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1 **EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN SQUARE) - DAY 1. FR.** 1

The square is a hive of activity. A caravan of colourful carts is being unloaded by ACROBATS, DANCERS, JUGGLERS, STRONG MEN and JESTERS.

An ACROBAT back flips off a wagon and lands on his feet. JUGGLERS practice their routine, sending batons high into the air.

CUT TO:

1a **INT / EXT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) / CAMELOT (MAIN SQUARE) - DAY 1. UK/FR.** 1a

MERLIN and ARTHUR look down into the Main Square. MERLIN's impressed, ARTHUR less so.

MERLIN  
Did you see that?

ARTHUR  
It's a man throwing some sticks in the air.

MERLIN takes in ARTHUR's mood.

MERLIN  
What's wrong?

ARTHUR pulls a face...

MERLIN  
It's the anniversary of your birth. A huge feast is being held in your honour. You have dancers, jugglers and acrobats to entertain you. It must be a terrible burden.

ARTHUR  
Perhaps I'm just less easily impressed than you, Merlin.

MERLIN  
I'm really looking forward to it.

ARTHUR  
That's because you have the mind of a child.

ARTHUR heads out.

MERLIN  
(to himself)  
And yet I'm still more intelligent than you.

ARTHUR doesn't look round as he calls out...

ARTHUR  
I heard that.

CUT TO:

2	SC 2 CUT.	2
3	SC 3 CUT AND MOVED TO TOP OF SC 5.	3
4	SC 4 CUT AND MOVED TO SC 1A	4

5 INT. KING'S PALACE (BANQUET HALL) - DAY 1. FR.

5

Two ACROBATS have set up a circular board, divided into brightly coloured segments.

THE GLEEMAN passes through the Banquet Hall, casting a critical eye over the preparations, checking everything is as it should be.

Suddenly, behind him we hear a crash - THE GLEEMAN turns to see a chest full of juggling batons spill out over the floor.

THE GLEEMAN  
Careful gentlemen. Careful.

The JUGGLERS pick up their batons.

THE GLEEMAN  
There is no room for error. We must  
strive for perfection in all that  
we do. For tonight, we entertain  
royalty.

He hears a sound and looks round to see objects flying out of a deep trunk.

THE GLEEMAN clears his throat. A head appears, peering out over the rim of the trunk. This is GELDRED.

THE GLEEMAN  
Have you misplaced something  
Geldred?

GELDRED leaps from the trunk. We now see he is a dwarf.

GELDRED  
Our special gift for the Prince.  
I cannot find it anywhere. It is  
lost.

GELDRED starts to search a sack, causing more mess...

THE GLEEMAN  
Geldred...

GELDRED continues his search. He stops as he feels a hand on his shoulder. He looks up to see THE GLEEMAN fixing him with a piercing stare. It is suddenly apparent that THE GLEEMAN is a man to be feared. He pulls slim box from his tunic...

THE GLEEMAN  
I took the liberty of ensuring  
their safe passage myself. King  
Odin has gone to such trouble to  
arrange our little surprise. We  
would not want to disappoint him.

THE GLEEMAN opens the box to reveal three sharp throwing daggers...

THE GLEEMAN  
We must make sure this is a  
celebration that the young Prince  
will never forget.

The GLEEMAN throws one of the knives through the air. It pierces the centre of the board with terrifying precision.

## **TITLES**

6 **INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CORRIDOR) - DAY 1. UK.** 6

MERLIN and ARTHUR exit Arthur's chambers and make their way down the corridor. They meet GWEN...

GWEN  
Arthur.

ARTHUR  
Guinevere.

GWEN

I'm glad we have met. I wanted to give you my best wishes for your special day.

ARTHUR

Thank you. That's very kind.

GWEN

You must be so looking forward to the carnival?

ARTHUR hesitates, then...

ARTHUR

Absolutely. More than I can say.

MERLIN's outraged as he takes in ARTHUR's volte-face.

GWEN

I should get on.

ARTHUR and GWEN share an affectionate smile as she heads off. ARTHUR stares after her with puppy dog eyes. His expression changes as he sees MERLIN smirking...

ARTHUR

Shut up, Merlin.

MERLIN

It's sweet. How you are with Gwen. You're like... you're like a little puppy.

ARTHUR doesn't appreciate the analogy.

ARTHUR

Really? Have you ever seen a little puppy do this...?

ARTHUR clips MERLIN round the head...

MERLIN

Ouh!

ARTHUR clips MERLIN round the head again. MERLIN's outraged.

MERLIN

What was that for?

ARTHUR

*That* was for what you said earlier.

MERLIN goes to respond. ARTHUR clips him round the head before he can speak. MERLIN's speechless.

ARTHUR  
And that, is for what you were  
about to say.

ARTHUR heads off, leaving MERLIN disgruntled, rubbing his  
sore ear.

MERLIN  
(to himself)  
A little puppy with the brains of  
a donkey.

ARTHUR calls out without looking back...

ARTHUR  
Heard it.

CUT TO:

7 **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 1. UK.** 7

UTHER appears weak and withdrawn. Reveal ARTHUR seated by  
him. ARTHUR takes a moment as he takes in UTHUR's vacant  
expression, then launches into his usual routine...

ARTHUR  
The Court discussed the annual  
levy this morning. The council  
has suggested we raise it. I feel  
the people are already over-  
burdened...

UTHER  
We should not talk about matters  
of court today.

ARTHUR's surprised by UTHUR's response. UTHUR fixes ARTHUR  
with an emotional look. ARTHUR's increasingly concerned...

ARTHUR  
Father?

UTHER smiles softly...

UTHER  
You think I could ever forget  
that today is the anniversary of  
your birth?

ARTHUR's both relieved and touched. UTHUR pulls out a small  
box, holds it out to ARTHUR, gestures for him to take it.  
ARTHUR takes the box, opens it and pulls out a beautiful  
ring.

UTHER  
It was your grandfather's.

ARTHUR's moved...

ARTHUR

I shall treasure it. Thank you.

UTHER

Despite what you all think, I haven't completely lost my mind.

ARTHUR

No one thinks that. Least of all me.

UTHER's touched...

UTHER

You are a good son Arthur... I take it a suitable celebration has been arranged for this evening?

ARTHUR

A feast, and some entertainment. I will tell you all about it tomorrow.

UTHER

Nonsense. You think I would miss my son's anniversary?

ARTHUR's surprised and touched...

ARTHUR

Are you sure you feel strong enough?

UTHER

Nothing would stop me.

CUT TO:

8

**INT. KING'S PALACE (PHOENIX CORRIDOR) - DAY 1. UK.**

8

ARTHUR and GAIUS are talking by the guards outside the door to Uther's chambers.

ARTHUR

He seems much better. This will be the first time he has left his chambers in months.

GAIUS

We must be cautious. I have seen cases like your father's before. Periods of lucidity are not uncommon, but I have to warn you. It may not last.

ARTHUR takes this in, but remains positive.



A blast of trumpets. Everyone looks toward the doors. For a moment, nothing happens. The tension builds. Suddenly, the doors are thrown open and ACROBATS back flip through them. DANCERS and JUGGLERS follow behind, and suddenly the Hall is filled with entertainment...

Everyone's enjoying the show, wowed by the skills of the PERFORMERS. ARTHUR takes in UTHUR smiling, and then applauding. He catches his eye. UTHUR raises his goblet. ARTHUR returns the gesture with a smile. He's thrilled to see his father in such good spirits...

In the midst of the PERFORMERS, stands THE GLEEMAN. He raises his arms and signals. The PERFORMERS freeze. All eyes focus on THE GLEEMAN as a hush descends over the Hall.

With a flourish, THE GLEEMAN pulls a brightly coloured cover from the large circular board. A ripple of excitement as the CROWD realise what's happening...

UTHER  
Knife throwing. Excellent.

THE GLEEMAN looks out over the Hall.

THE GLEEMAN  
We will require a volunteer...

THE GLEEMAN's eyes travel the Hall, before settling on ARTHUR...

THE GLEEMAN  
Prince Arthur. What better and more fitting occasion to demonstrate your legendary bravery.

ARTHUR's caught out, put on the spot.

THE GLEEMAN  
Do you accept the challenge?

ARTHUR feels the eyes of the COURTIERS and KNIGHTS awaiting his decision. ARTHUR stands...

ARTHUR  
Of course.

There's a round of applause as ARTHUR makes his way through the Hall. MERLIN intercepts ARTHUR. They have a whispered exchange...

MERLIN  
Is this safe...?

ARTHUR

It's knife throwing, Merlin. Of course it's not safe. I could hardly refuse his challenge.

ARTHUR sees that the eyes of the entire room are upon them and starts emptying his pockets, giving the contents to MERLIN, making an excuse to cover the true nature of their exchange...

ARTHUR

Just emptying my pockets. Try not to steal anything, Merlin.

A ripple of laughter. MERLIN and ARTHUR's whispered exchange continues...

MERLIN

I just don't think it's a good idea to let someone strap you to a board and throw knives at you.

ARTHUR

Perhaps I should have you take my place?

MERLIN doesn't relish the prospect, looks out at the expectant CROWD, then back at ARTHUR...

MERLIN

I think they want you to do it.

ARTHUR

Your bravery never ceases to impress me, Merlin.

ARTHUR heads over to the circular board where THE GLEEMAN waits for him. He catches GWEN's eye. She looks concerned. ARTHUR smiles, reassuring. THE GLEEMAN gestures for ARTHUR to place himself against the board...

THE GLEEMAN

Sire. If you will...?

ARTHUR places himself against the board. DANCERS strap ARTHUR's ankles and wrists to the restraints on the board. ARTHUR shoots a slightly nervous glance at THE GLEEMAN.

THE GLEEMAN

Do not fear, my Lord. I never miss my target.

ARTHUR

Good. Glad to hear it.

With a flourish, THE GLEEMAN whips an apple from his robes and holds it up to the CROWD. THE GLEEMAN turns to ARTHUR...

THE GLEEMAN

May I?

ARTHUR

What?

Before ARTHUR can object, THE GLEEMAN places the apple in ARTHUR's mouth. THE GLEEMAN nods to one of the DANCERS. She gives the wheel a push and it starts to spin...

ARTHUR spins on the board. It makes him feel dizzy, and a little nauseous. A faint groan escapes his lips, muffled by the apple stuffed in his mouth...

GELDRED presents the case of knives to THE GLEEMAN. He takes one out, touches his finger to the tip, then demonstrates the blades sharpness by slicing off the top of GELDRED's hat.

On ARTHUR's eyes, a flash of fear at the demonstration.

Looking on, MERLIN is also concerned.

Without even stopping to take aim, THE GLEEMAN suddenly turns and throws the knife at ARTHUR. It thuds into the board, centimeters from ARTHUR's face. A huge gasp goes up, followed by a round of applause.

As he spins, ARTHUR eyes the knife warily...

THE GLEEMAN takes the next knife from the case. The tension builds, and suddenly THE GLEEMAN throws the knife. It flies through the air and thuds into the board on the other side of ARTHUR's head. Another round of applause.

THE GLEEMAN takes the final knife from the case. Tension as he takes aim...

MERLIN looks on. He steps into the shadows, his eyes flash, he's poised, ready to intervene magically...

We go into MERLIN TIME as THE GLEEMAN throws the knife. It spins through the air in slow motion...

The knife sticks straight into the apple. On ARTHUR's eyes, wide with fear. The hall erupts in applause.

MERLIN stands down, breathes a huge sigh of relief.

GWEN is equally relieved.

The DANCERS release ARTHUR from the board as THE GLEEMAN takes a bow.

ARTHUR grabs the handle of the knife, takes a bite of the apple as he saunters back to his seat. He throws the knife and apple to MERLIN, who catches them...

ARTHUR

See, Merlin. Nothing to worry about.

THE GLEEMAN and GELDRED watch ARTHUR chewing the mouthful of apple as he retakes his seat next to Uther, who congratulates him warmly. THE GLEEMAN has a quiet word with GELDRED...

THE GLEEMAN

(an aside)

In a few hours, the sedative on the apple will start to take effect. The Prince will be defenceless. Then we will strike.

CUT TO:

11 INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 1. UK. 11

The door flies open. ARTHUR staggers in, followed by MERLIN. The sedative is starting to take effect. ARTHUR's very drowsy and unsteady on his feet...

MERLIN

You're telling me you weren't even a little bit scared?

ARTHUR

Of course I wasn't. I am a warrior. You learn to control your fear. To channel it...

ARTHUR loses his balance, staggers. MERLIN catches him, stops him from falling over...

MERLIN

You looked scared...

ARTHUR rights himself.

ARTHUR

Then you are blind, as well as stupid, Merlin.

ARTHUR lets out an enormous yawn as he starts to undress.

ARTHUR

It was good to see my father enjoying himself.

(a worrying thought occurs)

He was a little quiet toward the end of the evening. Perhaps I should go and see him.

MERLIN

Are you sure that's a good idea?  
You can barely stand up.

ARTHUR

Are you saying I'm drunk?

MERLIN

I'm saying I really don't think  
you should be wandering around  
the palace.

ARTHUR

And why is that, Merlin?

MERLIN

Because you're not wearing  
trousers.

ARTHUR looks down and sees that he is indeed not wearing  
trousers, then looks back at MERLIN...

ARTHUR

Good point.

CUT TO:

12            **INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 1. UK.**            12

ARTHUR emerges from his chambers, fastening his trousers,  
which he finds rather difficult. He heads off down the  
corridor, bouncing off the walls, struggling to keep his  
eyes open. MERLIN looks after him with concern...

MERLIN

Are you sure you're okay?

ARTHUR

I'll be fine, Merlin. Get some  
beauty sleep.

MERLIN pulls a face as ARTHUR rounds the corner and  
disappears from view...

MERLIN

Watch out for the steps!

We hear a loud crash O/S. MERLIN smiles to himself, then  
heads off in the opposite direction...

CUT TO:

13            **INT. KING'S PALACE (NORTH CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 1. UK.**            13

ARTHUR wobbles down the corridor.

We now see THE GLEEMAN is wedged onto the ceiling, braced between the two walls. THE GLEEMAN watches ARTHUR disappear round the corner, then drops silently to the floor.

CUT TO:

14 **INT. KING'S PALACE (PHOENIX CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 1. UK.** 14

ARTHUR lets out an enormous yawn, struggling to keep his eyes open as he passes the two GUARDS outside the doors to Uther's chambers. He heads inside.

CUT TO:

15 **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 1. UK.** 15

UTHER lies in bed, sleeping peacefully. ARTHUR looks down at him. His eyes start to close as the sedative takes hold. He wobbles on his feet. ARTHUR forces his eyes open, slaps his face. But this only gives him a moments reprieve. He sinks into a chair. He fights the tiredness he feels sweeping over him, but it's a losing battle.

CUT TO:

16 **INT. KING'S PALACE (PHOENIX CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 1. UK.** 16

The two GUARDS standing outside Uther's chambers suddenly react as they see THE GLEEMAN standing in front of them - surprised he was able to get so close without them noticing...

THE GLEEMAN  
Good evening, gentlemen.

Before the GUARDS can challenge him, we see a glint of a blade in each of THE GLEEMAN's hands. He dispatches the GUARDS in two swift but deadly moves.

CUT TO:

17 **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 1. UK.** 17

ARTHUR is drifting into sleep, struggling to focus on Uther. His head lolls. He jerks himself awake. ARTHUR hears a faint sound, but he is too tired to react to it. Behind ARTHUR, we see the door open. THE GLEEMAN slips into the room. ARTHUR's oblivious...

THE GLEEMAN creeps toward ARTHUR. He draws a sword from his robes just as ARTHUR's head jerks up. ARTHUR catches a flash as the blade catches the candle light. ARTHUR draws his sword and parries the blow as THE GLEEMAN strikes. ARTHUR spills out of the chair and staggers backwards.

He's sleepy and disorientated, tries to call out, but his voice is weak...

ARTHUR

Guards...!

THE GLEEMAN

They will be of no help to you. I imagine you are feeling rather sleepy by now?

THE GLEEMAN attacks. ARTHUR barely manages to fight off the attack. His sword is knocked out of his hand and thrown across the room. ARTHUR collapses to his knees. He tries to call out, but barely manages a mumble...

ARTHUR

Father...

THE GLEEMAN stands over ARTHUR.

THE GLEEMAN

It is a shame that Odin will not be here to witness your death. I will enjoy telling him how you died, kneeling before me.

THE GLEEMAN raises his sword, ready to strike.

THE GLEEMAN

Goodbye, Arthur Pendragon.

ARTHUR is powerless, fears this is the end. But as THE GLEEMAN strikes, the blow is blocked by a sword. ARTHUR and THE GLEEMAN see UTHUR standing there, Arthur's sword in his hand...

UTHER

It will take more than a coward like you to kill my son.

THE GLEEMAN strikes. UTHUR blocks the blow. They trade a series of ferocious blows. But THE GLEEMAN is skilled and UTHUR rusty. UTHUR is beaten back, and only narrowly avoids being killed.

ARTHUR tries to get to his feet to go to UTHUR's aid, but he's too drowsy, collapses back on the floor.

UTHER and THE GLEEMAN circle each other, preparing to strike...

THE GLEEMAN

They say you have lost your mind. How does it feel, to know your people laugh at you?

Enraged, Uther attacks, but THE GLEEMAN easily deflects the blows.

THE GLEEMAN  
Uther Pendragon. The great King.  
Look at you. A broken man.

UTHER attacks, and again THE GLEEMAN easily deflects the blows. He's cruelly toying with Uther, taunting him.

THE GLEEMAN  
Is there anything you'd like to  
say to your son before I kill  
him?

UTHER looks at ARTHUR, kneeling, helpless. Uther's paternal instincts kick in. He attacks with a new ferocity, taking THE GLEEMAN by surprise. Uther rains blow after blow down on THE GLEEMAN, forcing him back. THE GLEEMAN's sword is knocked from his hand. Uther prepares to deliver a fatal blow...

UTHER  
I will send Odin your head as a  
gift.

THE GLEEMAN suddenly draws a knife, lunges at Uther. Uther thrusts his sword. THE GLEEMAN's expression changes as he's impaled. He staggers backwards, collapses and dies.

ARTHUR looks on, hugely relieved. But Uther doesn't respond. He looks weak and confused. His legs buckle. He sinks to the floor, sitting against the bed. ARTHUR realises something is very wrong.

ARTHUR  
Father!

UTHER pulls the bloody dagger from his robes, from where THE GLEEMAN thrust it into his chest. ARTHUR forces himself to his feet, staggers over to Uther and drops to his knees beside him. ARTHUR's horrified to see blood staining Uther's robes. Both ARTHUR and Uther have to fight to stay conscious.

ARTHUR  
No... Guards!... I will get  
help...

ARTHUR goes to stand. Uther grabs his hand...

UTHER  
Stay with me...

ARTHUR  
(to Uther)  
I'm here...  
(MORE)

ARTHUR (cont'd)  
(beat, calling out)  
Guards! Someone! We need help!

UTHER  
It is my time...

ARTHUR  
No... You can't die...

UTHER  
I know you will make me proud, as  
you always have. You will be a  
great King...

ARTHUR  
I'm not ready...

UTHER  
You have been ready for some  
time, Arthur...

ARTHUR  
No. I need you...

UTHER  
I know I wasn't always a good  
father. I put my duty to Camelot  
first. I'm sorry.

ARTHUR  
Don't say that...

UTHER grips ARTHUR's hand with all his remaining strength.

UTHER  
Know one thing. I always loved  
you, Arthur...

With that, UTHUR's eyes slowly close as he loses  
consciousness. ARTHUR's horrified...

ARTHUR  
No... Father... Father!

ARTHUR's appalled, but barely able to focus.

ARTHUR  
No...

CUT TO:

The sun rises over Camelot.

CUT TO:

19

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

19

GAIUS is tending to UTHUR. He's unconscious, very weak - close to death. ARTHUR and GWEN look on, deeply concerned. ARTHUR fixes GAIUS with a desperate look...

ARTHUR

Gaius. Can you treat him?

GAIUS

The knife pierced an artery. He is bleeding internally.

ARTHUR

There must be something... there must be something you can do. Please, Gaius.

GAIUS shakes his head.

GAIUS

It is just a matter of time. I am sorry, Arthur.

ARTHUR prepares himself for the worst.

ARTHUR

How long - how long has he got?

GAIUS

I fear he will not last more than two days.

ARTHUR can't accept that.

ARTHUR

No...

GWEN comforts ARTHUR...

GWEN

I'm sorry.

As GWEN holds him, ARTHUR stares at UTHUR, struggling to accept that he is going to die.

CUT TO:

20

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

20

SIR LEON and AGRAVAINE are reporting to ARTHUR, who just stares blankly, traumatised...

AGRAVAINE

We have traced the assassin back to the town of Wenham. It is in Odin's land.

(MORE)

AGRAVAINE (cont'd)

It seems Odin hired him to kill you, in revenge for the death of his son.

ARTHUR barely responds as he takes this in.

SIR LEON

We believe he had an accomplice among the performers, but he has fled the city. We have doubled the guard, should there be another attempt on your life.

Again, ARTHUR barely responds. AGRAVAINE takes in ARTHUR's despondent mood. He places a comforting hand on ARTHUR's shoulder...

AGRAVAINE

Our thoughts are with you, Arthur. If there's anything I can do at this difficult time, you have only to ask.

ARTHUR

Your support means a great deal to me. Thank you.

AGRAVAINE and SIR LEON head out, passing MERLIN as he enters. ARTHUR immediately responds to MERLIN's arrival...

ARTHUR

(to MERLIN)

What news of my father?

MERLIN

There's no change.

ARTHUR snaps.

ARTHUR

Why isn't Gaius doing something?

MERLIN treads softly...

MERLIN

Because there's nothing he can do.

ARTHUR knows that's true, and that is what pains him.

CUT TO:

21

**EXT. FOREST - DAY 2. FR.**

21

AGRAVAINE rides through the forest at speed...

CUT TO:

22

**INT. MORGANA'S HUT - DAY 2. UK.**

22

AGRAVAINE bursts through the door, taking MORGANA by surprise. She instinctively spins, drawing a dagger and stands poised, ready to plunge it into AGRAVAINE. He gives a sly smile...

AGRAVAINE

Is that any way to greet an old friend...?

MORGANA lowers the dagger.

MORGANA

I wasn't expecting you today...

AGRAVAINE

I had to see you. I bring good news. Better news than we could ever have hoped for.

MORGANA reacts, curious.

MORGANA

What is it?

AGRAVAINE

Uther has been mortally wounded. He lies on his deathbed. Gaius says he only has days to live.

MORGANA smiles.

MORGANA

I hope the image of my face haunts him.

(a sudden thought occurs)

How is Arthur?

AGRAVAINE

He is devastated. The poor boy can barely think straight.

MORGANA smiles at this news.

MORGANA

We must strike while he is vulnerable.

AGRAVAINE

When Uther dies, the Kingdom will be weak. We must choose our moment carefully. Who knows what opportunities the coming weeks will bring.

They share a smile.

CUT TO:

23

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

23

ARTHUR holds a vigil beside UATHER's bed. He just sits there, staring at UATHER intensely. GWEN enters. She stops as she sees ARTHUR, doesn't want to intrude.

GWEN

I was going to change the dressing on your father's wound. I'll come back.

ARTHUR

It's all right. Come in.

GWEN crosses over to the bed. She changes the dressing on UATHER's wound through the following. GWEN and ARTHUR catch each others eye a few times, but given the circumstances, they are unsure what to say to each other. ARTHUR makes the first move.

ARTHUR

I appreciate your kindness, everything you are doing for him.

GWEN

I do it for you.

ARTHUR's touched. It tips him over the edge. He turns away from GWEN to prevent her seeing how upset he is...

GWEN

Arthur?

She turns his face and is pained to see his hurt...

ARTHUR

I cannot see him die... Without him, I have no one.

GWEN seizes ARTHUR's hand.

GWEN

You have many friends. And you have me. I will always be here for you.

ARTHUR looks pained.

ARTHUR

It is not the same... he's my father. There is still so much I want to say to him... He cannot die.

ARTHUR stands and hurries out...

GWEN  
Arthur. Please...

ARTHUR exits, leaving GWEN deeply concerned for him.

CUT TO:

24 **INT/EXT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) / CAMELOT (MAIN SQUARE) - NIGHT 2. UK/FR.** 24

TOWNSPEOPLE hold a candle-lit vigil in the Main Square. MERLIN stands at the window, staring down at them. ARTHUR enters, crosses over and looks out of the window...

ARTHUR  
What's going on?

MERLIN  
It is a vigil for your Father.  
The people wish to share their  
grief.

ARTHUR frowns, unsettled...

ARTHUR  
Why are they behaving like my  
father is already dead? There is  
still life in his body...

MERLIN  
They're preparing themselves for  
the worst.

ARTHUR steels himself.

ARTHUR  
They can give up hope, but I will  
not.

MERLIN  
I know it's hard to accept. I  
wish it wasn't so, but there is  
nothing more that can be done.

ARTHUR looks thoughtful, then...

ARTHUR  
There is a way to heal my father.

MERLIN  
How?

ARTHUR hesitates, then fixes MERLIN with a poignant look.

ARTHUR  
With magic.

MERLIN's stunned as he takes this in.

CUT TO:

25 **INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 2. UK.**

25

MERLIN has just informed GAIUS of ARTHUR's plan. GAIUS looks concerned.

GAIUS  
Arthur plans to use magic?

MERLIN  
He's desperate. He knows it's the only hope he has of healing Uther.

GAIUS takes a moment to process the revelation, then fixes MERLIN with a look.

GAIUS  
Please tell me you're not thinking of doing this, Merlin.

MERLIN  
I'd be lying if I said 'no'.

GAIUS  
You can't risk exposing yourself like this. It's too dangerous.

MERLIN  
Arthur didn't recognise me last time I was eighty years old. There's no reason why he should this time.

GAIUS  
You seem to be forgetting that last time you used an ageing spell, you nearly got yourself burnt at the stake.

MERLIN  
It's worth the risk.

GAIUS  
You think Uther will thank you for healing him with magic? He'll most likely have you hanged.

MERLIN  
Uther will never change his attitude to magic. I know that.  
(MORE)

MERLIN (cont'd)

But if Arthur allows it to be used to heal his father, his attitude will be changed forever. He will see that magic can be a force for good.

GAIUS

You of all people should know that using such powerful magic is fraught with dangers.

MERLIN

If it works, I won't have to hide any more. Arthur will come to trust me for who I really am.

GAIUS

And if it doesn't? I cannot stand by and let you do this Merlin.

MERLIN

Don't try and stop me, because you can't.

Tension GAIUS and MERLIN trade a poignant look...

GAIUS

You are playing a dangerous game, Merlin.

MERLIN

I've been playing a dangerous game since the first day I set foot in Camelot. Maybe this is my chance to change that.

CUT TO:

26

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

26

MERLIN enters. ARTHUR's waiting impatiently.

ARTHUR

Well. What did Gaius say? Did he have any information?

MERLIN

He didn't know much. But he has heard of a sorcerer. An old man. He lives in the Forest of Glaestig. Gaius thinks he may be able to help you.

ARTHUR

Will he take me to him?

MERLIN

He has told me all that he knows.  
We will have to find him  
ourselves.

ARTHUR takes this in and is suddenly daunted by the prospect of what he is about to do.

ARTHUR

If you were me Merlin, if it was  
your father, would you use magic  
to save his life?

MERLIN seizes the moment, looks ARTHUR in the eye.

MERLIN

Yes. I would. I'd do whatever it  
took.

ARTHUR's persuaded.

ARTHUR

Ready the horses and gather some  
supplies. We ride at first light.

CUT TO:

27

**INT. KING'S PALACE (AGRAVAINE'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 2. UK.**

27

AGRAVAINE is staring out of the window. There's a knock on the door.

AGRAVAINE

Enter.

The door opens. ARTHUR enters.

AGRAVAINE

Arthur. What news of your father?

ARTHUR

I'm afraid there is still no  
improvement.

ARTHUR hesitates, unsure how to express what he needs to say.  
AGRAVAINE detects ARTHUR's hesitation.

AGRAVAINE

Is there something on your mind?

ARTHUR

It will be apparent soon enough. I  
didn't want to go behind your back.  
I have decided to use magic to heal  
my father.

AGRAVAINE's shocked - knows he must do what he can to dissuade him.

AGRAVAINE  
I must counsel against such a course of action.

ARTHUR  
There is no other way...

AGRAVAINE  
Magic caused your mother's death. My sister would still be alive today. If you respect her memory, you cannot do this.

ARTHUR's moved by the argument. He's torn...

ARTHUR  
Would you see my father die?

AGRAVAINE's put on the spot, but of course cannot reveal his true desires...

AGRAVAINE  
Perhaps it is his time.

ARTHUR cannot accept that...

ARTHUR  
I know we have both suffered because of magic, but I cannot stand by and let my father die. My mind is made up.

CUT TO:

28 **EXT. CAMELOT - DAY 3. FR.** 28

The sun rises over Camelot.

CUT TO:

29 **EXT. FOREST OF GLAESTIG - DAY 3. UK.** 29

MERLIN and ARTHUR ride up to a fork in the path. MERLIN stops. He's uncertain which path to take. ARTHUR's unimpressed.

ARTHUR  
You're lost, aren't you Merlin?

MERLIN  
No. I'm just getting my bearings...  
(MORE)

MERLIN (cont'd)  
(choosing a path)  
It's this way...

Through the trees, ARTHUR spots a hut off the other path  
(it is the same charcoal maker's hut we saw in episode 2).

ARTHUR  
So what's that hut over there?

MERLIN sees the hut, realises he was about to take the  
wrong path, attempts to cover.

MERLIN  
Right. I was going to take this  
path and loop round. Or, we can  
go this way.

ARTHUR reacts, disbelieving. ARTHUR and MERLIN ride toward  
the hut.

CUT TO:

30

**EXT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.**

30

ARTHUR and MERLIN dismount. ARTHUR eyes the hut curiously.

ARTHUR  
Are you sure this is the right  
place? It looks like a charcoal  
maker's hut.

MERLIN  
The old man can hardly make a  
living by practising magic. I  
think a lot of sorcerers are in  
the charcoal business.

ARTHUR doesn't look entirely convinced by this as he walks  
up to the front door. MERLIN looks round, wondering how  
he's going to work the deception. ARTHUR realises MERLIN  
hasn't followed him.

ARTHUR  
Are you joining me, Merlin?

MERLIN  
We don't want to overwhelm him.  
He probably doesn't get many  
visitors. I'll stay out here and  
watch the horses.

ARTHUR  
I have never met anyone who is so  
scared so often. Scream like a  
big girl if there's any trouble.

MERLIN  
Don't worry. You'll hear me.

ARTHUR shakes his head, disbelieving, as he turns and  
knocks on the door.

CUT TO:

31 **INT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.** 31

The door opens. ARTHUR peers in.

ARTHUR  
Hello...?

ARTHUR looks round the hut. There's no one there.

CUT TO:

32 **EXT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.** 32

MERLIN's hurrying into the trees when ARTHUR re-emerges  
from the hut.

ARTHUR  
There's no one here. Are you sure  
this is the right place?

MERLIN  
I'm absolutely certain of it. I'm  
sure he'll be back soon.

ARTHUR  
How d'you know when he'll be  
back?

MERLIN  
He's a dodderly old man. He can't  
have gone far. If you want his  
help, you'll just have to wait  
for him to return.

ARTHUR suddenly takes in that MERLIN was heading off into  
the trees.

ARTHUR  
Where are you sneaking off to?

MERLIN's put on the spot, thinks on his feet.

MERLIN  
I need to pee.

ARTHUR's disturbed by the revelation.

MERLIN

So unless you want to watch me,  
you should wait inside the hut.

ARTHUR

Why would I want to watch you?

MERLIN gestures toward the hut.

MERLIN

There's the hut. Make yourself at  
home.

ARTHUR eyes MERLIN suspiciously, then turns and heads back  
inside the hut. MERLIN reacts, exasperated. He hurries  
behind a tree. He peers out to check that ARTHUR hasn't re-  
emerged, then focuses as he starts to incant the  
transformation spell...

MERLIN

Miht dagaena, bepecce me. Adeaglie  
pisne gast min freondum ond min  
feondum!

CUT TO:

33

**INT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.**

33

ARTHUR pokes around at a few dusty old bottles and pots on  
the table. In doing so, he knocks over a bottle, which in  
turn knocks a pot off the table. It falls to the floor and  
smashes. ARTHUR grimaces. Oops. He quickly kicks the pieces  
of broken pottery under the table to conceal them. ARTHUR  
hears a sound outside. Someone's approaching the hut.  
ARTHUR steps away from the table.

ARTHUR tenses as the door opens. ARTHUR reacts, stunned as  
OLD MERLIN enters...

ARTHUR

You?

OLD MERLIN looks back at ARTHUR...

OLD MERLIN

We meet again, Arthur Pendragon.

ARTHUR instinctively reaches for the hilt of his sword. OLD  
MERLIN reacts to the move...

OLD MERLIN

So you have come to kill me?

ARTHUR eyes OLD MERLIN warily, uncertain how to proceed.

ARTHUR

No. That wasn't my intention.

OLD MERLIN hears a crunch as he steps on some broken pot. He looks down at it. ARTHUR grimaces...

ARTHUR  
I broke a pot.

OLD MERLIN  
You always were a clumsy fool.

ARTHUR  
Excuse me?

OLD MERLIN  
So if you haven't come to kill me, what is it that brings you here? I take it you didn't come all this way just to smash my pot?

ARTHUR  
If I'd known who you were, I would not have come at all.

Seeing how difficult this is for ARTHUR, OLD MERLIN helps him out.

OLD MERLIN  
I thought you may have come to ask me to use magic to heal your father?

ARTHUR's taken aback.

ARTHUR  
How did you know?

OLD MERLIN  
I know more than you could possibly comprehend.

ARTHUR  
Given your hatred for my father and all that he stands for, I have clearly had a wasted journey.

OLD MERLIN  
Do not suppose that you know my mind.

ARTHUR fixes OLD MERLIN with a desperate look.

ARTHUR  
Will you help me?

OLD MERLIN  
You are asking me to save the life of the man that would have me executed.

ARTHUR

I know what I am asking of you.  
And you have no reason to help  
me. But... You are my father's  
only hope. I will give you  
anything you ask. Land, gold -  
name your price.

OLD MERLIN

I do not want your gold. All I  
have ever wanted is that people  
like me are allowed to live in  
peace. That those who practice  
magic are accepted, rather than  
hunted. That is all I ask.

ARTHUR's unsure he can meet the demand.

OLD MERLIN

That is the price of your  
father's life.

ARTHUR rises to the moment.

ARTHUR

You have my solemn word, that  
when I am King, things will be  
different. You will not have to  
live in fear.

OLD MERLIN takes this in, moved by the declaration.

OLD MERLIN

Then I will help you.

ARTHUR's suddenly filled with hope.

ARTHUR

There is not a moment to spare.  
We must ride for Camelot  
immediately.

OLD MERLIN's caught out.

OLD MERLIN

Now?

ARTHUR

My father grows weaker by the  
hour.

OLD MERLIN blusters, searching for an excuse.

OLD MERLIN

But I have no horse.

ARTHUR

You can have Merlin's horse. He will have to walk.

OLD MERLIN's outraged.

OLD MERLIN

You would make your poor servant walk back to Camelot? I've a good mind not to help you.

ARTHUR

I don't care whose horse you have. We have to get to Camelot before it's too late.

OLD MERLIN

(thinking on his feet)

First, I will need to gather some rare herbs. They are an essential part of the cure. I shall come to Camelot at nightfall. If you want my help, that is how it needs to be.

ARTHUR feels he can't push any further.

ARTHUR

I will meet you at the lower gate outside the town... Give me your word that you will come.

OLD MERLIN

You have my word.

OLD MERLIN pauses as he attempts to figure out how to handle the transformation back into his youthful self without being caught.

OLD MERLIN

Now just wait here one moment.

ARTHUR

Why?

OLD MERLIN

Questions. So many questions. For once in your life, will you just do as your told?

ARTHUR feels chastised.

ARTHUR

All right. I'll wait here.

OLD MERLIN hurries out.

CUT TO:

34 **EXT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.** 34

OLD MERLIN emerges from the hut and hurries into the trees. OLD MERLIN hides behind the same tree as before and takes out a vial of liquid...

CUT TO:

35 **INT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.** 35

ARTHUR kicks his heels. He soon grows impatient of waiting and heads out.

CUT TO:

36 **EXT. CHARCOAL-MAKER'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.** 36

ARTHUR emerges and looks round. There's no sign of MERLIN, or OLD MERLIN. ARTHUR grows uneasy and reaches for the hilt of his sword as he scans the trees.

ARTHUR  
Merlin...?

Silence. A crack of twigs. ARTHUR spins round. MERLIN emerges from behind the tree, once again his youthful self. ARTHUR's suspicious.

ARTHUR  
What were you doing?

MERLIN's put on the spot.

MERLIN  
Peeing.

ARTHUR  
(disturbed)  
You mean to say you've been peeing all the time I was in there?

MERLIN's forced to nod.

MERLIN  
I *really* needed to go.

ARTHUR  
There is definitely something very wrong with you, Merlin.

ARTHUR turns to mount his horse. MERLIN breathes a sigh of relief that the deception was successful.

CUT TO:

37

**INT. MORGANA'S HUT - DAY 3. UK.**

37

AGRAVAINE gives the news to MORGANA.

AGRAVAINE

Arthur has gone to consult with a sorcerer. He means to use magic to heal Uther.

A determined expression comes over MORGANA's face.

MORGANA

Then we must see to it that he fails.

CUT TO:

Open on a small fire in the grate. MORGANA stands over it. In her hands she holds a tiny silver charm. She casts it into the fire and her eyes glow a deep amber as she incants a spell.

MORGANA

Seolforpræd apringe winstra,  
apringe yfele, apringe wip ealle  
gode cræfte.

Suddenly, the flames flare, the firelight dances in her eyes. AGRAVAINE looks on, in awe.

MORGANA takes a pair of tongs and pulls the charm from the raging fire.

She turns to AGRAVAINE and drops the charm before him. He instinctively reaches out and catches it, before realising the danger of what he has just done. He reacts with surprise...

AGRAVAINE

It's cold...

MORGANA

I have bound it to the left hand path.

He holds up the charm, impressed.

MORGANA

You must place the charm around Uther's neck.

AGRAVAINE

What will it do to him?

MORGANA

The force of any healing magic will be reversed, and magnified tenfold.

(MORE)

MORGANA (cont'd)  
By trying to cure his father,  
Arthur will seal his fate.

AGRAVAINE looks grave as he takes this in.

AGRAVAINE  
Arthur will never forgive himself.  
He will be destroyed.

MORGANA  
And a broken Prince will make a  
terrible King.

CUT TO:

38 **EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN SQUARE) - DAY 3. FR.** 38

ARTHUR and MERLIN dismount. MERLIN hurries off.

ARTHUR  
Where are you going?

MERLIN's put on the spot...

MERLIN  
I have some errands to run for  
Gaius.

ARTHUR  
They'll have to wait. I want you  
to prepare hot water, fresh  
bandages and anything else you  
think we might need. Everything  
has to be ready for this evening.

MERLIN heads off, daunted by the growing list of things he  
has to do.

CUT TO:

39 **INT. KING'S PALACE (PHOENIX CORRIDOR) - DAY 3. UK.** 39

ARTHUR hurries towards Uther's chambers. Two GUARDS flank  
the doors.

CUT TO:

40 **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - DAY 3. UK.** 40

ARTHUR enters. GWEN is tending to Uther. He crosses over to  
the bed and looks down at Uther.

ARTHUR  
How is he?

GWEN

His breath is weaker. Gaius has given him wintergreen to make him more comfortable.

ARTHUR takes this in. GWEN's curious.

GWEN

I saw you and Merlin riding out. Where have you been?

ARTHUR's torn about whether to confide in GWEN. She sees his indecision.

GWEN

Arthur?

ARTHUR decides he must tell GWEN.

ARTHUR

I don't want to have any secrets from you.

CUT TO:

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

41

MERLIN enters. GAIUS is relieved to see him.

GAIUS

Merlin. I was worried something had gone wrong.

MERLIN

Apart from Arthur thinking that there is something very wrong with my bladder, everything went to plan.

MERLIN starts to search the shelves, taking various books down. GAIUS looks on with concern.

GAIUS

I take it this means you're going through with it?

MERLIN

If I heal Uther, Arthur has given me his word that when he is King, magic will no longer be outlawed. This could change everything.

GAIUS

And if something goes wrong? What of Arthur's attitude to magic then?

MERLIN stops and looks at GAIUS.

MERLIN

I live with the risk of being exposed every day. If I don't take this opportunity, maybe I'll spend the rest of my life having to hide who I really am. Everyone's always telling me I have this great destiny. Maybe this is it. I have to try.

GAIUS can't bring himself to argue. MERLIN gathers up the books and heads into his room. GAIUS looks thoughtful as he stares after him.

CUT TO:

42

**INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS (MERLIN'S ROOM) - DAY 3. UK.**

42

MERLIN sits on his bed. He looks through a book, but fails to find what he's looking for. He tosses it aside in frustration, picks up another book and starts to go through it. Again, he fails to find what he's looking for. MERLIN sits there, frustrated. There's a knock on the door. MERLIN looks up as GAIUS enters. MERLIN looks downcast.

MERLIN

I gave Arthur my word that I could heal Uther. I can't even find the right spell.

GAIUS

That's because you're looking in the wrong books. Here...

GAIUS holds out a small leather tome, which MERLIN takes.

GAIUS

Gwillem of Cambria was as mad as a coot, but there has never been a better healer.

MERLIN smiles. This means a lot to him. GAIUS makes to leave.

MERLIN  
Gaius. Thank you.

MERLIN and GAIUS share an affectionate look.

CUT TO:

43

**EXT. KING'S PALACE (PHOENIX CORRIDOR) - DAY 3. UK.**

43

ARTHUR has just told GWEN of his plans. She looks shocked.

GWEN  
You're going to use magic?

ARTHUR nods, solemn.

ARTHUR  
It is my father's only hope.

GWEN looks worried, but doesn't voice her concerns. ARTHUR sees her hesitation.

ARTHUR  
You think I'm mad, don't you?

GWEN  
No. Who am I to say what you should do?

ARTHUR  
And yet it is your opinion I value above all others.

GWEN  
I'm flattered, but perhaps I'm not the best person to ask. If it weren't for sorcery, my own father would still be alive.

ARTHUR nods, solemn.

ARTHUR  
Of course. My mother also died because of magic.

ARTHUR stares out over Camelot.

ARTHUR  
Magic has cast a shadow over my life from the moment I was born. Perhaps it is time to step out from under that shadow. I don't believe everyone who practices magic is evil.

GWEN  
Perhaps that is true.

ARTHUR

Then isn't it time we stopped treating them like they are? Sometimes I feel our judgement has been clouded by hate, and fear.

GWEN

That is a courageous attitude.

ARTHUR

I'm not sure if it's courageous, or foolish. I still don't know if I'm doing the right thing.

GWEN

You are not a fool, Arthur. You have a good heart. And good instincts. You have to trust those instincts. Sometimes that is all any of us can do.

ARTHUR nods as he takes this in.

CUT TO:

44

**INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS (MERLIN'S ROOM) - NIGHT 3. UK.**

44

GAIUS hands MERLIN a small pouch of hogswart.

GAIUS

You must use no more than four drops. Any more could be dangerous.

MERLIN nods. He takes one final look at the spell.

MERLIN

I just hope I can make the spell work.

GAIUS

Trust in your abilities, Merlin.

MERLIN's grateful for the reassurance.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

Merlin?

GAIUS and MERLIN exchange a worried look.

MERLIN

(low)

You have to get rid of him.

ARTHUR (O.S.)  
Merlin!?

CUT TO:

45      **INT. GAIUS' CHAMBERS - NIGHT 3. UK.**

45

GAIUS emerges from Merlin's room.

GAIUS  
Arthur...

ARTHUR  
Gaius. Have you seen my useless  
toad of a servant?

GAIUS  
I'm afraid not.

ARTHUR  
Where on earth can he be?

GAIUS is put on the spot.

GAIUS  
Have you tried the tavern?

ARTHUR's enraged.

ARTHUR  
The tavern. Of course. I am going  
to make him wish he was never born.

ARTHUR heads out. A moment later, MERLIN emerges from his  
room. He fixes GAIUS with a look of outrage.

MERLIN  
Why did you tell him I was in the  
tavern?

GAIUS  
It was the first thing that popped  
into my head.

MERLIN  
Next time, go for the second, or  
third thing that pops into your  
head. Anything but the tavern.

GAIUS nods, smiles faintly, then turns more serious.

GAIUS  
Good luck, Merlin.

MERLIN and GAIUS share a poignant look, then MERLIN heads out. GAIUS stares after him, deeply worried.

CUT TO:

46 **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. UK.** 46

AGRAVAINE enters. He sees GWEN tending to UATHER, mopping his brow. AGRAVAINE crosses to the bed, exchanges a faint smile with GWEN.

AGRAVAINE

It is cold today. Perhaps it would be a good idea to start a fire.

GWEN

Of course.

GWEN crosses over to light the fire. AGRAVAINE waits until GWEN has her back turned and is preoccupied with the fire. He takes a small cloth bundle from his tunic. He unwraps it and takes out the tiny silver charm, which glows with a magical light.

AGRAVAINE glances over at GWEN, then quickly and carefully ties the charm around UATHER's neck. He ensures it is carefully tucked out of sight in UATHER's robes.

AGRAVAINE

(sotto)

Finally, you will get all that you deserve, old friend.

AGRAVAINE looks down at UATHER for a poignant beat, then heads out. Go out on UATHER, lying in bed.

CUT TO:

47 **EXT. CAMELOT (STREET) - NIGHT 3. FR.** 47

ARTHUR waits impatiently by the lower gate. He hears a sound and spins round to see OLD MERLIN emerging from the darkness.

ARTHUR

I'd started to think you weren't coming.

OLD MERLIN

I gave you my word. And here I am.

ARTHUR  
We must hurry.

ARTHUR heads off, away from the palace, taking OLD MERLIN by surprise.

OLD MERLIN  
I'm led to believe that the King's Palace is that way?

ARTHUR  
I can hardly be seen walking through the main gate with a known sorcerer.

OLD MERLIN  
So you are already going back on your word. You promised that I would no longer have to live in fear.

ARTHUR  
You're forgetting that you have yet to heal my father. When you have, I will give you all that I promised.

OLD MERLIN takes this in. They head off.

CUT TO:

48

**INT. CAMELOT (TUNNELS) - NIGHT 3. FR.**

48

ARTHUR hurries through the dark, damp passage. He turns to see OLD MERLIN lagging behind and reacts with frustration. ARTHUR waits for OLD MERLIN to catch up. When he arrives, OLD MERLIN is out of breath.

ARTHUR  
Is that really as fast as you can walk?

OLD MERLIN  
When you are as old as I, we will see how fast you can walk. I need to rest a moment.

ARTHUR  
There's no time.

OLD MERLIN  
Then perhaps you should carry me?

ARTHUR  
Fine. If it means we get there quicker, I'll carry you.

ARTHUR turns. OLD MERLIN hops onto his back. ARTHUR heads off. OLD MERLIN kicks him with his heels, as you would a horse. ARTHUR stops, outraged...

ARTHUR  
Did you just kick me?

OLD MERLIN  
Now who's wasting time?

ARTHUR staggers on, disgruntled. OLD MERLIN kicks ARTHUR again, enjoying himself...

ARTHUR  
Stop kicking me!

CUT TO:

49        **SC 49 CUT**        49

50        **INT. KING'S PALACE (GRIFFIN CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 3. FR.**        50

ARTHUR approaches the GUARDS outside Uther's chambers.

ARTHUR  
You're dismissed.

The GUARDS hesitate, surprised by the order.

GUARD  
But, Sire. We were instructed not to leave our post.

ARTHUR  
I said you're dismissed.

GUARD  
Yes, my Lord.

The GUARD's head off. ARTHUR waits until they've disappeared round the corner, then gives a nod. OLD MERLIN hobbles out of the shadows. ARTHUR ushers OLD MERLIN into Uther's chambers, then follows him inside and closes the door.

CUT TO:

51 INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. UK. 51

UTHER lies in bed, barely breathing. ARTHUR grows increasingly anxious as he watches OLD MERLIN placing four drops of hogswart on UATHER'S lips. OLD MERLIN takes a branch of sage and holds it over UATHER. OLD MERLIN psyches himself up. His eyes start to glow. ARTHUR cracks...

ARTHUR

Wait!

OLD MERLIN stands down, looks at ARTHUR...

OLD MERLIN

Is something wrong?

ARTHUR

My father has taught me never to trust magic, and now I am using it to save him.

OLD MERLIN

Your own life has been saved by magic more times than you can possibly imagine.

ARTHUR

What on earth are you talking about?

OLD MERLIN realises it would be dangerous to elaborate.

OLD MERLIN

I merely mean to say that magic is all around you. It is woven into the fabric of the world.

ARTHUR'S unsettled.

ARTHUR

How can I be sure it is the right thing to do?

OLD MERLIN

I know you have suffered because of magic, as many have. But not all magic, and not all sorcerers are the same. I wish only to show you that magic can be used for good. I hope that one day you'll see me in a different light.

ARTHUR'S moved by the argument. ARTHUR and OLD MERLIN trade stares for a poignant beat, then ARTHUR nods and steps back. OLD MERLIN turns to UATHER, psyches himself up then holds up the sage branch. OLD MERLIN'S eyes glow. The sage branch begins to smoke. OLD MERLIN wafts the incense over UATHER and begins to chant, with increasing intensity...

OLD MERLIN  
Efencume ætgædre, eala gastas  
cræftige: gestricie pis lic forod.

OLD MERLIN completes the spell. Silence. The tension rises as ARTHUR looks at UThER, desperately hoping to see some signs of life. For a moment, it looks like the spell has failed. OLD MERLIN grows anxious. Suddenly, UThER's eyes snap open. ARTHUR's thrilled.

ARTHUR  
Father...

ARTHUR and UThER clinch hands. UThER manages a weak smile.

UTHER  
Arthur...

OLD MERLIN allows himself a smile, overcome with relief. But as UThER looks up at ARTHUR, his expression suddenly contorts in pain. His breath starts to fail. ARTHUR reacts, alarmed.

ARTHUR  
What's happening!?

OLD MERLIN's equally alarmed.

OLD MERLIN  
I don't know...

UTHER's fading fast. His eyes close. He goes still.

ARTHUR  
Do something!

OLD MERLIN feels for a pulse. There isn't one. OLD MERLIN reels, meets ARTHUR's stare.

OLD MERLIN  
He's dead.

ARTHUR struggles to accept this...

ARTHUR  
No... He can't be...  
(shaking UThER)  
Father... Father!?!... No...  
Please... Father...

All OLD MERLIN can do is look on, horrified. ARTHUR realises the futility of his actions. He gives up, stares at UThER, his mind swimming. He suddenly turns on OLD MERLIN, more hurt and angry than we have ever seen him.

ARTHUR  
What have you done?

OLD MERLIN  
This was not supposed to happen.

ARTHUR  
You gave me your word. You have  
killed him... You killed him.

OLD MERLIN  
No...

ARTHUR draws his sword and advances on OLD MERLIN.

ARTHUR  
You will die for what you have  
done.

OLD MERLIN's eyes flash as he thrusts his hand out.

OLD MERLIN  
Hleap on bæc!

ARTHUR flies backwards into the wall and falls to the  
floor, momentarily stunned. OLD MERLIN flees. ARTHUR takes  
a moment to come to his senses.

ARTHUR  
Guards!

CUT TO:

52      **EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN SQUARE) - NIGHT 3. FR.**      52

The warning bell rings out across the moonlit square.

CUT TO:

53      **INT. KING'S PALACE (GRIFFIN CORRIDOR) - NIGHT 3. FR.**      53

OLD MERLIN hurries down the corridor as fast as his old  
legs will carry him. He hears the sound of GUARDS  
approaching. OLD MERLIN ducks into a stairwell, takes out a  
little bottle of potion and downs it.

CUT TO:

54      **INT. KING'S PALACE (UTHER'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. UK.**      54

MERLIN hurries in. He sees GAIUS standing over the bed, and  
ARTHUR and GWEN looking on, traumatised. MERLIN struggles  
to accept what he's seeing as GAIUS gently closes UTHUR's  
eyes and pulls a sheet over his face. GAIUS turns to  
ARTHUR.

GAIUS

I'm sorry, Arthur. There is nothing more I can do. The King is dead.

ARTHUR instinctively shakes his head, unable to accept this. GWEN places a comforting hand on ARTHUR's shoulder, really feeling for him, but lost for words.

GWEN

Arthur...

GAIUS catches MERLIN's eye. They trade a horrified look.

CUT TO:

55

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

55

MERLIN and GAIUS enter Gaius' chambers.

MERLIN

The spell was working. I'm sure of it. I did everything right. I don't know what happened.

GAIUS

I think I do.

GAIUS opens his hand to reveal the small silver charm. It twinkles magically.

GAIUS

I found it around Uther's neck. It appears as though it's been enchanted and such an enchantment would have reversed the effects of your healing spell. Uther didn't stand a chance.

MERLIN suddenly suspects who is responsible.

MERLIN

Morgana...

GAIUS

I believe so.

MERLIN

How did she get past the guards?

GAIUS

Perhaps it wasn't Morgana who placed the charm around Uther's neck.

MERLIN

You think it was Agravaine?

GAIUS

I fear so.

MERLIN frowns as he takes this in.

CUT TO:

56        **EXT. MORGANA'S HUT - NIGHT 3. UK.**        56

AGRAVAINE gallops up, dismounts and hurries inside.

CUT TO:

57        **INT. MORGANA'S HUT - DAY 4. UK.**        57

AGRAVAINE enters and finds MORGANA staring contemplatively at the fire. MORGANA speaks before AGRAVAINE can deliver his exciting news.

MORGANA

Uther's dead, isn't he?

AGRAVAINE

(confused)

How did you know?

MORGANA

I felt it. I felt his pain.

AGRAVAINE's surprised by MORGANA's muted reaction.

AGRAVAINE

I thought Uther's death would be cause for a celebration?

MORGANA

Arthur will replace him. There is nothing to celebrate until I take my rightful place on the throne.

AGRAVAINE

You are closer to that goal than you think. Arthur is young, and untested. He will look to his trusted uncle for counsel. And I will ensure he fails.

MORGANA and AGRAVAINE share a thin smile.

CUT TO:

58 **INT. KING'S PALACE (ARTHUR'S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 4. UK.** 58

ARTHUR stares out of the window, struggling to process his emotions. MERLIN approaches. ARTHUR looks round and sees MERLIN standing there.

MERLIN

I am so sorry.

ARTHUR absorbs the sympathy. MERLIN struggles to express what he's feeling.

MERLIN

I... I should've... I wish there was something I could have done.

ARTHUR

Merlin. No one but me is to blame for this.

MERLIN

You're not to blame. This isn't your fault.

ARTHUR

I am entirely to blame. My father spent twenty years fighting sorcery. To think I knew better. I was so arrogant. My arrogance has cost my father his life.

MERLIN

You were only doing what you thought was right. I'm sure that old sorcerer meant no harm. Perhaps the spell went wrong. Uther was dying. Maybe nothing could have saved him...

ARTHUR

We'll never know. All I know for sure is that I have lost both my parents to magic. It is pure evil. I will never lose sight of that again.

ARTHUR's makes to leave.

\*

MERLIN

Arthur...

But ARTHUR's already at the door and what else can MERLIN say?

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

59           **INT. KING'S PALACE (THRONE ROOM) - NIGHT 4. FR.**           59

ARTHUR enters the mighty room where UTHER is lying in state. There is a raised dais in the centre of the space. UTHER lies on it, surrounded by candles. ARTHUR begins the long, lonely walk to UTHER's side.

MERLIN and GAIUS watch from the doorway.

ARTHUR reaches the dais. He stares down at UTHER's serene and peaceful face. And as he stares, ARTHUR starts to cry.

Looking on, MERLIN's devastated by the thought of what he has done.

CUT TO:

60           **INT. KING'S PALACE (ANTE CHAMBER) - NIGHT 4. FR.**           60

GAIUS closes the doors to the Throne Room.

GAIUS  
We must leave him to mourn.

GAIUS takes in MERLIN's shell shocked expression.

GAIUS  
Merlin..?

MERLIN  
This is all my fault. I killed him.

GAIUS  
You didn't kill Uther. Morgana did. Uther's spirit died when she broke his heart.

MERLIN takes this in.

GAIUS  
We must look to the future.  
Uther's death will allow Arthur's progression to the throne.  
(MORE)

GAIUS (cont'd)  
We must hope it brings peace and  
stability to the land.

MERLIN  
But magic will still be outlawed.

GAIUS nods sadly.

MERLIN  
I have turned Arthur against  
magic forever. I'll never be able  
to show him who I really am.

GAIUS  
That time will come. I'm sure of  
it. Arthur will be under even  
more pressure now he is King. He  
will need you now more than ever.

MERLIN takes that in. He knows it's true.

GAIUS  
There is nothing more to be done.  
Come and eat your supper.

MERLIN  
I think I'll wait here.

GAIUS takes this in, touched by MERLIN's devotion. GAIUS  
heads off, leaving MERLIN to wait with a heavy heart.

CUT TO:

61 **INT. KING'S PALACE (THRONE ROOM) - NIGHT 4. FR.** 61

ARTHUR stares at Uther. Tears streak down ARTHUR's face.

CUT TO:

62 **EXT. CAMELOT - DAY 5. FR.** 62

The sun rises over Camelot. The start of a beautiful day.

CUT TO:

63 **INT. KING'S PALACE (ANTE CHAMBER) - DAY 5. FR.** 63

Sunlight streams in through the windows. It falls on  
MERLIN, lying on the floor, fast asleep.

ARTHUR (O.S.)  
Merlin?

MERLIN wakes, comes to his senses. He sees ARTHUR standing  
over him. ARTHUR has dried his eyes.

He is calm and composed, almost serene. They trade stares, then ARTHUR looks at the light flooding in through the window - in a contemplative mood.

ARTHUR  
It is a new day.

MERLIN takes this in, nods, then stands.

ARTHUR  
Have you been out here all night?

MERLIN  
I didn't want you to feel you were alone.

ARTHUR  
(touched)  
You're a loyal friend, Merlin.

MERLIN and ARTHUR trade a look.

ARTHUR  
You must be hungry?

MERLIN  
Starving.

ARTHUR  
Me too... Come on. You can make us some breakfast.

MERLIN and ARTHUR head off down the corridor, side by side.

CUT TO:

64      **EXT. CAMELOT - DAY 6. FR.**      64

Establishing.

CUT TO:

65      **INT. KING'S PALACE (THRONE ROOM) - DAY 6. FR.**      65

The Throne Room is packed with COURTIERS. An air of excitement and anticipation fills the room. We take in the presence of MERLIN, GAIUS, GWEN, AGRAVAINE, PERCIVAL, SIR LEON, GWAINÉ and ELYAN...

ARTHUR kneels. GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH stands before him.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH  
Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the Peoples of Camelot according to their respective laws and customs?

ARTHUR

I solemnly promise so to do.

GEOFFRY OF MONMOUTH

Will you to your power cause Law  
and Justice, in Mercy, to be  
executed in all your judgements?

ARTHUR

I will.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH places a crown upon ARTHUR's head.

GEOFFRY OF MONMOUTH

Then by the sacred laws vested in  
me, I pronounce you Arthur, King of  
Camelot!

ARTHUR stands and looks out over the COURTIERS. He catches  
GWEN's eye and they share a poignant look.

AGRAVAINE

Long live the King!

Everyone joins in the chant...

ALL

Long live the King!

Go out on MERLIN, shouting - proud, moved by the huge  
significance of the moment.

MERLIN/ALL

Long live the King!

**Ends.**