

1.

New Knights of Camelot

Created by DAVE MORRIS

Episode One: "ABANDONED"

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WGA registration no. **1112803**

1. EXT. LAKE. DAY

Darkness.

Slowly our eyes adjust. We are close to a cavern wall, drifting upwards.

A slow swirl of motes tells us we're underwater. We see the gleaming pane of daylight above.

Breaking the surface, we see it's a lake. On the shore, mist hangs around bare trees. There are distant sounds of shouting - a battle.

Down to the shore of the lake staggers a KNIGHT carrying a mace and a sword. He's badly injured. We track in as he struggles through the mud and reeds along the shoreline.

The sword shines in the late afternoon sunlight. It's a magnificent weapon. The finest blade in all the world.

The KNIGHT swings his arm back to throw the sword.

VOICE (V/O)
Where should I begin?

Behind the KNIGHT come two FOOTMEN with crossbows. They pause and take aim...

The KNIGHT throws the sword with all his might...

The crossbows fire. There's a deadly *chank-chank* as the quarrels pierce the KNIGHT's back plate. In slow motion he falls forward into the mud.

We watch the sword helicoptering in flight as it arcs across the lake.

VOICE (V/O)
Not here. This story is coming
to an end.

The sword, still spinning against the sky, gets closer. Its trajectory carries it so that we look straight into the pale sun, and in a blaze it's lost as we

CUT TO

2. EXT. SCRIPTORIUM TERRACE. DAY

Turning away from the dazzling sunlight, we're moving along the terrace of a castle with white stone walls. The architecture is Romanesque, the white paving of the terrace decorated blue and green mosaic. The stonework is smooth, brand new - this castle was built only a few decades ago.

At a lectern outside an arched doorway sits FLAVIA, a beautiful blonde girl of about 14. Her bearing is so graceful that we hardly need to see her fine clothing to know she's an aristocrat.

She's working at a page of illuminated manuscript - just starting on it. She has drawn an elaborate letter A in black ink at the top of a blank sheet. At her elbow are a tray of coloured inks, various pens and brushes, a small knife and a sheet of gold leaf.

VOICE (V/O)

Here. This is more promising.
This looks like the start of
something.

FLAVIA lifts a piece of gold leaf in the shape of the first stroke of the letter. She's carefully positioning it on the page when we hear a sharp crack that sounds like a pot shattering.

FLAVIA'S concentration is abruptly interrupted - she jumps as pieces of broken roof tile rain down on her page. Shards of red pottery continue to clatter all around her on the white tiles as she sits there glaring down at her ruined work. Her expression quickly flickers from stunned surprise to mounting anger.

FLAVIA

(low and angry)

Rhys...

(louder now)

RHYS!

Grabbing a piece of broken tile from the lectern, she jumps up and starts for the doorway.

3. INT. CLOISTERS. DAY

RHIANNA, a redheaded girl of about 13, is practicing courtly dance moves in the cool shadows. She stops the minute she hears footsteps...

FLAVIA comes storming past, fists clenched, head jutting forward and still muttering under her breath. Rhianna raises a hand in greeting but her smile wavers as she sees the expression on Flavia's face.

RHIANNA
What's going on?

FLAVIA goes stomping past, ignoring her. RHIANNA hurries after her:

RHIANNA
Flavia? What's the matter?

FLAVIA
Your brother.

Both girls look down at the piece of pottery in Flavia's hand.

RHIANNA
What's he done now?

CUT TO

4. EXT. BATTLEMENTS. DAY

A roof tile sails towards us through the air and suddenly explodes mid-air, scattering fragments with the same sound we heard before.

Pulling back, we see RHYS, a redheaded boy of 14, and BRAN, a lad several years younger. RHYS is recocking the crossbow that he's just used to shoot the roof tile. BRAN'S got another tile in his hand and a stack in front of him on the parapet.

BRAN
This is your best idea - ever.

RHYS lifts the crossbow.

RHYS

Yeah - beats the whole chariot
racing thing.
(he squints)
OK - two this time.

BRAN
(delighted)
Two?

RHYS
At the same time.

BRAN releases two tiles into the air. RHYS judges his
shot perfectly, taking out both roof tiles in midair.

FLAVIA (O/S)
Rhys, when are you going to
GROW UP?

BRAN turns to see FLAVIA emerging onto the
battlements with RHIANNA just behind her. RHYS
ignores them and just starts reloading.

BRAN
He just did a double - two
tiles with one shot!

RHIANNA
We saw. Impressive...

She walks up smiling beside her brother and points to
the stack of filched tiles.

RHIANNA
...if it doesn't rain.

RHYS doesn't find this funny.

RHYS
It won't.

He nocks a quarrel onto the crossbow.

RHIANNA
(to Flavia)
He's sulking because they
wouldn't let him go too.

FLAVIA

(to Rhianna)
On the positive side - if
somebody besieges us with roof
tiles, we know who to call.

RHYS tries to ignore them. He lifts the crossbow.

RHYS
Okay, Bran.

BRAN throws another tile. This time Rhys' shot isn't so well-aimed. The bolt smacks against the tile and rebounds without shattering it. All four of them duck smartly as the bolt whizzes over their heads. We hear the tile splash into the moat below.

Recovering from the shock:

RHYS
(under his breath)
Damn.

FLAVIA
And you're wondering why they
left you behind.

RHYS, stung by the taunt, turns sharply to her and is about to say something he'll regret, when he notices FLAVIA staring up at the roof at grinning. Against his better judgement he follows her eye-line and sees the weather vane above them spinning madly. As it slows to a halt he sees to his embarrassment that the quarrel is sticking out of the cockerel's backside.

FLAVIA, turning to leave, throws the piece of tile she's got to RHYS, causing him to almost drop the crossbow.

FLAVIA
Nice - very nice.
(beat)
Cockadoodledoo, tile boy.

Somewhat smugly, FLAVIA exits.

BRAN
Don't you just hate posh
girls?

RHIANNA gives him a sharp look. (She's a bit posh herself, don't you know.)

RHYS has other things on his mind.

RHYS
Rhianna - can you see
anything?

RHIANNA nods, her mood serious now.

RHIANNA
I'll try.

She closes her eyes, touches her hand to her forehead in concentration, and we pan out over the parapet, surveying the bleak autumnal landscape.

The colors become washed out, unreal. We start to accelerate across the rolling countryside, but immediately the view becomes blurred at the edges. As we get faster and further, the blurring spreads until the image is lost in a blaze of white. In the midst of the white light we can see vague silhouettes of knights stumbling, fighting, hacking at each other, impaled on spears, falling and dying... but the light becomes dazzling, the silhouettes are lost in the blaze, and we cut back to:

The scene on the battlements. RHIANNA opens her eyes, blinks. She shakes her head to clear it of the magical vision.

RHIANNA
Just shadows. It's too far.

BRAN looks out from the battlements. Then he shields his eyes and points.

BRAN
What about that?

RHIANNA squints.

RHIANNA
What is it?

We look down and can see them - two riders just cresting a hill in the distance.

RHYS

Knights!

They turn to hurry down and greet the knights.

We pull back, away from the battlements, and now for the first time we get to see the size and full glory of Camelot. It gleams in the autumn sunlight, a white citadel set on the top of a hill over rolling green countryside.

We continue to rise up and up. The moat around the castle is a thread of silver. We lose sight of Camelot at last through wisps of cloud and

CREDITS

5. EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD. DAY

The clanging of the bell is louder now. Two servants are running to and fro in panic - the OSTLER and the COOK. The youngsters emerge from a door and rush down the steps, halting as they see -

Two knights riding in through the open gates. Both are bloody, pennants ripped, armor battered, shields broken.

SIR BORS falls from his saddle and staggers right towards the frightened kids. A terrifying sight caked in gore. One arm is missing, hacked off at the elbow.

He plunges his head into the water trough.

The youngsters wait. They are deeply shocked - they have never seen the brutal reality of war like this. RHIANNA pushes through and reaches hesitantly to touch SIR BORS.

No response. His head is under the water. She turns him with effort and he rolls to face the sky.

BROTHER CUTHBURT appears on the steps above and looks down aghast. The youngsters watch as he comes down.

RHIANNA

He's dead.

SIR BORS's body lies by the trough. The other knight,

SIR ECTOR, is still on his horse, slumped motionless in the centre of the courtyard.

BROTHER CUTHBURT passes SIR BORS'S body. Maybe we expect him to touch it, to bless it, but he hesitates. His look is one of amazement and horror.

He edges around the stationary figure of SIR ECTOR...

And, suddenly, BROTHER CUTHBURT raises his robe to his knees and runs off out of the gate as fast as his fat legs will carry him.

FLAVIA

I call that a vote of no confidence.

BRAN

Shouldn't we close the gate?

The OSTLER runs over to the gates. He touches a mechanism and the portcullis drops with a clang. At the same time, steel doors slide across more slowly in front of the portcullis to form a double barrier.

CUT TO

A view from behind SIR ECTOR'S shoulder looking towards the youngsters, watching through the closing gates as the monk runs away. The castle servants stand around in frightened huddles.

A clang signals that the inner gates have shut. The youngsters hesitate, then RHYS comes forward.

A handheld camera view follows RHYS as he approaches SIR ECTOR, who looms high above like a statue that could come to life at any moment and crush him.

RHYS stares at the shield. Under the mud and blood, he sees a golden dolphin on a black field. He turns to look at SIR ECTOR with dawning recognition.

RHYS

Sir Ector...?

SIR ECTOR lifts his head. With a weary swipe of his hand he snaps back his visor. Underneath, his face is soaked in blood and he looks near to death.

SIR ECTOR
Young Gawainson...

He only now seems to realize where he is.

RHYS
You are the first back, my
lord.

SIR ECTOR
And the last. The King has
fallen. And all the others
with him.

RHYS
(horrified,
disbelieving)
Prince Mordred won?

SIR ECTOR
(shaking his head)
Mordred's dead - beheaded by
Excalibur. It was slaughter
and it has finished us.
Camelot... the Round Table.
The dream. It's all gone.

RHYS glances nervously over his shoulder. He hopes
this news is not true, but deep down he knows it is.

RHYS
You men, help him down! My
lord, I'll fetch a doctor...

SIR ECTOR
Too late for that.

SIR ECTOR'S eyes flutter closed. Perhaps he's dead.
RHYS waits tensely, one hand half raised. No-one else
in the courtyard dares to move.

RHYS dares to touch SIR ECTOR'S hand. A moment, and
SIR ECTOR opens his eyes again. Pulling off his
gauntlet, he tugs weakly at the ring on his finger.

SIR ECTOR
Take this.

RHYS

But...

SIR ECTOR

Help me with it.

(beat)

It's yours, boy. It was your
father's before, and he had it
from Merlin.

RHYS reaches up ineffectually, hesitating in
astonishment as he hears Merlin's name. Without his
help, SIR ECTOR gets the ring off and holds it up, a
heavy silver band bearing a green jewel. It catches
the late afternoon sunlight.

Momentarily we

CUT TO

6. INT. CAVERN. NIGHT

In a flash of green light, briefly, we see MERLIN
frozen inside a boulder of quartz.

VOICE (V/O)

It is time...

BACK TO

7. EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD. DAY

RHYS takes the ring, having to pull it from SIR
ECTOR'S rigid grip. He touches the hand, then looks
up.

SIR ECTOR'S eyes are closed again, for good this
time.

RHYS looks at the gate, at the frightened servants.
He remembers the ring in his hand and lifts it for
another look.

SIR ECTOR'S horse snorts and sinks to lie on its
chest, its head sinking to the ground. RHYS steps
smartly back, keeping his composure. The horse is
dying, its one last duty to its master now done.

RHIANNA touches RHYS shoulder, making him start. He
forgets about the ring, pocketing it as he turns to

her.

RHIANNA

What did he say? What
happened? Where is everybody?
Rhys? Tell me - where's the
King?

RHYS looks at the sky. The sun is still up, but the
east is already darkness.

RHYS

(to himself)
It's getting dark.
(beat)
I'll tell you everything but
let's get inside first.

He turns to lead her after the others.

CUT TO

8. EXT. SALISBURY PLAIN. DUSK

Sunset over a wide battlefield. Warriors lie dead and
dying. We can make out figures in silhouette picking
their way between the fallen. Looters.

Ignoring the looters, a verdigris-armored CATAPHRACT,
visor closed, brings something towards us. It's a
severed head.

Pulling back, we see Stonehenge. MORGANA and an
obsequious SERVANT wait here within the circle of
stones.

The CATAPHRACT comes trudging up. Passing with its
wide shoulders between two narrowly-grouped stone
columns, it gets stuck for a moment. It gives mighty
shrug, freeing itself, and continues on. In doing so
it has actually moved one of the huge stones - we
hear the grinding of stone and see a trickle of rock
dust spill from the cross-piece.

Reaction shot of the SERVANT and MORGANA at this. The
SERVANT steps back nervously, afraid the columns
might topple. MORGANA just casts her eyes up at the
CATAPHRACT's stupidity.

The CATAPHRACT halts in front of MORGANA and holds up the head.

MORGANA comes forward slowly and raises her hands, not quite caressing the dead face.

MORGANA
Mordred. My brave boy.

SERVANT
A tragedy, milady.

MORGANA
But he died well.

SERVANT
(agreeing)
In battle.

MORGANA
Killing his uncle!

She doesn't turn when she corrects the SERVANT - when she speaks to him, it's as if she hardly cares that he's there, she's speaking half to herself. In silence, she stands at the edge of the camp and surveys the battlefield.

We pan out across the plain, following her gaze and

CUT TO

9. EXT. BATTLEFIELD. DUSK

We track across the battlefield, which is eerily hushed as night falls:

A bloodied lord raises a lady's green scarf to his lips, kisses it, and dies...

A footman binds the stump of his own leg and staggers upright, using his longbow as a crutch...

A dog searches sniffing, finds his dead master, and curls up beside him...

A looter tries to snatch a silver cross from the hand of a fallen GENERAL, who lunges with his dagger to kill the wretch, then slumps back beside his fallen

horse.

For an instant it's almost as if the GENERAL seems to see us. He feebly raises his hand, which is covered in blood, to shield his eyes against the setting sun. Then his hand drops with exhaustion to his side and he shuts his eyes, head tilting back as he gives a sigh.

We pull up and away, approaching Stonehenge and

CUT TO

10. EXT. STONEHENGE. DUSK

MORGANA is standing with her raven-feather cloak wrapped around her, deep in thought, looking out across the plain as darkness falls. The SERVANT is behind her, the CATAPHRACT still stands holding Mordred's head.

The view rotates around her, as if we were hovering invisibly.

MORGANA suddenly turns, distracted, looks this way and that. She sniffs the air.

MORGANA
We're not alone.

We watch from above, drifting, as MORGANA turns to and fro. The SERVANT follows her gaze, the CATAPHRACT waits silently.

MORGANA crosses to the CATAPHRACT, lifts her hand, mutters something under her breath. Liquid syllables in an old tongue: "*Udhre mothre dath-da...*"

The eyes of the severed head, which had rolled up, move sluggishly. The head retains its slack-jawed dead expression, but the eyes focus for a second over MORGANA'S shoulder, staring straight at us, before rolling back up in their sockets.

MORGANA whirls triumphantly to face the camera.

We cut behind her to see MERLIN hovering in front of her.

MORGANA

You!

She raises both hands and a blast of green fire shoots from them. It passes straight through the translucent figure of MERLIN and strikes the SERVANT standing on the other side of him.

The SERVANT whimpers, clutches at his skin. He falls, utters a shriek that barely gets started before it dies away. We watch him shrivel inside his clothes. A moment later, a thin grey snake slithers out of the pile of clothes and into the long grass.

MORGANA regards the pile of clothes for a moment, annoyed that MERLIN'S appearance panicked her. Then she visibly recovers herself and looks back at him.

MORGANA

(dismissively)

You're just a spook.

MERLIN

You've opened Pandora's box,
haven't you, Morgana. And
you've let out all the
troubles of the world...

MORGANA

That's right. So you can go
back to the grave - like a
spook should. Say hello to
Arthur's knights, won't you.
Tell them the Round Table is
history now. Soon it won't
even be that - just a myth.

MERLIN

...You forget that, at the
bottom of the box, there's
always hope.

He says the last words loudly, and vanishes.

MORGANA curls her lip, chafing at the fact that he left before she could think of a retort. Under her breath:

MORGANA

(derisively)

Hope...

CUT TO

11. EXT. CAMELOT. NIGHT

Establishing shot and CUT TO

12. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT

A ringing of metal footsteps on the white stone floor. We see striding feet.

The others - FLAVIA, BRAN and RHIANNA - turn as RHYS enters the room. He is wearing gleaming steel armor, with a tunic of red with a gold pentangle on it. He doesn't have a sword.

FLAVIA

Where did you get that?

BRAN

OH YES! Have you got a sword?

RHIANNA steps over and touches her brother's arm.

RHIANNA

Father's armor. Where did you..?

RHYS nods.

RHYS

(replying to
Rhianna)

It's from his first quest
against the Green Knight. A
little big but I can pad it.

(to Bran:)

There wasn't a sword.

RHIANNA

He took it with him to the
battle.

FLAVIA steps forward slightly bossily, hands on hips.

FLAVIA

Rhys, what exactly do you

think you're going to do?

RHYS looks solemnly at his friends.

RHYS

All the knights have fallen.
The Round Table is finished.

There are few harsh intakes of breath. RHIANNA turns away, distraught. She knew it.

FLAVIA

All of them? Sir Ector told
you that?

RHYS

We have to prepare for the
worst.

BRAN

Does that mean Prince Mordred
is coming here? Is he going to
be King?

RHYS

Mordred's dead too.

RHIANNA

But Sir Ector didn't mention
Morgana, did he? I think she's
alive, Rhys. And she's coming
here, to Camelot.

RHIANNA starts to sob - big tight-throated gasps
escape her. RHYS helplessly puts a hand on his
sister's shoulder.

FLAVIA starts pacing.

FLAVIA

My uncle... He'll hear about
this, I know he will. Somehow.
And when he does... he'll
return.

FLAVIA'S beautiful face is full of hope.

RHYS

Right. Well, that's great.

Just a shame he didn't come
back before, then, y'know,
when he could have actually
made a difference. He's better
off staying where he is now.

FLAVIA deflates slightly and then her face reddens -
she's angry now.

FLAVIA

Oh, and what? You're going to
order Sir Lancelot around, are
you - "Keep out of Britain,
you're not wanted"? You don't
have a sword. You're not even
a knight. What difference do
you think you can make?

RHYS

I don't know... I don't know
what we should be doing. But
I'm not going to sit around
and wait for help, from your
uncle or anyone else.

RHYS strides out of the room.

RHIANNA looks at Bran, who is obviously confused and
a little frightened. She puts her arm around his
shoulders.

BRAN

(to Rhianna)

What are we going to do, then?

RHIANNA doesn't have an answer to this.

FLAVIA

(curtly)

Pray.

13. INT. CHAPEL. NIGHT

In the shadows of a high gallery stands the statue of
a saint holding a huge cross.

We pan down, overlooking the castle chapel. A single
red sanctuary lamp burns above the altar. In the
gloom, we see that the chapel is empty except for the

solitary figure of RHYS kneeling in prayer at the front pew.

The camera moves around to face RHYS. He has his hands clasped in prayer.

We track in slowly on his face. As we do, we see that he is nodding off to sleep...

CUT TO

14. INT. LABYRINTH. NIGHT

Darkness. Footsteps ringing on a stone floor. A cloaked figure sweeps by, feet striding fast, fur cloak brushing the flagstones. Not the clean white limestone of Camelot - this stone is grey, lichen-spotted, worn and pitted with age.

RHYS

Hey!

We pull back. A rough-hewn tunnel. RHYS is here, following the cloaked figure who is striding ahead. The figure carries a staff. RHYS hurries to catch up.

As he falls into step just behind, the figure half-turns his head. We glimpse an enigmatic smile but he doesn't break stride.

RHYS is almost out of breath as he runs to keep up.

RHYS

You're Merlin.

There's no answer except a vague gesture of the hand.

RHYS

But how do I know that? You died before I was born.

MERLIN

Huh. Not died, exactly.

RHYS

Where are we going?

(beat)

Come to that, where are we now?

MERLIN gives no reply.

RHYS

Is this the labyrinth under
the castle?

MERLIN

We're not in Camelot, we're in
a dream. As a matter of fact,
we're in your dream.

RHYS

(getting annoyed)

If it's my dream, why am I
following you?

MERLIN stops and whirls around to face him.

MERLIN

(very forcefully)

Because *I* know where I'm
going.

NEW ANGLE shows

15. EXT. SNOWSCAPE. NIGHT

Close-up on RHYS'S face, taken aback. The stone
tunnel walls behind him have gone. They are outside.

A crane shot shows two small figures in a snow-
covered landscape dotted with bare trees. The stars
wheel overhead at unnatural speed.

Close-up on MERLIN. The stars turning behind him. He
lifts his head to look and they slow and stop.

MERLIN

Even in the depths of winter,
the land isn't dead. It's
sleeping. Time holds its
breath and waits for the year
to begin again.

Merlin stoops over a bank of hard frozen snow. CU of
Merlin's fingers as he digs away snow to uncover
green grass. He straightens up cradling something in
his hands. Rhys stands behind him.

RHYS
What's that?

MERLIN
Would you like to see..?

Merlin's cupped hands over Rhys's open palms.

MERLIN (CONTD)
Take it.

CU of Rhys's amazed reaction at what he sees.

RHYS
Wow.

Rhys is looking down at the tiny hibernating vole
Merlin has given him.

RHYS
I can feel its heartbeat...

View past Merlin towards Rhys as he walks away.

RHYS (CONTD)
I don't understand. What are
you trying to tell me?

The baying of a wolf echoes out of the night.

WOLF (OS)
AROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

Momentarily we get a wolf's-eye view padding through
leafless trees.

RHYS is alarmed. He stares between the trees,
starting as something dislodges snow from a branch.

RHYS
Did you hear that? Are we in
danger?

He means right here and now, but Merlin takes it as a
more general question:

MERLIN
You are Camelot's last
defenders. Protect it. It's

the egg from which a new world
must be hatched.

An avalanche of snow falls from a branch in the
woods.

SOUND FX:

CRUMP!

Rhys looks towards the woods.

RHYS

I really think we should be
getting out of -

He turns. LS of Rhys, now alone. Merlin has gone.

RHYS

Oh. Right.

There is a crunch of padding feet. Eyes glitter in
the darkness. RHYS holds the little vole to his chest
protectively.

RHYS

Is that your heart beating
fast? Or mine?

Rhys looking anxiously around as the wolf's-eye
viewpoint closes in.

A heartbeat grows, magnified, thudding. RHYS suddenly
whirls, startled, as a blurred shape leaps for him.
But he's rooted in shock. And his eyes are closed.

VOICE

Rhys!

CUT TO

16. INT. CHAPEL. NIGHT

Someone is shaking RHYS awake. He had fallen asleep
upright in the pew.

FLAVIA

Rhys, wake up!

RHYS

Ah - !

FLAVIA
You fell asleep.

RHYS
Flavia... I was talking to
Merlin.
(beat)
Was that just a dream?

He looks at his hands, still clasped in prayer. The ring glints on his finger. Flavia has touched his hand to wake him and for a moment they both look at where their fingers touch.

RHYS
Flavia, about what I said
before -

The moment broken. Flavia lets go his hand and rises briskly to her feet.

FLAVIA
Later. We've got other things
to worry about now.
(beat)
Someone's got into the castle.

CUT TO

17. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT

The hall is now unlit. An INTRUDER, apparently encased in black armour and carrying a sword, enters and feels his way along the wall.

Bars of moonlight from the high latticed windows form a web of shadows on the floor. The INTRUDER crosses to the table in the centre of the hall.

He places his sword on the table and touches a lamp on the table. It glows with very faint blue light, showing us a visor styled like a wolf's mask.

A loud battle-cry suddenly breaks the silence: "Yeee-haa!"

Using one of the ropes that secure the chandelier

overhead, RHYS swings down from the gallery above. The INTRUDER turns, starts to move aside, but he is still caught a glancing blow by RHY'S kick.

The INTRUDER ends up sprawling, holding himself up by the table edge. RHYS is on the table.

The INTRUDER lunges, a swinging blow with his armoured fist. RHYS recovers in time to jump over it - and again, as the other fist swings round.

The INTRUDER lunges to grab his legs. RHYS jumps right over him, somersaulting to land on the floor.

The INTRUDER kicks backwards, bracing himself on the table to give full force to the blow. There's a huge metallic clang as RHYS goes flying.

RHYS scoots under the table to buy time to recover. They confront each other across the table. Suddenly the INTRUDER grabs the rim of the table, bellows, and heaves the table back. He's trying to pin RHYS against the wall.

RHYS rolls onto the table and across, landing on his feet. He's going for the INTRUDER'S sword.

We see the ring on his finger start to glow.

The INTRUDER pulls the tablecloth. The sword goes clattering to the floor.

Neither of them notice the flash of green light from RHYS's ring.

CUT TO

18. INT. CAVERN. NIGHT

The same scene as before of MERLIN frozen inside a boulder of quartz. Only this time his eye inches open.

MERLIN
Time to wake up.

CUT BACK

19. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT

As the INTRUDER snatches up his sword, a ball of blinding green light appears in the air between him and RHYS. They stare at it, their fight forgotten for the moment, as it spins in the air. Sparks crackle off it, slowly flickering over walls, floor and ceiling.

It's growing bigger. A monstrous face appears - just eyes and mouth of gaping darkness against the light, like sunspots. It starts to give vent to a snarling, howling voice - like somebody who hasn't spoken for years trying to remember how to form words. A rush of wind forces both RHYS and the INTRUDER back.

RHYS suddenly lunges for a side table where his crossbow is lying. He grabs it, checks it's loaded. But he doesn't know whether to point it at the INTRUDER or the glowing face.

He chooses the INTRUDER.

RHYS
Call it off.
(beat)
Whatever it is.

INTRUDER
Don't be stupid. It's nothing
to do with me!

RHYS mulls it over a moment, makes the call. He swivels so that he's pointing the crossbow at the crackling demonic face instead.

RHYS
Okay, let's deal with this
thing first. Then we can go
back to beating each other up.

The INTRUDER nods. Then runs towards the glowing face with his sword raised to strike.

There's a terrible screech of shearing metal. The sword breaks and the blade goes flying, as if thrown by an immensely powerful magnet.

It strikes RHYS, gashing his arm. The crossbow falls to the floor as he staggers back and collapses against the wall.

The light in the ring fades.

CUT TO

20. INT. CAVERN. NIGHT

Inside the block of quartz, MERLIN's eye closes again.

21. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT

The glowing face shrinks rapidly and vanishes with a soft pop. The room is silent and in darkness again, the wind has gone as if someone closed a door.

The INTRUDER stands for just a moment gaping at the spot where it vanished. Then he hears RHYS groan and hurries across to him.

The INTRUDER bends close to RHYS, who is half-stunned, wincing in pain. He reacts with recognition now that he can get a good look at RHYS's face.

INTRUDER

Rhys Gawainson.

(beat)

You're a bloody fool, aren't you.

Suddenly the lights go on. RHIANNA steps from behind a tapestry. RHYS's crossbow is on the floor right in front of her. She picks it up and points it straight at the INTRUDER.

The INTRUDER glares at his broken sword, at RHIANNA with her crossbow. He throws the sword down.

INTRUDER

Where the hell did you spring from?

RHIANNA

If you've killed him...

INTRUDER

He's not dead.

RHYS groans and sits up, nursing his injured right arm. RHIANNA hurries over to check on him, keeping

the crossbow levelled at the INTRUDER.

INTRUDER (CONTD)

His pride might never recover,
though.

(re the crossbow)

Point that thing somewhere
else, will you?

RHYS

Who are you?

FLAVIA and BRAN enter. The INTRUDER looks around at them, then pulls off his helmet, revealing himself to be STEFAN, a lean Byronic young man of about 15.

STEFAN

I'm Stefan, squire to Sir
Bleoberis - my father.

RHIANNA lowers the crossbow.

RHIANNA

I've seen you around.

FLAVIA

You've come from the battle?

STEFAN

I was in the rearguard, at
Sarum. Didn't see the battle.
I heard it, though. A roar
like a thousand men shouting
with one throat. It seemed to
come from the sky. And it went
on and on. It didn't end,
just... faded away.

He looks at all of them. What are they thinking? That he ran away? It's a possibility but it remains unspoken.

STEFAN starts up the staircase at the back of the Great Hall.

RHYS

Where are you going?

STEFAN

The Throne Room. I need a sword. You'd better get one too.

22. INT. GALLERY. NIGHT

The gallery at the top of the staircase, overlooking the Great Hall. A long tapestry hangs along the back wall, depicting a hunt for fawns through thick woodland. At the far end of the gallery are doors to the Throne Room.

FLAVIA is hurrying after STEFAN, who is walking towards the doors. RHYS is just behind her. He has removed his right vambrace and wound a scrap of the tablecloth around his injured wrist. He hurries after the other two.

FLAVIA
You can't go in there.

STEFAN
Who says?

RHYS
Only the Knights of the Round Table can enter the Throne Room. And you're no knight.

STEFAN
Fine, good boy - stick to the rules.

They've reached the doors, which are sealed by complicated lock mechanism like a (possibly booby-trapped) set of giant interlocking brass jigsaw pieces. STEFAN stops, not so sure of himself now.

RHYS
You see, genius, it's not about the rules. We don't know how to open it.

FLAVIA
Maybe if you move this bit...

She gingerly touches the lock mechanism, then jerks her hand away smartly as various pieces move

threateningly like clockwork jaws.

FLAVIA

Yiii!

After a moment, the lock returns to its quiescent position.

STEFAN

Listen, we have to get in there somehow. We're going to need weapons to fight Morgana.

RHYS

She is coming, then.

STEFAN doesn't bother to look at him. He doesn't think much of RHYS, and it shows in his dismissive tone.

STEFAN

Of course she is. And then I'm going to kill her.

The lock mechanism suddenly opens a kind of clockwork eye, turns and glares and them, then unfolds clockwork "jaws" and makes a terrifying mechanical ROAR.

They all take a step back, startled.

STEFAN

O-kay... Tell you what, maybe we'll just get some knives from the kitchen.

RHYS looks at the other two, then tentatively reaches for the lock. He's not eager to touch it, but he can't think of a way to give up without losing face.

Before he can touch the lock, the doors click and swing open.

RHIANNA is standing in front of them.

RHIANNA

Are you lot just going to stand around out there all night?

RHYS sighs, shakes his head and enters first. STEFAN and FLAVIA follow.

23. INT. THRONE ROOM. NIGHT

It's a circular room dominated by the huge Round Table. There are chairs bearing coats of arms all around the table, and the largest chair is like a throne. Above the very centre of the table hovers a large silver chalice that gleams with highlights of red. Beams of ruby light shine from it - the only illumination in the room.

STEFAN

You have this knack of popping
up out of the stonework, don't
you?

RHIANNA

A magician never reveals her
secrets.

RHYS is staring in amazement at the Holy Grail.
STEFAN notices.

STEFAN

The Holy Grail. The King drank
from it and it cured all his
wounds.

RHYS looks at the blood-stained bandage on his arm.
STEFAN notices, then turns away.

We can see RHYS wondering nervously whether to reach
for the glowing Grail.

STEFAN

Of course, you could just been
blown to atoms the minute you
touch it. My father said that
only Sir Percival was pure
enough to touch the Grail
without being burned.

RHYS looks round at him, back at the Grail briefly,
then goes to join the others searching the weapon
racks along the wall.

FLAVIA

There's nothing here. The knights must have taken all the swords with them.

RHYS

Of course - it was the final battle. Why leave a weapon you might need?

We hear running footsteps outside.

BRAN (O/S)

Quick! Come quick!

He comes skidding into the Throne Room.

BRAN

Morgana's army is outside.

Push in on their reaction shot and

CUT TO

24. EXT. CAMELOT. NIGHT

The youngsters gather on the battlements and look down at the field in front of the castle. Dozens of torches are burning in the darkness, sparkling in a light mist, marking out a large band of men drawn up for battle.

We travel down from the battlements.

FLAVIA (O/S)

It's not what I'd call an *army*, exactly. But not a bad turnout considering all her soldiers died this afternoon.

We descend close to the ranks of soldiers standing with flaring torches in the mist. As we track along, we see that all of them are skeletons clad in rusty earth-spotted Roman armor.

MORGANA is standing beside a horse-drawn cart on which rests a coffin. The silent CATAPHRACT stands behind her.

MORGANA takes a few paces towards the castle and

pauses, smiling to herself. She taps her staff twice on the ground beside her - *thud, thud*.

CUT TO

25. EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD. NIGHT

RHYS, RHIANNA and BRAN are just emerging on the steps behind FLAVIA. The courtyard is lit by burning braziers. The servants we saw earlier - the COOK and OSTLER - are hurriedly pulling haversacks onto their backs. It's possible they have a silver candlestick or two in there among their own possessions.

The OSTLER spots the youngsters, nudges the COOK, and both servants stop what they're doing. (They are not your standard B-movie cringing, servile-type peasantry - King Arthur's reign was egalitarian. It's a sign of how far gone things are now that they're scarpering with some loot.)

COOK

We have to go. Our families...

FLAVIA pauses disdainfully, but she knows it's not fair to keep them here.

FLAVIA

Go.

The servants scurry off to the portcullis mechanism and open it before running out across the drawbridge. The youngsters watch them go. Outside they can see only thick mist and darkness.

BRAN

Shouldn't we go too?

RHYS

Go where?

STEFAN emerges from the Great Hall clutching an axe that he's found somewhere. He takes in the situation at a glance.

STEFAN

What's that gate doing open!
Everybody get inside!

STEFAN starts to push past them, intending to close the gate, but then he hears something and stops -

There are footsteps on the drawbridge, muffled by the mist. A lone figure takes shape out of the darkness. It's MORGANA.

MORGANA

I rather like it this way.
It's more... inviting.

She walks unhurriedly to the centre of the courtyard. RHYS moves forward to stand beside STEFAN at the foot of the steps, with the girls and BRAN behind them.

MORGANA looks around the courtyard, pleased to be back in Camelot, then turns to address them:

MORGANA

"Suffer the little children..." Do you know that one? I don't have much time for the new faith myself, but that's a quote I always find myself drawn to. "Suffer." It has a pleasant ring.

She looks pointedly at RHYS'S ring. STEFAN suddenly runs over, giving her a wide berth, and operates the gate mechanism. The portcullis drops swiftly, steel doors slide across to form a double barrier.

MORGANA ignores him.

MORGANA

No, here's a better one: "The sins of the fathers..." Hmm?
"The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children." That's in your book, isn't it, of your new faith? So maybe there is something to be said for it.

The steel doors have only just closed when there's a hammering on the other side - a slow pounding, three times. STEFAN looks at the steel doors.

The knocking resumes, three more blows. Morgana looks at Stefan.

MORGANA

Are you going to get that?

A hollow voice like the tolling of a bell comes from outside:

SIR BLEOBERIS (O/S)

Ste-fan.

STEFAN

Father?

RHIANNA looks across at him sharply as her sixth sense kicks in.

MORGANA turns from looking at STEFAN and his father. With a satisfied smirk, she addresses RHYS and RHIANNA standing on the steps:

MORGANA

I'd have brought your father, too, poppets, but there wasn't enough of him left.

RHIANNA

Stefan, don't -

Too late. He hits the gate mechanism.

STEFAN

Get them all inside...

RHIANNA

Stefan - it's a trap!

MORGANA makes a gesture as if to say, "What can you do with these children?" and steps out of shot.

Stefan ignores RHIANNA as, with a clanking of machinery, the portcullis slides up, the steel bulkhead slides across. Just before he steps out onto the drawbridge STEFAN turns once again.

STEFAN

Rhys! Remember what I told you...

RHYS hesitates then grabs RHIANNA - he turns to FLAVIA and BRAN.

RHYS

Inside now!

FLAVIA'S about to make a smart comment but she thinks better of it and just nods. The four of them hurry inside.

26. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT

RHIANNA and BRAN are already here. FLAVIA and RHYS enter. RHYS closes and bars the doors behind them.

FLAVIA

What did Stefan mean, about
what he told you before?

RHYS

He said that Morgana mustn't
take Camelot. Rather than let
that happen... we should be
prepared to kill her.

RHYS spots something that catches his attention. He strides rapidly across the room. It's the crossbow RHIANNA had earlier, lying on the table. RHYS takes it and checks it's cocked and loaded.

RHIANNA catches his arm, points up the stairs.

RHIANNA

Rhys, look!

They look up at the gallery. Red light is streaming from open doors at the far end. The Throne Room.

RHIANNA

Someone's up there.

They start towards the stairs and we

CUT TO

EXT. THE DRAWBRIDGE - NIGHT

At first it seems as if there's nothing out there in the thick mist. Stefan steps forward out onto the drawbridge. The dark lines of the bridge seem to stretch out to eternity - there's nothing beyond the bridge and this mist. Stefan looks behind him - the

mist has shrouded Camelot from view. Stefan is all alone.

STEFAN

Father?

Stefan takes another few steps forward. The mist swirls all around him and a tall man emerges from the fog further down the elongated bridge. He's wearing similar armor to STEFAN'S, his closed visor also a wolf's head, though much more feral than his son's.

STEFAN

Father!

Stefan takes another step forward.

For a moment the armored man doesn't respond but then he raises his sword - a clear indication that he's about to attack.

STEFAN

Father - I don't understand

SIR BLEOBERIS lets rip with a mighty yell and runs at Stefan, his armor clanking and echoing in this vacuum of a place. Stefan has no choice but to defend himself and their swords meet with a mighty clash.

SIR BLEOBERIS

Coward! My son - the coward.

STEFAN spins away and circles his father - SIR BLEOBERIS strikes out with his sword again.

SIR BLEOBERIS

Insolent pup - you think you deserve to live? Men a hundred times braver than you perished today.

STEFAN parries his father's wheeling sword, trying desperately to defend himself from its mighty blows. The fight is now progressing down the drawbridge.

STEFAN

No - I - I was ordered to stay back...

SIR BLEOBERIS

You cowered like a girl behind
her mother's skirts!

Stefan is now being driven back towards the edge of
the bridge.

STEFAN

I didn't know what to do.

Sir Bleoberis is up close to Stefan, driving him back
towards the edge.

SIR BLEOBERIS

You should have died for your
king like a man!

More mighty blow rain down on STEPHAN from his
father's sword and all he can do is retreat from
them. Stephan's heels are now off the edge of the
drawbridge and he teeters for a moment, his foot
slipping as he regains his balance.

SIR BLEOBERIS

You have shamed our family's
name - you shall never bear it
- never! You're not worthy.

Stefan howls and pushes back at his father, away from
the edge.

STEFAN

I DID MY BEST!

Sir Bleoberis attacks back, driving Stefan towards
the edge again.

SIR BLEOBERIS

The best lie dead in the
fields. Take off that armor
boy - you're not fit to wear
it.

Tears are wet on Stefan's cheeks and he's breathing
heavily - he and his father circle each other, both
tense and ready to pounce. SIR BLEOBERIS laughs, a
deep, rattling and mocking laugh. Stefan replaces
sadness with anger, he lunges towards his father, his
sword whirling.

STEFAN

It was the King who ordered me
to stay back and now I will
honor the king with my life. I
AM NOT A GHOST, FATHER - I AM
ALIVE. AND WITH MY LIFE I WILL
TRIUMPH OVER THE DARK!

And with that STEFAN brings his sword round to cut
off the head of SIR BLEOBERIS - except that in that
move it's revealed that STEFAN'S opponent was nothing
but an empty suit of armor. The armor crumples to the
ground as STEFAN stands over it with his sword held
up in victory.

The mist swirls and clears and behind him - Camelot
is revealed once again.

28. INT. THRONE ROOM. NIGHT

RHYS leads the way with FLAVIA, RHIANNA and BRAN as
they run in through the open doors and stop.

MORGANA is sitting in King Arthur's chair.

MORGANA

Nice place. I'll take it.

RHYS steps forward and levels the crossbow at her.

RHYS

I don't think so.

MORGANA rises and stretches lazily, like a cat. She
fixes her gaze on RHYS.

MORGANA

It's not an easy thing to take
a life.

(beat)

Actually I've never really
found that to be true.

She's staring at RHYS. Her green eyes hold him with a
penetrating stare.

We see him fighting whatever she's doing. The
crossbow shakes slightly in his hands. Beads of sweat
run on his forehead.

He starts to turn the crossbow around. Gives a gasp as he grits his teeth with the effort of trying to resist her will.

MORGANA

Ever seen what a crossbow bolt can do to a person's face? The skull... explodes. You can only identify the body by the armor it's wearing.

The crossbow is rattling in RHYS'S hands. He's gasping, sweat pouring from his face. The crossbow is turned now to point at him.

RHIANNA steps forward next to him. Her eyes lock with MORGANA'S. Her gaze flashes down to the ring on RHYS'S finger.

MORGANA can't help following RHIANNA's glance. As she does, her hold over RHYS is broken. She snarls and raises her hand.

MERLIN (V/O)

Watch out!

RHYS shoves his sister aside with one hand. A jet of green fire from MORGANA flashes between them.

RHYS swings the crossbow around and shoots - the bolt goes wild, striking the Holy Grail. It falls from the air and a glowing blood-red fluid gushes out towards MORGANA. She draws back, but not fast enough. The red liquid touches her foot and it burns her. She screams in agony.

The lights of the castle go dim. Perhaps it was powered by the grail before. Now the energy is leaking away.

The red stuff keeps flowing out of the Grail where it lies on its side on the Round Table. It's a strange substance - halfway between a liquid and a heavy glowing vapour. It spills over the sides of the table. RHYS and the others stare at it. They've forgotten all about MORGANA.

Close-up on RHYS looking at the ring on his finger. It's throbbing with green light. The gem seems as deep as an ocean - or a buried cave.

MERLIN (V/O)
Get out - fast.

RHYS seems to hear MERLIN'S words. He comes to his senses and takes charge:

RHYS
Quickly.

He ushers them out of the Throne Room.

29. INT. GALLERY. NIGHT

FLAVIA, RHIANNA and BRAN race along the gallery with RHYS bringing up the rear. Behind them, a wave of glowing red vapour/fluid rolls inexorably out of the Throne Room.

The lights in the Great Hall below go out. Metal grilles are dropping from the ceiling, to bar the gallery and the arches overlooking the Hall. The way ahead is blocked.

RHIANNA starts feeling along the wall. The others look at her.

RHIANNA
Help me find the catch! It's -
here it is.

She touches something on the wall and a panel pops open. RHIANNA dives through.

The others hesitate. RHIANNA appears again in the open tunnel.

RHIANNA
Come on!

They follow her through and shut the secret panel just before the red liquid reaches them.

CUT TO

30. INT. THRONE ROOM. NIGHT

MORGANA is trapped at the back of the room as the flood of red liquid spreads from the overturned Grail. Smoke is still rising from her leg where she

was burned.

She limps back. The look on her face as the liquid spreads towards her is one of obvious terror.

A grinding of metal gears from above. Morgana looks up. The domed roof of the chamber is glass, and through it we can see the predawn, but a metal iris is sliding into place to close it off.

MORGANA raises her arms over her head. She gives a long drawn-out screech. The black feather cape completely covers her.

The screech is so loud that the glass roof shatters. But the steel iris is almost closed.

MORGANA'S screech becomes the squawk of a bird. There is a frantic rustling of feathers.

31. EXT. CAMELOT. PREDAWN

Out of the domed turret atop Camelot flies a raven with an injured leg.

CUT TO

32. INT. CHAPEL. PREDAWN

STEFAN is retreating between the pews. A moment later we find out why, as the door of the chapel bursts off its hinges and the CATAPHRACT stomps in.

STEFAN is looking around for a weapon. The CATAPHRACT is pursuing him, upending pews like they were balsa wood.

STEFAN stumbles over. The CATAPHRACT closes in.

Clang! - as RHYS jumps down from the gallery above, catching the CATAPHRACT with both feet in the back of the neck. It sways and turns, swiping wildly at RHYS as he lands and jumps back out of reach.

STEFAN whacks the CATAPHRACT with the big silver crucifix that normally rests on the altar. It turns, seizes the crucifix from him, and crushes it with one hand.

RHYS steps in, trying to force it back with a long bronze candle-stand that he jabs at it like a pike. STEFAN steps in beside him so that the two of them can apply their strength.

STEFAN

Nice of you to drop in.

Despite the danger they're in, RHYS has time to look faintly scornful at this pun.

RHYS

Did you just think of that?

The CATAPHRACT grabs the shaft of the candle-stand and pulls it out of their grasp. They watch in dumbfounded amazement as it bends the bronze stand like a twig.

Suddenly a thrown object hits the CATAPHRACT in the side of the head. It lets go of the candle-stand and catches the object - a prayer-book.

The CATAPHRACT looks up at the gallery, where the only figure to be seen is the stone statue of a saint.

Another couple of prayer-books come sailing over, bouncing off the CATAPHRACT. A pause, then a wooden chair comes flying over the parapet and crashes into it.

FLAVIA and RHIANNA appear at the parapet having flung the chair. BRAN appears beside them and lobs a few more prayer-books.

None of this fazes the CATAPHRACT. Then it hears something, remembers the two boys, and turns as -

STEFAN and RHYS ram a pew into the side of it. The CATAPHRACT rocks back with the impact, but it still doesn't go down.

STEFAN

What is this guy made of?

Before they can ram it again, the CATAPHRACT swings about to face them, raises both fists and smashes the pew into splinters.

RHYS

Trouble!

It steps forward, fists raised. STEFAN and RHYS are right in front of it, with nowhere to go.

Crash! The saint's statue comes whizzing down from above and flattens the CATAPHRACT to the floor before it can strike.

RHYS and STEFAN look up to see FLAVIA and BRAN peering down from the balcony, having toppled the statue.

FLAVIA smacks the palms of her hands together and for once drops her haughty demeanour with a broad grin.

FLAVIA

Anything else?

There's a click and a panel opens in the side of the pulpit. RHIANNA beckons to RHYS and STEFAN.

RHIANNA

Let's get out of here.

RHYS goes to enter the hidden passage under the pulpit. STEFAN catches his arm.

STEFAN

What's happened?

RHYS

Later. We need to get out of here.

STEFAN

What are you talking about? We can't leave. We have to defend this castle with our lives.

RHIANNA

We don't have any choice! Come on.

There's the sound of metal scraping on stone as the CATAPHRACT does its Terminator act and rises from under the wreckage of the statue. Its arm is hanging half off, but still mechanically opening and closing.

We are facing STEFAN and RHYS as they look at each other.

RHYS

Where are we going to get
another statue at this short
notice?

We see them turn back to face the CATAPHRACT and react to something, then a moment later we see what it is as we cut to a view of the CATAPHRACT and, behind it, a tidal wave of glowing red fluid comes rolling through the broken doorway.

Our last sight of the CATAPHRACT is as it's swamped by the wave of red liquid.

CUT TO

33. INT. LABYRINTH. PREDAWN

RHIANNA leads STEFAN, FLAVIA, BRAN and (bringing up the rear) RHYS through the tunnels below Camelot.

Behind them thunders the gushing red liquid.

We're with RHYS. He looks behind him, then we see him react in confusion as he turns around - what happened to the others? They're gone!

He stops. The red liquid is bearing down on him...

Just before it hits, he's grabbed by several pairs of hands and hauled directly up through the roof of the tunnel, and we

CUT TO

34. EXT. WOODS. DAWN

RHYS is pulled up beside the others onto a grassy bank. Dawn is just breaking. Above the treetops we can see Camelot gleaming in the morning sun.

STEFAN looks darkly up at it. There's a long silence; everyone is too stunned by recent events to know what to say. At last STEFAN speaks:

STEFAN

We abandoned Camelot. We
should have died before we did
that.

He stamps off deeper into the woods, brooding. The
others follow in their own time.

RHIANNA lingers beside RHYS, who is still looking up
at Camelot against the dawn. He looks at her.

RHYS
At least Morgana didn't get it
either.

She nods, smiling wanly, and follows the others. We
stay with RHYS as he takes a last look at Camelot and
makes a vow to himself:

RHYS (CONTD)
And we'll be back.

END OF EPISODE ONE