

In time all things are forgotten.

*Heroes become legends. History succumbs to myth. And
those that once stood tall are consumed by the ages.
Swallowed by time. Lost to the darkness.*

... But the shadows have whispers.

*And some things we cannot forget. Their magic lives on,
waiting to be discovered. Until, like steel from stone,
they slowly awaken.*

And the time for heroes comes once again...

FADE IN:

INT. COVERED WAGON - DAY

A MOVING WAGON. TWELVE MEN in MEDIEVAL BATTLE ARMOR -- woven leather and spiked steel. The men gearing up with BROADSWORDS, AXES, BOWS. We'll call them the KNIGHTS.

History will call them something else.

VOICE (O.S.)

... Stay within sight --

Their leader sits among them. UTHUR PENDRAGON (40s, all piss and iron). The sharp end of the stick.

UTHER

-- Keep formation. Watch for
fire, incantations, bolts --

As the Knights throw a jar of MACHINE GREASE around. Greasing ARMOR JOINTS. SPITTING in palms for extra grip. SHARPENING BLADES with water stones.

UTHER

You lay eyes on him -- you signal.
No one tries to face him...

Uther pulls his sword. The mighty EXCALIBUR. White knuckling the ENGRAVED HILT. A fearsome blade.

UTHER

... That fight is mine alone.

The sound of SCREAMING suddenly intruding from outside. Great loud BOOMS. As if God himself were running by. The wagon almost tipping. RATTLING. Anxiety spreading.

UTHER

If we do not stop him today, there
won't be a tomorrow. Our forces
cannot sustain. It is to us now.

Uther looking over at his YOUNGER BROTHER VORTIGERN (25, SCARRED face). Vortigern holding a huge BATTLE SCYTHE.

UTHER

Good speed your way...

As we REVEAL the Knights are all mounted on ARMED BATTLE HORSES. Uther opening a DOOR at the back of the carriage to reveal they are hurtling through a WAR ZONE.

A war UNLIKE ANYTHING WE'VE EVER SEEN...

EXT. BATTLEGROUND - DAY

THE MAGE WARS. The sorcerer MAGE ARMY battling against Uther's PENDRAGON ARMY. SORCERY against STEEL. A horrific bath of DARK MAGIC and VIOLENCE. Blood and mud.

Mage warriors TELEKINETICALLY HURLING soldiers. THROWING FIRE and TENDRILS OF LIGHTNING. Using magic as a weapon.

Fighting alongside the huge BEASTS OF THE NORTH. Mage-engineered perversions of nature. 350-FOOT ELEPHANTS the size of FOOTBALL STADIUMS -- heads literally half in the CLOUDS. SNAKES the size of SUBWAY TRAINS. WOLVES like oversized DOUBLE-DECKER BUSES.

ANGLE ON BATTLE WAGON

as it HURTLES across the battlefield, and Uther and the Knights suddenly CHARGE out of the back on their horses --

TWO KNIGHTS immediately struck by MAGE LIGHTNING. A THIRD telekinetically thrown to the mouth of a HUGE WOLF. A fourth INCINERATED ALIVE. Knights to the slaughter.

As Uther leads the way. Carving through the OMAHA BEACH-like battlefield. FLANKING the Mage position...

Slicing and dicing. Vortigern swinging his BLOODIED COMBAT SCYTHE, spotting something through the MIST ahead.

VORTIGERN

Brother --

Uther seeing a huge thirty-story ELEPHANT bearing the KING'S BANNER. A HUNDRED FOOT FORTRESS built on top. Vortigern GOING TO TAKE THE LEAD. Uther GOING FIRST.

UTHER

... On my lead --

EXT. BATTLE ELEPHANT - MOMENTS LATER

The EIGHT SURVIVING KNIGHTS ride towards the TEN THOUSAND TON ELEPHANT. Weaving between its giant pounding legs.

Uther and his Knights a sight to behold. Impossibly skillful with their weapons. A machine of death.

As Uther STANDS on his horse and the other Knights unleash ARROW after ARROW. Riddling the side of the elephant. Creating a veritable ARROW STAIRWAY...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Uther PULLING HIMSELF UPWARDS. Climbing higher and higher towards the hundred foot MOBILE FORTRESS above --

INT. MOBILE FORTRESS - MOMENTS LATER

Uther pulls himself inside the huge moving building. The wooden structure CREAKING from side-to-side as Uther sees corridors of MAGE WARRIORS running towards him.

Uther tearing through them with an almost PRETERNATURAL ability. His blade dizzyingly fast. Almost as if he can predict their actions. As if he can SEE FASTER.

Until Uther sees his final destination ahead...

INT. THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Uther inches around the corner to find his NEMESIS already standing there. SWORD DRAWN. Waiting...

MORDRED. THE SHADOW KING. Covered in BLACK HELMET and BLACK ARMOR. A fearsome, looming sight.

THE SHADOW KING
... Cut off my head and another
will only grow in its place...
(forboding)
They will always come, Pendragon.

As Uther raises his SWORD. His BLOOD-SOAKED BATTLE ARMOR and FLOWING RED CAPE cutting a FEARSOME SILHOUETTE...

UTHER
And I will always be waiting.

EXT. BATTLEGROUND - DAY

The MAGE ARMY has the PENDRAGON ARMY backed against a RAVINE WALL. Nowhere to run. As Vortigern and the Knights fight out front. Protecting their army...

Watching the elephant getting closer. Unstoppable. The Knights looking up at the fortress on its back, losing hope by the second. An air of anxiety now. Of doubt.

The elephant almost to them. CLOSER AND CLOSER...

And then the elephant suddenly STOPS. The FRONT LEGS going first. The imperious beast suddenly CRASHING to the ground with an awful WHINE. Like a tower falling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kicking up a shock wave of MUD and DUST... As a BLOODIED FIGURE slowly appears through the mire. Climbing out of a LACERATION in the back of the elephant's SKULL.

UTHER PENDRAGON holding The SHADOW KING'S HEAD aloft.
Raising his SWORD high in the air to GREAT CHEERS...

UTHER (V.O.)
... The time of the Mage is over.

EXT. CAMELOT - VILLAGE - DAY

REVOLUTION. The common man filling the streets. Uther and his BLOODIED KNIGHTS riding through it all. Handing out reacquired FOODS and MEDICINES to a SEA OF HANDS.

UTHER (V.O.)
... For too many years we have
fought from these shadows.

Uther reaching down to the people. TAKING THEIR HANDS.

UTHER (V.O.)
... For too long has the Mage
menace plagued these lands.

As Uther sees CAMELOT CASTLE ahead. Perched on top of a MOUNTAIN. Hundreds of feet in the air.

UTHER (V.O.)
Well, they will plague us no more.

EXT. CAMELOT - BALCONY CASTLE - DAY

Uther gives a SPEECH to ADORING CROWDS below. The courtyard packed. MORDRED'S MAGE FLAGS being BURNED.

UTHER
From this day forth let the sons
of Camelot stand as free men.

CHEERS fill the air. PENDRAGON FLAGS RISING all around.

UTHER
In the name of my father. Under
Pendragon bloodline and banner.
... We reclaim this crown.

Uther, Vortigern and the Knights bathed in ADULATION.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UTHER

... And I pledge to you that we
will never let it fall again.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The sound of Camelot CHANTING UTHER'S NAME in the
background, as Uther enters to find his WIFE ELSA (30s).

ELSA

Your words carry weight. You give
him too much to live up to.

UTHER

He is the blood heir now, Elsa.
His fate is already set.

As we see a BABY in a sling around Elsa's body. No more
than a MONTH OLD. His FATHER'S EYES. BABY ARTHUR.

ELSA

You promise me we'll be okay?

UTHER

Whatever enemies rise. He will
always be safe. And so will you.

ANGLE ON THE SHADOWS

As we REVEAL a FAMILIAR FIGURE standing in the shadows
behind them. VORTIGERN'S SCARRED FACE. The second born
son, watching over the INFANT HEIR with envious eyes...

The CHANTING outside growing louder and louder as we --

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

YOUNG ARTHUR (3, wide-eyed) is RUNNING. Breathless.
Hurrying through CORRIDORS. Like a kid at Christmas.

SUPERIMPOSE: THREE YEARS LATER

As he finally arrives at a WINDOW. Looking out to see
Uther, Vortigern and the bloodied Knights enter the
CASTLE GATES. Returning home after a LONG JOURNEY.

Arriving back to a FLOURISHING CAMELOT. The city all but
unrecognizable now. A clean, healthy, happy world.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - TABLE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Young Arthur hurries to a VIEWING GALLEY over the TABLE ROOM below. A ROUND TABLE in the center. Seeing Uther and the Knights entering to a BOUNTY OF ALE AND FOOD.

VORTIGERN

You grow too lenient, brother.
The uprisings will continue --

UTHER

Then so must our caution --

VORTIGERN

They should fear reprisal --

UTHER

Fear is not the same thing as
respect, brother. You will learn.

Young Arthur's view suddenly blocked as ELSA appears.

YOUNG ARTHUR

... I just wanted to see --

ELSA

To bed, Arthur. Now.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - YOUNG ARTHUR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Arthur plays with CARVED TOY FIGURINES. Carved KNIGHTS fighting carved BEASTS OF THE NORTH. Giant elephants, snakes, etc. As the DOOR OPENS and Uther enters.

YOUNG ARTHUR

... Did you win?

Uther allowing a SMILE. NODDING. He always wins. As Young Arthur sees EXCALIBUR hanging from his side.

YOUNG ARTHUR

Is it heavy?

Uther considering this. Removing Excalibur from its SHEATH. Letting it rest in the boys waiting hands.

ELSA (O.S.)

Uther --

Uther seeing his DISAPPROVING WIFE in the doorway.
Watching her son FEEL THE SWORD'S WEIGHT...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Young Arthur reaches for the HANDLE to hold it --

UTHER
Patience, Arthur. Your time will
come soon enough...

Uther returning Excalibur to its sheath. Young Arthur
smiling. Watching his father KISS his forehead.

UTHER
... Now go to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - YOUNG ARTHUR'S ROOM - NIGHT

NIGHT. Silence. Young Arthur's EYES suddenly OPEN WIDE.
The boy waking at the sound of a NOISE.

And then ANOTHER NOISE. Almost like a distant SCREAM...
Young Arthur walking to the WINDOW. Investigating...

Only to find a NIGHTMARE COME TO LIFE below. BLACKCLOAKED
KNIGHTS appearing from the SHADOWS like demons. Killing
GUARDS. SLITTING THROATS. Camelot castle under SILENT
ATTACK. Young Arthur backing away, scared, as --

A HAND over his mouth, the boy turning to see his FATHER.

UTHER
... Listen to me. We're in
trouble, do you understand?

Uther RIPPING a BREASTPLATE off a SUIT OF ARMOR.
STRAPPING it tightly around his son. Picking him up.

UTHER
Try and stay small. Don't make a
sound... No matter what you see.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Young Arthur looks out from his father's arms as we SEE
GLIMPSES of the horror. People MURDERED in their beds.
WOMEN AND CHILDREN killed. The ROUND TABLE ON FIRE...

As Uther joins his wife Elsa, and THREE KNIGHTS gather
around them. Led by a BRAVE KNIGHT (30s).

UTHER
Where are the others?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRAVE KNIGHT

They never made it out of their
beds. They were waiting for us.

Uther SICKENED. Seeing the BURNING ROUND TABLE.

UTHER

How did they get in?

BRAVE KNIGHT

... They were already inside.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

CHAOS. Prosperity BURNING. Hope DYING. FOOD CARTS
knocked over as citizens are SLAUGHTERED. The Knights
surrounding Uther's family like a HUMAN SHIELD. One of
them killed. Then another. The BRAVE KNIGHT the last.

BRAVE KNIGHT

The south passage.

As the Brave Knight opens a HIDDEN ENTRANCE in the WALL --

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - SOUTH PASSAGE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

A STAIRWELL burrowed through the MOUNTAIN ROCK. The
Brave Knight flanking Uther's family as they descend
down. The sound of BLACKCLOAKS breaking through above --

A RIVER OF DEATH now pouring down the stairwell after
them. Closer and closer. Uther seeing LIGHT AHEAD.

Almost to the EXIT below. The Brave Knight ushering them
out. Staying behind to DEFEND the exit.

BRAVE KNIGHT

For Camelot.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BOTTOM - COASTLINE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Uther, Elsa and Young Arthur run out to find the HUGE
ROCKS and granite of the bottom of the mountain...

RIVERS and LAKES SURROUNDING. As they run towards the
coastline FISHING DOCKS. Not far now. Almost there --

THFFT. The sound of a SINGLE ARROW. Uther barely with
time to process. Seeing his WIFE'S EYES WIDEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELSA

Uther...

The arrow through her chest. A clean shot. Uther's WIFE ALREADY DEAD before her body hits the ground.

Young Arthur SCREAMING. The RAGE building inside of Uther as he turns to see a HUNDRED BLACKCLOAKS waiting.

UTHER

... Close your eyes.

Young Arthur doing as he's told. As Uther secures his SON to his body, and PULLS EXCALIBUR. Going to war. A machine of vengeance, SON STRAPPED TO HIM AS HE FIGHTS...

And once again it's as if he's able to predict every SWORD. Every ARROW. A BALLET OF VIOLENCE as he runs for the coast. Closer and closer to the DOCKS until --

THFFT. The first arrow hits his ANKLE. Knocking him off balance. The second his ARM. Then his SHOULDER. Uther CRADLING HIS SON, protective. Fighting on. A bull.

Tearing through the enemy. Hit by ARROW after ARROW, until he finally kills the LAST OF THE BLACKCLOAKS.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BOTTOM - DOCKS - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Uther pulls himself and Young Arthur over the HUGE ROCKS lining the dock. FIRE TORCHES lighting his path. BOATS in the distance beyond. Uther trying to pull himself closer. To no avail. COLLAPSING. BLEEDING OUT..

Young Arthur looking at his DYING FATHER. As Uther hangs an IRON PENDRAGON PENDANT around his SON'S NECK.

UTHER

... Go.

Uther looks back to see MORE BLACKCLOAKS coming.

UTHER

Just go. NOW --

Young Arthur BACKING AWAY, scurrying off to the docks. Hidden from view behind some WEEDS. Watching on...

Seeing his father TRYING TO STAND. Brave to the last. Blackcloaks surrounding him. As their leader finally appears. The infidel revealing himself... VORTIGERN.

VORTIGERN

-- The kingdom to the second born.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Young Arthur instinctively wanting to CRY OUT. A HAND pulling him back. A FISHERMAN pulling the child away, shaking his head, getting him to the SAFETY OF A BOAT.

UTHER

It will never be yours.
(off his look)
... Not as long as he lives.

VORTIGERN

Where is he?

Uther SLAMMING EXCALIBUR down into the rock in front of him. A few feet from the hilt. LODGING IT IN THE STONE. Vortigern trying to pull it. Seeing it cannot be moved --

VORTIGERN

(angry now)
Where is the boy --

As Uther suddenly grabs a FIERY TORCH from the ground, SLAMMING it into Vortigern's FACE. His HEAD NOW ON FIRE. Vortigern not even FLINCHING. As if feeling nothing.

VORTIGERN

... I will find him, brother.

Vortigern THRUSTING HIS SCYTHE into Uther's STOMACH. Disemboweling him. Uther's EYES CALM. At peace.

VORTIGERN

I will find him, and the last
thing he sees will be my face.

Uther looking through the MIST in the distance, seeing his son on the fishing boat, DISAPPEARING INTO THE NIGHT.

VORTIGERN

(to the night)
... DID YOU HEAR THAT? NO MATTER
HOW LONG IT TAKES.

As we see Young Arthur. Holding his father's PENDRAGON PENDANT tight. A boy now lost to the world.

VORTIGERN (O.S.)

... I WILL BE COMING.

The sound of VORTIGERN'S WORDS surrounding as we --

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD

The ROUND TABLE BURNING. The words through the flames...

SUPERIMPOSE: KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE:
KING ARTHUR

The words growing brighter, lighting our way as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. FISHING BOAT (OCEAN) - DAWN

RAIN. The sharp end of a FISH-GUTTING KNIFE sits lodged in a WOODEN HULL. A FISHERMAN pulling the knife free.

SUPERIMPOSE: TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER

As we see the fisherman's WEATHERED FACE, covered by a BEARD. Shaved head. Callused hands. A child once known as ARTHUR. A man now known as WILLIAM PALLEAS (28).

VOICE (O.S.)

... William?

William turning to find TWO SEA MATES. Brother KAY Palleas (20, fresh-faced). And father ECTOR Palleas (60s, THE SAME FISHERMAN WHO SAVED ARTHUR AS A CHILD).

William helps them pull a series of UNDERWATER TRAPS onto this OLD BOAT. Raising them with HAND CRANKS...

Each trap EMPTIER THAN THE LAST. Until the crank STRAINS under the weight of the FINAL TRAP. SOMETHING INSIDE...

William slowly raises the winch. Hauling up the trap to find a FINNED SEA SERPENT inside. 20 FEET LONG. Extended FINS on the side. COILED within. DEAD.

ECTOR

... Three fin, female. Looks like a red back. Make sure it's dead.

William opens the trap, fearless. Examining the sea serpent's dead DRAGON-LIKE HEAD. A fanged mystery of fins and molluscs. Only to see the EYES SUDDENLY OPEN...

The sea serpent STRIKING. William not even flinching. KNIFE through the serpent's throat. All in a day's work.

WILLIAM

... It's dead.

EXT. ECCLES DOCKS - DUSK

ECCLES is a BLUE-COLLAR SEAPORT through a MEDIEVAL LENS. Filled with ANCIENT BOATS AND TRAWLERS. All manner of FISH, CREATURES and UNDERWATER FAUNA being brought in.

As IMPRESSED FISHERMEN see William, Kay and Ector haul their TWENTY-FOOTER onto the blood-stained docks.

EXT. ECCLES DOCKS - GUTTING TABLES - MOMENTS LATER

A mess of GUTS, SCALES and INNARDS. Fishermen hacking away. As we see William throw BLUBBER in a BOILING POT. Carving out INTERNAL ORGANS. Seeing KAY'S WORK.

WILLIAM

Nothing to waste... Gland oil is a tonic. Can use the fat to clean --

As he rips the TEETH out, showing his young brother.

WILLIAM

These are good for trading. Worth their weight. Even the back ones. Everything counts. Remember.

Kay NODDING. Returning to SLICING BACK MEAT. When a COMMOTION intrudes. WAGONS APPROACHING in the distance.

KAY

(re: wagons)
... Thought they weren't supposed to be here until tomorrow?

EXT. ECCLES DOCKS - MOMENTS LATER

A WAGON TRAIN STOPS. The silhouette of Vortigern's BLACKCLOAKS surrounding. The KING'S COLORS FLYING.

As a COLLECTOR (50s) steps out. Walking the CUTTING TABLES. Selecting the best of the catch. His LACKEYS hauling the goods into the wagons. The fishermen SILENT.

Until the Collector arrives at William's table. NODDING to his men. Taking the BLUBBER, OIL, TEETH. Everything.

WILLIAM

With respect...
(off his look)
That is the entire catch. The levies were for half the haul --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLECTOR

The levies have changed --

WILLIAM

At least leave us skin, some oils.
This is all we have to trade --

William sees the Collector has MISSED A TOOTH. William going to steal it away. The Collector GRABBING his hand.

COLLECTOR

You would steal from your king?

WILLIAM

It is you that steals from us.

A BLACKCLOAK'S SWORD drawn in an instant as --

William pushes the man back, defending himself. Grabbing the GUTTING KNIFE. Knocking down one Blackcloak, then another. Turning his knife towards the Collector as --

CRACK. William is knocked to his KNEES. A SWORD CRACKED ACROSS HIS NOSE. The Collector's knife to his NECK.

ECTOR (O.S.)

Please --

The Pointed Man seeing William's pleading father.
Picking up the TOOTH. SPITTING at William as he LEAVES.

COLLECTOR

... Worry not. I've no desire to
soil my blade with common blood.
(disdain)
I'll settle for twice that owed on
our next visit... Payable by all --

The Collector GRINNING. The wagon train SPEEDING AWAY.
All eyes on William. As he feels their angry STARES...

INT. ECCLES VILLAGE - DUSK

William, Ector, Kay and the fishermen lead a convoy of
EMPTY HAND CARTS into the quaint VILLAGE. ECTOR'S WIFE
coming out of a COTTAGE. Seeing William's face BLOODIED.

ECTOR'S WIFE

-- What happened?

Ector throwing his Wife a KNOWING LOOK as --

VOICE (V.O.)

It's not the first time, William --

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

A SIMPLE TAVERN. The VILLAGERS ARGUING. William holding court in the middle of it all. Flanked by Kay and Ector.

WILLIAM

You would rather we did nothing?

VILLAGER

The fight is not yours to make.

(off his look)

... You raise arms, you bring it
on all of us. Not just you --

WILLIAM

I'm not the one raising levies --

VILLAGER #2

There is nothing to be done.

WILLIAM

While there is still a monarchy
there is something to be done.

William seeing he is getting nowhere. Going to LEAVE.

VILLAGER

You'd have him take our homes, too.
Make orphans of our children --

WILLIAM

(as he leaves)

Better than having them grow up
knowing their fathers did nothing.

Kay going after his brother. Ector HOLDING HIM BACK.
Going to the BAR instead. The BARKEEP pouring an ALE.

ECTOR

... Perhaps something with a
little more teeth?

EXT. ECCLES VILLAGE - NIGHT

William sits on the edge of village. CHIMNEYS FOGGING
THE SKY behind him. The COAST and DOCKS visible ahead.
As his father SITS NEXT TO HIM. STRETCHING HIS BACK.

ECTOR

Getting old, son. Can't run the
hook like I used to. Can't haul.
Not going to be here forever --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

You trying to raise my spirits?

Ector hands his son a STIFF DRINK from the tavern.

ECTOR

... When you were a boy you used
to hunt thin fins in the wash...
Stripers, Eelnecks -- sting you so
badly your *skin* would peel. But
you'd keep chasing them anyway --

WILLIAM

I'm not a child anymore.

ECTOR

... Yet still the hunt remains.

William picks at a wall with his GUTTING KNIFE.

ECTOR

... When I am gone, your time as
an elder will come. This village,
these people will look to you --

WILLIAM

They're the reason we must fight.

ECTOR

And they're the reason you cannot.
(re: the village)
... We're forgotten out here, left
alone. Leave it that way.

Ector rests his HAND on William's, stopping the knife.

ECTOR

We're dockhands son. Fisherman.
(off his look)
... Know your place. Start a
family, find a wife --

WILLIAM

Trying to marry me off now?

ECTOR

Any woman in these provinces would
gladly settle your house --

WILLIAM

Maybe I'm not ready to settle --

ECTOR

And maybe your mother would like a
grandchild before she dies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM
(sardonic)
Not sure I'm really father stock.

ECTOR
Fate makes fathers of us all, son.

William looking at him with KIND EYES. Father and son.

ECTOR
Promise me. Promise me you'll let
things run their course... For me.
(off his look)
... Fight the fights you can win.

William looking into his father's eyes. The wish of an
old man. Until finally, inevitably, he NODS. Relenting.

WILLIAM
... I promise.

As Ector takes his drink and they TOAST. William
KNOCKING HIS MUG BACK. CHOKING on the contents.

ECTOR
(re: the drink)
Cuttlefish venom, all that's left.

WILLIAM
You just gave me *venom* --

ECTOR
... What? I thought you could use
a little slowing down --

EXT. ECCLES VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

William walks through the VILLAGE. Kids running up,
using him as a JUNGLE GYM. William seeing a BARMAID
smiling, flirtatious. William trying to smile back.

As we see Ector WATCHING ON. His WIFE joining him.
Mother and father watching their SON from a distance.

ECTOR'S WIFE
... His will is too strong, Ector.
It is his blood. His heart.
(off his look)
He is his father's son.

William, covered in CHILDREN. Talking to the barmaid.

ECTOR'S WIFE
Cannot change who he is inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ector watching his son WALK AWAY.

ECTOR
... I can try.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

A gently SWAYING ROOM. Almost like the galley of a ship.
A SHAFT OF MOONLIGHT illuminating...

A MAN'S MUSCLED TORSO. COMBAT TRAINING in the dark.
SKIN covered in SCARS, a landscape of REPAIRED TISSUE and
OLD STITCHING. SWEATY muscles and tendons RIPPLING...

The man SPINNING a FAMILIAR COMBAT SCYTHER. Scythes at
EACH END of the staff. A barbaric instrument of death...

As his head catches the light. Revealing a GLIMPSE of a
HORRIFICALLY SCARRED FACE. The face of VORTIGERN (50s).

VOICE (O.S.)
Father?

Vortigern turns to see his son, CATIGERN (late 20s,
musculature hiding SHALLOW, WEAK EYES).

CATIGERN
It is time.

As he NODS. Reaching for a FEARSOME METAL MASK to cover
HALF HIS FACE. Securing it with BUCKLES and STRAPS.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Vortigern steps out onto a slightly swaying BALCONY.
Standing next to the waiting Catigern. Seeing his
anxious son SECURING a HIDDEN KNIFE to his body.

VORTIGERN
Contain your fear, Catigern, it
undoes you. You are king's blood.
(disdain)
... Let the fear be theirs.

As we see the HORIZON MOVE ahead. Almost like the
BUILDING THEY ARE IN IS MOVING...

Almost like they aren't in a building at all...

EXT. COASTLINE - NIGHT

As we REVEAL a HUNDRED PORTERS secured to HARNESS POLES, carrying a MOBILE QUARTERS. A MINI-CITADEL, surrounded by GUARDS. HUNDREDS OF LEGS propelling it forward...

Navigating the undulating countryside like a HUMAN CATERPILLAR in the MOONLIGHT. Arriving at the COAST...

EXT. BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

The carriers lay the citadel to rest. STAIRS extending downwards, as Vortigern and Catigern step onto the BEACH.

SILENCE. Moonlight and darkness blanketing everything...

And then a distant LIGHT. A single LANTERN. As a NORDIC "FAERING" ROWBOAT appears from sea. Rowing to shore. And Catigern sees the horrifying SILHOUETTES aboard...

NORSEMEN. VIKINGS. Blood-encrusted FUR SKINS and NORDIC ARMOR. MATTED HAIR and FIERCE HEAVY BROWS.

Their mighty leader KJARTAN stepping out (40s, TATTOOED SKIN). His fellow warriors KNEELING in the SURF like STEPPING STONES, allowing him dry passage to the BEACH.

VORTIGERN

-- You embarrass us with the speed of your crossing, Kjartan. Our preparations were not for days...

KJARTAN

Forget your tone, Vortigern.
(off his look)
... You know why I am here.

VORTIGERN

A sampling of our fruits perhaps?

Vortigern looking back to his platform. A sampling of SEMI-CLAD WOMEN and WINES awaiting Kjartan's approval.

KJARTAN

Secrets fester, King. They cannot be hidden... Or buried in stone.

Catigern TENSING. Nervous. Hand near his HIDDEN KNIFE.

VORTIGERN

... I see you have been sampling our folk stories instead --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KJARTAN

Did you think you could hide it --

VORTIGERN

I am the blood born, Norseman.
The throne is mine by right --

KJARTAN

Not while another breathes. Not
while the sword sits waiting.

Vortigern remaining CALM. Stepping closer. Quiet tones.

VORTIGERN

... It's been twenty-five years --

KJARTAN

And we will not wait another.
There can only be one blood king.
I leave it to you to remedy.

As Kjartan returns to his boat.

VORTIGERN

Set anchor off the coast, it will
not be long. If certainty is what
you seek, you shall have it.
(resolute)
... I give you my word as king.

Kjartan being ROWED BACK into the night.

KJARTAN

If that is your word to give.

Vortigern WHISPERING to his son as they row away.

VORTIGERN

I want them tested and re-tested.
The isles, caves, provinces --

CARTIGERN

-- We've searched everywhere.

VORTIGERN

Then search further. Every rat
hole, every village. If he's out
there we need him found. Now.
(off his look)
I don't have to remind you what is
at stake here, son.

As the MIST starts to clear revealing the MOONLIT OCEAN.
THREE "KVASLAND" VIKING LONGSHIPS waiting off the coast.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

... It is time to lay this ghost
to rest once and for all.

CUT TO:

EXT. ECCLES VILLAGE - NIGHT

This simple village at the end of the world. Spinning
WEATHER VANES. AMBER WINDOWS aglow. Puffing chimneys.
In its way, the most beautiful place in the world.

INT. PALLEAS HOME - NIGHT

William and Kay clean the DINNER TABLE. Bowls of SIMPLE
SOUP. Kay WASHING PLATES in a BOWL OF WATER. Wincing.

WILLIAM

Your skin will harden in time.

Kay nursing BLISTERS and WELTS on his hand from the sea.

KAY

Will we be okay? For the winter.

WILLIAM

We shall always be okay, brother.

As William's mother comes and puts her ARM around her two
grown boys. Mother and sons. Doing the DISHES together.

INT. PALLEAS HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

William locks up for the night. Blowing out CANDLES.
Putting the DOG outside. SECURING the DOOR. Looking in
on his BROTHER SLEEPING. His PARENTS doing the same...

As he finds his SIMPLE COT in the corner. WIPING HIS
FACE from a BOWL OF WATER. Cleaning his BLOODIED SCAB
from the day's fight. A moment of calm. Peace even --

And then a distant NOISE. William listening. Hearing it
again. A WHISPERING. Then the sound of the dog BARKING.
GROWLING. The DOG'S BARKS SILENCED with an awful yelp...

William seeing SHADOWS outside, as he runs for the door --

Too late. The DOOR CRASHING OPEN. BLACKCLOAKS swarming
in, grabbing the rising Kay. William's father emerging
to see KAY BEING TAKEN. Trying to stop them...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ECTOR

Take the food, take anything --

BLACK KNIGHT

We're not here for your food.

EXT. ECCLES VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The sounds of families SCREAMING. MEN being violently dragged from their homes. As we see Kay being PULLED OUT into the street. WILLIAM BEING PULLED OUT BEHIND HIM...

William wanting to FIGHT, looking over at an AXE on a nearby chopping block, seeing his FATHER looking at him --

Ector SHAKING HIS HEAD. William heeding his previous words. DOING NOTHING. Going without a fight.

ECTOR'S WIFE

... Why are you doing this --

As William and Kay are thrown into a WAGON CAGE and...

EXT. HILLS - DAWN

A huge TRAIN of WAGON CAGES snakes over the countryside. The breaking dawn illuminating HUNDREDS OF CAGES. OTHER CAGE WAGONS sporadically joining from NEARBY VILLAGES.

The train of caged people getting LONGER AND LONGER...

INT. WAGON CAGES - MORNING

There is BARELY ROOM TO BREATHE. LIMBS intertwined, HEADS together. Men as animals. Kay looking at William.

KAY

Where are they taking us?

Kay looks around. The prisoners all of SIMILAR AGE. 20S AND 30S. No teenagers, no middle-aged, no old men.

KAY

-- Why didn't they take anyone older? Anyone younger? Why us --

Kay PRODDED with a SPEAR by a SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK --

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

... Loosen your tongue again, and I'll remove it --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kay saying nothing. As William sees a SETTLEMENT on the horizon ahead. Growing more and more NERVOUS...

EXT. TESTING SETTLEMENT - DAY

A MASSIVE OPERATION. The train we have been following just ONE OF MANY. All SPOKES around this CENTRAL HUB.

As William, Kay, and THOUSANDS OF MEN are ejected from their cages. All joining a CENTRAL LINE. Shuffling along up a HILL. The top NOT VISIBLE, shrouded in MIST.

The sound of MEN SCREAMING beyond...

EXT. HILL TOP - DAY

A SOLITARY RAT. Nose twitching. GLASSY EYES searching. Just another scavenger on the hunt, scampering through --

The King's MOBILE QUARTERS on TOP OF THE HILL. Porters all kneeling next to carrying poles in ceremonial repose.

As we see the citadel has been RETROFITTED. Part of the edifice REMOVED. Something altogether more striking now providing the centerpiece to this massive structure --

EXCALIBUR.

Still IMBEDDED TO THE HILT in the STONE that has held it for 25 years. Said section of EXCAVATED ROCK beneath it.

CATIGERN holding court out front. Watching the LINE OF MEN come shuffling up the hill. Each being made to PULL THE SWORD. Catigern waving each TEST SUBJECT on...

Every man then BRANDED ON THE NECK with a HOT IRON. The source of the SCREAMING. As a Blackcloak approaches --

BLACKCLOAK

... Provinces are emptied, sire.

CATIGERN

Hurry them along. I want to be at the Glens by nightfall.

(re: branding)

And make the brands deeper. I'm not going through this again...

ANGLE ON THE LINE

As we see William and Kay shuffling closer. Seeing the SWORD AND STONE up ahead. Men as test subjects.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

... Doesn't make any sense... The
blood sword is a myth --

KAY

Then what do you call that?

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK (O.S.)

-- You put little stock in your
tongue, boy --

The Blackcloak CRACKING the back of Kay's KNEES.

KAY

Please, I didn't --

Pulling a KNIFE. Going to grab Kay's MOUTH. As William
suddenly STANDS IN FRONT of his brother. Protective.

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

Something you wish to say, too?

CRACK. William now the one STRUCK. Knocked down to his
KNEES. The Blackcloak amused. William SPITTING BLOOD.

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

I'm sorry, I could not hear --

As William STANDS TALL. Defiant, looking at him...

CRACK. The Blackcloak hitting him again. Enjoying this.

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

Maybe I'll have both your tongues.

Only to see William STANDING ONCE AGAIN. EYE-TO-EYE.
BLEEDING. But NOT FIGHTING BACK. Keeping his word...

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

... Don't know when to stay down
do you, fisherman?

As the Blackcloak raises his KNIFE to William's throat,
William STARES TYRANNY IN THE EYE, fearless, and --

CATIGERN (O.S.)

Wait --

Catigern interrupts. Walking over.

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

... He's just a dockhand, sire,
from the provinces. Fish scum --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATIGERN

Everyone gets tested... Once he's
branded, you can do as you please.

The Blackcloak annoyed, dragging William over to the
SWORD. William held down over it like a LAB RAT...

As he suddenly finds ALL EYES STARING AT HIM. Waiting.

SADISTIC BLACKCLOAK

-- Well. Hurry up...

A KNIFE to William's throat. William putting his HAND on
the sword. FINGERS GRIPPING the handle. Pulling it.

AS NOTHING HAPPENS. The sword remaining lodged.

CATIGERN

Both hands, please.

William doing as he's told. Using BOTH HANDS now as --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The world suddenly, quite literally STOPS MOVING. Time
slowing almost to a STOP. Everything in EXTREME SLOW
MOTION. Catigern's FACE. The encroaching BLACKCLOAKS --

BACK TO THE HILL

As William lets go instantly. As if ELECTRICALLY
SHOCKED. Seeing the SWORD HAS MOVED UPWARDS AN INCH.

WILLIAM

What --

The entire scene TURNING ON A DIME. DISBELIEF. SHOCK.
BLACKCLOAKS PULLING swords. Aiming at our hero.

CATIGERN

... Again.

The swords inching closer to William. A hundred SHARP
POINTS closing in. Catigern anxious, SCARED EVEN --

CATIGERN

I SAID AGAIN --

William pulling the sword with both hands as we hear the
grind of metal against ROCK, Excalibur SLIDES UP and --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

SLOW MOTION surrounds again. As this time William looks around. Seemingly the only one aware of this new world. A BREATH of SILENT, SURREAL BEAUTY...

And then CHAOS. A CACOPHONOUS NOISE. The SOUNDS of the WORLD all attacking him at once as TIME SPEEDS UP, the LIGHT FLARES into a HEADACHE-INDUCING BRIGHT LIGHT and --

BACK TO THE HILL

William PULLS EXCALIBUR FROM THE STONE. Instantly STRUCK from behind across the head, the SWORD falling to the ground with a CLATTER. Catigern grabbing the prize.

CATIGERN

-- *Take him...*

William GRABBED from behind. SHACKLED. LIFTED UP --

WILLIAM

NO, WAIT, *GET OFF ME* --

As he is GAGGED, a BAG is pulled over his head, and he is LIFTED AWAY SCREAMING into the DARKNESS of the Citadel --

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

William is SECURED to a WOODEN SLAB. Splayed like DA VINCI'S MAN. The BAG removed from his head. Still GAGGED, as he looks around the DARK ROOM...

VORTIGERN (O.S.)

25 years is a long time.

William sees VORTIGERN'S SHADOW move across the room. Picking up a KNIFE. SHARPENING IT. FACE STILL HIDDEN...

VORTIGERN

Gave up searching after ten.
Thought maybe you'd drowned,
died... Must say they hid you
well.

Vortigern accidentally SLICING his hand as he sharpens the knife. Not flinching. Noticing the DEEP CUT.

VORTIGERN

I'm sorry, do excuse me...

Vortigern annoyed, CLUMSILY SEWING THE INCISION with a THREAD and HOOK. An air of ROUTINE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

... Don't worry, I'm used to it.
(re: skin)
No nerves. No feeling, see?

William watches Vortigern clearly FEELING NOTHING.

VORTIGERN

Was three before they realized.
Bedside candle. Didn't even know
I was burning... Until the smell.

He finishes sewing. Picking up the KNIFE once again.

VORTIGERN

You ever smelled flesh crisp?

Vortigern uses the knife to CUT THE BEARD off of
William's face. Revealing his features beneath.

VORTIGERN

They kept me... Hidden after that.
Locked away from the world. The
great shame of the family.
(sardonic)
... Until your father needed my
scythe, of course.

Vortigern sees a SHAVED William revealed beneath him.

VORTIGERN

Look at you, same nose, same face.
Like looking into his own eyes.
(fascinated)
... You really don't remember me --

William trying to TALK. Vortigern removing the GAG.

WILLIAM

I was born in the provinces --

VORTIGERN

The blade is enchanted by Mage
hands. It can only be drawn by
your father or his line --

WILLIAM

My name is William Palleas. My
Father is Ector, he's a dockhand.

VORTIGERN

No, your name is Arthur. Son of
Pendragon. True heir to Camelot.
(a relief)
And today, nephew, you will die...

EXT. MOBILE CITADEL - DAY

William (as we shall continue to call him) is carried out of Vortigern's citadel -- still BOUND TO THE SLAB OF WOOD.

VORTIGERN
... BEHOLD YOUR KING.

As he is propped up in front of the SHOCKED CITIZENS.

WILLIAM
You're making a *mistake* --

VORTIGERN
... Behold the coward child
plucked from his hole.

William flat for execution now. The CHOPPING BLOCK.

VORTIGERN
Behold the end of the Uther
bloodline by his own sword.

As his MINIONS CHEER. And William sees his BROTHER in the crowd, watching on, confused. Not understanding --

VORTIGERN
Would you have history hear any
last words, King?

WILLIAM
Please, I am not your king --

VORTIGERN
No... Not anymore --

As he raises the mighty Excalibur to behead him and --

A tiny NOISE suddenly intrudes. A PITTER-PATTERING. The sound of the RAT we saw earlier running towards them. CLAWS pulling it up the SLAB... Then up VORTIGERN'S ARM.

VORTIGERN
What --

And then ANOTHER RAT. And another. RATS suddenly SWARMING up him from all sides. Covering his body --

VORTIGERN
(realizing)
To your *WEAPONS* --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Too late. As a FLOOD of rats swamps the Citadel. The King smothered, DROPPING EXCALIBUR. The Blackcloaks trying to fight, to no avail, ALL COVERED IN RODENTS --

All except one.

A SOLITARY BLACKCLOAK left untouched. Like Moses in the Red Sea. Suddenly stepping forward, picking up Excalibur. CUTTING THE CAPTIVE WILLIAM FREE.

As William's new ally sees REINFORCEMENTS arriving. Pulling out a BOW AND QUIVER of ARROWS. Unleashing a volley of arrows with GATLING GUN-like precision.

THUD, THUD, THUD. Blackcloaks falling like flies.

William seeing one of the King's men about to BLIND SIDE the Solitary Blackcloak with a CLUB --

WILLIAM

Behind you --

William pushing his new ally clear. Taking the brunt of the BLOW -- struck in the HEAD, sent flying...

Landing. Dazed. LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS...

Everything in GROGGY GLIMPSES now. The Solitary Blackcloak running over to William, checking he's alive. HELMET removed, as we finally meet William's SAVIOR...

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN beneath. Battle hardened. Muddled by the fight. We will call her THE WOMAN (late 20s).

The Woman trying to pick William up. No use. Seeing the enemy CLOSING IN. NO WAY OUT...

As she CLOSES HER EYES and --

A WOLF suddenly appears from the surrounding THICK BRUSH. Leaping on one of their attackers. Teeth to throat.

ANOTHER WOLF APPEARING. Pouncing. Flanked by ANOTHER. A PACK appearing from the hills. Pouncing more like raptors than wolves. Ripping out necks. An animal army.

William looking over as TWO MORE WOLVES approach him, grabbing him by the COLLAR. DRAGGING HIM AWAY from the battle, up the hill to the top of a RAVINE...

As Vortigern CHARGES. The Woman unleashing her bow. ARROW AFTER ARROW. Vortigern's scythe a propeller-like BLUR OF METAL. SLICING the arrows out of the air...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Our heroes' backs against the ravine now. A HUGE DROP down. The wolves CIRCLING protectively. Last stand...

Until The Woman sees a RIVER BELOW. William seeing it too. Seeing her suddenly LEAN BACK and --

WILLIAM

No, DON'T --

The Woman falls backwards. The wolves suddenly FOLLOWING SUIT. DRAGGING WILLIAM over the edge with them...

EXT. RAVINE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

William LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS now as he PLUMMETS down. The wind fighting his fall. The Woman and TWO WOLVES next to him. A strange CALM to the animals as --

EXT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS ACTION

WHOOSH. They HIT THE WATER. The Woman and William caught in the CURRENT. The wolves arching, caught too --

Until a SCHOOL OF FISH surround them, pulling them all UPWARDS. The multi-colored AQUATIC LIFE lifting our heroes up to the safety of the SKY ABOVE as we --

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. CAVE - DUSK

A FIRE. HORSES. SUPPLIES. William waking to find himself in a CAVE. A medieval version of a SAFE HOUSE.

WILLIAM

... Where am I --

THE WOMAN (O.S.)

You are safe. Up river.

As he realizes they're SKIN TO SKIN. His WET SHIRT off. The Woman trying to COVER AS MUCH OF HIS SKIN AS SHE CAN.

WILLIAM

What are you *doing* --

THE WOMAN

The cold was taking you. You're no good to me dead --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

William pulling away, seeing the TWO WOLVES standing protectively at the CAVE ENTRANCE. EARS RAISED.

WILLIAM

... What are you, *Mage*?

THE WOMAN

I'm no Mage. There is much you do not know. Much you have to learn.

As she gets dressed, clearly feeling no embarrassment at her NUDITY. Handing him EXCALIBUR.

WILLIAM

Get that thing away from me...

THE WOMAN

You are the rightful King.

WILLIAM

I'm leaving --

THE WOMAN

He'll have every rider in the land searching for you now --

WILLIAM

I'll go back, back to my family,
I'll show him the truth --

THE WOMAN

Your family is already dead.

William looking at her. Sickened. Confused.

THE WOMAN

... It's the first place he would have gone.

William already LEAVING. Grabbing a HORSE. Panicked.

THE WOMAN

... Wait, it's too dangerous --

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

William's horse GALLOPS across the rolling hills.

William frantic. An awful FEAR spread across his face. Eyes trained on the FIERY SETTING SUN...

As he sees the awful black smear of BILLOWING SMOKE...

EXT. ECCLES VILLAGE - NIGHT

William's village is all CINDERS. BODIES EVERYWHERE.
William hurrying to his HOME. Finding it still ablaze.
His MOTHER'S BODY outside. His FATHER'S BODY beside her.
In fallen BATTLE STANCE. Protecting her to the last.

William COLLAPSING next to them. A strange CONFUSION to
his face, as if not understanding. Trying to comprehend.

ECTOR

Will --

As William sees his father is STILL ALIVE. Barely.

WILLIAM

... *Father?*

Immediately putting pressure on the BLEEDING --

WILLIAM

Try not to move --

The BLOOD SEEPING THROUGH. Ector TRYING TO SPEAK --

ECTOR

... The king --

WILLIAM

I know, it's my fault, they --

Ector GRABBING HIS HAND. Silencing him. Pressing
something into his palm. As William looks down to see --

The old PENDRAGON PENDANT. The same pendant we saw him
given 25 years before. The PENDRAGON INSIGNIA. The
ROYAL EMBLEM. His world fading away. The LIE REVEALED.

ECTOR

Just wanted to protect you.

William looking at his father. A MAN HE DOESN'T KNOW.

WILLIAM

I don't understand --

(off his look)

... It's true...

William reeling now. As Ector FEELS HIMSELF DYING.

WILLIAM

... This isn't happening --

ECTOR

I can't protect you anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ector COUGHING. Starting to die.

WILLIAM
... What do I do?

Ector's words CRACKING. Against his would-be son's face.

ECTOR
Survive.

As William sees the man he thought was his father DIE IN
FRONT OF HIM. Life escaping his body. William on his
knees. SILHOUETTED against his burning home...

EXT. PYRE - NIGHT

A PYRE BURNS high. William's PARENTS consumed by flames
in CEREMONIAL RITUAL. The voice coming from the fire.

KAY (O.S.)
I was at dock, oiling the rig.

As William sees KAY, watching on through the fire.

KAY
... Heard the screams. Thought it
was the serpents feeding --

WILLIAM
Brother, listen to me --

KAY
You are not my brother... Not
anymore.

William stepping closer. His once-brother STEPPING BACK.

WILLIAM
Kay, this wasn't my fault.

KAY
Without you they'd still be alive.

WILLIAM
... I didn't want this.

KAY
And yet still they burn.

William looking at him. Seeing the HEARTACHE ON HIS
FACE. As Kay goes to leave. William heading after him --

THE WOMAN (O.S.)
Go near him, you endanger him too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

William turning to see THE WOMAN. Wrapped in a shawl.

THE WOMAN

-- You want him safe? You'll stay
as far away from him as possible.

The ANGER growing in William now. His WORLD COLLAPSING.
As he looks at the FIRE. Looks back at the village and --

INT. ECCLES VILLAGE - NIGHT

William hurries through the REMAINS of his village. The
Woman seeing him assembling SUPPLIES. Securing a HORSE.

THE WOMAN

-- What are you doing?

WILLIAM

What do you think --

As she sees him secure WEAPONS, SWORDS. Anything he can.

THE WOMAN

... You're not going to try and
fight him --

WILLIAM

He has taken everything from me --

The Woman BLOCKING HIS WAY, as he tries to PUSH PAST her.

The Woman easily deflecting him. Using his weight
against him. William sent TUMBLING in the MUD.

THE WOMAN

You're not thinking straight, you
are angry. This is what he wants.

William charging her again. The Woman easily outsmarting
him again. The outcome the same. WILLIAM IN THE MUD.

THE WOMAN

Fight him now you'd be dead before
your blade left the scabbard.

WILLIAM

He stole my life. My *family*... I
will have my revenge --

THE WOMAN

-- He is surrounded by walls, by
warriors, a thousand guards. You
know how to defeat a thousand men?
... Can't even beat one woman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

So you would have me do *nothing*?

The Woman looking at him. Bathed in MOONLIGHT.

THE WOMAN

... What if I told you there was another way? To defeat him.

(off his look)

To end all of this. Another way to find the justice you seek.

WILLIAM

What way --

THE WOMAN

How far would you be willing to go? To take back your life?

WILLIAM

There is nothing I would not do.

THE WOMAN

... Why don't we find out?

As she reaches down her HAND to help him up. William HESITATING. Looking at her, suspicious.

THE WOMAN

Come with me, you live, you find your justice. Stay here, you die.

(re: her hand)

-- The choice is yours.

WILLIAM

... Give me one good reason why I should trust you.

THE WOMAN

I've already saved your life twice today. That should count for two.

William finally RELENTING, allowing her to PULL HIM UP. As she finally says the words we've been waiting to hear.

THE WOMAN

Name's Guinevere. Of Maladron.

William SHAKING her hand.

WILLIAM

William. Of Eccles.

GUINEVERE smiling. Never more beautiful. More iconic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE (THE WOMAN)
... Welcome to the war.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DAY

The MOUNTAIN-TOP CAMELOT CASTLE. A miracle of engineering. Adorned in VORTIGERN'S COAT OF ARMS. An IMPOSING ACROPOLIS watching over the lands.

The nearby DISEASED VILLAGES and PLAINS of Camelot separated by a 600 foot CHASM surrounding the castle. The castle inaccessible from the villages --

Until a RATCHETING SOUND echoes out, and we SEE a massive ARTICULATED BRIDGE extend out. GEARS CLICKING within.

The bridge EXTENDING to the mainland, as the KING'S MOBILE CITADEL appears. The might of a hundred muscle-bound porters below. Carrying it across the huge chasm.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

A LAVISH COURTYARD. The Citadel entering through HUGE GATES, coming to a stop. Vortigern and Catigern exiting.

VORTIGERN
... Whoever she was, she had the
gift, whisperers do not go unseen.
(off his nod)
Find her, you will find him.

Vortigern looking at a nearby BLACKCLOAK.

VORTIGERN
... Prepare greetings
arrangements. Beds, meats, clean
women... Send word to our guests --

CATIGERN
(whispering)
Father, he still lives --

VORTIGERN
The born King is dead, my son. He
died in the fall... Is that clear?

CATIGERN
... They will want proof.

Vortigern looking across his attending Blackcloaks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

How tall was he? My height?
Little taller? Dark hair?

Vortigern selecting a VOLUNTEER BLACKCLOAK fitting the description. Waving him over.

VORTIGERN

You believe in our cause, kinsman?

VOLUNTEER BLACKCLOAK

Of course, my lord.

VORTIGERN

Join us. You have been selected
for a matter of great importance.

As Vortigern leads them inside. Looking at Catigern.

VORTIGERN

Remember, find the girl. She is
the key. Take whatever you need.
(off his nod)
... Good hunting.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DAY

Catigern and a team of SIXTY MEN ride out, across the bridge, immediately FANNING OUT in all directions. Like arrows shot into the ether. THE HUNT NOW ON...

CUT TO:

EXT. BARREN FIELDS - DAY

Guinevere leads William across BARREN, DISEASED FIELDS.

WILLIAM

... Where we are going?

GUINEVERE

North. We'll find shelter there.

WILLIAM

North are the Darklands, it isn't
safe --

GUINEVERE

... It is with me.

As William sees a FORMATION of OWLS overhead. Birds of prey circling them protectively. Watchdogs above.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

Elders called it whispering. I've had it since birth. Can make them do what I want, think what I want.

Guinevere watching a GREAT OWL swoop by.

GUINEVERE

There were many of us before the king. Before the purges...

(matter-of-fact)

... I am all that remains now. He finds me, he'll kill me, too.

WILLIAM

Suppose I owe you my thanks... For getting me out, getting me safe.

GUINEVERE

-- You're not safe yet, Pendragon.

EXT. THE NORTH - DAY

A herd of BLACK UNICORN sweep the plains. Horns BLOODIED from a fight. As the PLAINS give way to an IMPOSING LANDSCAPE of SCORCHED FIELDS and PETRIFIED FORESTS.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

What is this place?

EXT. THE DARKLANDS - LATER

Guinevere leads William riding through the old MAGE WAR BATTLEFIELDS from 25 years before. The ground SEARED by BLACK MAGIC. PETRIFIED TREES. DEEP CRATERS. Lifeless.

GUINEVERE

This is where they fought.

(off his confusion)

... Your father. The Knights of the Table. This is all that is left of the Mage Wars.

As they ride through enormous 300-foot-high SKELETAL REMAINS. Like a huge ELEPHANT GRAVEYARD. RIB CAGES the size of buildings. A VAST LANDSCAPE of SKELETONS.

GUINEVERE

... Dark magic can create horrific things...

(off his disbelief)

Be mindful -- some still live, in the mountains, walking the lands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

Thought they were all hunted down?

GUINEVERE

And I thought I said to forget
what you have been told.

William looking around the old TEETH and SPINAL COLUMNS.

GUINEVERE

Trust only what you can see. What
you feel. The rest is shadows.

EXT. THE GREAT FOREST - LATER

A DENSE, THICK seemingly infinite OAK TREE FOREST.
Guinevere and William dismounting. Guinevere SLAPPING
the horses as they RUN OFF. Leaving them alone.

GUINEVERE

... This is it, you ready?

WILLIAM

For what? I don't see anything.

GUINEVERE

You will learn to look closer.

Guinevere clearly ENJOYING PLAYING WITH HIM. William
looking around, SEEING NOTHING. Irritated now.

WILLIAM

... This is absurd, we're wasting
time, the king still breathes --

GUINEVERE

And you're still not listening.

As she smiles and NODS at a tree.

A CAMOUFLAGED GUARD NODDING BACK. Indistinguishable
before. Hidden in the foliage. HEAVILY ARMORED...

Opening up a HIDDEN DOOR in the trunk of a huge OLD OAK.

INT. OAK TREE STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Guinevere leads William up a HIDDEN SPIRAL STAIRWELL.
Dark and dank. Winding higher and higher...

WILLIAM

We just rode for two days so you
could bring me into a tree?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

This isn't just any tree. This is
the Great Oak. It offers passage.

WILLIAM

Passage to where...

As they arrive at an OPENING of LIGHT above and William
enters a whole new, hidden world...

EXT. THE OAKS - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Welcome to THE OAKS. A VILLAGE high above the forest
floor. A maze of ROPE BRIDGES, SHACKS, and PULLEY
SYSTEMS bringing supplies from below. Like an enormous
SHANTY TOWN in the sky. A dizzying WOODEN WORLD.

William seeing a vast lattice of CAMOUFLAGED NETTING
stretched BETWEEN THE BRANCHES beneath them. The
branches, leaves and netting hiding this SECRET WORLD.

GUINEVERE

... Welcome to The Oaks.

Guinevere leads William past BLACKSMITHS, TAVERNS, TRADE
POSTS, etc. The city populated with WIDOWS, ORPHANS, and
WARRIORS. Men of fighting age. ALL EYES ON OUR HERO.

WILLIAM

What are they staring at?

GUINEVERE

They're staring at you. You're
everything they've prayed for.

WILLIAM

I'm not here to play *king* --

People offering William GIFTS, as he REFUSES them.
Feeling the weight of their eyes. JESUS WALKING.

GUINEVERE

Looks like you could use a drink.

INT. TAVERN (THE OAKS) - MOMENTS LATER

Guinevere and William walk through OLD WOODEN DOORS.

GUINEVERE

Watch yourself in here, okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

What do you mean, I thought I was
the answer to everyone's prayers?

GUINEVERE

... Not everyone prays.

As William enters the OAKS TAVERN. TREE BRANCHES growing
through the SLANTED ROOM. The DREGS of CAMELOT within.
DRUNKEN 10-FOOT GIANTS sitting on the floor. 3-FOOT IMPS
running GAMBLING. A world of PIPE SMOKE and TATTOOS.
Guinevere leading William through it all until --

A man wearing TWIN BATTLE AXES across his back blocks
their way. This is MARK (30s, cocksure, handsome).

MARK

This him? Doesn't look like much.

GUINEVERE

Leave him be, Mark --

William trying to walk past. A BATTLE AXE hitting the
wall with a THUD in front of him. Blocking his way.

MARK

... What, you too good to drink
with us common folk, Pendragon?
Here, have one on me --

As he POURS his drink over William's head. Mark's GAGGLE
OF LACKEYS CHUCKLING. Guinevere going to DEFEND him...

VOICE (O.S.)

That's enough --

William turns to see an OLD MAN (70s, eyes alive) propped
up on a bar stool. HUNCHED OVER. Frail-looking.

OLD MAN

That's good ale. I don't care who
you're wasting it on...

The Old Man sits up as Guinevere brings William closer.

OLD MAN

Closer, child.

William seeing the Old Man's LIVED-IN FACE.

OLD MAN

Where is the sword?

GUINEVERE

He will not take it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD MAN
A Pendragon without his blade?

WILLIAM
My name is William Palleas.

The Old Man looking at his STAFF leaning against the bar.

OLD MAN
Will you pass me my cane, William?

William handing the staff to the SHAKING Old Man as --

The Old Man suddenly GRABS the STAFF, SPINNING it around his WRIST, SWEEPING the LEGS out from under William. His whole stance changing. Not as old and frail as he seems.

OLD MAN
... You will learn appearances can be deceiving.

The Old Man grinning. Indicating Guinevere's old BLACKCLOAK UNIFORM she used to disguise herself with.

OLD MAN
Is she your enemy? Or savior?
(re: the room)
Are these the dregs of Camelot?
Or the last hope of the realm?

The MISFITS and WARRIORS of the bar CHEERING.

OLD MAN
Are you a fisherman?
(grinning)
... Or are you a king?

William sees GUINIVERE SMILING, enjoying the show.

OLD MAN
... It matters only what you are inside, Arthur.

WILLIAM
I swear to you, I hear that name one more time, you will never see me again, Old Man...

OLD MAN
The name is Bedivere.

WILLIAM
And mine is William. I'm no king.

The Old Man flanked by TWO BUXOM BARMAIDS. TOASTING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE (OLD MAN)
... You will be.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

KJARTAN and his VIKING COUNCIL enter the gates of CAMELOT. CONFETTI FALLING. CHEERING CITIZENS...

As we REVEAL SOLDIERS behind the revellers, urging them on. Women PRICKING their FINGERS with PINS, using the BLOOD as BLUSH. THROWING FLOWERS at KNIFEPOINT...

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Vortigern STEPS DOWN from his THRONE to greet Kjartan and his men. The NORSEMEN throwing a 6-FOOT DRAGON HEAD on the floor. FORKED TONGUE LIMP. EYES in PERMANENT SHOCK.

KJARTAN
-- From our realm to yours. A red
back. Took nine of our men.

VORTIGERN
We receive it with great pride.

Vortigern NODDING as his men bring forth a six-foot EDGE of CURVED, BURNED TABLE WOOD. On a VELVET PILLOW.

VORTIGERN
My brother's table. What remains.
I have no greater trophy to give.

KJARTAN
Then the pride is ours, King.
(to the chase)
... And what of our concern? I
presume you have good news...

VORTIGERN
-- Better your eyes tell the tale.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - WALL - LATER

Vortigern stands at a WALL OF DEATH. Enemies of Camelot CAGED, HANGED and NAILED TO THE WALL. Decaying CORPSES.

VORTIGERN
... Behold the so-called king.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As we see the VOLUNTEER SOLDIER. Face BLOODIED. Made to look like William. RAVENS picking at his skin.

KJARTAN

And the sword?

VORTIGERN

Lost to the river. For now...

(with a smile)

... I'll see if we can reclaim it
for your trophy chest.

Vortigern nodding to one of his Blackcloaks. As SEMI-CLAD WOMEN holding TRAYS OF ALE and MEATS appear.

VORTIGERN

In the mean time, let us get you
settled. We have much to discuss.

As Kjartan looks back at the CORPSE, making sure.

VORTIGERN

... There will be nothing to stop
us now.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN (THE OAKS) - DAY

A RUSTIC cabin. A HAMMOCK. BRANCHES running through.
William with SHIRT OFF. Patching his BLOODIED BODY.

GUINEVERE (O.S.)

He's ready for you.

Guinevere enters. Seeing him HALF-NAKED. Trying to WRAP
a WOUND. Having a hard time reaching his BACK.

GUINEVERE

-- Need some help?

WILLIAM

I'm fine.

GUINEVERE

You always this stubborn?

As she comes closer. Wrapping his MUSCLED HALF-NAKED
BODY. William flinching slightly at the close proximity.

GUINEVERE

... Relax, it's nothing I haven't
seen before.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Guinevere seeing the PENDRAGON PENDANT now around his neck. An inscription rounding the edge. THREE WORDS...

"IN PENDRAGON FIRE"

GUINEVERE

Same inscription as the sword.

William covering the pendant with CLOTHING. No interest.

GUINEVERE

... Must be hard. Two lives, two fathers --

WILLIAM

Told you... Not here to play king.

GUINEVERE

You want your justice? You want your revenge?

(off his nod)

... You might not have a choice.

EXT. THE OAKS - LATER

Bedivere leads William and Guinevere over a ROPE BRIDGE.

BEDIVERE

Up until now, we've stayed hidden. Stealing, redistributing. Our iron is strong, but we are but a few hundred. A blunt stick --

They arrive at a SMALL PULLEY PLATFORM. Bedivere standing on it, Guinevere and William following his lead.

BEDIVERE

Even if we could kill Vortigern, we do not have the numbers to hold the crown. Another dictator would just rise. Nothing would change.

Bedivere pulling a LEVER. A COUNTER BALANCE DROPPING.

BEDIVERE

... Which is why we need an army.

EXT. TRAINING PLATFORM (THE OAKS) - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The pulley platform SHOOTS UP to at a TRAINING AREA secured between 3 HUGE TREES. Like standing in the sky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

-- A king's greatest weapon is his people. They'll follow him to war, like they did your father --

WILLIAM

You want me to give you an army?

Bedivere throwing William EXCALIBUR. William catching it. As the SURROUNDING TREES fill with watching PEOPLE.

BEDIVERE

That's Camelot steel. Folded 200 times. 42 inches tip-to-hilt. Enchanted by the Mages themselves.

William seeing: "IN PENDRAGON FIRE" engraved on the side.

BEDIVERE

Use it correctly and you can fight a hundred men, single handed. You can become legend, William... And the people will follow a legend.
(grinning)
Whether he wants them to or not.

Bedivere CIRCLING now. Looking at the sword in his hand.

BEDIVERE

You want to defeat him? You want him beaten? This is the only way.

WILLIAM

... Show me what I have to do.

EXT. TRAINING PLATFORM (THE OAKS) - MOMENTS LATER

William stands facing Bedivere, holding EXCALIBUR.

BEDIVERE

... Hold it with both hands...
Only with both hands to the hilt
will you complete the bridge.

As, irritated, William places TWO HANDS on the hilt --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The world INSTANTLY SLOWING DOWN, just like before.
William shocked, looking at the silent world around him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Until the LIGHTS start FLARING. The CACOPHONOUS NOISE crashes in with a HEADACHE-INDUCING DIN and --

BACK TO TRAINING

William lets go, as if ELECTROCUTED. Bedivere smiling.

BEDIVERE

... You felt it before, correct?
When you pulled it from the stone.

WILLIAM

I don't understand --

BEDIVERE

To control Excalibur is to control
time itself. When you move, time
will move. When you are still,
time will stop. Try it again --

William holding the sword once again, as we return to --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The world immediately STILL. William looking around with
his EYES. The world SPEEDING UP as he MOVES. SLOWING
DOWN again as he STOPS. William amazed, until --

The CACOPHONY intrudes once again, the world VIBRATING,
spiralling beyond his control. PAIN overwhelming as --

BACK TO TRAINING

William LETS GO once again. LAUGHTER intruding. MARK
and his COHORTS watching on from the trees. Amused.

WILLIAM

-- Think this is funny, why don't
you come down and try it --

BEDIVERE

It will not work for anyone else --

WILLIAM

Isn't exactly working for me --

BEDIVERE

Because you stand in its way. You
must clear your head of all that
clouds you. The ire, the wrath --
Then the control will be yours...

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

William trying again. Focused on the blade. Moving as his world moves. The LIGHT starting to FLICKER. The NOISE beginning. William calm, CONTROLLING IT NOW.

As he sees a BUTTERFLY flying past, amazed, flapping in SLOW MOTION. Stunning. Bedivere SPEAKING in SLOW DISTORTED TONES, until William moves to speed him up.

BEDIVERE

... man that controls Excalibur
controls the battlefield. He has
time to react, to plan, to think
mid-battle... For example --

Guinevere suddenly pulls out her BOW, shooting an ARROW AT WILLIAM. Our hero seeing it late. PANICKING. Losing his focus. The world DISTORTING around him as --

BACK TO TRAINING

The arrow SLAMS into William's arm. WINGING HIM.

WILLIAM

-- WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* --

GUINEVERE

You must be ready at all times.

WILLIAM

You could have killed me --

William annoyed, heading straight for her as... She PIVOTS, throwing him. Like a judo move. PINNING HIM DOWN. FACE-to-FACE. Breath-to-breath. Smiling.

GUINEVERE

... Wasn't the arrow that almost
killed you. It was the butterfly.

The butterfly LANDING on her. GUINEVERE HAVING BEEN CONTROLLING IT ALL ALONG. Inches away from him.

GUINEVERE

... And you must remain focused.
Whatever the distraction.

As she PULLS him up. William clearly irritated now.

BEDIVERE

Clean him up, let's go again.

EXT. TRAINING PLATFORM (THE OAKS) - DAY

It is RAINING LEAVES. William trying to avoid every FALLING LEAF. Bedivere watching on. POPPING GRAPES.

BEDIVERE
... Focus. Each leaf is another
blade, another arrow, another axe.

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The leaves HANGING MID-AIR. William tracking his course through. Moving as they move, slowing as they slow...

BEDIVERE (V.O.)
See what's coming before it comes.
What happens before it happens...

BACK TO THE TREES

As we see William remaining untouched. A certain GRACE and FLUIDITY to his movement. His EYES noticeably alive.

WILLIAM
Think I'm starting to get it --

Bedivere raising a CROSSBOW and shooting William in the LEG. The others LAUGHING as Bedivere POPS ANOTHER GRAPE.

WILLIAM
(reeling)
-- WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU --

BEDIVERE
He won't stop. Neither can we.
(off his glare)
... You want a grape?

WILLIAM
What?... No, I don't want a *grape*,
MY LEG IS BLEEDING --

Mark WHISPERING in Bedivere's ear. Unimpressed.

MARK
This is pointless, it won't work.
Let me lead them. Take the sword.
The illusion will be the same --

As William REMOVES THE BOLT. Standing. Pissed off.

WILLIAM
... We're going again.

EXT. OAK TREES - LATER

The CLATTER of STEEL AGAINST STEEL. William SWORD-TO-SWORD with Guinevere. Nothing but THIN TREE BRANCHES to stand on below. LEAVES still falling from above.

As William's SKILLS GROW. Avoiding every LEAF, maintaining his BALANCE. An almost ZEN-LIKE calm. Punctuated by FAST BURSTS of controlled EVASIVE MOVEMENT. A final SOLITARY LEAF falling. Impossible to avoid...

Until William pivots. ARCING over it. EYES WIDE as it floats by within MILLIMETERS. Our hero landing back on the BRANCH, Guinevere attacking in the distraction as --

William sees her, pivoting, THROWING HER NOW. Pinning her down. Now the one on top. ENJOYING HER FRUSTRATION.

WILLIAM

-- You really should try
focusing... Whatever the
distraction.

William helping her up. Guinevere SMILING, looking at him. The ENERGY between them growing. Electric.

GUINEVERE

... Not bad, fisherman...

Mark clearly less impressed. ANTAGONIZED. As he draws a BOW, firing an ARROW at William's back --

And William SPINS, sword already SWINGING DOWN, SLICING directly through the center of the arrow's head...

SLICING the incoming arrow into two perfect halves...

Each arrow half WHIZZING by William's HEAD. Hitting two TREE TRUNKS behind him. Two HALF-ARROWS LODGED in the wood. The shafts and halved feathers still VIBRATING.

BEDIVERE

... Maybe there's a king in there
after all.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARM VILLAGE - NIGHT

CATIGERN and his men walk through this OLD FARM VILLAGE. Catigern's men PULLING people into the street to listen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATIGERN

... You all know my name.
(off their looks)
You know the banner I fight for.
The blood we have spilled.

Vortigern's son trying to INTIMIDATE. Trying too hard.

CATIGERN

A fugitive of this Kingdom took
the life of a King's guard on
these very streets. She stole his
armor, his weapons, his uniform...
This fugitive is an abomination, a
whisperer, survivor of the purge.

As he pulls out a SMALL BAG OF COINS. VORTIGERN'S HEAD
imprinted in the center. The ROYAL CURRENCY.

CATIGERN

... If there is one among you who
knows where she is, I can promise
you food, ointments and coin --

VOICE (O.S.)

You ask the wrong questions...

Catigern turning see a man in a HOOD. The man lowering
his hood to reveal a familiar face beneath... MARK.

MARK

It is not where she is, my Lord...
It is who she is with.

Catigern drawing a KNIFE to Mark's throat.

CATIGERN

You'd presume to know my business.

MARK

Violence does not become you, my
Lord. You are not your father's
son... Unlike our friend.

Mark eye-to-eye with him now. As Catigern WHISPERS.

CATIGERN

... If there were someone else we
were seeking. I would be willing
to double the incentive.

MARK

Then call your men to arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATIGERN

... You know where he is?

MARK

Better. I know where he will be.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - PATH - DAY

A huge, seemingly INNOCUOUS PEASANT CART -- piled high with WOOD. BEDIVERE sitting up front, holding the REIGNS. KNOCKING on the side of the cart behind him.

BEDIVERE

Five minutes.

As we see William looking out through a HIDDEN WINDOW.

WILLIAM

... Where are we going?

INT. BEDIVERE'S CART ROOM - DAY

Inside the cart is a SECRET ROOM. Guinevere and William within. Guinevere handing him a DEEP RED WAR CLOAK.

GUINEVERE

Half the kingdom thinks you're dead. We're going to show them their king is still alive.

William looks at the CLOAK. A PENDRAGON INSIGNIA on it.

WILLIAM

You think they'll follow me just because I'm wearing a *cloak*.

GUINEVERE

No, I think they'll follow you because your father wore one... Here, hold still --

Guinevere securing the war cloak to him. Adjusting it.

Guinevere looking at him. CLEARLY IMPACTED BY WHAT SHE SEES. William never more striking, MORE HANDSOME. As she tries to brush it away. TRYING NOT TO CARE.

WILLIAM

... How do I look?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

You'll do.

William adjusting the cloak, clearly IRRITATED by it.

GUINEVERE

... You don't believe in the realm
at all? Do you?

WILLIAM

What you would call a king I call
a dictator. That's too much power
for any man --

GUINEVERE

Not the right man.

WILLIAM

The people have a right to choose
who leads them. If I were king,
the first thing I'd do is dissolve
the monarchy. Set them free.

GUINEVERE

The monarchy is what gives Camelot
its strength. To deny them a king
is to deny them *their* birthright.

As the cart comes to a STOP. Bedivere KNOCKING again.

GUINEVERE

You want to take that from them
when we're done, that's up to you.

EXT. WIDOW'S VALE - DAY

The RAIN pours down. Guinevere and William getting out
of Bedivere's cart to find Bedivere waiting in the MUD.

BEDIVERE

... Cloak looks good.

WILLIAM

You going to tell me where we are?

William seeing they are in a RUN-DOWN VILLAGE. The
inhabitants ALL SICK WOMEN. From EIGHT TO EIGHTY.

BEDIVERE

Widow's vale. There are hundreds
of these towns across the kingdom.

WILLIAM

What's wrong them --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

They live off diseased water. The
King controls all the wells...

William sees the VILLAGE WELL. Flanked by TWO
BLACKCLOAKS. FRESH WATER being gathered and carted away.

WILLIAM

So we're getting back their well?

BEDIVERE

... Not exactly.

As we see MARK riding over, joining them. Giving the
GOLD COINS he received from Catigern to a SICK MOTHER.

WILLIAM

What's going on?

William suddenly seeing CATIGERN and FOUR BLACKCLOAKS
ride into town, having followed Mark there.

WILLIAM

... Wait, *he betrayed us* --

BEDIVERE

Oh, he didn't betray us,
William... We betrayed you.

As Bedivere, Guinevere and Mark get onto the cart.

BEDIVERE

Want to teach a mongoose to fight,
have to throw it in with a snake --

WILLIAM

Wait, what are you *doing* --

EXT. BEDIVERE'S CART - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The cart leaves William behind. Guinevere looking back,
nervous, seeing Catigern and his men SURROUNDING WILLIAM.

GUINEVERE

Better be right about this.

Guinevere looking at him. As we REVEAL a DISTINCTIVE
BRACELET around her wrist. WIRE AND WOOL interwoven.
Bedivere seeing her working it between her fingers.

GUINEVERE

We have a lot riding on him.

Bedivere seeing SHE IS STARTING TO CARE TOO MUCH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

-- He'll be fine.

EXT. WIDOW'S VALE - DAY

Catigern and his men circle William in the RAIN and MUD.
Drawing MACES, SPEARS, CROSSBOWS and SWORDS.

CATIGERN

Pretty cloak, cousin... You were
anticipating a more formal affair?

The others LAUGHING. As William raises EXCALIBUR.

CATIGERN

What a shame to have to bloody it.

As they CHARGE, William CALMS HIMSELF and --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The RAIN HANGS IN MID-AIR. Individual droplets BREAKING
as the Blackcloak's charge, weapons SWINGING...

William into immediate EVASIVE MANEUVERS. TRYING TO
FOCUS. Tracking the WEAPONS as they FLY TOWARDS HIM.
Too many of them. Trying to SLOW TIME again as --

The PANIC overwhelms, the LIGHT FLARES and --

BACK TO THE VALE

William letting go AS IF ELECTROCUTED. Trying to shake
it off. Backing away into a CORNER. Seeing the WATCHING
EYES of the townspeople. Watching him retreating.

CATIGERN

You trying to run away, cousin?

As he clutches the sword again. CALMING HIMSELF and --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The rain FREEZES AGAIN. William focused now. DEEP
BREATHS. TIME SPEEDING UP as they ATTACK AGAIN, and he
vaults off a WOODEN SHACK, pivoting. Ducking the SPEARS.

Time SLOWING and SPEEDING UP as he navigates the INFLUX
OF WEAPONS. In control now. SWORD SWINGING until --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He suddenly sees it. The MACE. SLICING through the rain drops. Unable to avoid it. An AWFUL INEVITABILITY --

BACK TO THE VALE

As the Mace SLAMS into William's side. Sending him FLYING to the floor. BLOOD POURING from his ribs.

William EXHALING, WINDED. STRUGGLING to stand again as a second HORRENDOUS MACE STRIKE to his SHOULDER. Man down. Catigern looking at him on the ground. Amused.

CATIGERN

... Such a shame.

EXT. BEDIVERE'S CART - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Guinevere moving in a FLASH. Seeing William in trouble. Wanting to INTERVENE. Pulling her BOW AND ARROW --

GUINEVERE

They have him...

Guinevere LINING up a SHOT. A HIDDEN ANXIETY in her eyes. A FEAR OF LOSS. BOW RETRACTED when --

BEDIVERE

... Wait --

EXT. WIDOW'S VALE - DAY

Catigern stands over William. Dominant. Enjoying the WATCHING EYES of the surrounding villagers.

CATIGERN

They died in the mud, too, you know.

Catigern KICKING him while he's down. In the GUT.

CATIGERN

When he killed them. Your parents. They *begged* for mercy...

Catigern closing in, raising a CROSSBOW. As William manages to get his hands to his sword --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

William looks up to see his ASSAILANTS closing in.
Seeing the WATCHING VILLAGERS. The DETAILS. A HANGING
BUCKET. The CROSSBOW. A SPEAR. A SHIELD...

The RAIN HANGING as William CALMS HIS MIND...

BACK TO THE VALE

Catigern's FINGER resting on the crossbow TRIGGER.

CATIGERN

You going to beg, too, William?

(off his look)

Or will you die with a whimper...

As William suddenly rises. Lifting himself to his feet.

And what happens next almost defies reality. Catigern
FIRING the crossbow. William ARCING clear, CATCHING THE
BOLT. Sending it flying back into a BLACKCLOAK --

Excalibur already SWINGING, cutting a ROPE above, as the
HANGING BUCKET knocks out a SECOND BLACKCLOAK...

William GRABBING his SPEAR, aiming it behind him to
impale the charging THIRD BLACKCLOAK...

Grabbing his SHIELD to deflect a SWINGING MACE, as he
RUNS THROUGH the FOURTH BLACKCLOAK...

SPINNING, Excalibur raised, to face Catigern. The FOUR
BODIES hitting the ground behind William.

WILLIAM

No, I think I'll go down fighting.

Catigern suddenly ALONE. No one to defend him. Seeing
the WOMEN of the vale in the shadows. Some now holding
WEAPONS. GUINEVERE in the distance with BOW RAISED.

CATIGERN

There will be another day, cousin.

WILLIAM

... Tell him I'm coming. Tell him
I will not stop, not ever.

As Catigern MOUNTS HIS HORSE. Making haste.

WILLIAM

... And the next time he hears
begging, it will be his own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Catigern already GALLOPING AWAY. William turning to the BLACKCLOAKS at the WELL, only to see them following Catigern's lead. ABANDONING THE WELL. The coast clear.

William FALLING TO HIS KNEES. BLEEDING and BATTERED. Guinevere hurrying to his side. Masking her CONCERN.

GUINEVERE

You alright? You okay?

WILLIAM

Think I got a little mud on it.

William looking at his MUDDIED BATTLE CLOAK. Guinevere SMILING. The intimacy between them becoming a WARMTH.

GUINEVERE

You did well.

BEDIVERE (O.S.)

Guinevere...

As she turns to see the villagers slowly emerging from the SHADOWS. A CHILD walking through the crowd...

Taking a PITCHER of FRESH WATER from the well. Giving it to our hero to drink after his ordeal...

BOWING her head. As the others do the same. A circle of heads bowed in respect. WHISPERS OF THE KING'S RETURN. William clearly feeling UNCOMFORTABLE with the adulation.

VORTIGERN (V.O.)

... This is just the beginning.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BACK ALLEY - DAY

A DANK ALLEY. Vortigern LIVID. SLAMMING his son against the wall. SLAPPING him hard with OPEN HAND.

CATIGERN

... It was not my fault, he knows the sword --

VORTIGERN

Your weakness is poison to me, son. It is the only pain I feel.
(off his look)

... You know what would happen if our *guests* heard tell of this?

As VORTIGERN pulls out a BOUND SCROLL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

... We cannot wait any longer.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - GREAT HALL - DAY

Kjartan and his Norsemen lie in a sea of VICE. WOMEN.
ALE. DEER BONES. Vortigern entering this den of sin.

VORTIGERN

... Your men do not disappoint,
Kjartan. We've sent out three
hunts just to keep stock.

Kjartan throwing more BONES to the FIRE as we see a WOMAN
UNDER THE TABLE, helping make his stay more comfortable.

VORTIGERN

... I trust everything is to your
satisfaction?

KJARTAN

Your ale tastes like piss.

VORTIGERN

Well, perhaps this will make it go
down a little better --

Vortigern bringing out the BOUND SCROLL and a QUILL.

KJARTAN

To matters already?
(off his look)
-- Why the rush, Pendragon?

VORTIGERN

We get it out the way now, we can
focus on more important things.

Kjartan handing the scroll to one of his MEN to read.

VORTIGERN

... Everything is in order, I
assure you, as has been discussed.

KJARTAN

I do not bed a snake without first
making sure the fangs have been
removed, Vortigern... Especially
when it is so eager to mate.

Vortigern sees the DOUBT in Kjartan's eyes. The lack of
trust. SUSPICION. An awkward beat lingering. Until --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

Did you know these lands were once
teeming with dragon, Norseman?...
Ridgebacks and Gulleys. Reds and
whites. They flew wild... Had no
natural predator save for one.

(knowing)

Each other.

Vortigern POURING MORE ALE for his guests. Playing host.

VORTIGERN

... Now these lands haven't seen
dragon fire in a hundred years.

(off his look)

... I know of your aspirations,
friend. Valhalla is too small for
your people's ambitions. Just as
Camelot is too small for mine...
But divided we are always at war.

Kjartan receiving the treaty back with a nod. APPROVED.
Taking QUILL and INK POT in hand. Hesitating.

VORTIGERN

... This union is mine to make,
Kjartan, by blood right. A treaty
between our two great kingdoms.

(all charm)

A marriage of your great lands and
ours. Trade. Blood. Why take
from each other when we can take
from others? Why steal the scraps
when we can share the wealth?

Kjartan STANDING. Knocking the woman beneath him away.
Looking Vortigern in the eyes, as he SIGNS the treaty.

KJARTAN

Dragon to dragon.

A THUMPING HANDSHAKE between them. BICEP-TO-BICEP.

VORTIGERN

King to king.

Vortigern grabbing the SCROLL. Visibly relieved, until --

KJARTAN

... Let us celebrate. A games
perhaps. So I may see my new
kingdom. Meet my new people --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

... Wouldn't you rather stay
within the castle walls --

KJARTAN

You think I could drink this piss
any longer? Let them bear witness
to our union. Let Camelot see...

Vortigern looking anxiously over at his SON. SICKENED.

VORTIGERN

Of course, I will make it so.

As we REVEAL SOMEONE ELSE watching on. DISGUISED as a
SERVANT. Clearing BONE SCRAPS from the floor...

MARK. Hiding in plain sight in SERVER CLOTHES.

BEDIVERE (V.O.)

... The plan has changed.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM (THE OAKS) - LATER

Bedivere addresses the RESISTANCE MILITIA. MARK AT HIS
SIDE. William and Guinevere watching on. Ill at ease.

BEDIVERE

-- Vikings. From across the sea.

A DISCOMFORT in the room. Bedivere pointing to a MAP.

BEDIVERE

A union secures his interests here
-- gives him footing to the East.
Eliminates any threat of invasion.

(grave)

... With a Viking alliance, we
cannot regain the crown.

GUINEVERE

-- The kingdom is not his to ally.

Bedivere motions to a series of TARGETS on the map.

BEDIVERE

Which is why we must now hurry.

INT. ARMORY (THE OAKS) - DAY

The MILITIA GEARS UP. Guinevere filling her QUIVER.
Mark SHARPENING his AXES. SWORDS and ARMOR drawn.

BLACKSMITH

... This is your new armor.

As we see a BLACKSMITH showing William a SUIT OF ARMOR.
An exact RECREATION OF HIS FATHER'S ARMOR.

BLACKSMITH

Stress points are all reinforced.
Wrists, collar, ankles. Added a
chain mail lining to the cloak...
You can use it as a shield --

William seeing a THIN CHAIN MAIL woven behind the deep
red cloak. Seeing THREE FINISHED SUITS near completion.

BLACKSMITH

Your father's armor was a steel
alloy, we've done the best we can.

He SCRATCHES it and the dark grey color comes off.

BLACKSMITH

Color is dyed in. Scrapes off,
but looks good from a distance.

As William sees the Blacksmith has been working from OLD
TAPESTRIES of UTHUR IN BATTLE. Fighting DRAGONS. GIANT
SQUID. MASSIVE ARMIES. William clearly INTRIGUED by the
images of his FATHER. FASCINATED. Bedivere joining him.

BEDIVERE

Battle for the Thames. Teurot
Bridge. Mage Wars... Killed half
of Mordred's army single handed at
Teurot. Over a thousand men --

WILLIAM

You believe everything you hear?

BEDIVERE

I believe everything I see.

William looking at him. A TWINKLE in the old man's eye.

WILLIAM

... Wait, you fought at Teurot?
(realizing)
You fought for the *round table* --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

And now I fight for you.

(re: tapestries)

-- It's who you are, William.

The responsibility is now yours.

Many good people died to get us
here.

William STARING at the images of his father. Harder and
harder to ignore. THE LEGACY OF THE MAN BEFORE HIM.

BEDIVERE

Let's make them proud...

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A familiar WAGON TRAIN trundles along, filled with
hoarded OINTMENTS, FOOD and FIREWOOD. The COLLECTOR from
the docks riding up front. BLACKCLOAKS surrounding.

As he sees a FIGURE blocking the road ahead. A
DISTINCTIVE SILHOUETTE in the FOG. The EDGES and CURVES
of a distinct armor. CLOAK FLAPPING in the wind.

COLLECTOR

Get out of the road...

William standing tall, EXCALIBUR drawn.

WILLIAM

... Remember me?

COLLECTOR

Should I?

WILLIAM

Abandon the wagon -- and no harm
will come to you or your men.

COLLECTOR

Do you know who this belongs to?

WILLIAM

It belongs to the people of
Camelot, and we're taking it back.

The Collector having heard enough.

COLLECTOR

... Guardsman, please execute this
man for treason.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Collector hearing no response. Looking over to see his flanking Blackcloak FALLING FROM HIS HORSE. One of Guinevere's ARROWS in his chest. The Collector turning to see every Blackcloak FALLING. ARROW after ARROW.

One left. As Mark's BATTLE AXE swivels through the air, sending the Blackcloak FLYING BACKWARDS twenty feet...

The Collector reaching for his DAGGER. As a STAFF BLOCKS IT. The Collector looking up to see Bedivere.

BEDIVERE

... We'll take it from here.

EXT. LABOR CAMP - DAY

A LABOR CAMP on a RIVER. A massive LUMBER OPERATION. 10-FOOT GIANTS CHAINED together. Felling TREES, CHOPPING wood. Carrying MASSIVE TREE TRUNKS to a RIVER BARGE. GUARDS WHIPPING the giants with awful BARBED WHIPS.

As we see the CHIEF GUARDS, DRINKING and GAMBLING outside a GUARD STATION. Rowdy. Distracted...

Not seeing 10 FIGURES silently EMERGING from the RIVER behind them. William and his insurgents like a SWAT team. Pulling PERIMETER GUARDS into the SHADOWS...

The Chief Guard oblivious, swigging ale, collecting his winnings. Only to see WATER DRIPPING on the table...

The Chief Guard looking up, expecting rain. Only to find BEDIVERE. Dripping wet. SWIGGING his ALE. Grinning.

EXCALIBUR to the Guard's throat. William DISGUSTED.

WILLIAM

You think it's right that their families *die* of the cold in their villages... While you make them bring firewood to the king --

The guards trying to RUN. Finding that they aren't going anywhere. CHAINED TOGETHER under the table by Guinevere.

As they see UNCHAINED GIANTS standing behind William. Massive, proud men, rubbing their once shackled wrists. Now HOLDING THE BARBED WHIPS that once tortured them.

CHIEF GUARD

... Wait...

William STEPPING BACK. Clearing the way, as a Giant approaches. The guards frantic, TRYING TO RUN. Trapped.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHIEF GUARD

-- No, don't --

The giant GLARING at them, as the MASSIVE MAN reaches a HUGE ARM above them, the guards CLOSE their eyes and --

The giant LAYS DOWN THE WHIP. His brethren following, one at a time. NO MORE VIOLENCE. THE BETTER MEN.

The Chief Guards seeing the MILITIA helping the giants stock the RIVER BARGE with wood. Helping them bring heat to their kin. Their time as slaves over...

CHIEF GUARD

... Who are you?

As William SMILES. Guinevere looking at his GROWING STATURE. As if PROUD. Her king growing in confidence --

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The MOVING HIPS of a woman of the night. LEGS, CURVES...

SLINKING from side-to-side through this RAUCOUS TAVERN filled with DRUNKEN BLACKSMITHS. A COURTESAN working the room. The FRILLY UNDERGARMENTS in question belonging to Guinevere. All but unrecognizable in her sexy getup...

As a LEG STOPS HER. A HAND grabbing her closer.

DRUNKEN BLACKSMITH

How much for both?

The Blacksmith's LECHEROUS FRIEND leering. BLOCKING her way out. Until she motions to their FRIEND too, smiling.

GUINEVERE

How 'bout we make it three?

EXT. BEHIND TAVERN - NIGHT

Guinevere leads the three Blacksmiths BEHIND the TAVERN. ALLEY CATS clearing the way. The three men SWIGGING ALE.

DRUNKEN BLACKSMITH

Make it quick, shift's coming --

The men DROPPING their PANTS. Getting UNDRESSED...

Until they suddenly see William, Bedivere and Mark waiting in the alley. Motioning to their clothes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

Oh, no, please. Do keep going.

EXT. ROYAL MINT - NIGHT

William, BEDIVERE and MARK adjust their new stolen BLACKSMITH ATTIRE. Arriving at the ROYAL MINT. SMOKE pouring out the MASSIVE STRUCTURE'S ROOF...

INT. ROYAL MINT - NIGHT

William, Bedivere and Mark shuffle in for their SHIFT with OTHER BLACKSMITHS. HEADS DOWN. Faces dirtied.

Seeing MASSIVE FURNACES. Gold being MELTED. Stone URNS being lifted with TONGS. Pouring gold into MOLDS. A huge CUTTER punching BLANK COIN-SIZED DISCS.

A SCREW PRESS imprinting the KING'S HEAD on each coin. As Mark sees a STOCKPILE ROOM. PILES OF GOLD COINS.

BEDIVERE

-- Remember why we're here...

MARK

Bedivere, there's enough coin in there to hire an entire army --

BEDIVERE

There are other ways to fight...

William pulling out two pieces of CUT STEEL. Securing them INSIDE the SCREW PRESS. RETROFITTING IT.

As Bedivere motions to a ROYAL DECREE on the wall. A scroll requesting MANDATORY ATTENDANCE to a ROYAL GALA in honor of their NORSE KINSMAN. Bedivere grinning.

BEDIVERE

... Time to put on a show.

EXT. ROYAL GALA - DAY

CRUNCH. A BLOODY UNICORN JOUST. ARMORED BLACK UNICORNS, ridden by KNIGHTS, charging each other. Their long BLACK HORNS IMPALING THE OTHER RIDERS. BARBARIC SPORT...

As we see the VIKING DIGNITARIES in BLEACHERS CHEERING. A LARGE JOUSTING and GLADIATORIAL ARENA in front of them. CAMELOT'S CITIZENS surrounding, SICKENED at the gala.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATIGERN (V.O.)
... We lost three more.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

VORTIGERN looks sick. Anxious. Like he hasn't slept.
The gala behind him. Catigern SHEEPISH in his report.

CATIGERN
That's the 8th convoy in 3 days,
nothing's getting through... If
the Norsemen catch wind --

VORTIGERN
(realizing)
... He's coming here --

CATIGERN
What? No, he would never risk --

SLAM. VORTIGERN suddenly SMASHING a BLOODIED FIST next
to his head. His BONES CRACKING. Feeling nothing.

VORTIGERN
-- Your thoughts have not earned a
place in this conversation.
(off his look)
... Check the perimeter, every
entrance, every exit. I want to
know for sure, is that understood?

Catigern NODDING, leaving. As Vortigern prepares
himself. Like an actor about to enter the stage...

VORTIGERN (V.O.)
... Beautiful day isn't it?

EXT. BLEACHERS - DAY

Vortigern SMILING, joining Kjartan as he relishes every
BLOW in the jousting below. SHOUTING over the crowd.

KJARTAN
ONE THING I'LL SAY OF YOUR PEOPLE,
VORTIGERN... THEY LIKE TO BLEED --

Kjartan watching a VICTORIOUS UNICORN IMPALE a final
Knight. The VICTORIOUS MOUNTED KNIGHT receiving CHEERS.

As a HUGE CAGE is hastily brought into the arena. The
victorious Knight joined within by a HULKING FOUR-FOOT
WIDE ORC WARRIOR from the east. And a 12-FOOT WAR GIANT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KJARTAN
THIRTY COINS ON THE GREEN NECK.

Kjartan lays down some GOLD COINS. Vortigern suddenly seeing WILLIAM'S FACE ON THEM. Coins now in circulation with WILLIAM AS KING... Vortigern GRABBING THEM --

VORTIGERN
... Allow me --

Vortigern going to PLACE THE BET for him. As CATIGERN returns. Vortigern looking SICK. UNSTABLE.

CATIGERN
Perimeter's secure. Any entrance at this point would be impossible.

Vortigern showing him the COINS. Catigern's turn to look nauseous. Seeing William's FACE on the King's currency.

CATIGERN
We'll find every last coin --

The cage fight beginning. ORC VERSUS GIANT VERSUS KNIGHT. ARMOR and BARBARIC WEAPONS CLASHING.

VORTIGERN
... He's trying to taunt me. Get inside my head --

Vortigern watching the fight, the GIANT INSTANTLY KILLED.

CATIGERN
Father, are you okay?

VORTIGERN
(realizing something)
... I don't believe it --

The fight CLIMAXING below. The ORC KILLED. Kjartan CHEERING. TOASTING the Knight left standing.

KJARTAN
HUGRAKKIR! SHOW YOURSELF, KNIGHT.
YOU HONOR OUR UNION!

Vortigern suddenly going PALE. His world dripping away.

CATIGERN
What? What is it?

VORTIGERN
You were right, son. He's not trying to get in...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN (CONT'D)

(sickened)

... He's already here.

As the Knight REMOVES HIS HELMET to reveal the sweat-covered WILLIAM BENEATH. EXCALIBUR in hand.

The CHEERING CROWDS seeing his face. SILENCE. And then a MURMUR SPREADING. The PEOPLE'S HERO AMONG THEM.

VORTIGERN

... THE KNIGHT --

Vortigern GRABBING his COMBAT SCYTHE. Livid. Running, as... A single FIERY ARROW suddenly ARCING across the SKY. Landing in front of the BLEACHERS.

A FIERY TRAIL IGNITED. The bleachers suddenly CUT OFF.

VORTIGERN

You cannot get out. You are surrounded on all sides.

WILLIAM

... You must learn to look closer.

As the GUARDS near William suddenly DROP THEIR HELMETS and HOODS to reveal GUINEVERE and the MILITIA beneath.

Vortigern's HUNDREDS OF MEN ALL CUT OFF IN THE BLEACHERS.

KJARTAN

WHO ARE YOU THAT YOU WOULD DARE INTERRUPT THESE PROCEEDINGS --

William HESITATING. Not knowing how to respond. Knowing what he is supposed to say. Unable to say it when --

GUINEVERE

... HE IS THE BLOOD KING. FIRST BORN. TRUE HEIR TO THESE LANDS.

Guinevere seizing the moment. Stepping in for him.

GUINEVERE

... AND HE WILL NEVER HONOR THIS OR ANY OTHER UNION.

The crowd CHEERING. As William sees BLACKCLOAK REINFORCEMENTS COMING, and he mounts a BLOODIED UNICORN. Vortigern and William sharing one final GLARING LOOK...

And then he CHARGES away. The militia following on HORSEBACK, as Guinevere looks to the TREES and...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MURDER OF CROWS suddenly breaks into the sky. A HUGE SWARMING MASS OF BIRDS, blocking out the sun.

ALMOST IN THE SHAPE OF THE PENDRAGON CREST ITSELF...

Until they suddenly DIVE. CIRCLING around the ARRIVING REINFORCEMENTS like an impenetrable TORNADO OF BLACKBIRDS. Swirling cylindrically around... No way through.

As Vortigern feels the EYES OF KJARTAN GLARING...

VORTIGERN (V.O.)

... I give you my word, Norsemen --

EXT. ROAD - LATER

Kjartan and his contingent STORM AWAY. Vortigern following, his son in tow. PLEADING NOW.

VORTIGERN

He is a charlatan, nothing more --

Kjartan turning. HUGE BROADSWORD drawn.

KJARTAN

... You lied to me, Vortigern.
You told me you were the dragon.
But you are no dragon, are you?

(off his look)

Beneath that mask, you are just a
wolf in dragon's skin.

VORTIGERN

Our realms are shared by *oath* --

KJARTAN

The oath was not yours to make,
wolf. Your kingdom falls.

(disgusted)

-- And the next time I set foot in
this realm it will be to invade.

Kjartan turning his back on Vortigern. As the would-be king watches the Norsemen walking away. Powerless...

And the FIRE OF VENGEANCE slowly grows in his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - NIGHT

SWARMS of FAERIES soar up into the sky like FIREWORKS. Changing color as they float downwards. A beautiful celebratory LIGHT SHOW under the STARS...

GLADSTONE VILLAGE MID-CELEBRATION below. DRUNKEN VILLAGERS. FIDDLERS spilling out of TAVERNS. Unabated joy. BEDIVERE AND GUINEVERE the eye of the storm. DANCING, spiralling. Bedivere the LIFE OF THE PARTY.

As we FIND WILLIAM in the middle of it all. Under HOOD. Hidden. Walking the UNKNOWING CROWDS. Seeing the spoils of the resistance being shared among the village. WATER, BREAD, OINTMENTS. Like a RED CROSS WORKER on the ground. Seeing GRAFFITI on the walls: "THE KING LIVES"

GUINEVERE looks over, seeing William. The king among his people, EMOTIONALLY IMPACTED. Helping a GIRL with an OINTMENT. Spreading hope. Guinevere clearly enamoured.

GUINEVERE

... Better keep that hood on,
you're likely to get mobbed --

William turning to see Guinevere. Her GUARD DOWN.

GUINEVERE

Your father started the same way.
Food, medicine, water. Went from
town to town, left no one behind --

WILLIAM

How soon 'til we can attack?

Guinevere looking at him. William STOIC. As if trying to BURY everything she just saw.

GUINEVERE

... You really expect me to
believe this means nothing to you?

WILLIAM

You said they would rise, how soon
'til we can mobilize --

GUINEVERE

You can bury it all you want. I
know who you are inside.
(off his look)
... Even if you can't say it.

William knowing she is referring to his SILENCE at the games. As she STEPS CLOSER. Looking into his EYES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

This isn't just about revenge.
Not anymore. I saw you with them.

Guinevere CLOSER. Seeing through him. Into him.

WILLIAM

I'm not here to be their king,
remember? All I want is justice.

GUINEVERE

... Doesn't mean that's all you're
going to get.

A BEAT. The moment extending. A moment of CONNECTION.

MUSIC interrupting. A gaggle of FIDDLERS and DANCING
VILLAGERS storming through. Guinevere seeing the weight
on William's shoulders. Taking his HAND --

GUINEVERE

... Come on, why don't you show me
how they dance in the provinces --

WILLIAM

What happened to your partner --

GUINEVERE

Think I kind of lost him...

Guinevere motioning over to Bedivere. A BLONDE in one
hand. An ALE in the other.

WILLIAM

... You sure he was a knight of
the *round* table --

GUINEVERE

Your father's right hand. Still
blames himself for not saving him.
(off his surprise)
Was there the night he died...

As we realize Bedivere is that same BRAVE KNIGHT from the
prologue. William looking at him. His DRINKING carrying
a different weight now. Less whimsy, more pain.

GUINEVERE

Everyone's fighting for something.

WILLIAM

... What about you?
(off his look)
What are you fighting for?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Guinevere TAKES HIS OTHER HAND. Pulling him closer.

GUINEVERE

That's a story for another time...

Guinevere about to lead him to the DANCING CROWD when --

KAY

... William?

William knowing the voice instantly. Turning to see KAY.

KAY

Didn't believe it at first.

(off his look)

Thought it was some kind of trick,
someone pretending to be you --

William EMBRACING his brother, Kay NOT RETURNING IN KIND.
As Guinevere gives them space, walking away...

WILLIAM

Are you okay, I was so worried --

KAY

What are you doing, William? You
really think you're a *king* --

WILLIAM

... You don't understand --

KAY

You're giving them hope where
there is none. You're bringing
pain on these people... Like you
did my mother. My father --

WILLIAM

I'm doing this for them, for you --

KAY

You're just a *dock hand* --

WILLIAM

Then join me. Fight with me,
we'll find our justice together --

KAY

... William, listen to me, please.

(sincere)

You need to stop. You're only
going to make things worse. You
think he's just going to lay down?
You think this is over?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

William looking at Kay, SADDENED. Two sides of the coin.

WILLIAM

... We are North, above the
Darklands, Everall forest --
(off his look)
If you change your mind...

KAY

This has only just begun, William.

As Kay backs away, washing his hands of him. LEAVING.

KAY

You have no idea what you've done.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

Kjartan's "FAERING" ROW BOAT arrives at a huge "KVASLAND"
LONGSHIP. Kjartan and his men CLIMBING UP into the boat.

EXT. VIKING LONGSHIP - NIGHT

RAIN. Kjartan boards the longship, full of piss and
vinegar. Straight to KICKING his fellow Norsemen ROWERS.

KJARTAN

TO THE SAIL --

Kjartan losing his words. Seeing a SMALLER ROW BOAT
already moored to the other side of his ship...

VORTIGERN (O.S.)

-- I cannot let you do that, King.

As he sees VORTIGERN and CATIGERN waiting for him.

KJARTAN

... Is it war you seek then --

VORTIGERN

Two days. You'll have his head as
your chalice... Do not let one lie
temper what we have started --

KJARTAN

You think it is the lie?
(off his confusion)
It's not the deceit that vexes me,
Vortigern. It is the failure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CATIGERN (O.S.)

The blame does not lie with him.

Vortigern seeing his SON step forward.

CATIGERN

Do not punish him for my mistakes,
it was I who could not kill him --

VORTIGERN

That is enough --

KJARTAN

You wish for me to blame you, son
of Pendragon? You want it on you?

VORTIGERN

He doesn't know what he's saying --

KJARTAN

Then you will be held responsible.

Kjartan handing Vortigern his NORSEMEN HUNTING KNIFE.

KJARTAN

Show me... Show me you can command
respect, and I will give you mine.

VORTIGERN

-- You would not have me do that.

KJARTAN

I would have you choose that which
matters more... Kingdom or kin.

Vortigern looking SICKENED. Revolted. Catigern seeing
the CONFLICT on his father's face. Confused by it.

CATIGERN

Father?

VORTIGERN

Without this alliance our kingdom
will fall, my son.

VORTIGERN

What are you doing?

Vortigern looking at the knife. Catigern NERVOUS now.

VORTIGERN

... I so wanted you to be strong.

CATIGERN

Father --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vortigern RESTING THE KNIFE AGAINST HIS CHEST.

VORTIGERN

Look at me, son.

CATIGERN

(panicked)

Please --

VORTIGERN

... It's all right --

Vortigern PUSHING THE KNIFE into his son's chest.

VORTIGERN

It's all right. I am here.

All the way in now. Catigern's SHOCKED EXPRESSION.

VORTIGERN

It's almost over.

(blank)

Everything is going to be fine.

Vortigern watching life escape him. Any TEARS lost to the rain. Any HUMANITY now gone, along with his son...

KJARTAN (O.S.)

... Two days. Sundown.

Kjartan duly IMPRESSED. Vortigern CARRYING HIS SON to the boat. As the Vikings RESPECTFULLY CLEAR A PATH.

KJARTAN

We will be waiting...

CUT TO:

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - NIGHT

The CELEBRATION winds down. Taverns closed. Bedivere walking with a BLONDE on EACH ARM. As he finds William --

Sitting at a table next to a JUG OF ALE. Looking over at GUINEVERE in the distance. Guinevere never more beautiful. DANCING. Surrounded by villagers.

BEDIVERE (O.S.)

Hurt her, I'll break both your arms.

William looks up to see Bedivere. Bedivere's Blondes scampering off as he SITS DOWN. Avuncular.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

... I get the impression she can
take care of herself.

BEDIVERE

Thought by now you'd learned not
to judge the bird by the plume.

Bedivere pours out the rest of the ale. William DRUNK.
As he looks at the VILLAGERS. CHANGING TACK.

WILLIAM

... How do you know?

BEDIVERE

How do I know what?

WILLIAM

That they'll rise. Take arms...
How do you know they'll follow us?

BEDIVERE

I don't.

Bedivere smiling. Combating William's doubt.

BEDIVERE

... But I believe.
(off his look)
People want to do the right thing.
They just need a reason to.

William caught up. DOUBTING. Bedivere seeing this.
Taking Excalibur from William's scabbard.

ANGLE ON EXCALIBUR

Bedivere holds the ASTONISHING BLADE to the MOONLIGHT.

BEDIVERE

... You know where this came from?
The mighty sword --

WILLIAM

The Mages.

BEDIVERE

It came from a child... The son of
the Shadow King himself. No more
than 5 or 6, but old enough to
see. To witness his father's
acts. Your father's strength.

Bedivere ADMIRING THE BLADE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

He enchanted Excalibur to be used
against his own father, his own
kind... Can you imagine?
(off his look)
... The conscience of a child.

William seeing Bedivere's clear respect for the child.

BEDIVERE

Such is the inspiration of a king.
(re: Excalibur)
... He marked it here. See?

Bedivere pointing to a MAGE SYMBOL on the sword's BASE.
HANDING WILLIAM BACK the sword.

BEDIVERE

People just need the courage to do
the right thing. If you lead, all
will follow. They always have.

William returning the sword to the scabbard. Nodding.

WILLIAM

... What happened to him?
(off his confusion)
The Mage boy.

BEDIVERE

... He chose exile with those that
survived -- out in the ice floes.
Lost to the world... Like you.
(off William's look)
Your father called him Merddyn.
The blessed child...

As Bedivere goes to leave.

BEDIVERE

The people called him Merlin.

WILLIAM

... Merlin.

BEDIVERE

The world is full of heroes,
William. They are all around us.
They just need a reason to fight.

MARK (O.S.)

Bedivere --

They see Mark. The sound of SCREAMING in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARK

... We have to get him off the streets. Now.

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Chaos. BLACKCLOAKS POURING into the village like a black tar. Dragging Camelot's CHILDREN AND MEN from their homes. MURDERING those who resist. A medieval holocaust. CHILDREN at knife point. BARBARIC TYRANNY...

As William, Bedivere and Mark join Guinevere. Seeing the boys and men being LINED UP in the middle of the STREET.

GUINEVERE

Every village. Every town --

William seeing RIVERS of BOYS AND MEN across the hills in the distance. Reaching for EXCALIBUR. Being held back.

GUINEVERE

... We can't. There are too many.

Guinevere PROTECTING HIM. As a SCREAM intrudes. A MOTHER trying to pull her SON away from a Blackcloak.

MOTHER

Take me instead, PLEASE --

BLACKCLOAK

Only the first born --

As we finally see him, arriving on his HORSE. Looking over his subjects. GOD TO HIS ANTS. VORTIGERN. His son's BODY on the back of the horse. The dead Catigern.

VORTIGERN

It is said to outlive a child is the greatest suffering there is.

Vortigern seeing a MAN resisting being taken. Climbing down off of his horse. STABBING the man with his scythe.

VORTIGERN

To live beyond your own blood. To see the bloodline severed.

Vortigern's going to the man's MOURNING MOTHER. Putting his head to hers. In comfort. In SOLIDARITY.

VORTIGERN

It is said that the first born son is the true born...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN (CONT'D)
 (off their fear)
 ... Well, that is a question I now
 put to you. My loyal subjects...

William seeing KAY BEING TAKEN, dragged into the streets.

VORTIGERN
 ... If you do not bring the first
 born heir of this kingdom before
 me. Then the first born sons of
 Camelot will perish.

William watching his brother being pulled away...

VORTIGERN
 You have until sundown. Tomorrow.

As the king sets off to ride to the next town.

VORTIGERN
 ... The future of your sons is now
 in his hands.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

ANGRY VILLAGERS gather RUDIMENTARY WEAPONS. Scythes,
 pitchforks. A MOB forming. The head ANGRY VILLAGER
 noticeably BRANDED on his NECK from the earlier sifting.

VILLAGER
 ... What are you *doing* --

ANGRY VILLAGER
 Finding the born king... If he
 won't come we will make him --

VILLAGER
 Are you forgetting what he's done.

ANGRY VILLAGER
 You think giving us a little *grain*
 can compare to my son?

The Angry Villager motioning to the growing MOB.

ANGRY VILLAGER
 You think some coin can replace
 her husband? Or the boy's father?

VILLAGER #2
 The born king fights for us --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGRY VILLAGER #2

Then where is he now? He's the
one who let this happen --

GUINEVERE (O.S.)

He is the one who will remedy it --

Bedivere trying to stop GUINEVERE as she steps forward.
A HOODED William and MARK behind her.

GUINEVERE

If he surrenders, it is over, the
born king is our only hope --

ANGRY VILLAGER #2

We were fine without him before.

ANGRY VILLAGER #3

He's right, I'm not letting my son
die for another king --

The MOB assembling as Guinevere stands tall.

GUINEVERE

... I cannot let you pass --

ANGRY VILLAGER #2

What business is it of yours --

GUINEVERE

I am one of you --

The Angry Villager suddenly seeing BEDIVERE'S CART behind
her. A PENDRAGON FLAG in the SUPPLIES within.

ANGRY VILLAGER

No, she is one of them.

As one of the villagers suddenly PULLS OFF MARK'S HOOD.
Then BEDIVERE'S. WILLIAM'S HOOD coming down last.

ANGRY VILLAGER

... It is *him* --

William retreating to the CART, everything going wrong.
The mob SWARMING as Guinevere PULLS HER BOW, AIMING AN
ARROW. Bedivere and Mark following William...

GUINEVERE

No, William, WAIT --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Bedivere's cart SPEEDS AWAY. Evasive maneuvers, as a pack of HORSES gives chase. The villager's ON THE HUNT.

INT. BEDIVERE'S CART - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Mark has the REIGNS OUTSIDE as William, Guinevere and Bedivere take refuge within. Mid-argument...

GUINEVERE

The only way to win is to rally them. They're just afraid.

WILLIAM

You think they'll follow me *now*?

GUINEVERE

They follow fear because they know nothing else. *Lead* them, that is what it means to be a king --

SLAM. A FIERY TORCH through the window. The cart under ATTACK outside. Sent SPINNING. TUMBLING --

Up suddenly becomes down. Left becomes right. The world turning, the cart barreling to a STOP --

HANDS suddenly RIPPING at the carriage window. MOB mentality run amok. Like being inside a RIOT. The fever of fear. The villagers PULLING William OUT --

Until MARK breaks through the other side, grabbing him...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

William pulled out as he immediately grabs one of the CART HORSES, mounting the steed. About to ride away...

GUINEVERE

... You leave now, you're turning your back on them.

WILLIAM

Their back is already turned.

ANGLE ON HORSE

William CLIMBING up. One step ahead of the CHASING MOB.

GUINEVERE

William, *please*...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

I don't have a choice, I'm sorry.

As he leaves. The King riding away from his people.

WILLIAM

I cannot wait for them any longer.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DAY

The RIVERS of BOYS and MEN are led across the BRIDGE into the BOWELS of Camelot Castle. DISAPPEARING below.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DUNGEONS - DAY

A massive DUNGEON. LEVELS of TIERED CAGES in huge ROOMS carved into mountain rock. A medieval ARKHAM. As CRIMINALS and THUGS watch the BOYS AND MEN FILTER IN...

CRAMMED twenty people to a cell. Barely room to MOVE. A SWEATY PILE of SCARED PEOPLE. As we SEE KAY being wedged in by a JAILER. LOCKING him in with a HUGE LOOP OF KEYS.

KAY

Please, we can't breathe --

JAILER

Then do not waste your air --

KAY

You're killing these people.

Kay seeing the SUFFERING all around him. CHILDREN in pain. Knowing he has to do something. A decision made.

KAY

... I need audience with the King.

JAILER

Silence, villager --

KAY

Listen to me, I know where he is.
Where he hides. The born king.

JAILER

And how would you know that?

Kay hesitating. Knowing he has no other choice.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM

Kay is KNEELING before Vortigern on his THRONE.

VORTIGERN

Is this some kind of joke?

KAY

I am first born son of Palleas.

VORTIGERN

You expect me to believe a man
would betray his own *kin* --

KAY

... I do not see your son, my
lord. Perhaps we should ask him?

Vortigern glaring at him. Enjoying the GALL of the man.

KAY

-- My brother is foolish, my king.
Impetuous. He risks us all --

VORTIGERN

And from where does he risk the
lives of those he claims to lead?

KAY

... If I tell you, will you show
mercy on those people. On him?
... Commit him to servitude, to
prison. But I want no more death.

VORTIGERN

You have the word of your king.

Kay looking out the window. Seeing the SUFFERING. More
boys and men being brought in. The choice made for him.

KAY

... North, above the Darklands,
Everall forest.

Vortigern NODDING, as Kay sees the DOORS being closed.

KAY

... What are you doing?

VORTIGERN

Did you say you were close, you
and your brother?

KAY

You gave me the word of the *king*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

Savor your pain, fisherman. It is
a gift. A blessing.

Encroaching BLACKCLOAKS casting a SHADOW over Kay's face.

VORTIGERN

I envy you your screams.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GREAT FOREST - DAY

Guinevere, Mark and Bedivere ride up to find William's
HORSE. Guinevere heading straight to THE GREAT OAK.

INT. ARMORY (THE OAKS) - DAY

Guinevere enters to find William SUITING UP. Putting on
his BATTLE ARMOR. Removing the PENDRAGON INSIGNIA.

WILLIAM

Can't believe I listened to you.

GUINEVERE

You're not thinking --

WILLIAM

Can't believe I actually thought
this would work --

Bedivere and Mark arriving to see William leaving.

WILLIAM

... I'm going for him now --

GUINEVERE

You think because you've won a few
battles, you're ready to fight a
war? Your training's not complete
-- you cannot fight him alone.

William motions to the MURALS of his father's battles
with the GIANT BEASTS of the North. To a huge BATTLE
ELEPHANT -- a mobile fortress, ATTACKING A CASTLE.

WILLIAM

(re: beasts)
... I'm not going to.

EXT. THE OAKS - DAY

William WALKS AWAY as Mark and Bedivere follow.

MARK

... I knew we couldn't trust him --

As we SEE Guinevere PUTTING ON HER ARMOR, TOO.

MARK

... What are you doing?

GUINEVERE

I'm following my king --

MARK

You do know where he's *going* --

BEDIVERE

She's right, he's all we have left. Take the best we have.

MARK

She's not thinking straight, and you know it. Her attachment grows too strong. He is not ready.

BEDIVERE

... Then we will have to be.

EXT. ROCKY ROAD - DAY

William rides NORTH towards the MOUNTAINS. Guinevere, Mark and a squad of MILITIA following from behind.

GUINEVERE

William, take heed --

WILLIAM

You said those that survived hide in the uplands. To the North --

MARK

It is an invitation to death --

WILLIAM

The Mages took over an entire empire with but a few of them.

(determined)

They are worth ten thousand men.

GUINEVERE

The Mages had the dark magic to control them --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

And I have you...

Guinevere REALIZING WHAT HE IS SUGGESTING.

GUINEVERE

... It wouldn't work on anything
that big --

WILLIAM

It has to. All we need is one.

(intimate)

Please, I can't do it without you.

Guinevere looking at him. UNABLE TO REFUSE HIM.

GUINEVERE

There are many breeds, many kinds,
we don't even know what lives...

As William sees the LOOMING MOUNTAINS ahead.

WILLIAM

... We will find out soon enough.

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - DAY

The UPLANDS. JAGGED MOUNTAINS carved into the sky.
William, Guinevere, Mark and the militia riding through
RAIN and MUD, as an awful GUTTURAL MOAN echoes out ahead.

MARK

(to Guinevere)

-- Can't you just do it from here?

GUINEVERE

It doesn't work that way, can only
control what I see. For something
this big I have to be close...

MARK

How close?

Guinevere's SILENCE all the answer he needs. The distant
groan becoming a WHEEZING NOW. Closer than ever. Until
the MISTS start to CLEAR to reveal...

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - VALLEY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

An ENORMOUS DYING WOLF. 200 FEET LONG, laid on its side.
Its body EMACIATED. BIRDS picking at its flesh. TONGUE
hanging out. SHALLOW breathing. William in SHOCK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

... Mage experiments created all
sorts of -- monstrosities...

William next to the wolf's HUGE EYE. The IRIS narrowing.

GUINEVERE

Those that still live don't have
long now. Hiding out here --

As Guinevere takes one of the militia's huge BROADSWORDS.

MARK

What are you doing?

GUINEVERE

Putting it out of its misery.

Guinevere pulling herself up onto the back of the wolf's
HEAD. Pushing the sword into the back of its BRAIN PAN.

The wolf's eye WELLING. A RELIEF. The peace of death
coming. As William watches the giant eye START TO CLOSE.

... And then he sees it. REFLECTED in the eye behind
him. William turning to see a huge 250 FOOT HIGH BATTLE
RHINO lumbering through the fog. A massive, old MOBILE
FORTRESS on its back. BIG ENOUGH TO ATTACK A CASTLE.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GREAT FOREST - DAY

A NOISE. Like a TWIG CRACKING. Enough to cause the
CAMOUFLAGED TREE GUARD to TURN HIS HEAD. Giving away his
position as an ARROW sends him flying.

INT. TAVERN (THE OAKS) - DAY

Bedivere sits looking at the MURALS of the Beasts of the
North. Looking over a DIAGRAM of the CASTLE, planning.

The noise almost INDECIPHERABLE at first. A PFFFT...

Then like rain. PFFFT, PFFFT, PFFFT... FIRE ARROWS
peppering the WOODEN VILLAGE in the trees behind him.

Bedivere knowing instantly what the sound means. An
awful RESIGNATION. Hearing the DOOR CREAK OPEN behind
him. As he SLIDES the castle plans out of view...

And we REVEAL Vortigern in the doorway. Bedivere not
even turning. Sitting on his favorite OLD BAR STOOL.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

Can I offer you an ale after your travels? I brewed it myself...

VORTIGERN

Where is he?

Bedivere CLOSING HIS EYES, savoring a HUGE SWIG OF ALE.

BEDIVERE

Secret's in the oats. The dredge.
Can't let it cool too long --

VORTIGERN

Tell me where he is, I will show mercy... You cannot win, old man.

Bedivere taking one final SWIG. DRAINING THE MUG. A warm smile. As he reaches for his STAFF.

BEDIVERE

... Then I will lose well.

Vortigern looking at one of his BLACKCLOAKS.

VORTIGERN

He is not here. We will continue North. Join us when it is done --

Vortigern leaving. A SWARM of Blackcloaks entering.

FANNING OUT around Bedivere. As he smiles. Resigned.

BEDIVERE

... Come closer, child.

CUT TO:

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - DAY

The massive RHINO stands, head half in the CLOUDS, eating from some mountain-side TREES. RAVENS circling.

As we REVEAL William, Guinevere, Mark and the others on an adjacent MOUNTAIN-SIDE LEDGE. A silent approach.

MARK

... You really think that thing's going to hold us?

Mark looks at the OLD WOODEN FORTRESS on its back, seeing it closer now. Visibly DILAPIDATED. Like a GHOST TOWN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

We'll be fine. Just don't make a noise. It cannot be startled --

As William pulls out a GRAPPLING HOOK. Swinging it...
The METAL HOOK hurtling across the VALLEY...

Flying around a WOODEN POST on fortress. William WINCING at the noise. The rhino GLANCING UP. Seeing nothing...

As Mark SECURES the other end of the rope around a HUGE BOULDER, and William starts to PULL HIMSELF ACROSS the valley. ARMOR WEIGHING HIM DOWN. A 200 foot drop below.

The others following, one by one. Like ANTS ACROSS A THREAD. Inching closer to the fortress through the RAIN.

EXT. BATTLE RHINO - MOBILE FORTRESS - CONTINUOUS ACTION

William ARRIVES FIRST. Helping the others onto a HUGE WOODEN PLATFORM. One at a time. Slow going...

And then it happens. The rhino starting to STIR. Having finished feeding. Starting to move. Guinevere, Mark and the rest of the militia HURRYING ACROSS. Frantic...

The ROPE pulling. Dragging the distant BOULDER towards the edge, William pulling his men on hurriedly until --

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The boulder is DRAGGED off the mountain, PLUMMETING down. SHATTERING on the ground as the RHINO REARS up...

Seeing the string of militia hanging from the rope, as it SWINGS through the air. CRASHING against the side of the fortress. Militia LOSING GRIP. Falling to their DEATH --

As the RHINO CHARGES, running through the valley, trying to shake the parasites. The survivors WHITE-KNUCKLING the ride, PULLING THEMSELVES up in the RAIN, desperate.

Guinevere bringing up the rear, HOLDING on for her life.

INT. MOBILE FORTRESS (BATTLE RHINO) - CONTINUOUS ACTION

An awful RATTLING. SHAKING. An 8.0 earthquake.

As William pulls in the SURVIVORS, one by one. Mark and a handful of militia. William reaching out to Guinevere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The rope starting to THREAD on the wooden post... About to BREAK as William GRABS Guinevere's hand...

William and Guinevere EYE-TO-EYE, the moment extending between them, as he finally PULLS her into the room...

Guinevere already running. Hurrying to the front of the STRUCTURE, behind the rhino's head. CLOSING HER EYES.

As she lays her hand down on the rhino's THICK HIDE...

And slowly, peacefully, the rhino starts to CALM ITSELF. Settling. Slowing to a stop. Guinevere in control. As if having just pulled the reins on a 100,000 ton horse.

INT. MOBILE FORTRESS (BATTLE RHINO) - MOMENTS LATER

Guinevere returns to find half the militia DEAD. Two BLEEDING badly, SCREAMING. Mark trying to help --

MARK

... Can't stop the bleeding --

Guinevere suddenly distracted. Hearing a NOISE.

GUINEVERE

Did you hear that?

(off their confusion)

... *Listen.*

The noise LOUDER this time. Like SLITHERING.

GUINEVERE

This isn't over yet...

WILLIAM

-- What, what is it --

Guinevere looking out, seeing MOVEMENT between the ADJACENT MOUNTAINS. Like a SUBWAY thundering past.

GUINEVERE

-- Basilisk... *Snake* --

As Guinevere sees the BLEEDING MEN and she panics, trying to COVER THEIR WOUNDS. To stop the bleeding.

GUINEVERE

It's the blood. They're attracted to the blood --

The sound of SLITHERING THUNDERING CLOSER. As slowly but surely, everything starts to go wrong --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE
HOLD ON TO SOMETHING --

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - DAY

A SUBWAY TRAIN-SIZED BASILISK SNAKE suddenly ARCS out of the mountain range. STRIKING at the BATTLE RHINO --

HUGE TEN-FOOT FANGS sinking into the rhino's hide. The RHINO'S HORN flying. STABBING into the side of the snake. The snake immediately WRAPPING itself around the enormous mammal. CONSTRICTING. Crushing the rhino --

Asphyxiating the noble creature as the huge beast starts to falter. The VENOM in its veins now. The battle rhino falling to its KNEES as the HEAVY RAIN falls all around --

INT. MOBILE FORTRESS (BATTLE RHINO) - CONTINUOUS ACTION

William, Guinevere, Mark and the surviving militia hold on for dear life as the fortress PLUMMETS. The snake visible outside in its DEATHLY EMBRACE as --

SLAM. The rhino hits the ground. The fortress COLLAPSING all around them. MILITIA MEN CRUSHED...

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - DAY

A WAVE OF MUD kicked into the air as the rhino breathes its last breath in the RAIN. The SNAKE UNCOILING as it sees MOVEMENT in the remains of the battle fortress...

ANGLE ON FORTRESS REMAINS

William leads our heroes out into the MUD. EYES DARTING as they look for the giant snake. Nowhere to be seen.

Until, THROUGH THE MIST, they see the horror --

GUMS EXTENDED, giant jaw SNAPPING. Body stretched as the snake STRIKES once again, and William GRIPS EXCALIBUR --

WILLIAM
STAY BEHIND ME --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The world immediately STILL. The huge head HANGING in the air. Like an enormous FANGED STATUE. William seeing the nearby FORTRESS WRECKAGE. The lay of the land --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then RUNNING as TIME SPEEDS UP and he pivots off the wreckage. Spinning over the attacking head. SLICING across one of the HUGE FANGS...

The FANG landing on the ground, VENOM spitting out. As William LANDS NEXT TO IT. In BATTLE POSE.

ANGLE ON GUINEVERE

As she sees the snake COIL. Regrouping. Then ATTACKING AGAIN. William FIGHTING BRAVELY. One man against a SUBWAY TRAIN-SIZED SNAKE. Holding his own --

Until a SHADOW suddenly moving behind him. And she sees a SECOND HUGE SNAKE sliding towards William from behind --

GUINEVERE

Wait, no, *BEHIND YOU* --

William turning to see the second serpent STRIKE. Pivoting, TOO LATE, as he is sent FLYING THROUGH THE AIR.

Landing in the MUD. Winded. Trying to breathe.

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

As William sees the TWO SNAKES suddenly turn on the militia. CRUSHING ONE. SWALLOWING another WHOLE. JAWS SNAPPING as the survivors are ripped apart...

William trying to help. Forced to endure the sight of his comrades DYING in EXTREME SLOW-MOTION. The face of DEATH. LIFE LEAVING EYES. Rain-soaked terror...

William overwhelmed. LOSING HIS FOCUS NOW. The LIGHT DISTORTING, HEADACHE-INDUCING STATIC OVERWHELMING. All his training and learning COLLAPSING ALL AROUND HIM --

ANGLE ON GUINEVERE

As Guinevere GRABS the panicking William. William trying to hold the sword again. Unable to. As if SHOCKED.

WILLIAM

What is happening --

(frantic; re: sword)

Why can't I control it?

Guinevere and Mark RETREATING. William RESISTING.

GUINEVERE

There's nothing we can do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Guinevere pulling him back to the shadows, the SCREAMS and WHIMPERS of the militia still hanging in the air.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

It wasn't my fault --

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DUSK

William, Guinevere and Mark are all that's left. BRUISED and BATTERED. The AWFUL SILENCE of MARK'S JUDGMENT.

WILLIAM

The sword faltered --

GUINEVERE

The fault lies not with the sword.

WILLIAM

I did everything that you taught me -- my head was clear --

GUINEVERE

Takes more than just a clear mind.
-- Until you truly *believe* you are king, control will never be yours.

(saddened)

The sword will always allude you --

MARK

Then we are all doomed...

GUINEVERE

You will hold your tongue, Mark.

MARK

He cannot even say his own *name*...
How many more would you have die.

Only for William's HORROR to go from bad to worse as he sees the SMOKE in the distance. The OAKS BURNING.

EXT. THE GREAT FOREST - THE OAKS - DUSK

William runs through the forest to find it RAINING FIRE. BURNING LEAVES falling. A horrifying beauty to it all.

Until he sees THE OAKS TREE VILLAGE ENGULFED in flame above. BODIES WITHIN. The others having not stood a chance with William and the militia gone. A handful of distraught, BLEEDING SURVIVORS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

William thinking his GUILT is complete -- only to see the nail in the coffin...

KAY'S BODY. His TORTURED BROTHER hanging from the BOW of the SECRET TREE. Murdered. A BLOODY MESSAGE.

As William CUTS Kay's body down. Sickened. Broken.

GUINEVERE (O.S.)
... He's still alive.

ANGLE ON GUINEVERE

As she and Mark pull BEDIVERE'S BODY from the ASHES. Seeing he is STILL ALIVE, barely. Guinevere already making a TOURNIQUET. Feeling his PULSE.

GUINEVERE
The fever is coming. Get him to Gladstone, tell them he needs Tain Root. Get the wound clean...
(off Mark's look)
We cannot treat him here, GO --

A hand on Bedivere's SHOULDER.

GUINEVERE
-- Good speed, old man.

Bedivere NODDING, as Mark sees Guinevere IS NOT COMING.

MARK
... He is bad luck, please. The fight is done. Let us go.

GUINEVERE
I'm not giving up on my king.

MARK
He's not your king. He never was. He fights for himself --

GUINEVERE
You're wrong about him, Mark. You will see. He stands for us all.

MARK
... Is it your head that objects, Guinevere? Or your heart?

Guinevere looking at him. Too close to home.

MARK
You can't save them all, Guin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

... But I can still save him.

As Mark pulls Bedivere over his HORSE and RIDES AWAY, leaving Guinevere to the GRIEVING William. Their conversation lost to the sound of the BURNING TREES.

William finally standing. Joining Guinevere as they RIDE AWAY. Not seeing the FIRELIGHT illuminating the SHADOWS.

Not seeing the BLACKCLOAK SPY Vortigern left behind. Mounting his horse. SHADOWING their every move.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD - DUSK

Vortigern is BURYING CATIGERN. Throwing DIRT. Burying the last of his soul along with his son. An awful HUMANITY to it all. As the Blackcloak Spy appears...

BLACKCLOAK SPY

... They seek refuge beyond the
Glens. On the coastal wash.

Vortigern NODDING. Gathering his men and HORSES.

BLACKCLOAK SPY

My King, the Wash cannot be
breached. No horse can cross the
brush, nor boat the coral seas.

Vortigern a thousand miles away. Nothing left to lose.

VORTIGERN

Then we shall find another way...

EXT. CAMP (THE WASH) - NIGHT

The WASH is a NATURAL BAY in the coastline. The CORAL-riddled water littered with SHIPWRECKS. The coastline a THICK MASS OF THORNED BRUSH. Impenetrable either side.

As we see Guinevere setting up CAMP on the coastline. SNOW starting to fall all around. William SILENT...

GUINEVERE

We will be safe here.

An OWL PERIMETER GUARD SWOOPS OVERHEAD, keeping watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

... We should start a fire. See
if you can find some wood --

William remains silent. Fixated on the water --

GUINEVERE

... You think it's a coincidence,
William? The way they died? The
fire while we were gone. Too late
to help them. The guilt you feel.

WILLIAM

You should get away from me, Guin.

GUINEVERE

He's pushing you. Trying to get
in your head. It's what he wants.

(off his silence)

... You are still their king, the
people will still follow you.

William suddenly SLAMMING his hand against a tree. His
ANGER frightening him now. NOT ABLE TO HEAR IT ANYMORE.

WILLIAM

The people are inspired by a
sword. By painted armor, by a
dead king. Not by me.

GUINEVERE

The people do not follow a piece
of steel. They follow a man --

WILLIAM

I'm just a dock hand, remember?
Sometimes have to know your
place... Fight the fights you can
win --

His FAMILY'S WORDS hanging heavy on his conscience now.

WILLIAM

Can't change what you are inside.

GUINEVERE

It is the king you cannot change --

WILLIAM

Do you have any idea what its like
to have people *die* because of you?

(distant)

... You have no idea how I feel.

The snow falling harder now. Guinevere looking at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

Actually, yes. I do.

EXT. CAMP (THE WASH) - LATER

HEAVY SNOW. A WOLF walking towards a CRACKLING FIRE.
LAYING FIREWOOD next to Guinevere. Respectfully.

As she picks it up. EXPOSING the BRACELET around her
wrist. WIRE AND WOOL. Guinevere showing it to him...

GUINEVERE

This is what I have left.

(re: bracelet)

... He was a Blackcloak. One of
Vortigern's, working for our side.
He's the one who recruited me,
after the purge. Lit something in
me. Something I couldn't stop.
Something he couldn't stop either.

(distant)

... He gave me back my heart.
Gave me his. Gave me everything.

She adjusts the fire. STOKING it with a piece of wood.

GUINEVERE

We were both working the castle.
Running anything we could back to
Bedivere. Until he was caught.

(off his look)

They hunted him down. Like an
animal. He could have made it out
-- he wouldn't leave without me...

WILLIAM

You chose to stay?

GUINEVERE

I chose you.

(off his look)

Couldn't leave, not with what was
at stake. Not 'til we found you.

WILLIAM

You stayed because of me?

GUINEVERE

They found him on the moors.
Gutted him like poultry. Hung him
outside the castle walls... If I'd
gone with him he'd still be alive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

William looking at her. SEEING HER DIFFERENTLY NOW. The warrior gone. Never more beautiful. Never more open.

WILLIAM

... I don't know what to say.

GUINEVERE

... You're the reason I fight, the reason that I've always fought.

(sincere)

And they didn't die for nothing.

Guinevere closer now. Liberated. Unencumbered.

GUINEVERE

We can change things, you and me.

We've all lost people...

(resolute)

... But we are still alive.

Guinevere smiling. Closer. HER HAND IN HIS.

GUINEVERE

And I won't lose you too...

The words landing in a way he hadn't anticipated. Her LIPS against his. Just a graze at first. A test.

GUINEVERE

I believe in you, William... Even if you don't believe in yourself --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

Her face suddenly MOTIONLESS. Frozen in the moment. William's hands on Excalibur. As if needing to be sure.

The SNOWFLAKES between them. The comfort of her QUARTER-SMILE. Her EYES slowly closing. Her lips beginning to PURSE. No more beautiful sight in the world.

Until he finally joins her in the SLOW MOTION KISS. Taking over. KISSING HER BACK.

BACK TO THE FIRE

William casting the sword aside, in control now.

GUINEVERE

... You are my king.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The KISS DEEPENING. Arthur and Guinevere united. As he lays her down against the snow. The kiss escalates. And we lose our two lovers in the fire.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATTACK BOAT (OCEAN) - LATER THAT NIGHT

TORCHES are EXTINGUISHED as a boat creeps towards the COAST. Vortigern and his BLACKCLOAKS gearing up as they pass a series of SHIPWRECKS. Run aground.

BOAT CAPTAIN

My lord, the coral runs shallow.
The boat can go no further.

VORTIGERN

Then it serves no further purpose.

The Captain looking at him, CONFUSED, as Vortigern NODS and one of his Blackcloaks SLAMS a hole in the hull.

BOAT CAPTAIN

... What are you *doing*?

WATER GUSHING IN as Vortigern and his men all CLIMB ON HORSES, waiting as the ship starts to SINK around them...

EXT. CAMP (THE WASH) - NIGHT

William and Guinevere SLEEP, ENTWINED. The snow falling. Not seeing the BAY. Not realizing what is coming...

ANGLE ON WATER

The MOONLIGHT illuminating SHADOWS in the water. Gliding towards the beach like TORPEDOES, COMING FROM ALL SIDES --

The HORSES SWIMMING SILENTLY towards them. Vortigern and his men astride the magnificent animals. WEAPONS DRAWN.

ANGLE ON WILLIAM

His EYES suddenly OPENING. As if hearing a NOISE. Seeing NOTHING in the DARKNESS. And then the sound of OWLS suddenly SCREECHING above. Ringing the alarm.

Guinevere and William waking to see the LAST OF THE HORSES arrive on shore. William LOOKING FOR EXCALIBUR...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Seeing it FIVE FEET away. About to GRAB it, only to see HOOVES suddenly surrounding it...

VORTIGERN PICKING UP EXCALIBUR. Claiming the prize...

GUINEVERE (O.S.)

Run.

The OWLS coming to their defense as Guinevere and William RUN FOR COVER. The Blackcloaks CLOSING IN. Guinevere already with BOW IN HAND, laying down fire.

GUINEVERE

... You go, I'll hold them back.

WILLIAM

What --

GUINEVERE

... We don't have a choice.

(off his look)

We won't both make it.

William seeing them encroaching. Knowing he has NO WEAPON, NO ARMOR, NO WAY TO FIGHT. Knowing she's right.

GUINEVERE

... They're going to use me
against you, they won't kill me --

WILLIAM

I'm not leaving you --

GUINEVERE

You can still save me, please.

(off his look)

Just go... GO --

As William RELUCTANTLY RUNS. Guinevere unleashing ARROW after ARROW. Holding off the Blackcloaks, getting him away... Using their OWN HORSES against them...

William making it to the THICK BRUSH, disappearing into the NIGHT. THORNS RIPPING into his skin...

Looking back to see Guinevere as her arrow supply DWINDLES. THREE ARROWS LEFT, TWO ARROWS, ONE...

Until finally, fatefully, she is TAKEN by the hunting party. VORTIGERN grabbing her, looking into the BRUSH.

VORTIGERN

-- YOUR RESISTANCE HAS FALLEN.

Your sword. Your queen --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE

Do not listen to him... REMEMBER
WHAT YOU ARE --

Vortigern KNOCKING HER OUT. Silencing her. The OWLS and HORSES all stopping their fight. Owls flying away. Horses to the beach. As if from a BROKEN SPELL.

VORTIGERN

... I implore you. End this
bloodshed... For those first born.
For her. Show yourself...

William HOLDING FAST. Conflicted. KNOWING HE CANNOT.

VORTIGERN

(off the silence)
... Then you know where we will
be. Surrender to your people by
sundown tomorrow, or her blood
spills with the rest of them.

Vortigern reclaiming a horse, going to head up the BEACH.

VORTIGERN

-- The choice is now yours.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - NIGHT

DARKNESS. A village in anticipated mourning. The same DESPERATE VILLAGERS we saw chasing William earlier.

As a LONE HOODED FIGURE enters the village. Tattered. BLOODIED. Seeing the suffering. Standing by a FIRE...

William CONTEMPLATING SURRENDER. Debating giving himself up. Looking at those in need. Knowing he has no choice.

Taking off the PENDRAGON PENDANT his father gave him. Looking at it. Considering. The guilt rising...

As he finally TOSSES it in the FIRE. Resigned to the course. Resolute. Watching the pendant BURN. Going to LOWER HIS HOOD and reveal himself to the village...

And then he HESITATES. Seeing something. A DISTINCT SMOKE rising from the flames. As if the METAL PENDRAGON PENDANT were itself BURNING. MELTING in some way.

William looking down to see the OUTER COAT OF SOFT METAL melt off. Revealing a DIFFERENT HARD METAL beneath...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A HARD METAL KEY. William knocking it out of the fire with a stick. SHOCKED. Cooling it in the SNOW. Seeing the key has an INSCRIPTION on the side. A LOCATION: "GAPING GILL FALLS." Our hero REALIZING...

WILLIAM
... In Pendragon fire.

As he looks over at a nearby UNGUARDED HORSE and --

EXT. GAPING GILL WATERFALL - DAWN

William RIDES the HORSE to the THUNDERING GAPING GILL FALLS. A three hundred-foot waterfall. William dismounting. Walking the TRAIL behind the waterfall, not knowing what he is looking for. Until he sees it...

The PENDRAGON SEAL on a wall. A TUNNEL below...

INT. TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

William walks the short, DAMP TUNNEL, finding a THICK WOODEN DOOR. Pulling the KEY to find it fits the LOCK perfectly. AIR ESCAPING as the DOOR SLOWLY OPENS...

INT. THE CAVE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The door strikes a FLINT against the wall. LIGHTING a FIRE TRAIL. The trail igniting around the room...

Until the trail arrives at a GOLD BASIN. The fire ALIVE WITHIN. Almost with movement. Like a figure. Like a cloaked face. Like the face of a LONG DEAD KING.

The UTHUR ENCHANTMENT flickering. The voice CRACKED.

UTHUR ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... I know not if this enchantment
will work, my son --

William in SHOCK. The fire NOT HOT. A DANCE OF LIGHT.

UTHUR ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... It is a leftover of a dying
race. Of a child that helped me
once -- so that I might help you.

William eye-to-eye with his lost father now.

UTHUR ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... There are rumors, Arthur.
Whispers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I know not from who, but I know it
is coming... All I can do is
prepare you now...

The fire suddenly ILLUMINATING a CACHE of UTHUR'S
WEAPONS. Swords, maces, shields. And in the center...

THE KING'S ARMOR. Uther's own distinct armor. The
facsimiles up to now a mere shadow of its grandeur.

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
If you are hearing this then the
worst has happened...

William looking at the SHINING METAL. The THICK CLOAK.

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... You must be stronger than you
know how to be...

The PENDRAGON INSIGNIA shining bright.

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... You must lead them where they
fear to go...

William slowly starting to STAND TALLER. Invigorated.

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
You must remember what you are.
(beat)
... You are Arthur, third of the
Pendragon. Heir to Camelot's
throne. You are the born king.

As our hero watches the fire trickle out. His father's
FACE lost to the darkness. Alive for a FINAL MOMENT.

UTHER ENCHANTMENT (V.O.)
... You are my son.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

Vortigern LEADS Guinevere walking through the mighty
courtyard. Guinevere's EYES SCANNING, anxious --

VORTIGERN
-- You're looking for an animal,
perhaps? A creature to wield...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN (CONT'D)

(off her look)

There are none within sight, I can assure you. Anything with more legs than you has been removed.

GUINEVERE

He comes for us, it won't be long.

VORTIGERN

... When he comes, it will be in surrender.

GUINEVERE

Then why do your palms sweat?

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - KING'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Guinevere is thrown into the BEDROOM by a BLACKCLOAK.
Vortigern entering with her as the DOOR is LOCKED.

VORTIGERN

You know what Avalon is, my lady?

Vortigern stands at a TABLE of MASKS. Removing the one he is wearing, BLOODIED and CRACKED from the fight.

VORTIGERN

The burial isle, resting place of Kings. Men, women and children...

Vortigern steps into the light. Revealing his FULL DISFIGUREMENT. A sickening scrawl of BURN SCARS.

VORTIGERN

... There's no place for me in Avalon. No plot waiting. I was deemed unworthy, even in death.

(off her look)

... You know what that feels like? To see people's stomachs turn? To not be able to feel the warmth of another? Of your own blood?

Vortigern reaching a SCARRED HAND to Guinevere's FACE.

VORTIGERN

... It is a living prison.

Vortigern enjoying her FEAR. Seeing her BODY TENSE as he lifts the THREAD of her BATTLE DRESS. Teasing it.

VORTIGERN

Do not worry, my lady... I could not feel you even if I wanted to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he pulls away. Picking up a FACE MASK.

VORTIGERN

You have nothing to fear from me.

GUINEVERE

I fear you no more than I fear the
boy you once were.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BALCONY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Vortigern STEPPING OUT OVER Camelot castle below. A VIEW
of the LANDS BEYOND. Guinevere behind him.

GUINEVERE

... You can rule ten kingdoms,
you'll still just be that child.

(off his look)

He is a thousand times the man you
will ever be.

Vortigern putting on his NEW FACE MASK. Looking out.

VORTIGERN

... We shall see.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - DAY

VILLAGERS tend to WOUNDED MILITIA survivors. MARK
tending to BEDIVERE, the old man's WOUNDS BOUND.

As Mark SQUINTS. Not trusting his eyes at first. A LONE
FIGURE riding into town. Like a FLASHBACK to TWENTY-FIVE
YEARS BEFORE. Same SHINING ARMOR. SAME insignia.

As if the king himself had been reborn. Mark and the
VILLAGERS in SHOCK. As the HELMET is REMOVED.

WILLIAM

... I have lied to you.

William dismounting. Steadying the horse.

WILLIAM

I have flown banner and claimed
sovereignty... I have pretended to
fight in the name of this realm.

(off their looks)

... But my fight was not for you.

William looking at the villagers. LOOKING AT MARK.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

It was for myself. With myself.
(to Mark)
And I will lie to you no longer.

An ANGRY VILLAGER going to take him. Being held back my
MARK'S HAND. Mark listening now. Curious...

WILLIAM

If you wish to take me to Camelot,
I will not fight. If your desire
is for me to die, I will give my
life for those you have lost...
(off their looks)
But I would rather die fighting.

William WALKING AMONG THEM now. MUDDYING HIS ARMOR.

WILLIAM

I am not practiced in the ways of
Kings. I was not trained in the
joust, or groomed by a page hand.
(off their looks)
I was born of mud and farrow, like
you, and like you I must now rise.

The faith of others now running through him. Uther's
CONVICTION, Bedivere's CONFIDENCE, Guinevere's FAITH...

WILLIAM

I don't ask that you fight for me.
I do not even ask that you fight
with me. But I ask that you fight
for your children. As your
fathers fought beside mine.

The villager's HANDS lowered ON WEAPONS. Listening.

WILLIAM

There has been too much blood lost
to these fields. And if we fight
there will be more to come...

An ENERGY in the crowd now. A resilience.

WILLIAM

But this is Camelot. No matter
what is done to us, no matter who
sits in that throne, they cannot
change what we are. Who we are...

As he STANDS TALL in front of the whole village.

WILLIAM

... My name is Arthur.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A proclamation. His TRUE NAME cutting through the rain.
ARTHUR (as he will now be known) standing tall.

ARTHUR (WILLIAM)
... Son of Pendragon.
(proud now)
First in line to the blood throne.
And in battle or sacrifice, from
this moment on, my life is yours.

ANGLE ON VILLAGERS

The MASS of congregated Villagers now STANDING. A
HESITANCY among them, a POTENTIAL ENERGY...

Until a figure steps forward. MARK. Stopping in front
of Arthur. BATTLE AXES out. Having finally heard what
he needed to hear. STARING AT HIM, until...

MARK
... Mark. Son of Allard.

Arthur NODDING. Mark standing behind him. BEDIVERE
following suit. STAFF by his side. Looking at his king.

BEDIVERE
... Bedivere. Son of Graine.

The rest of the INJURED MILITIA doing the same. One by
one. Pulling their WEAPONS, joining their king...

MILITIA MEMBER
... Lucius. Son of Lark.

As one by one, the VILLAGERS follow suit. Stating their
name. A NEW MILITIA forming. The PEOPLE'S ARMY. The
ANGRY VILLAGER with BRANDED NECK even joining the fight.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
... War is upon us.

EXT. GLADSTONE VILLAGE - LATER

The villagers GEAR UP FOR WAR. Making WEAPONS out of
anything. As Bedivere and Mark watch Arthur leave.

ARTHUR
Without the first-borns, we don't
have enough men. We're going to
need help... Find weapons, armor,
whatever you can. Catapults too --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE
Where are you going?

ARTHUR
I'm going fishing...
(to Mark)
... Mark, you think you could find
that wolf again? In the uplands?
(off his confusion)
Can't catch anything without bait.

Mark DOING THE MATH. Realizing what he's saying.

MARK
That's not a plan, that's *suicide*.

ARTHUR
... Then we die fighting.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Vortigern looks at her. Guinevere holding the bracelet.
Nervous habit. Looking at the SUN in the SKY.

VORTIGERN
Doubt plagues you. I can see it.

GUINEVERE
My King will come, I have faith.

VORTIGERN
... Are you thinking about him,
perhaps? Your warrior of old?
(off her confusion)
... The mighty Lancelot.

Guinevere looking at him, confused. VIOLATED...

As a PARCHMENT lands on a TABLE. An old REWARD DECREE
for TWO TRAITORS to the CROWN. Two FAMILIAR NAMES.

The LANCELOT OF THE DOWNS and GUINEVERE OF MALADRON.

VORTIGERN
Took me a while to place you, I'll
admit. Lancelot's fair maiden --
(off her silence)
Put your faith in him too, didn't
you? Look what happened there --

GUINEVERE
You *murdered* him --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

... You don't believe that do you?

GUINEVERE

I saw him on the wall --

VORTIGERN

You saw a farmer, a peasant. The
people see what I need them to --
(off her confusion)
He didn't die, Guinevere. He ran.
... He abandoned you. Your cause.

GUINEVERE

That's a lie --

VORTIGERN

Is it? Sooner or later, you will
learn faith is an empty promise.
(pitying)
And no one is going to help you.

Guinevere trying to process what she's being told.
Reeling now. As a BLACKCLOAK arrives.

VORTIGERN

Is he here?

BLACKCLOAK

... Not exactly, my King.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BALCONY - DAY

Vortigern looks across the CHASM surrounding the castle
to see a PEOPLE'S MILITIA assembled in the FIELDS on the
other side. Guinevere coming out to see the ARMY.

VORTIGERN

Is that the best he could muster?
(to Blackcloak)
... Send five to every man they
show. Leave no one alive.

GUINEVERE

No, you can't --

BLACKCLOAK

Sir, some are just children, women
-- they can barely fight --

VORTIGERN

... Then an example must be made.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Swords, pitchforks, knives. Improvised ARMOR. ROPE and STEEL. A REVOLUTIONARY ARMY glued together by hope.

Bedivere and Mark leading them towards the HUGE CAMELOT CASTLE ahead. Halting their march. Growing nervous.

MARK

... Where is he?

BEDIVERE

He'll be here.

As they see the bridge EXTENDING towards them. Preparing for war. An aircraft carrier in front of a row boat.

BEDIVERE

Come on... Where are you?

CUT TO:

EXT. UPLANDS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Two COVERED BUCKETS are set down.

Arthur back in the MOUNTAIN RANGE up north. Eyes to the horizon. As he uncovers the buckets to reveal WOLF BLOOD. Pouring the blood over himself like some kind of TRIBAL WARRIOR. His face RED. Waiting for the attack.

ARTHUR

-- This is a bad idea.

Arthur standing unarmed. Waiting. HUMAN BAIT. The FISHERMAN OUT FISHING ONCE AGAIN...

And then he sees it. A BASILISK. The SNAKE appearing in the distance. Arthur waiting, knowing another is coming.

ARTHUR

Come on, where's your friend?

Only to hear a HISS behind him. The huge snakes CIRCLING HIM now, preparing to strike, both RECOILING as --

Arthur suddenly DARTS into a canyon, leaping onto a waiting HIDDEN HORSE. Already off running...

The horse GALLOPING AT PACE up the mountain valley as the giant snakes curl and unfurl, and the CHASE BEGINS...

EXT. HILLS - DAY

And here's something we haven't seen before. Two SUBWAY TRAIN-SIZED SERPENTS sliding over the COUNTRYSIDE chasing a HORSE. Jaws SNAPPING, bodies STRIKING...

The enormous reptiles crashing through TREES and BRUSH. CARVING great SWATHS OF GRASS out of the green fields. CRASHING through a HUGE WINDMILL. SAILS flying...

Hunting Arthur down as the horse SLALOMS through the wilderness. Seeing an old VILLAGE AHEAD...

EXT. VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Arthur GALLOPS into town. Pulling up. Surveying his EXITS. Looking for the best way out --

CRASH. One of the SNAKES PLOUGHING through the WOODEN BUILDINGS behind Arthur. Like a TORNADO tearing through the town. Masonry flying. Arthur kicking his HORSE...

ARTHUR

GO, GO, GO --

The SNAPPING JAWS of the snake feathering the HORSE'S TAIL as it STRIKES, just missing. The horse galloping out of town. BLOOD DRIPPING off of Arthur's ARMOR...

As the TWO SNAKES give chase in REPTILIAN BLOODLUST.

ARTHUR

... COME ON --

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - ARMORY - DAY

Battle stations. SWORDS. ARMOR. BLACKCLOAKS GEARING UP. Soldiers mobilizing in the THOUSANDS.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BRIDGE - DAY

Thousands of BLACKCLOAK TROOPS march out in FORMATION towards the SMALL REVOLUTIONARY ARMY in the distance.

BLACKCLOAK CAPTAIN (V.O.)

... We cannot see him, sir.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BALCONY - DAY

Vortigern and the BLACKCLOAK CAPTAIN look down on the BATTLEFIELD. Vortigern turning to Guinevere.

VORTIGERN

... This is your king? A man who sends his own people to *slaughter*.

GUINEVERE

They rise in protest, not action --

VORTIGERN

(to the Blackcloak)
Show the coward king what happens when other men fight his wars...

BLACKCLOAK CAPTAIN

Sir, they might still disperse --

VORTIGERN

... Then attack before they have a chance to.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

A HORN echoes out. As the BLACKCLOAKS start to charge. A BLACK MILITARY MACHINE running through fields towards --

Bedivere, Mark and the Revolutionary Army. Standing firm. Bedivere with STAFF. Mark with DOUBLE AXES DRAWN.

BEDIVERE

HOLD YOUR GROUND.

Bravery in the face of certain death. The WALL of armor and swords tearing towards them. Bedivere ANXIOUS...

BEDIVERE

... Come on --

And then he sees him... His horse galloping across the field between the TWO ARMIES. The breathless ARTHUR --

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BALCONY - DAY

Vortigern seeing the TWO ENORMOUS SNAKES in the distance, thundering forward. Realizing what is happening...

VORTIGERN

... No, wait, GET YOUR MEN BACK --

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

As we REVEAL a series of HIDDEN CATAPULTS behind the MILITIA'S LINES, and Bedivere raises his STAFF, SHOUTING.

BEDIVERE

RELEASE --

WHOOSH. The catapults are UNLEASHED. A series of GIANT BUCKETS sending GALLONS OF WOLF BLOOD into the sky...

BLOOD RAIN falling over Vortigern's army. The soldiers barely having time to understand what is happening --

As TWO GIANT SNAKES arc over the horizon. Immediately following the scent. THUNDERING towards them --

And this is what it looks like to see two subway train-sized snakes tear into THOUSANDS OF MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS.

BEDLAM. The reptiles cutting through the army, sending them flying hundreds of feet in GREAT SWATHS.

A wave of defensive ARROWS and SWORDS attacking the magnificent reptiles, to no avail. A SLAUGHTER.

ANGLE ON ARTHUR

As he rides up, Bedivere and Mark smiling at him.

BEDIVERE

Took your time.

ARTHUR

... You ready?

Mark NODDING. The two old enemies now brothers in arms. CLASPING HANDS. Looking out to the enemy slaughter.

MARK

... Why the hell not --

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - MOMENTS LATER

And so we go to WAR. ARTHUR RIDING into battle. Bedivere at his side. BATTLE HELMETS DOWN...

The king leading from the front as he tears into the Blackcloaks. Supporting the ARROW-RIDDLED BASILISKS. PILES OF BLACKCLOAK BODIES already littering the field.

ANGLE ON THE PEOPLE'S ARMY

As we see the BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN of Camelot at war. Fighting alongside their king. FEARLESS. Battling through MUD, GUTS and BLOOD. Inching their way closer to the BRIDGE in the distance, and Camelot Castle beyond...

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BALCONY - LATER

The thunder of the opening battle has given way to a war of ATTRITION. The battlefield now BODIES DEEP. The BASILISKS and PEOPLE'S ARMY almost to the bridge.

Vortigern's anxiety amplified by his Blackcloak Captain.

BLACKCLOAK CAPTAIN

... My King, the Basilisk run rampant, they cannot be stopped --

VORTIGERN

They must be taken head on --

BLACKCLOAK CAPTAIN

We should retract the bridge. Consolidate. It has been hours --

VORTIGERN

You would have us retreat in our hour of *victory*?... Prepare my armor. Scythe, quarter mail --
 (off his confusion)
 -- If you lack the courage, I will do it myself...

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Vortigern secures Guinevere. Binding her to a CHAIR. SHACKLES against skin. Guinevere enjoying his panic.

GUINEVERE

You grow desperate. Panicked --

Vortigern DRAGGING her to a window with a SCREECH.

VORTIGERN

... So you may witness his death.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BRIDGE - DAY

A LONE HORSE enters the fray. COMBAT SCYTHE EXTENDED. Fierce BLACK ARMOR climaxing in SHARP EDGES and SPIKES. Vortigern a fearsome sight. Hurtling forward...

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Vortigern SLICES through anything in his path. Through BLACKCLOAKS AND MILITIA ALIKE. CARVING a DIRECT TRAIL towards one of the immense reptiles --

A WAKE OF BODIES behind him as he charges the snake. The BASILISK instantly STRIKING. Vortigern fearless, leaping off his horse as the snake BITES THE ANIMAL IN HALF...

And Vortigern LODGES his scythe into the snake's TAIL. Like HOLDING onto a bottle rocket...

Pulling himself up the jolting SNAKE'S BACK. Impossible bravery. RUNNING along the length of the reptile...

Bringing the scythe down through the HEAD. Then around, UNDERNEATH the SNAKE'S JAW. The snake trying to shake him off, SLAMMING his head into the ground as --

SSCCHHHFFT. The SCYTHE STABS UP through the snake's jaw from below. TWO HUNDRED TONS of snake SLIDING to a stop.

The battlefield aghast. The BLACKCLOAKS CHEERING. As Vortigern leads the charge to the second snake, and they FOLLOW THEIR LEADER. SWARMING THE REPTILE AS ONE...

ANGLE ON BEDIVERE

As he sees Vortigern and his men TAKING DOWN the second magnificent creature. The POWER HAVING SHIFTED...

BEDIVERE

ARTHUR --

Arthur turning MID-FIGHT to see the second snake hit the MUD. DEAD. An awful SILENCE across the battlefield...

As Vortigern suddenly arrives through the CROWD. An ANXIETY among the militia. Arthur standing tall.

VORTIGERN

... Did you honestly think you would win?

Bedivere going to join Arthur. Arthur RAISING A HAND.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

The fight is ours, old man.
 (off his look)
 -- Sword to scythe. King to king.
 Let us settle it here. Now.

Vortigern facing Arthur now. Pulling down his FACE
 PLATE. Arthur's ALREADY DOWN. Now TWO METAL WARRIORS.

Nothing but their EYES. Searching each other out. As
 Vortigern suddenly ATTACKS. Feet through mud. Steel
 against steel. SPARKS lost to the light rain.

Arthur giving as good as he gets. Using his CHAIN MAIL
 CLOAK to cloud Vortigern's attacks. Blocking his way.
 SWORD SWINGING as he SLICES ACROSS Vortigern's path --

SLICING his armor in two. A THICK GASH across
 Vortigern's chest. The king not even noticing, feeling
 nothing. As Arthur STRIKES AGAIN. Slicing his ARM...

And then ANOTHER STRIKE. And another. Arthur striking
 blow after blow. Vortigern UNRELENTING, until --

VORTIGERN'S HAND literally CATCHES Arthur's BLADE. No
 pain. GRIPPING IT TIGHT... ARTHUR'S EYES CONFUSED. The
 confusion turning into shock as he LOOKS DOWN...

To see VORTIGERN'S SWORD BURIED in his GUT. ALL THE WAY
 THROUGH HIM. As Vortigern LIFTS ARTHUR INTO THE AIR...

Arthur's body SLIDING DOWN the sword. A RAG DOLL.

BEDIVERE

No --

Vortigern DROPPING the vanquished king to the ground.
 Standing over him. About to BEHEAD HIM...

And then he sees it. His SUIT. The metal SCRATCHED from
 the battle. PEELING. Almost as if the FAMED DARK GREY
 METAL had been painted. As if the SUIT WERE A FAKE...

VORTIGERN

What...

Vortigern removing ARTHUR'S HELMET to reveal...

MARK BENEATH. In DECOY SUIT. The Born King nowhere to
 be seen. Mark DYING with BLOODIED TEETH. Having fought
 the brave fight. Dying for his king. At peace.

MARK

For Camelot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vortigern's RAGE complete as he LOOKS BACK TO HIS UNDEFENDED CASTLE. Suddenly realizing...

VORTIGERN
... TO THE GATES --

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - MOUNTAIN FACE - DAY

As on the MOUNTAIN FACE below Camelot Castle we see him --

ARTHUR. Scaling the treacherous NORTH FACE. Fearless. A SECRET CLIMBING ASCENT. A one-man attack from the rear. As he arrives at the BASE of the CASTLE WALLS...

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BATTLEMENTS - DAY

A LOOKOUT walks the BATTLEMENTS. A CROSSBOW BOLT suddenly hitting his neck. The bolt attached to a LINE --

The lookout suddenly PULLED BACKWARDS. ANOTHER GUARD meeting the SAME FATE. And ANOTHER...

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - MOUNTAIN FACE - DAY

The GUARDS FALL down past the ASCENDING ARTHUR. Arthur climbing up, reaching the top. Seeing a FINAL PERIMETER GUARD above. A cat stalking its prey...

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BATTLEMENT TOWER

Arthur's CLOAK suddenly WRAPPING around the oblivious GUARD'S HEAD. Sending him FLYING off the wall. As Arthur pulls himself up and RUNS across the battlements --

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BRIDGE - DAY

Vortigern and his Blackcloaks SPEED BACK across the bridge to fight Arthur. Back to the undefended castle.

VORTIGERN
RETRACT THE BRIDGE --

As we see Bedivere and the militia behind them. Trying to give chase. NOT FAST ENOUGH. The GIANT BRIDGE RETRACTING beneath them. COGS and GEARS turning below...

Men FALLING down into the abyss as Bedivere STOPS SHORT. He and his men now CUT OFF. Arthur on his own...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE
ARTHUR, *THEY'RE COMING* --

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - CORRIDORS - DAY

Arthur RUNS through CORRIDORS. FIGHTING his way through BLACKCLOAKS. Searching. Frantic. Room to room.

ARTHUR
Guinevere...

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

Arthur entering the HUGE THRONE ROOM. Almost there --

ARTHUR
... GUINEVERE --

As he sees the CHAIR by the window. The SHACKLES on the ground. Guinevere nowhere to be seen. Confused, when --

GUINEVERE (O.S.)
OUT HERE --

Arthur shuddering at the sound of the STRAINED VOICE. Knowing he is too late. As he looks to the GIANT DOORS --

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

Arthur exits to find VORTIGERN waiting. EXCALIBUR to Guinevere's neck. A THOUSAND BLACKCLOAKS behind him.

Arthur looking out at Guinevere. REUNITED again. Guinevere relieved to see him alive, despite it all.

VORTIGERN
... Storming an entire fortress by
yourself. They will write songs
of your bravery, nephew.

Arthur seeing the BRIDGE RETRACTED behind him. Bedivere and the militia cut off. No help coming --

VORTIGERN
You fought well, take faith in
that. But it is done.
(off his look)
You are surrounded. Your army is
cut off. You cannot win alone.

Arthur THROWING SOMETHING on the ground in front of Vortigern. Whatever it is landing with a CLATTER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

... Who says I'm alone?

As a FIRST BORN SON of Camelot suddenly appears behind him, sword drawn. Followed by another. AND ANOTHER...

Vortigern seeing FIRST BORN SONS appearing all around Arthur, as he PICKS UP what Arthur threw in front of him.

Seeing the JAILOR'S IRON LOOP OF KEYS in his hand...

ARTHUR

My army isn't cut off, Uncle...
You brought them right to me.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DUNGEONS - DAY

The DEAD JAILOR lies on the ground. OPEN DOORS all around him. The FIRST BORN SONS of Camelot protecting the CHILDREN among them. Grabbing WEAPONS...

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

The FIRST BORN WARRIORS surround their king.

VORTIGERN

... You are outnumbered ten to one. It won't make a difference.

More FIRST BORNs arriving. Vortigern seeing Arthur's CONFIDENCE. Nervous now. Sword to Guinevere's THROAT.

VORTIGERN

Tell them to stand down, or I slit her throat where she stands --

Guinevere glancing UPWARDS at the SKY, looking at Arthur. Arthur seeing what she is looking at. A SOLITARY HAWK.

As Arthur grabs a BOW and ARROW from a First Born.

VORTIGERN

What? You think *that* will save her? Your aim's not that good --

ARTHUR

Maybe...

As the bird suddenly SOARS DOWNWARDS. DIVING...

ARTHUR

But hers is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Arthur THROWING THE BOW through the air as --

SLAM. The HAWK ATTACKS, TALONS OUTSTRETCHED. CLAWING at Vortigern's EYES. The king STUMBLING BACK --

Guinevere pulling free, GRABBING the BOW, unleashing an ARROW into Vortigern's HAND at CLOSE RANGE...

The king DROPPING EXCALIBUR as Guinevere grabs it in an instant, SLIDING it along the courtyard floor...

Vortigern CRACKING the HAWK'S NECK. Turning to see Arthur GRABBING HIS WEAPON. Guinevere joining his RANKS.

The FIRST BORNs surrounding them. As Vortigern BACKS into his BLACKCLOAKS. The anger building. Retreating...

VORTIGERN

Kill him --

ANGLE ON ARTHUR

Guinevere standing next to him. UNLEASHING ARROWS. Watching the Blackcloaks approaching. A wave of death.

GUINEVERE

He is right, they are too many.

(off his look)

... We have to extend the bridge,
get Bedivere and the others --

Guinevere seeing Arthur going to FACE THE BLACKCLOAKS. An army of a thousand. Arthur PULLING EXCALIBUR.

GUINEVERE

What are you doing --

ARTHUR

I don't stay, we'll be dead before
that bridge hits the other side --

GUINEVERE

No, we fight together --

ARTHUR

It is me they want. Take the
others, open that bridge.

GUINEVERE

Arthur, there are too many...

Arthur looking at her. Seeing her DOUBTS. Determined.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR
(re: Excalibur)
... I am ready --

Guinevere seeing it in his EYES. The SELF-BELIEF.
Seeing she has to let him go. TRUSTING IN HIM.

GUINEVERE
... Come back to me.

As he NODS, they KISS, and she retreats with the FIRST
BORNS to the BRIDGE. Leaving her king to the fight.

EXT. COURTYARD - CENTER - DAY

Arthur steps down into the center courtyard. Facing a
THOUSAND ENCROACHING MEN. Judgment day.

As he holds EXCALIBUR aloft in front of him. The
THOUSAND MEN charge towards him, and our hero INHALES --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

Arthur FREEZING TIME. Looking at the ROARING FACES of a
THOUSAND BLACKCLOAKS. Still. Calculating every angle...

And this is what we came for. King Arthur a one-man
wall, TAMING HIS WEAPON. Finally BELIEVING IN HIMSELF.
Unlike anything we've seen before. The marriage of
WARRIOR AND WEAPON. Fighting with IMPOSSIBLE SPEED...

A FIERY TORCH IGNITING the WOODEN INFRASTRUCTURE as the
castle starts to BURN, and Arthur fights THROUGH THE
FIRE. Around SLOW MOTION flames. Deflecting ARROWS and
SWORDS with CHAIN MAIL CLOAK. Ducking MACES and
SPEARS...

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DAY

Arthur's battle SWEEPING out onto the BATTLEMENTS and
ROOFTOPS of the castle itself. The Blackcloaks SWARMING
around him like a flood of INSECTS. From every side.

Arthur LEAPING from ROOFTOP to ROOFTOP. SPIRE to SPIRE.
Everything Bedivere taught him. All of Guinevere's
training. Arthur fighting ten, twenty, thirty AT A TIME.
The iconic image of King Arthur at war. UNSTOPPABLE.

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - BRIDGE CONTROLS - DAY

Guinevere and the First Borns FIGHT their way to the BRIDGE CONTROLS. SLICING through a COUNTERWEIGHT, as the HUGE MECHANISM CLICKS into action and the bridge EXTENDS.

EXT. CAMELOT - BRIDGE - DAY

The militia watching the EXTENDING BRIDGE arrive, weapons drawn. Bedivere standing out front. The old KNIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLE about to return to CAMELOT CASTLE...

BEDIVERE
... TO THE GATES --

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - COURTYARD - DAY

Vortigern realizes he is LOSING. Seeing Bedivere CHARGE across the bridge. Arthur creating a PILE OF BODIES in the COURTYARD. The First Borns and Guinevere joining...

Vortigern's sickening realization that the fight is OVER. As he heads to a FAMILIAR HIDDEN DOOR in the WALL.

ANGLE ON GUINEVERE

Guinevere sees Vortigern ESCAPING in the DISTANCE. Firing a VOLLEY of ARROWS. THUD THUD THUD. The arrows grouping in VORTIGERN'S BACK. Vortigern OBLIVIOUS...

ANGLE ON ARTHUR

As Arthur sees the king hurrying down the SOUTH PASSAGE. Immediately FIGHTING HIS WAY TOWARDS IT. Giving chase.

GUINEVERE (O.S.)
... No, ARTHUR, WAIT --

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - SOUTH PASSAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Arthur steps inside the same MASSIVE HIDDEN STAIRWELL his father carried him down as a child. Sword drawn.

Arthur following the BLOOD TRAIL on the steps. INCHING around each corner, down into the MOUNTAIN'S BOWELS.

EXT. MOUNTAIN BOTTOM - COASTLINE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Arthur exits to find the HUGE ROCKS and GRANITE of the BOTTOM OF THE MOUNTAIN. The BURNING CAMELOT way above. FIERY DEBRIS raining down all around him. CINDER RAIN.

He follows the BLOOD TRAIL across the rocks. Arriving at a CLIFF EDGE. The blood trail GOING OFF THE EDGE...

Almost as if Vortigern COMMITTED SUICIDE. Arthur approaching the edge, confused. Looking down. Not seeing Vortigern LOOMING over him from a LEDGE ABOVE --

The TRAP SPRUNG. Arthur realizing JUST IN TIME. Vortigern's BATTLE SCYTHE swinging as he ROLLS CLEAR...

VORTIGERN

... Fitting, isn't it?

Vortigern UNFURLS from above. Arrows sticking out of his back. LIMBS SLICED. Vortigern oblivious to his wounds.

VORTIGERN

This is where it happened. Where he bled out... How appropriate --

Arthur holds up Excalibur. The prize fight about to begin. Steel to steel. Nephew to uncle. King to king.

ARTHUR

It is over. Your kingdom is lost.

VORTIGERN

You think you have won? With your head, I have a *Viking* army at my side. Camelot is just the start --

Vortigern suddenly attacking. DEVASTATING SPEED. The double heads of the scythe flying. BLADES EVERYWHERE. Arthur KNOCKED BACK as he gathers himself. Reeling.

VORTIGERN

Don't worry, once their backs are turned, they shall feel Camelot's blade. Perhaps I'll even do it in their sleep, like our family --

ANOTHER ATTACK. All Arthur can do to keep his uncle at bay. The CURVED SCYTHE BLADES drawing BLOOD on Arthur's CHEEK.

ARTHUR

Alliance was never your intention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VORTIGERN

Guards drop among those we trust,
Arthur. Just ask your father --

Arthur the one to ATTACK now. Excalibur's blade meeting
Vortigern's steel at every swing. Vortigern SMILING.

VORTIGERN

Soon the Norse realm will be mine,
too. And I shall rule all lands.

ARTHUR

I will not let that happen --

VORTIGERN

You already have.

Arthur seeing he has surrendered the HIGH GROUND.
Teetering now near the CLIFF'S EDGE. Distracted as --

Vortigern ATTACKS. SUDDENLY KNOCKING EXCALIBUR FREE.
The SWORD FALLING off the cliff, plummeting downwards...

Down into the RIVER BELOW as --

SLAM. Vortigern sends Arthur flying. Arthur's head
CRACKING against the rock. Dazed. In shock.

VORTIGERN

... Have to say, I'm somewhat
disappointed, cousin --

Arthur KICKED AGAIN. NO WEAPON to protect himself. In
trouble now. Spitting blood... Too close to the edge.

VORTIGERN

I was expecting a little more.
... Underneath all that armor,
still just a scared fisherman.

As Vortigern prepares to BEHEAD him. FIRE RAINING DOWN.

ARTHUR

-- I'm no fisherman.

SLAM. Arthur suddenly CHARGES into Vortigern, sending
him flying. Toppling off the TOP OF THE CLIFF...

As Vortigern GRABS onto Arthur. Taking ARTHUR WITH HIM.
The TWO KINGS PLUMMETING DOWNWARDS, capes flapping, as --

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

WHOOOSH... Arthur and Vortigern shoot down into the water. FIERY DEBRIS still raining down from above...

Both men IMMEDIATELY SINKING. WEIGHED DOWN with the weight of STEEL and IRON ARMOR. Two immovable objects.

Arthur hurriedly trying to REMOVE HIS ARMOR as --

Vortigern ATTACKS. Pulling an ARROW from his back. Arthur GRABBING Vortigern's ARM as Vortigern presses the ARROW against Arthur's NECK. Deeper and deeper.

BLOOD FLOWING. Arthur straining. WATER ENTERING HIS LUNGS. EYES WIDE. Vortigern's BURNED FACE over him...

And then Arthur sees it. On the RIVERBED next to him. EXCALIBUR. Arthur REACHING for the sword...

Arm outstretched. Hand. Fingers. Inching closer. The ARROWHEAD almost into Arthur's THROAT as...

Arthur finally GRABS his sword. THRUSTING it up into VORTIGERN'S GUT. Vortigern's face a picture of SHOCK.

And then we witness what death looks like when not accompanied by pain. A strange SADNESS overwhelming.

A DISTANCE gathering in his eyes. As his body calms, and the CORPSE of VORTIGERN PENDRAGON SINKS SLOWLY back onto the riverbed. The fight over. His body LIMP...

Arthur returning to his ARMOR. Trying to get it off. Frantic. Too many BUCKLES. Arthur OUT OF BREATH now --

As he grabs Excalibur again with BOTH HANDS and --

EXCALIBUR HYPER REALITY

The underwater world STOPS MOVING. AIR BUBBLES hanging. Fish in stasis. Fiery debris HALF-EXTINGUISHED... As King Arthur prolongs the MOMENT OF HIS DEATH.

Knowing there is no way out. Finding peace in the DETAILS. The SUNLIGHT through the water. His father's SWORD in his hand. The end of his life.

And then he sees her. An ANGEL. Appearing through the water. A vision of BEAUTY. Reaching for him through the ether, BACKLIT by the sun. As we see it is no angel...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUINEVERE moving through the water. Arms outstretched in SLOW MOTION. Pressing her LIPS to Arthur's. Filling his lungs with HER LIFE. Reaching for his ARMOR FASTENINGS.

Perhaps an angel after all...

EXT. RIVER SURFACE - DAY

EXCALIBUR appears out of the water. Held by a WOMAN'S HAND. An ICONIC IMAGE -- as Guinevere lays the sword down on the RIVER'S EDGE. Pulling Arthur out with her...

Arthur CHOKING water out of his lungs. Lying on his BACK. Looking up at the sky. Gathering his bearings.

Alive. Just. As he looks over to Guinevere. The two lovers reunited, as she smiles and --

The sky above him is suddenly FILLED with VORTIGERN'S BLOODY BODY, flaring out of the water like a rabid alligator, SWORD FURIOUSLY SWINGING DOWN until --

An ARROW hits him in the HEAD.

Vortigern sent flying back into the WATER. Guinevere holding her bow. Looking down at his DYING BODY.

PITYING. Vortigern like a child. Taking her HAND. Holding it. AFRAID even. SHALLOW BREATHING.

As she watches his LAST BREATH leave his body.

VORTIGERN
(barely audible)
... I -- feel --

The air escaping as she finally feels his hand go LIMP. His head falling to the side, HALF-SUBMERGED in the WATER. The water REFLECTING the NON-SCARRED side of his face. His face finally looking NORMAL. At peace even.

A FUNERAL HYMN echoing out. A haunting SOLITARY CHILD'S VOICE. A piece of music we shall call the "ODE TO AVALON."

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT CASTLE - DAY

The "ODE TO AVALON" continues as we SEE BEDIVERE FIGHTING ABOVE in the BURNING CAMELOT. VICTORIOUS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The LAST KNIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLE raising the flag of his NEW KING. The PENDRAGON INSIGNIA flying once again.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The HYMN continuing. As we see ARTHUR AND HIS MEN watching Kjartan in his BOAT, being rowed away...

KJARTAN

If you are not our ally then you
are our enemy, Pendragon.

(off his look)

We will be coming.

As Arthur stands tall, FLANKED by Guinevere and Bedivere. Emulating his FATHER'S WORDS from a long time before.

ARTHUR

... And we will always be waiting.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORELINE - DAY

The "ODE TO AVALON" coming to an end as we finally see the CHOIR CHILD singing it, and we witness VORTIGERN'S BODY being laid to rest. His corpse on a FLOATING RAFT...

Being set adrift towards the MIST-COVERED ISLES OF AVALON on the HORIZON. The resting place of ROYALTY and KINGS.

Arthur and Guinevere giving Vortigern in death what he could never have in life. A PEACE TO HIS WARRING SOUL.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT - VILLAGES - DAY

CONFETTI rains down. ARTHUR, GUINEVERE, BEDIVERE and the MILITIA riding through villages. Villagers APPLAUDING.

BEDIVERE

You still want to dissolve the
monarchy? Set them free --

ARTHUR

They have a right to choose their
own leaders, Bedivere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BEDIVERE

-- They already have.

Arthur seeing the villagers BOWING as they pass by. A sea of BOWING HEADS. King Arthur's LOYAL SUBJECTS.

BEDIVERE

You are their king now, Arthur.
Camelot is yours.

As Arthur looks over at the SURROUNDING VILLAGERS.

ARTHUR

... Then it is ours.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - ROOM - DAY

Guinevere sits alone. Looking at her REFLECTION.
Lancelot's BRACELET in HAND. Wire and wool interwoven.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

Everything okay?

Arthur arriving behind her. As she HIDES THE BRACELET.

GUINEVERE

... Just trying to figure it out.

ARTHUR

What --

GUINEVERE

... Why you didn't run.
(off his confusion)
At the village. You could have
left, abandoned us. You stayed.

Arthur standing behind her. Arms around her.

ARTHUR

... Just stubborn I suppose.
(off her look)
You sure you're alright?

All the answer she needs. As Guinevere subtly PUTS THE BRACELET AWAY for good. NODDING. Closing the chapter.

ARTHUR

(off her nod)
... Come on. There's something
you need to see.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - WOODSMITHS - DAY

Arthur opens a DOOR, leading GUINEVERE and BEDIVERE into a WORKSHOP. SAWDUST in the AIR. A TEAM OF WOODSMITHS working on something. Guinevere and Bedivere in shock.

BEDIVERE
... Is that what I think it is?

ARTHUR
You didn't think I was going to do
this by myself, did you?

As we REVEAL a ROUND TABLE. Lavish CHAIRS surrounding.

GUINEVERE
... The Great Oak?

Guinevere seeing the table is made from a CROSS SECTION of THE GREAT OAK. The resistance still alive.

ARTHUR
Not everything was lost to the
fire... Every chair the same. All
equal. No head. No throne --

BEDIVERE
-- Arthur, the Knights died out a
long time ago. Their time's past.

ARTHUR
Then we will assemble a new order.
(with a smile)
... Welcome home, old man.

Arthur pulling out a chair for Bedivere. The old man slowly SITTING. As Arthur pulls a chair for Guinevere.

GUINEVERE
(off his look)
There are no women knights.

Arthur sitting her down. Sitting next to her. Looking at the MANY TREE RINGS in the table. YEARS OF FIGHTING.

ARTHUR
... There are now.

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

A KNIGHTING CEREMONY. Bedivere and Guinevere on their KNEES. Arthur holding Excalibur to their SHOULDERS...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

... Behold. Sir Bedivere. Son of
Graine. Knight of Camelot.

Bedivere STANDING to APPLAUSE, as Arthur turns to
Guinevere. Knighting her, too. Looking her in the eye.

ARTHUR

Behold. Lady Guinevere. Daughter
of Lucan. Knight of Camelot.

As Guinevere STANDS to more APPLAUSE. Arthur and
Guinevere eye-to-eye. An intimate SMILE. Their moment.

... Until they turn to the room. Bedivere at their side.
Now standing in front of the COMPLETED ROUND TABLE.

ARTHUR

From this moment on let Camelot's
enemies know that a table stands
between them and this kingdom.

Arthur feeding off the crowd's fervor, a TRUE LEADER now.

ARTHUR

... Let those who have fought and
suffered for our cause know they
have a seat waiting at our side.

The APPLAUSE growing. The hope of a nation.

ARTHUR

... Let all the kingdoms across
all the seas know that a new king
stands in Camelot's halls.

As our heroes stand tall.

ARTHUR

... And the Knights of the Round
Table stand with him.

The APPLAUSE at fever pitch. As Guinevere leans over,
motioning to the HUGE EMPTY TABLE. 12 EMPTY SEATS.

GUINEVERE

... That's a lot of empty seats.

ARTHUR

Then we'd better get to work.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT CASTLE - ARMORY - DAWN

Arthur puts on SEAFARING ATTIRE. Back to the fisherman we once met. Putting the PENDANT KEY around his neck.

GUINEVERE (V.O.)

... Do you have to go?

EXT. BOAT (SHORE) - DAWN

A large CAMELOT LONGBOAT is filled with SUPPLIES. Bedivere boarding with SKELETON CREW. As King Arthur says goodbye to Lady Guinevere. The intimacy of a KISS.

ARTHUR

There is no other way.

GUINEVERE

Feel like I just found you and
you're already leaving.

The kiss extending. Their fingers interlocked.

GUINEVERE

You'd better come back to me.

ARTHUR

... I'll be back. I promise.

Guinevere finding her peace. Finally letting him go.

As Arthur CLIMBS ABOARD the boat. At home back on the ocean. CAMELOT CASTLE being REBUILT in the distance.

ARTHUR

(re: the castle)
Keep her safe.

Guinevere NODDING. Watching the boat PULL AWAY.

GUINEVERE

... Keep yourself safe.

EXT. CAMELOT LONGBOAT - MOMENTS LATER

Bedivere watches as Arthur works the RIGGING. Life back on the boat. Getting DIRTY. The SALT AIR.

BEDIVERE

You know where you want to begin?

ARTHUR

... Oh, I have a few ideas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A HUGE SAIL UNFOLDING. The PENDRAGON COAT OF ARMS.

ARTHUR

-- Set your heading for the floes.

Arthur pulling his smock back, revealing EXCALIBUR on his belt. A familiar MAGE SYMBOL on the sword's BASE.

BEDIVERE

Please tell me you're not thinking
what I think you're thinking.

Arthur standing at the bow like a regal FIGUREHEAD.

BEDIVERE

... He lives in exile, he will
never join us.

ARTHUR

Then we will just have to persuade
him, won't we?

As he looks down to see a POD of SEA SERPENTS swimming
alongside the longship, arcing through the sky.

ARTHUR

-- War comes for us all, Bedivere.
We cannot fight it alone.

A serpent CATCHING THE AIR next to him. Leading the way.

ARTHUR

... It all starts here.

As King Arthur joins his crew, securing his FATHER'S
SAIL, and we SET COURSE for the RISING SUN. The future
ours now. The PENDRAGON COAT OF ARMS propelling us
forward like a huge SHIELD against the unknown as we --

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END

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