ARTHUR WITH THE SWORD IN HIS HAND

MERLIN (TO THE AUDIENCE)

Did he do it? Was it Arthur who pulled the sword from the stone?

AUDIENCE: Yes etc

MERLIN

No. it's no good I need to be sure. I want the evidence of my own eyes. One last time Arthur.

ARTHUR PREPARES TO DRAW THE SWORD

MERLIN

No wait! I want no interruptions. Kay come here.

KAY STEPS UP TO MERLIN. MERLIN TAKES KAY'S HANDKERCHIEF FROM HIS POCKET AND USES IT TO GAG KAY

MERLIN (CONT)

There we are. Draw the sword Arthur.

ARTHUR STEPS FORWARD AND DRAWS THE SWORD FROM THE STONE

MERLIN (CONT)

I never doubted it. Congratulations Arthur. People of England we have found our rightful King.

CHEERS FROM THE CROWD. MERLIN NOTICES KAY TRYING TO CHEER WITH HIS GAG STILL ON. MERLIN SMILES AND REMOVES IT.

ARTHUR

But Merlin, I don't know how to be King.

KAY

I'm still up for it if Arthur doesn't want to.

MERLIN

Kay, you are a thoroughly nice fellow but I doubt if England would survive your Kingship.

KAY

You think I'm nice? Thanks Merlin!

MERLIN

Arthur, this is your destiny. I'm sorry if it has come as a surprise but you will not be alone. I will be here to advise you in the ways of the court and to make sure that you take up your duties in the proper way.

ARTHUR

But Merlin, how can it be the destiny of a mere squire to be the rightful King of England?

KAY

That's what I don't understand. And also shoelaces, I don't understand those either.

MERLIN

Arthur, it is time for the truth of your tale to be told. You are not just a simple boy. I brought you to Sir Ector all those years ago and asked him to look after you.

ARTHUR

Merlin, did you know my parents?

MERLIN

Indeed I did Arthur. But I kept that secret from everyone. Perhaps it is time to tell you the full story now.

KAY

Brilliant, I love stories. Is there fighting in it?

## Scene 24: Merlin recaps in French

MERLIN

Enfin l'épée était hors de la pierre et le jeune Arthur devenait roi légitime d'Angleterre. Je dois dire que je n'avais, moi-même, pas prévu que tout cela fonctionnerait aussi bien. Mais mon Dieu, je ne peux quand même pas tout prévoir !

Le roi Arthur voulut alors connaître la véritable histoire de sa naissance.

Et c'est donc là, sur les marches même de la cathédrale, que je fis appelle à ma puissante magie et nous ramenai-je dans le passé...

## Scene 25: King Uther's battle tent

ACTOR HOLDS UP A BANNER WITH FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED  
**KING UTHUR'S BATTLE TENT**

MERLIN PLACES ARTHUR INTO POSITION, PUTS A KINGLY HAT ON HIM ETC

MERLIN

King Uther was a good King. He looked just like you Arthur! His dream was to bring together the chiefs of England to make one united kingdom. But this was not easy. All the Dukes wanted power and King Uther was forced to fight many battles. On the night my story begins King Uther summoned me to his tent on the battlefield. The sound of the battle was all around us.

MERLIN STARES AT THE AUDIENCE

MERLIN (IN FRENCH)

Allons ! Le bruit de la bataille ! Tout autour de nous ! Faites-moi entendre vos plus beaux bruits de bataille !

AUDIENCE: BATTLE SOUNDS

MERLIN (IN FRENCH)

Oui, eh bien, ça devait ressembler à ça, je suppose. Mais retournons à notre histoire.

UTHER

Ahh Merlin. I need your help. Something weighs very heavily on my mind tonight.

MERLIN

Your majesty, I will do what ever I can.

UTHER

Hmm. It may be that the time has come to test your powers. My troops move tonight in a great battle against the Duke of Cornwall.

MERLIN

I know my Lord. By all accounts you led the army bravely today and the fighting goes well even now. I think we shall see a victory by the morning.

UTHER

But this victory will not bring me the one thing that I find I most desire.

MERLIN

Name your desire my King

UTHER

Merlin, for some months now I can think of nothing except the beautiful Lady Igraine.

MERLIN

Igraine?

UTHER

Yes, Igraine. I think of her all the time Merlin.

MERLIN

You have fallen in love with the Duke of Cornwall's wife?

UTHER

I fear so. And whatever happens in the battle between us I cannot see that she will ever accept me as her husband.

MERLIN

That may be true my Lord.

UTHER

So Merlin, I ask you tonight for your most powerful spell. Transform me into the exact likeness of the Duke of Cornwall.

MERLIN

And once transformed, what do you plan to do?

UTHER

I will ride to the Duke of Cornwall's castle tonight whilst he is leading his troops in battle against my own. There I shall go to the Lady Igraine as if I am the Duke himself returning home to bed. I will spend the night with Igraine and leave in the morning. She will never know that I am not truly her husband.

MERLIN

I must warn you my Lord that a spell of transformation is powerful magic and we do not know what events we may set in motion.

UTHER

I do not care Merlin! I ask you to do this for me, your King. Prepare the magic.

MERLIN

Yes my Lord. But I must name a price.

UTHER

A price indeed? Well name it then.

MERLIN

If any child is born of your liaison tonight then I want your word that that child will be given to me.

UTHER

Why do you ask this Merlin?

MERLIN

Let us just say that this is powerful magic and a fair price must be paid.

UTHER

Very well Merlin. So be it. If Igraine has my child, that child will be given to you. So ready yourself, for tonight is the night we will see if Merlin's magic is all he has claimed it to be.

MERLIN

And so the spell was made. The King rode out; now the exact likeness of the Duke of Cornwall. Not the Duke's mother herself could have told them apart.

### **Scene 26: Lady Igraine's chamber**

ACTOR HOLDS BANNER, FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED

**Lady Igraine's chamber**

MERLIN ARRANGES KAY AS IGRAINE.

KAY

Hey why do I have to be Igraine? That's a bit creepy!

MERLIN

A spell is a spell, Kay. Be careful or I shall bewitch you into something worse.

UTHER/CORNWALL

Hello there? Igraine, open up. It is your husband.

IGRAINE

My Lord? Come in, come in. I had not expected you tonight. Is the battle against King Uther won?

UTHER/CORNWALL

No, my love. The battle rages still and I must return at dawn.

IGRAINE

The children are asleep already.

UTHER/CORNWALL

Never mind. I will see them soon enough. Come, let's retire to bed.

MERLIN

And so King Uther had his wish and spent the night with the beautiful Lady Igraine. At dawn as he promised he rode away from the Duke's castle. But almost as soon as he had gone the Lady Igraine received a message from the battle ground.

IGRAINE (READING)

"...sad to break to you my Lady this awful news. Last night at ten the Duke was killed in battle against King Uther's forces."

How can this be? My husband was here all night. He has just this moment left. This cannot be!

### **Scene 27: Back on the cathedral steps**

ACTOR HOLDS BANNER WITH FIRST LETTER ILLUMINATED



## **Back on the cathedral steps**

ARTHUR

So Merlin, you're telling me that King Uther's deception did result in the Lady Igraine bearing a child.

MERLIN

Yes Arthur.

KAY

I don't get it. What has this got to do with Arthur?

ARTHUR

I think Merlin is saying that I am the son of King Uther and the Lady Igraine.

KAY

Wow. I thought you'd have been better looking. Weird

MERLIN

Weird indeed Kay. But sometimes the truth is the weirdest thing of all.

KAY

Weirder than say a horse with the face of a frog wearing a dress and carrying a baguette?

MERLIN

Not as weird as that no.

ARTHUR

So I am the true King? The son of King Uther?

MERLIN

As my story made perfectly clear I think. Yes. And it was me who brought you as a baby away from the dangers of the court and the fighting over the succession and to safety in Sir Ector's house. Knowing that a time would come when the people of England were ready to unite under the true King.

KAY

So what happens now?

ARTHUR

Well, first things first. Merlin, if I am the true King then the first thing I'd like to do is make Kay a proper Knight.

MERLIN

As you wish my King.

ARTHUR (TAPPING THE SWORD ON KAY'S SHOULDER)

Arise Sir Kay, Knight of King Arthur's court.

KAY

I knew today was my lucky day! Thanks Arthur. Err King Arthur. Err My Lord Your Majesty.

ARTHUR

Can your tale be so simple Merlin or have you been watching over me all along I wonder.

MERLIN

I must confess my Lord that I used my magic to look in on you from time to time. My magic and my brilliant powers of disguise.

ARTHUR

The old man in the forest!

KAY

Oh yes I liked him. What about him?

ARTHUR

That was Merlin I think.

MERLIN

It was. And I watched you sometimes over the years in class and playing with Kay just to make sure that you were well and happy.

ARTHUR

Did you watch all the times that I tried to help Kay with his schoolwork?

MERLIN

I did.

ARTHUR

And did you watch me teach him to be a better sword fighter?

MERLIN

I did.

KAY

And did you watch the bit in the forest where Arthur said you were a completely mad old man and we shouldn't trust you?

MERLIN

No, I didn't watch that bit.

THERE IS AN AWKWARD PAUSE

ARTHUR

So Merlin, can you use your powers to look ahead and see what will become of me now that I am the rightful King of England?

MERLIN

The powers of prophecy can be tricky Arthur. But peering into the mists of time these are some of the things that I believe will come to pass: your court will be established in a beautiful castle at Camelot. I see you sitting at a mighty round table with a brave group of knights who will fight for you. I see a long reign with many quests, romances and adventures.

KAY

Anything about me at all?

MERLIN

I see bold Sir Kay at his King's command. How's that?

KAY

Not bad I suppose.

ARTHUR

So now, Merlin, what is there still to do before I convene my bold knights at this “round table” in Camelot?

MERLIN

Why celebrations for the coronation of course. Put on the crown young Arthur. This is a momentous day. Let there be dancing and cheering from the people. And perhaps a song?

### PERHAPS A SONG

Verse:

People of Britain united at last  
With a King for the future who's born of the past.  
Our nation is joyful and peaceful and proud  
We have our new King and we sing it out loud

Chorus

King Arthur King Arthur  
He's Britain's new master  
From the stone he has pulled out the sword  
King Arthur King Arthur  
King now and hereafter  
Admired and revered and adored,

Verse

His birth it is royal, his parentage true  
And as our new king he has plenty to do.  
He'll summon his knights just as soon as he's able  
And all shall be equal at Arthur's round table.

Chorus

King Arthur King Arthur  
He's Britain's new master  
Let nobody worry or frown  
King Arthur King Arthur  
King now and hereafter  
That's why he is wearing the crown.