

1 INT. CAMELOT (BURIAL VAULTS) - NIGHT 1. FR. 1

A dark shadowy vault containing a number of ancient tombs, graced with ornately carved sculptures of their noble occupants. A shadow falls across a black tomb - carved with the outline of a mighty Knight in full armour, a sword lain across his body like a cross. Suddenly, in the darkness we see a woman, it's NIMUEH...

She stands over the tomb and runs her hands over it, whispering a terrifying spell.

NIMUEH  
Gehyre me, wan cniht, awac!

As she utters the words her eyes burn into the stone casing. Suddenly, a crack rips across the lid.

NIMUEH  
Beo strangra ond steacra, forbrec  
tha wanne...

The crack grows bigger in the tomb...

NIMUEH  
Uparis; awrec Uther Pendragon!

CRASH! A hand clad in a black gauntlet smashes through the top of the tomb and reaches out towards the witch... A dark smile crosses her face...

CUT TO:

2 INT. KING'S PALACE (GREAT HALL) - NIGHT 1. FR. 2

ARTHUR is knelt on an elaborately decorated woolsack before UTHER. The Prince is dressed in ceremonial robes, MERLIN stands proudly to one side. A STEWARD holds a cushion carrying a coronet and a gold rod. It's the Prince's investiture. All around there are DIGNITARIES present, including GAIUS and MORGANA. UTHER speaks quietly but formally to his son as he takes the rod and places it in ARTHUR's hand...

UTHER  
Do you solemnly promise and swear  
to govern the people of this  
Kingdom and it's dominions  
according to the statutes, customs  
and laws laid down by your noble  
forebears?

ARTHUR  
I do, Sire.

UTHER

Do you promise to exercise mercy  
and justice in your deeds and  
judgements?

ARTHUR

I do, Sire.

UTHER

And do you swear allegiance to  
Camelot for now and for as long as  
you live?

ARTHUR

I, Arthur Pendragon, do pledge life  
and limb to your service and to the  
protection of this kingdom and it's  
peoples.

They both smile. UTHUR places the crown upon his son's head,  
he turns, addressing the room as well as ARTHUR, following  
the words of the ceremony.

UTHER

Now being of age and being the heir  
apparent, you shall hence-forth  
become Crown Prince of Camelot.

The CROWD cheer.

MERLIN grins proudly to one side, next to him stands GWEN.

GWEN

(in a low voice)

So how does it feel to be servant  
to the Crown Prince of Camelot?

MERLIN

(wry)

Washing his royal socks will be  
even more of a privilege.

GWEN takes a sideways look at him.

GWEN

You're proud of him really. Even  
though you complain about him  
constantly.

MERLIN

I am not.

GWEN

You are. I can see it in your face.

MERLIN

Those socks are very clean. Of  
course I'm proud of them.

GWEN laughs as ARTHUR soaks up the adulation.

But the moment is interrupted by the sound of smashing glass. UTHER and ARTHUR turn to see...

A KNIGHT on horseback rides an armoured steed at full tilt through the giant windows at the far end of the Great Hall.

Glass showers over the assembled GUESTS as they scramble out of the way. His face is masked beneath his visor. His armour is an ominous black. He advances slowly, inexorably toward UTHER...

UTHER

What in the Devil's name...?

Panicked GUESTS get out of the way as the horseman continues his relentless path toward the King...The Knights put their hands to their swords in expectation of trouble.

The BLACK KNIGHT stops before UTHER and ARTHUR and throws down a huge metal gauntlet. A stunned UTHER stares at it...

ARTHUR reacts, goes to pick up the gauntlet but before he reaches it, a young knight, SIR OWAIN, swoops and plucks the glove from the ground and holds it proudly aloft.

OWAIN

I, Sir Owain, accept your challenge.

A beat. The BLACK KNIGHT continues to focus on UTHER and ARTHUR, his expression is inhuman, unblinking, finally he turns toward SIR OWAIN.

BLACK KNIGHT

Single combat. Noon tomorrow. To the death.

UTHER's white as a sheet, fixated by the crest on the KNIGHT's helmet. GAIUS too stares intently at the KNIGHT, a flicker of recognition in his eyes.

## TITLES

3

**INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 1. UK.**

3

GAIUS is preparing some routine remedies at his workbench. MERLIN watches, but his thoughts are still consumed by the evening's events.

MERLIN

Have you ever seen this Black Knight before?

GAIUS stops his work for a moment.

GAIUS  
I don't believe so.

MERLIN  
You didn't recognise his crest?

GAIUS busies himself with his work again.

GAIUS  
(evasive)  
His crest?

MERLIN  
Which house is it?

GAIUS  
I'm not sure. I didn't see it that clearly.

MERLIN  
He's not someone you'd forget in a hurry though.

GAIUS  
(busying himself)  
No.

MERLIN  
So you don't think he's from round here?

GAIUS  
That would seem likely.

MERLIN  
But then what's he doing here?

GAIUS turns to face him.

GAIUS  
Merlin, your faith in my all-seeing knowledge is both touching and wholly misplaced. Maybe if you've finished your work for the day you could go to bed and leave me to finish mine.

MERLIN  
Okay, I'm going.

He goes to his room. GAIUS continues with his preparations. A second later MERLIN pops out of his room again.

MERLIN  
Gaius?

GAIUS  
(weary)  
Merlin.

MERLIN  
Do you think Owain can beat him?

GAIUS  
We will find out soon enough.

MERLIN leaves again. GAIUS looks after him, clearly more troubled by the night's events than he's letting on.

CUT TO:

4 INT. KING'S PALACE (MORGANA'S CHAMBERS) / EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) - NIGHT 1. UK / FR. 4

Looking out through the window we see...

The BLACK KNIGHT standing motionless in perfect symmetry outside the gates of Camelot, planted in the ground next to him is a plain black standard.

GWEN (O.S.)  
What does he want?

She is cautiously standing a few steps back from the window, watching the menacing stranger camped outside the castle.

GWEN  
Why would he issue such a challenge?

MORGANA is pacing nervously...

MORGANA  
(perturbed)  
And why did Owain of all people pick it up? Owain!

GWEN  
I know.

MORGANA  
He's just a boy.

GWEN  
He hates anyone saying that.

A guilty reaction on MORGANA's face. She turns to leave the room.

CUT TO:

5 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) / EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) - NIGHT 1. UK / FR.

ARTHUR too stands at the window looking at the BLACK KNIGHT, he looks concerned. There's a knock at the door. MORGANA enters.

MORGANA  
You must stop Owain from fighting.

ARTHUR  
(annoyed - a sense that he  
also feels some guilt)  
It's his damn fault. He shouldn't  
have picked up the gauntlet!

MORGANA  
So put an end to it.

ARTHUR  
The challenge has been taken up.  
The fight cannot be stopped.

MORGANA  
So fight in his place. Much as it  
pains me to say it, you're the man  
for this job, not him.

ARTHUR  
I can't!

MORGANA  
Why not?

ARTHUR  
Owain picked up the gauntlet, Owain  
is the one who must fight. That is  
the Knight's code. He knew that.

MORGANA  
But he's just a boy.

ARTHUR  
(a heavy sigh)  
I know.

CUT TO:

6 INT. KING'S PALACE (HALL OF RECORDS) - NIGHT 1. UK. 6

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH is anxiously examining a book of heraldry. He sees GAIUS enter.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Gaius! Thank God.

GAIUS  
You know why I'm here?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
The Black Knight.

GAIUS  
So it is he?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
You saw his crest.

GAIUS  
Have you confirmed it?

He looks down at the book ...

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
It is the crest of Tristan de Bois.

GAIUS  
And he's the only Knight to ever  
have carried that crest?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
According to the records.

GAIUS sighs, concerned, his fears confirmed. He turns to  
leave.

CUT TO:

7 INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 1. UK. 7

UTHER is alone, he hears a noise at the door and reacts -  
fearful of what it might be. A moment, he moves toward his  
sword lying on a table. He rests his hand lightly on it and  
looks anxiously toward the door...

UTHER  
Yes?

The door opens and in comes GAIUS.

GAIUS  
I'm sorry to disturb you, Sire.

UTHER tries to hide his anxiety.

UTHER  
What is it?

GAIUS  
The Knight, the stranger...

UTHER tenses again.

GAIUS  
He bears the crest of Tristan de  
Bois.

UTHER  
(quietly)  
Yes.

GAIUS nods.

GAIUS  
But he's been dead for twenty  
years.

UTHER  
I know. I killed him.

GAIUS  
But how do you explain ...?

UTHER  
(short)  
Dead men do not return. Is that  
all?

GAIUS bows and leaves. Uther sits alone in the empty room.  
Despite his denial, Uther is a troubled man.

CUT TO:

8 **EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) - DAY 2. FR.** 8

New born sunlight glints on the BLACK KNIGHT's breastplate.  
He remains almost cemented to the ground. His standard flaps  
in the breeze, further underlining his superhuman stillness.  
He does not appear to have moved all night.

CUT TO:

9 **INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 2. UK.** 9

The slow beat of a distant drum. OWAIN is standing in the  
centre of the room. In contrast to the Black Knight, he  
fidgets about as MERLIN helps him on with his armour. In  
daylight he looks even more of a boy than he did the previous  
night. ARTHUR tries to focus him.

ARTHUR  
Owain, you've never fought in  
mortal combat before, it's  
different... it's not like the  
training I've given you.

OWAIN  
(more fixated on adjusting  
a buckle)  
Yeah, I know...

ARTHUR  
Listen to me. The problem is we've  
never seen him fight. You have to  
quickly get the measure of him.

OWAIN  
(bright, innocent)  
But I have the same advantage -  
he's never seen *me* fight.

ARTHUR  
(unconvinced)  
True.

OWAIN  
You've watched me.

ARTHUR  
Yes...

OWAIN  
And?

ARTHUR  
And I know no one braver.

OWAIN smiles at MERLIN. MERLIN throws a glance at ARTHUR. He can sense his concern.

ARTHUR  
Remember, all it takes to kill a  
man is one well aimed blow.

OWAIN thrusts his sword at an imaginary target. In a few years he will make a good Knight, but he's still very much a colt, a lightweight.

GWEN enters. OWAIN smiles.

GWEN  
The Lady Morgana asked me to give  
you this token.

She holds up a ribbon. OWAIN is slightly overwhelmed, he looks at ARTHUR.

GWEN  
She wishes you to wear it for luck.

OWAIN  
You can thank her and tell her I  
shall wear it with pride, but...  
(MORE)

OWAIN (cont'd)  
(he turns to Arthur)  
I won't need luck.

We sense ARTHUR's gut churning feeling of responsibility.

CUT TO:

10

**EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 2. FR.**

10

A DRUMMER pounding a slow rhythm. A large CROWD waiting expectantly for the fight, dispersed amongst them are UThER, GAIUS and MORGANA. The BLACK KNIGHT stands in the centre in his customary static pose. As UThER enters the tournament ground and takes his seat, the KNIGHT turns to face him straight on. UThER stares back at the KNIGHT. He looks deeply troubled.

MERLIN and GWEN hurry to join the onlookers.

Finally, SIR OWAIN strides out from the palace with ARTHUR at his side. For the first time, the young man's nerves are apparent. He walks toward the waiting BLACK KNIGHT.

ARTHUR  
Find the flow of the fight and try  
to control it.

OWAIN nods, now barely able to speak. He stops a sword distance from his foe. The DRUMMER's beat quickens and intensifies echoing OWAIN's heartbeat.

ARTHUR  
(to both fighters)  
The fight shall be to the Knights'  
rules... And to the death.

He looks at OWAIN.

OWAIN puts on his helmet then lifts his sword, the BLACK KNIGHT reciprocates. As they face each other, for the first time, we appreciate the difference in scale between the two men. It's David and Goliath.

ARTHUR  
Let battle commence.

ARTHUR leaves the ground to take his seat by UThER, he watches the fight intensely throughout.

OWAIN doesn't hesitate, he lunges at the BLACK KNIGHT. In one swift and easy move, the BLACK KNIGHT side steps and parries, forcing OWAIN to look slightly ridiculous.

OWAIN readjusts himself and lunges again. The BLACK KNIGHT once more foils him with a deft move.

ARTHUR's concern intensifies - the BLACK KNIGHT is clearly an accomplished swordsman. Uther too looks concerned.

The two fighters circle each other, suddenly the BLACK KNIGHT unleashes a series of blows. His style is unhurried, precise, clinical, devoid of emotion. All OWAIN can do is block and parry, he's forced backward across the square unable to find a riposte...

GWEN  
Come on, Owain!

ARTHUR  
(bellowing)  
One well aimed blow!

MERLIN watches on fearfully, impotent to help.

The fight accelerates, blows rain down on young OWAIN. The BLACK KNIGHT is an awesome fighting machine, relentless, unstoppable...

MERLIN's eyes tighten...

Suddenly we're in MERLIN time: In slow motion we see OWAIN manage to unleash a single strike that pierces the BLACK KNIGHT's breastplate...

MERLIN reacts with joy.

MERLIN  
Yes!

GAIUS gives him a puzzled glance...

UTHER stands up - did he see the blow too? The fight continues at normal speed again, the BLACK KNIGHT shows no sign of injury. Instead, he reacts with a flurry of frenzied blows. As the final stroke lands, the CROWD react with audible horror... Uther sits down in horrified realisation that OWAIN is dead.

The drum stops. A silence. We see the ribbon, Owain's good luck token, lying in the dirt, it flutters on the breeze...

The CROWD is silent. ARTHUR hangs his head. MORGANA has tears in her eyes.

The BLACK KNIGHT steps over OWAIN's body and throws down his gauntlet again - it lands before the King.

BLACK KNIGHT  
Who will take up my challenge?

ARTHUR makes to step forward but Uther grabs him by the arm. ARTHUR flashes his father a quick look, and pulls himself from Uther's grip...

But as he turns back to the gauntlet, SIR PELLINOR steps forward and swipes it from the ground.

SIR PELLINOR  
I, Sir Pellinor, take up the challenge.

BLACK KNIGHT  
Single combat. Dawn tomorrow.

The BLACK KNIGHT stares at Uther...

ARTHUR spins round to Uther. Uther brushes him aside and turns away.

The BLACK KNIGHT starts to walk back toward the gates...

MERLIN watches him, then glances at GAIUS.

MERLIN  
Should we tend to his wounds?

GAIUS looks at him, confused.

MERLIN  
He took a hit.

GAIUS  
Owain didn't land a blow.

MERLIN  
I saw it. It pierced his breast plate.

GAIUS  
Are you sure?

MERLIN  
(nods)  
My eyes are quicker than yours.

They look at the Knight - He is walking purposefully with no hint of pain or impairment.

MERLIN  
He should be dead.

GAIUS looks concerned.

GAIUS  
Maybe he already is.

CUT TO:

11 INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - DAY 2. UK. 11

ARTHUR angrily pursues Uther as he enters the council chambers.

ARTHUR  
Why did you stop me?

UTHER  
We have to give our Knights the chance to prove themselves.

ARTHUR  
Have you seen how this stranger fights?!

UTHER  
And Sir Pellinor will be a match for him.

ARTHUR  
He's still not recovered from the wounds he suffered at Ethandun.

UTHER  
I cannot help that.

ARTHUR  
(incredulous)  
So you send him to his death?

UTHER  
(angry, turning on Arthur - with finality)  
I didn't send him anywhere. I am not to blame.

CUT TO:

12 INT. KING'S PALACE (STAIRS TO BURIAL VAULTS)-NIGHT 2. FR. 12

Darkness. A door opens and two figures appear silhouetted against the light outside. In the half light we can see some stone steps descending toward us...

MERLIN  
Are you sure we should be doing this?

GAIUS  
You're not scared, are you?

MERLIN  
No, I love old crypts.  
(a beat)  
I wouldn't be seen dead anywhere else.

Suddenly, the door they came through slams closed and the room is thrown into darkness.

MERLIN  
What was that?

GAIUS  
Must've been a gust of wind.

A beat. They can't see and are unable to move.

GAIUS  
We should've brought a torch.

MERLIN casts a spell...

MERLIN  
Leohtbora.

....a flame flares - a flambeau on the wall lights itself. MERLIN takes it off the wall.

GAIUS  
Handy!

MERLIN  
Yes.

GAIUS  
Except it means you'll have to go first.

MERLIN frowns, then reluctantly takes the lead.

CUT TO:

13

**INT. KING'S PALACE (BURIAL VAULTS) - NIGHT 2. FR.**

13

MERLIN and GAIUS are now in the vault itself. We recognise it from our opening. MERLIN sees various tombs ahead of him...

MERLIN  
What are we looking for?

GAIUS  
Move your light to the left.

MERLIN does as he's told. The flickering torchlight creates all kinds of strange unnerving shadows.

GAIUS  
There.

MERLIN shines the torchlight on the black tomb.

They move toward it.

MERLIN  
(uneasy)  
We're breaking into someone's  
grave.

As GAIUS reaches the tomb he stops

GAIUS  
We're too late... I think someone  
has already broken out.

We see the top of the tomb has been smashed open with great  
force. Debris is lying across the floor...

GAIUS bends down to peer inside, the inside of the tomb is  
empty.

CUT TO:

14 INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 2. UK.

14

GAIUS and MERLIN return. GAIUS hurries to the shelves and  
removes a book ...

GAIUS  
Tristan de Bois was the brother of  
Ygraine. Uther's wife.

MERLIN  
Arthur's mother?

GAIUS nods.

GAIUS  
Ygraine died in childbirth and he  
blamed Uther for her death. He came  
to the gates of Camelot and  
challenged him.

MERLIN  
(realising)  
To single combat?

GAIUS  
(nodding)  
And Uther won. With his last breath  
Tristan cursed Camelot to one day  
suffer his return...

MERLIN looks at him.

GAIUS  
I thought it was just the ramblings  
of a dying man...

MERLIN

Men don't just rise up from the dead though, no matter how angry they are.

GAIUS

(consulting a book)  
My guess is we're dealing with a wraith.

MERLIN

A wraith?

GAIUS

The spirit of a dead man conjured from the grave.

MERLIN

So this is the work of a sorcerer?

GAIUS

Powerful magic can harness the grief and rage of a tormented soul and make it live again.

MERLIN

How do we stop it?

GAIUS

(he looks up - a grim expression on his face)  
We can't. Because it is no longer alive, no mortal weapon can kill it.

MERLIN

Surely there must be something...

GAIUS

(shaking his head)  
Nothing can stop it until it has achieved what it came for.

MERLIN

And what's that?

GAIUS

Revenge.

MERLIN

On Camelot?

GAIUS gives a slight nod.

MERLIN

What does that mean for Sir Pellinor?

GAIUS

I'm afraid it doesn't look good.

CUT TO:

15           **EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 3. FR.**           15

The sound of the drum, beating its slow, ominous rhythm. The BLACK KNIGHT stands in the centre of the tournament ground in readiness for battle. His darkness is even more striking now that he's silhouetted against the sun. He stares at Uther...

Uther is determined to hold his gaze.

The eager CROWD has a nervous atmosphere. They cheer as SIR PELLINOR and ARTHUR enter the arena.

The pair stop, ARTHUR focuses on SIR PELLINOR to give him his last instructions...

ARTHUR

You've seen him fight.

SIR PELLINOR

(looking at the Black Knight)

He's good.

ARTHUR

(forcing Sir Pellinor to look at him)

Not as good as you. Are you listening to me?

SIR PELLINOR nods.

ARTHUR

See the sun is low in the sky.

SIR PELLINOR glances toward the sun...

ARTHUR

Keep it behind you.

He holds up his hand (in arm wrestling position). SIR PELLINOR reciprocates and clasps his hand.

SIR PELLINOR

For the love of Camelot.

ARTHUR

For the love of Camelot.

CUT TO:

SIR PELLINOR and the BLACK KNIGHT exchange sword blows. SIR PELLINOR is an experienced fighter, he gives as good as he gets. He pushes the BLACK KNIGHT back with a series of lunges...

The CROWD cheer for their hero. Amongst them we see UThER, ARTHUR, MORGANA and GWEN. Standing to one side, viewing the fight from a different angle, we find MERLIN and GAIUS.

MERLIN

Maybe you were wrong.

GAIUS

I hope so.

The BLACK KNIGHT parries everything SIR PELLINOR throws at him, until finally SIR PELLINOR lands a blow which knocks the black knight's sword to the ground.

The BLACK KNIGHT is momentarily defenseless as PELLINOR thrusts his sword into his chest with what looks like a fatal blow - the crowd gasp and cheer as they see SIR PELLINOR's sword penetrate the BLACK KNIGHT's armour.

SIR PELLINOR steps back, triumphant. But the BLACK KNIGHT doesn't flinch. He retrieves his sword and responds with a series of crashing blows, that SIR PELLINOR struggles to block. The BLACK KNIGHT is unstoppable, a killing machine. He lands a fatal strike that coincides with a drum beat...

We cut away to UThER's face, appalled by what he's witnessed... The crowd look shocked. We go to GWEN and MORGANA.

GWEN

The sword went in - I'm sure of it.

MORGANA

(worried)

I saw it too.

The BLACK KNIGHT turns toward the King, starts to remove his gauntlet, but before he can throw it down ...

A gauntlet hits the ground at his feet. The BLACK KNIGHT looks up to see where it's come from. He finds ARTHUR looking at him ...

ARTHUR

I will not see anymore of my men die.

(a beat)

I, Arthur Pendragon, take up the challenge.

A murmur amongst the CROWD.

BLACK KNIGHT

So be it.

ARTHUR

(calling the shots)

Single combat. Noon tomorrow.

GAIUS catches UTHER's eye. He is white-faced with shock.

CUT TO:

16

**INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - DAY 3. UK.**

16

ARTHUR, a determined look on his face, stands in front of UTHER.

UTHER

How could you be so stupid? I will  
revoke the challenge.

ARTHUR

No.

(turning on his father)

The Knights' code must be upheld.  
That's what you told me.

UTHER

This is different.

ARTHUR

Once a challenge is laid you cannot  
rescind it.

UTHER

You are the Crown Prince.

ARTHUR

There cannot be one rule for me and  
one for all the rest.

UTHER

I forbid you to fight

ARTHUR turns to face his father.

ARTHUR

You want me to prove myself worthy  
of the throne. I cannot do that by  
being a coward.

UTHER

No, Arthur, this will be your  
death!

ARTHUR  
(he walks to the door)  
I'm sorry you have so little faith  
in me, father.

UTHER  
Arthur!

ARTHUR keeps walking. UTHUR hangs his head in despair.

CUT TO:

17

**INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - DAY 3. UK.**

17

MERLIN and GAIUS discuss what to do.

MERLIN  
You were right.

GAIUS  
I wish I wasn't.

MERLIN  
If Arthur fights that thing, he'll  
die.

GAIUS  
He is Camelot's greatest warrior.  
If anyone can defeat it, he can.

MERLIN  
But you said yourself, no mortal  
weapon can kill it. Which means we  
have to find a way to defeat the  
wraith ourselves.

GAIUS  
How do you propose to do that?

He runs up the stairs to his room...

MERLIN  
If no mortal sword will kill it...

He disappears into his room and comes back with his magic  
book.

MERLIN  
Then I will have to. With mortal  
magic.

GAIUS  
Merlin, it's too dangerous...

MERLIN  
We don't have any choice.

GAIUS watches him turning the pages and quietly leaves the room.

CUT TO:

18 INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - DAY 3. UK. 18

A troubled UThER is pacing the room when GAIUS enters. UThER stops and stares at him in trepidation, anticipating bad news.

GAIUS  
Good evening, Sire.

UTHER  
Gaius.

GAIUS  
There is something of great urgency  
I must discuss with you.

UTHER  
Then spit it out, man.

GAIUS  
Tristan's tomb is empty.

UTHER face ices over.

GAIUS  
I believe he has been conjured from  
the dead.

UTHER is quiet for a moment, then resumes his pacing, his mind whirring.

UTHER  
How is this possible?

GAIUS  
I believe he is a wraith.

UTHER  
A spirit?

GAIUS  
(nods)  
He has come to take vengeance for  
Ygraine's death.

UTHER  
(guilty)  
It was magic that killed her. Not  
I.

GAIUS  
(gently)  
Nevertheless it was you he blamed.

GAIUS hesitates. He knows he must tread carefully.

GAIUS  
You cannot allow Arthur to fight.  
No weapon forged by man can kill a  
wraith. It will stop at nothing  
until it has accomplished what it  
came for. Arthur cannot win, he  
will die.

UTHER  
He will not listen to me.

GAIUS  
Then you must tell him who the  
knight is...

UTHER  
No.

GAIUS  
You cannot hide the truth forever.

UTHER  
(angered)  
I am the King! You will not bid me  
what to do!

GAIUS  
(calm)  
That is your choice, sire; you tell  
him or let him go to his death.

UTHER  
(threatening)  
No one but you and I will ever know  
that secret.

GAIUS  
The boy is of age, he should know.

UTHER  
Never.  
(he draws a dagger)  
You made an oath, and I warn you  
not to break it.

They two men stand face to face for a moment. GAIUS is first  
to drop.

GAIUS  
Very well, sire.



MERLIN  
Because he'll kill you.

ARTHUR  
Why does everybody think that?

MERLIN  
Because they're right. Just pull out. You're the crown prince. No-one wants you to die for some stupid challenge.

ARTHUR  
I am not a coward.

MERLIN  
I know that. I've stood there and watched you overcome every fear you've ever faced ...

ARTHUR  
It's what's required of me, Merlin.

MERLIN  
But you are more than that ... you are not merely a warrior, you are a prince. A future king. You have proved your courage, but you must prove your wisdom ...

ARTHUR  
I cannot back down.

MERLIN  
(urgent)  
Please, Arthur, listen to me. This is no ordinary Knight you're fighting. Look at him - he doesn't eat, he doesn't sleep ... He just stands there in total silence. Doesn't that tell you something?

ARTHUR  
No one is unbeatable!

MERLIN  
(looking back at him -  
desperate)  
If you fight him you will die.

ARTHUR  
I cannot listen to this, Merlin.

He throws the door open for MERLIN.

MERLIN  
I'm trying to warn you, Arthur.

ARTHUR

And I'm warning you, Merlin.

He swings his sword. MERLIN darts from the room.

ARTHUR slams the door ...

CUT TO:

21 INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. UK. 21

UTHER sits in the empty council chamber, a haunted figure. There's a rattle at the window, he reacts, looks toward the sound, clearly expecting the wraith to appear at any moment...

He turns back and is shocked to see someone standing in his room: NIMUEH. He stares at her fearfully, as if he's seen a ghost.

UTHER

(realising her  
involvement)

I should've known.

NIMUEH

(with sense of relish)

It is more than I had hoped for,  
Uther. Soon Arthur will be slain.  
You will have sent him to his  
death.

UTHER

You conjured this thing. Their  
deaths are at your hand.

NIMUEH

Always so righteous, never to blame  
...

UTHER

(angry)

Haven't you had your fill of  
revenge?

NIMUEH

Haven't you! You began this war  
when you threw me from the court  
and slaughtered all of my kind.

UTHER

You brought it on yourselves with  
the evil you practised.

NIMUEH

(irked)

I was your friend, Uther! You welcomed me here.

UTHER

And you betrayed that friendship!

NIMUEH

I did as you asked! I used the skills you so despise to give your barren wife the son you craved.

UTHER

Never speak of her that way! My wife was worth a thousand of you. And you took her from me.

NIMUEH

She died giving birth to your son! It was not my choice. That is the law of magic. To create a life there had to be a death, the balance of the world had to be repaid.

UTHER

You knew it would kill her!

NIMUEH

No, you're wrong. If I had foreseen her death, and the terrible retribution you would seek... I would never have granted your wish.

UTHER

I wish you hadn't.

NIMUEH

You wish you did not have a son? Well, that wish will come true tomorrow.

UTHER

I will not let you take him.

NIMUEH

That is your choice.

(a faint smile)

I have watched so many people I love die at your hands, Uther Pendragon. Now it is your turn.

A beat. There's a rattle at the window and the candles flame and go out. When Uther turns back, NIMUEH has gone.

CUT TO:

22

INT. KING'S PALACE (HALL OF RECORDS) - NIGHT 3. UK.

22

The room is dark. MERLIN is looking through a book, dissatisfied with what he's found. He begins searching the shelves again, he hears a noise, stops and listens. He waits, he clearly shouldn't be there. He starts rummaging again...

He knocks a book over, bends to pick it up and sees a pair of feet beside him. His eyes dart upward to see...

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH glaring at him.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
How did you get in here?

MERLIN  
The door was open.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
No, I locked it.

MERLIN  
Uh... Someone else must've opened it.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
And you thought you'd come in and help yourself.

MERLIN  
I was looking for a book. For Gaius...

GEOFFREY's tone softens, he looks at the open book, seeing the contents...

MERLIN  
He thinks the Black Knight is a wraith.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Then Arthur's in grave peril.

MERLIN  
Which is why I'm here.  
(beat)  
I need to find a weapon that will kill something that's already dead.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
(a beat)  
I have read of such things, in the ancient chronicles.

MERLIN leaps up, excited.

MERLIN  
What did they say?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Several fables speak of ancient  
swords...

MERLIN  
That can kill the dead?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
The fables speak of swords which  
can destroy anything - alive or  
dead.

MERLIN  
Can you show me one of these  
fables?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Well let me think...

He starts to search the shelves.

MERLIN  
I'm sort of in a hurry...

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
You young people always are.

He continues searching as MERLIN follows his every move.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Here we are. The Chronicle of  
Beltain. Now let me see...

He starts to go through the pages as MERLIN waits  
impatiently.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Yes, here we go...  
(reading)  
And Sir Marhaus looked upon the  
great sword begotten in the  
dragon's breath and found it  
passing good...

MERLIN  
What did you say?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
And Sir Marhaus...

MERLIN  
Not about him... The dragon...

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
The sword begotten in the dragon's  
breath...

He looks up from the book but MERLIN has already disappeared.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Always in a hurry.

CUT TO:

23 INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 3 (UK.) 23

GWEN is busy with her chores, she hears a knock at the door and sees MERLIN.

GWEN  
(quickly removing her  
pinny)  
Merlin ... What're you doing here?

MERLIN  
Oh, I've come to ask a favour.

GWEN  
Yes?

MERLIN  
I don't know how to ask it.

GWEN  
Ask, Merlin, you know that I would  
grant you anything ...

MERLIN looks at her - slightly thrown.

GWEN  
I mean not anything  
(a beat - backtracking)  
Obviously, not anything. What is  
it you want?

MERLIN  
I need a sword, the strongest sword  
your father's ever made.

GWEN  
What for?

MERLIN  
To save Arthur. I need you to help  
me.

CUT TO:

24 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) / EXT. CAMELOT 24  
(MAIN GATES) - NIGHT 3. UK/FR.

ARTHUR stands in the window alone, he stares out at the BLACK KNIGHT. We can sense his doubts...

He hears a noise and quickly turns to the door. He finds MORGANA watching him.

MORGANA  
(for once showing her true emotions)  
I don't want you to fight tomorrow.

ARTHUR stares at her, surprised by her conviction.

ARTHUR  
Why not?

MORGANA  
(feeling some kind of premonition)  
I don't know what it is ... Please - I'm warning you.

ARTHUR  
(smiling)  
You're worried about me.

MORGANA  
No. It's not me. It's your father. Can't you see what you're doing to him?

ARTHUR  
(doubtful)  
My father?

MORGANA  
Obviously. He cares about you.  
(betraying her own emotions)  
He loves you, Arthur. He doesn't want to lose you.

ARTHUR  
(recognising )  
And I feel the same. But ... I have to do this.

A moment, they hold each other's stare. Tears are forming in MORGANA's eyes.

MORGANA  
I understand.

She turns and goes. ARTHUR bows his head and sighs.

CUT TO:

25

INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 3. UK.

25

GAIUS is preparing for bed. A knock at the door. GAIUS goes to open it. He finds UThER standing outside.

UTHER  
Am I still welcome?

GAIUS  
Have you come to shout at me?

UTHER  
I'm sorry.

GAIUS leads him inside.

UTHER  
You knew that one day, all this  
would come back to haunt me.

GAIUS  
Not quite so literally.

UTHER  
I should've listened to you. You  
told me no good would come of using  
witchcraft.

GAIUS  
You wanted an heir. You thought it  
was the only way.

UTHER  
Nimueh told me there would be a  
price.

GAIUS  
You were not to know that the price  
you'd pay was Ygraine's life.

UTHER winces at the memory.

UTHER  
I cannot let Arthur die...

GAIUS  
Then you *must* stop the fight.

UTHER  
No... I will take his place.

GAIUS  
You realise what you're saying?

UTHER  
Ygraine died for him and so must I.

GAIUS

Uther...

UTHER

I have no other choice.

GAIUS

There must be another way.

UTHER

No! My death will stop the wraith  
and Arthur will live.

(he sets his eyes on  
Gaius)

It means that you will be the only  
person left who knows the truth  
about Arthur's birth. You must  
swear to me that you will keep your  
oath.

GAIUS

(a moment - finally  
relenting)

I will take it to my grave.

UTHER

You always were a good friend,  
despite my temper.

GAIUS

I always thought that would be the  
death of you.

UTHER

(managing a smile)

I must ask you one last favour...

CUT TO:

26

**INT. GWEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 3. UK**

26

GWEN returns to MERLIN carrying a sword ...

GWEN

My father's been saving this. He's  
always said this was the best sword  
he's ever made.

She hands it to MERLIN, he examines it.

MERLIN

It's beautiful.

GWEN

(slight concern)

He'll kill me if he finds I've  
taken it.

MERLIN  
It's for the love of Camelot.

GWEN  
Mmm ... Yes.

CUT TO:

27 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARMOURY CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 3. FR. 27

MERLIN hurries through the castle. He carries the sword with him, wrapped and hidden inside a cloth blanket.

28 INT. KING'S PALACE (UNDERGROUND STAIRS) - NIGHT 3. FR. 28

MERLIN hurries his way down into the depths of the citadel.

CUT TO:

29 INT. KING'S PALACE (CAVERN) - NIGHT 3. UK. 29

MERLIN steps out once more onto the lip of rock overlooking the great cavern.

The GREAT DRAGON raises his eyes ...

GREAT DRAGON  
Merlin!

MERLIN  
D'you know why I'm here?

GREAT DRAGON  
It may surprise you, Merlin, but my knowledge of your life is not universal.

MERLIN  
It's to do with Arthur, his life is in danger. He will die unless I can make a weapon that can kill the dead.

GREAT DRAGON  
So what do you come to ask of me?

MERLIN bends down on one knee, places the wrapped sword on the ground and unrolls it ...

We see the finished sword for the first time. Even in its raw, un-enchanted state it has a simple beauty.

MERLIN reaches down to pick it up, but it disappears before his eyes ...

Instinctively, he looks down into the cavern and sees the sword hovering in the air before the GREAT DRAGON.

MERLIN  
Will you burnish it to save Arthur?

The GREAT DRAGON considers this ...

GREAT DRAGON  
That is your destiny, young  
warlock, not mine.

MERLIN  
But if Arthur fights the wraith and  
dies Camelot will have no heir. I  
will have no destiny.

The DRAGON considers this.

GREAT DRAGON  
A weapon forged with my assistance  
will have great power.

MERLIN  
I know...

GREAT DRAGON  
(interrupting him)  
You do not know. You can only  
guess. You have not seen what I  
have seen. If you had perhaps you  
would not ask this of me.

MERLIN  
What do you mean?

GREAT DRAGON  
In the wrong hands this sword could  
do great evil. It must be wielded  
by Arthur and him alone.

MERLIN  
I understand.

GREAT DRAGON  
You must do more than understand.  
You must promise.

MERLIN nods.

MERLIN  
I promise.

The GREAT DRAGON exhales an almighty blast of fire ... The sword is temporarily lost within the inferno.

When the flames recede we see the shining sword - the light flashes off it, almost blinding MERLIN. He turns his head away ...

And when he looks up again, he sees the sword has been returned to him. It is lying on the cloth blanket. MERLIN is captivated - it has a simple but majestic presence.

GREAT DRAGON  
Heed my words ...

MERLIN stops and turns to the GREAT DRAGON ...

GREAT DRAGON  
The sword was forged for Arthur and him alone.

CUT TO:

30 INT. KING'S PALACE (CORRIDOR 1) / CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) -30  
NIGHT 3. FR.

UTHER standing at the window, looking out at...

The ominous unyielding figure of the BLACK KNIGHT standing before the gates of Camelot.

CUT TO:

31 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. FR. 31

ARTHUR is also standing at his window looking out through the curtains, he's unable to sleep. He hears GAIUS's voice outside his door.

GAIUS (O.S.)  
I've brought you something that might help you sleep.

GAIUS enters carrying a small phial.

ARTHUR  
I'm fine. I don't need it

GAIUS  
(he removes the cap from the phial)  
Here. It'll relax you, it'll take the edge off your nerves.

ARTHUR finally concedes and downs the liquid with a grimace.

ARTHUR  
I wouldn't drink it for pleasure.

GAIUS  
Why don't you sit down for a moment?

ARTHUR  
Mind you... if you forget the taste... the effects are...

He plonks himself down on his bed, already succumbing to the sedation...

ARTHUR  
Quite enjoyable.

GAIUS  
Lie back.

ARTHUR rests his head on his pillow.

GAIUS  
How're you feeling?

ARTHUR  
Mmm...

GAIUS looks at ARTHUR a moment, waiting for him to drift off. Satisfied that ARTHUR's asleep, he turns and walks quietly to the door. He gently removes the key from the doorlock....

CUT TO:

GAIUS leaves ARTHUR's room and locks the door behind him. He walks away along the corridor.

CUT TO:

32      **EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 4. FR.**      32

Dawn. The BLACK KNIGHT stands, watched by a few TOWNSPEOPLE who are setting up for the fight. Amongst them we see the DRUMMER.

CUT TO:

33      **INT. KING'S PALACE (MORGANA'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK.**      33

MORGANA is at her dressing table. She looks sick, she hasn't slept. GWEN enters with her breakfast and lays it before her.

MORGANA  
I'm not hungry.

GWEN  
You must eat something.

MORGANA

I can't.

We hear the drum beat start, MORGANA looks to the window.

MORGANA

(shrugs - lifeless)

If he dies, I fear for the future.

GWEN

Arthur will win. He will live to be King.

MORGANA

How can you be so sure?

GWEN

Merlin is looking out for him. He won't let him die.

MORGANA smiles at GWEN's sweet faith in Merlin but obviously doesn't share it.

CUT TO:

34 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK. 34

The drum beats continue while a drugged ARTHUR sleeps, oblivious to the preparations for the fight that are going on outside.

CUT TO:

35 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARMOURY) - DAY 4. FR. 35

A windowless room somewhere in the depths of the castle. The slow beat of the familiar drum continues outside as MERLIN readies Arthur's armour and finally unwraps the new sword from its blanket. It shimmers in the early morning light. He holds it in his hand. Suddenly, the door opens and MERLIN turns expecting to see ARTHUR, instead it's UTHUR that enters.

UTHER

That's a fine blade.

MERLIN

It's for Arthur.

UTHER

He won't be needing it today.

MERLIN looks confused.

UTHER

I will be taking Arthur's place.

MERLIN  
(realising that the sword  
is for Arthur only)  
But, Sire...

UTHER  
Prepare me for battle.

MERLIN  
But Arthur should be the one...

UTHER  
No, the grievance is with me, the  
fight is mine.

MERLIN  
I do not have your armour.

UTHER points to some armour placed nearby.

UTHER  
This will do. It's likely to make  
little difference.

MERLIN straps on a breast plate. UTHUR seems in a trance -  
he's a man on death row, coming to terms with his fate.

MERLIN  
I'll get you your sword.

UTHER  
This one will be fine.

MERLIN looks horrified.

MERLIN  
No, Sire... You don't understand...  
that one was made specifically for  
Arthur.

UTHER examines it. The sword appears to dazzle almost  
unnaturally.

UTHER  
Who made it?

MERLIN  
Uh... Tom the Blacksmith.

UTHER  
It's worthy of a King.

MERLIN  
You'd be better off with a sword  
you trusted.

UTHER slowly wields the sword...

UTHER

It has an almost perfect balance...  
Tom is not the Royal Swordsmith.  
I'm surprised Arthur went to him.

MERLIN

It was me.

UTHER looks at him.

MERLIN

(he shrugs)  
I felt he needed a better sword.

UTHER

(surprised - looking at  
Merlin anew)  
You do show him incredible loyalty.

MERLIN

It's my job, Sire.

UTHER

But you go beyond the line duty.

MERLIN

Well... you could say there is a  
bond between us.

UTHER

I'm glad...  
(a beat)  
Look after him, will you.

He sets off for battle, taking the sword with him.

CUT TO:

36      **EXT. KING'S PALACE (DRAWBRIDGE/TOURNAMENT GROUND)      - 36**  
**DAY 4. FR.**

UTHER walks under the drawbridge. The drum beat gets slowly louder as he approaches the tournament ground and the battle of his life.

CUT TO:

37      **EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 4. FR.      37**

UTHER'S P.O.V: The bright light, the noise of a large fight crowd, a multitude of expectant faces and in the centre of the Tournament Ground the BLACK KNIGHT standing motionless and poised for battle...

UTHER steps forward. Shock rumbles through the crowd, including MORGANA and GWEN in the stands and MERLIN and GAIUS at the side of the fighting area.

The DRUMMER holds his monotonous rhythm. UTHER walks calmly through the crowd, but we sense his tension within.

He arrives before the BLACK KNIGHT and stops inches from him, staring into his foe's visor...

UTHER

You can have what you want - the father, not the son.

The BLACK KNIGHT stiffens and steps back withdrawing his sword. UTHER puts on his helmet. The SPECTATORS watch in hushed silence as UTHER and the BLACK KNIGHT circle one another.

CUT TO:

38 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK. 38

The drum can be heard outside the window. ARTHUR begins to stir, then grabs his head. The drug has left him with one hell of a hangover!

He manages to stumble to the window. He reacts to what he sees...

CUT TO:

39 EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 4. FR. 39

The battle is on. The new sword glints in the light as it hits the Black Knight's blade for the first time. This is no ordinary sword. UTHER and the BLACK KNIGHT trade blows, two mighty gladiators engaged in ancient warfare as MORGANA, GWEN, MERLIN and GAIUS look on.

CUT TO:

40 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK. 40

ARTHUR rushes for the door and finds it locked. He kicks at it in vain - what the hell is going on?

CUT TO:

41 EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 4. FR. 41

Swirling action as the BLACK KNIGHT slashes ruthlessly at UTHER.

The King responds, parrying and countering with great skill, somehow managing to maintain his regal presence and command the fight... MERLIN watches the action intensely, reacting as the blows strike.

But the BLACK KNIGHT's assault is unrelenting. Suddenly, the sword is knocked from Uther's hand, it clatters across the cobbles. He is defenceless. He reaches for it, but the BLACK KNIGHT slices at his arm, striking a plate on his forearm...

GAIUS and MERLIN react to this turn of events against the KING.

UTHER reacts in pain, the BLACK KNIGHT closes in for the kill. Uther now has only his shield with which to defend himself...

In vain, he uses it to beat away the BLACK KNIGHT's blows. It's desperate heroic stuff...

MORGANA, sat next to GWEN, looks on in horror.

CUT TO:

42 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK. 42

ARTHUR wedges a spear into the jamb and forces his door open. He runs from the room...

CUT TO:

43 EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) - DAY 4. FR. 43

UTHER continues to desperately defend himself with his battered shield, but the BLACK KNIGHT drives him towards the wooden barriers. Uther appears doomed.

We discover NIMUEH concealed in the crowd, she smiles anticipating Uther's demise.

The BLACK KNIGHT makes a final lunge with all his might, but somehow Uther steps out of the way. The sword buries itself in Uther's shield. Uther hits the BLACK KNIGHT around the head, the KNIGHT's helmet flies off to reveal the hideous wraith underneath.

The CROWD's shock turns to horror...

Before the BLACK KNIGHT can remove his sword, Uther has regained his weapon.

UTHER  
Die a second time.

UTHER strikes home with the sword, straight into the KNIGHT's breastplate. As he pulls the blade back, the wraith's mouth opens, his final breath hitting UATHER, who stumbles back as the wraith starts to burn and then explodes in a cloud of dust.

On MERLIN's shocked face. The sword is all the dragon promised.

The CROWD react...

An exhausted UATHER looks down at the wraith's remains - an empty suit of armour...

CUT TO:

44 INT. KING'S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK. 44

GAIUS dressing UATHER's wounded arm.

UTHER  
(smiling - still unable to  
believe his good luck)  
I thought you said a wraith  
couldn't be killed.

GAIUS  
Yes, it was remarkable ...

He eyes the sword on the nearby table.

GAIUS  
Was that a new sword?

UTHER  
Best I've ever fought with.

GAIUS  
May I have a look?

GAIUS examines the blade, looking at the runes.

UTHER  
I was interested in those markings.

GAIUS  
On one side it says "Take me up",  
on the other "Cast me away"

UTHER  
What does that mean?

GAIUS  
Where did you get it?

UTHER

Merlin gave it me. It was forged  
for Arthur.

GAIUS reacts, but the conversation is interrupted by ARTHUR's  
entrance. The prince doesn't look happy.

GAIUS

(to Uther as her he  
withdraws from the room)  
That should heal pretty quickly.  
I'll redress it tomorrow.

UTHER

Thank you, Gaius. Thank you for  
everything.

GAIUS smiles and is gone.

ARTHUR

(his anger surfacing)  
You had Gaius drug me ... I was  
meant to fight him.

UTHER

No ... You weren't.

ARTHUR

The Knight's code ...

UTHER

(passionate)  
Be damned! I believed you would  
die. I could not take that risk.  
You are too precious to me. You  
are worth more to me than anything  
I know ... more than this entire  
Kingdom ... more than my own life.

ARTHUR is taken aback, it is the first time he has seen his  
father like this.

ARTHUR

I've always thought ... well ...

UTHER

What?

ARTHUR

That ... I was a disappointment to  
you.

UTHER

That is my fault, not yours ... You  
are my only son.  
(a smile)  
And I would not wish for another.

ARTHUR is unsure how to react.

ARTHUR  
What I saw ... You fought pretty well.

UTHER  
Thank you.

ARTHUR  
(preparing to head off)  
You should join us for training sometime. Looked like you needed some help on your footwork.

UTHER  
I'll give you some footwork.  
(offering to land a kick)

ARTHUR grins and moves swiftly away. UTHUR smiles, pleased he's had this opportunity with his son.

CUT TO:

45 INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 4. UK.

45

GAIUS and MERLIN are having supper. GAIUS looks at MERLIN. MERLIN tries to ignore him.

GAIUS  
You know why I'm looking at you.

MERLIN  
No.

GAIUS  
Uther told me you gave him that sword today.

MERLIN says nothing.

GAIUS  
It must be a sword of very great power to slay the dead.  
(a beat)  
Did you enchant it?

MERLIN  
No... I didn't.

GAIUS  
Who did then?

MERLIN  
(he shakes his head)  
Wasn't me.

GAIUS gives him a look.

GAIUS  
Shame, it saved the King's life,  
I'd have been proud of you.

MERLIN  
Well ...

GAIUS  
Never mind.

They share a look, MERLIN smiles.

CUT TO:

46 INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS (MERLIN'S ROOM) - NIGHT 4. UK. 46

MERLIN is asleep. The room rumbles with the sound of the GREAT DRAGON's voice...

GREAT DRAGON (V.O.)  
(a hint of indignation in  
his tone)  
Merlin! Merlin!

MERLIN wakes and listens... he knows he's in trouble. He swings his legs out of bed and thinks for a moment, what is he going to say?

CUT TO:

47 INT. KING'S PALACE (UNDERGROUND TUNNEL) - NIGHT 4. FR. 47

MERLIN returns the well worn route to the GREAT DRAGON, a sense of dread.

CUT TO:

48 INT. KING'S PALACE (CAVERN) - NIGHT 4. UK. 48

He reaches the stone orifice and sees the GREAT DRAGON's face loom toward it. The GREAT DRAGON stares at him...

GREAT DRAGON  
(seething)  
You have no idea what you have  
done.

MERLIN  
(nervous)  
I'm sorry. Uther just took the  
sword...

GREAT DRAGON  
You have betrayed me.

MERLIN  
He's the King. I couldn't stop him.

GREAT DRAGON  
You counted the promise you made to me for nothing. That is something you will regret.

MERLIN  
I couldn't let him die...

GREAT DRAGON  
You could. But yet you did not. And now he has the sword you begged from me.

MERLIN  
I'll get it back...

GREAT DRAGON  
The sword is in the world. It cannot be unmade. But now a curse will forever lie upon it.

MERLIN  
What do you mean?

GREAT DRAGON  
The sword forged by Arthur is now destined to be used against him. It will bring about his doom.

MERLIN  
What do you mean? Is Arthur going to die?

GREAT DRAGON  
Everything dies, warlock, it is only the manner of death that is in question. Your actions have made that choice for Arthur. What's done cannot be undone.

The GREAT DRAGON turns and is gone. A worried MERLIN stands there a moment, taking in what he's heard.

CUT TO:

49

**INT. KING'S PALACE (ARMOURY) - DAY 5. FR.**

49

MERLIN stares at the blade, shining in the early morning light. He takes it from it's rack and wraps it in a bundle.

CUT TO:

