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

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

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

NIMUEH
Gehyre me, wan cniht, awac!

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

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

The crack grows bigger in the tomb...

NIMUEH
Uparis; awrec Uther Pendragon!

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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

ARTHUR
I do, Sire.
Do you promise to exercise mercy and justice in your deeds and judgements?

I do, Sire.

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

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

They both smile. Uther places the crown upon his son’s head, he turns, addressing the room as well as Arthur, following the words of the ceremony.

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

The crowd cheer.

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

(in a low voice)
So how does it feel to be servant to the Crown Prince of Camelot?

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

GWEN takes a sideways look at him.

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

I am not.

You are. I can see it in your face.

Those socks are very clean. Of course I’m proud of them.
GWEN laughs as ARTHUR soaks up the adulation.

But the moment is interrupted by the sound of smashing glass. Uther and Arthur turn to see...

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

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

UTHER
What in the Devil’s name...?

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

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

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

OWAIN
I, Sir Owain, accept your challenge.

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

BLACK KNIGHT
Single combat. Noon tomorrow. To the death.

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

TITLES

INT. GAIUS’ CHAMBERS - NIGHT 1. UK.

Gaius is preparing some routine remedies at his workbench. Merlin watches, but his thoughts are still consumed by the evening’s events.

MERLIN
Have you ever seen this Black Knight before?

Gaius stops his work for a moment.
GAIUS
I don’t believe so.

MERLIN
You didn’t recognise his crest?

GAIUS busies himself with his work again.

GAIUS
(evasive)
His crest?

MERLIN
Which house is it?

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

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

GAIUS
(busying himself)
No.

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

GAIUS
That would seem likely.

MERLIN
But then what’s he doing here?

GAIUS turns to face him.

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

MERLIN
Okay, I’m going.

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

MERLIN
Gaius?
GAIUS

(weary)
Merlin.

MERLIN

Do you think Owain can beat him?

GAIUS

We will find out soon enough.

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (MORAGNA’S CHAMBERS) / EXT. CAMELOT

4

(MAIN GATES) – NIGHT 1. UK / FR.

Looking out through the window we see...

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

GWEN (O.S.)

What does he want?

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

GWEN

Why would he issue such a challenge?

MORAGNA is pacing nervously...

MORAGNA

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

GWEN

I know.

MORAGNA

He’s just a boy.

GWEN

He hates anyone saying that.

A guilty reaction on MORAGNA’s face. She turns to leave the room.

CUT TO:
INT. KING’S PALACE (ARTHUR’S CHAMBERS) / EXT. CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) - NIGHT 1. UK / FR.

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

MORGANA
You must stop Owain from fighting.

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

MORGANA
So put an end to it.

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

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

ARTHUR
I can’t!

MORGANA
Why not?

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

MORGANA
But he’s just a boy.

ARTHUR
(a heavy sigh)
I know.

CUT TO:

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

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

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
Gaius! Thank God.
GAIUS
You know why I’m here?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
The Black Knight.

GAIUS
So it is he?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
You saw his crest.

GAIUS
Have you confirmed it?

He looks down at the book ...

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

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

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
According to the records.

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) – NIGHT 1. UK.

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

UTHER
Yes?

The door opens and in comes GAIUS.

GAIUS
I’m sorry to disturb you, Sire.

UTHER tries to hide his anxiety.

UTHER
What is it?

GAIUS
The Knight, the stranger...

UTHER tenses again.
GAIUS
He bears the crest of Tristan de Bois.

UTHER (quietly)
Yes.

GAIUS nods.

GAIUS
But he’s been dead for twenty years.

UTHER
I know. I killed him.

GAIUS
But how do you explain ...?

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (ARTHUR’S CHAMBERS) - DAY 2. UK.

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

ARTHUR
Owain, you’ve never fought in mortal combat before, it’s different... it’s not like the training I’ve given you.
(more fixated on adjusting a buckle)
Yeah, I know...

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

OWAIN
(bright, innocent)
But I have the same advantage – he’s never seen me fight.

ARTHUR
(unconvinced)
True.

OWAIN
You’ve watched me.

Yes...

OWAIN
And?

ARTHUR
And I know no one braver.

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

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

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

GWEN enters. OWAIN smiles.

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

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

GWEN
She wishes you to wear it for luck.

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

(MORE)
I won’t need luck. We sense ARTHUR’s gut churning feeling of responsibility.

CUT TO:

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

MERLIN and GWEN hurry to join the onlookers. Finally, SIR OWAIN strides out from the palace with ARTHUR at his side. For the first time, the young man’s nerves are apparent. He walks toward the waiting BLACK KNIGHT.

ARTHUR

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

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

ARTHUR

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

He looks at OWAIN.

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

ARTHUR

Let battle commence.

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

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

OWAIN readjusts himself and lunges again. The BLACK KNIGHT once more foils him with a deft move.
ARTHUR’s concern intensifies - the BLACK KNIGHT is clearly an accomplished swordsman. Uther too looks concerned.

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

GWEN
Come on, Owain!

ARTHUR
(bellowing)
One well aimed blow!

MERLIN watches on fearfully, impotent to help.

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

MERLIN’s eyes tighten...

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

MERLIN reacts with joy.

MERLIN
Yes!

GAIUS gives him a puzzled glance...

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

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

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

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

BLACK KNIGHT
Who will take up my challenge?

ARTHUR makes to step forward but Uther grabs him by the arm. ARTHUR flashes his father a quick look, and pulls himself from Uther’s grip...
But as he turns back to the gauntlet, SIR PELLINOR steps forward and swipes it from the ground.

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

BLACK KNIGHT
Single combat. Dawn tomorrow.

The BLACK KNIGHT stares at Uther...

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

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

MERLIN watches him, then glances at GAIUS.

MERLIN
Should we tend to his wounds?

GAIUS looks at him, confused.

MERLIN
He took a hit.

GAIUS
Owain didn’t land a blow.

MERLIN
I saw it. It pierced his breast plate.

GAIUS
Are you sure?

MERLIN
(nods)
My eyes are quicker than yours.

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

MERLIN
He should be dead.

GAIUS looks concerned.

GAIUS
Maybe he already is.

CUT TO:
INT. KING’S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) - DAY 2. UK.

ARTHUR angrily pursues Uther as he enters the council chambers.

ARTHUR
Why did you stop me?

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

ARTHUR
Have you seen how this stranger fights?!

UTHER
And Sir Pellinor will be a match for him.

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

UTHER
I cannot help that.

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

MERLIN
Are you sure we should be doing this?

GAIUS
You’re not scared, are you?

MERLIN
No, I love old crypts.
(a beat)
I wouldn’t be seen dead anywhere else.
Suddenly, the door they came through slams closed and the room is thrown into darkness.

MERLIN
What was that?

GAIUS
Must’ve been a gust of wind.

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

GAIUS
We should’ve brought a torch.

MERLIN casts a spell...

MERLIN
Leohtbora.

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

GAIUS
Handy!

MERLIN
Yes.

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

MERLIN frowns, then reluctantly takes the lead.

CUT TO:

13 INT. KING’S PALACE (BURIAL VAULTS) - NIGHT 2. FR.

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

MERLIN
What are we looking for?

GAIUS
Move your light to the left.

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

GAIUS
There.

MERLIN shines the torchlight on the black tomb.

They move toward it.
MERLIN
(uneasy)
We’re breaking into someone’s grave.

As GAIUS reaches the tomb he stops

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

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

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

CUT TO:

14 INT. GAIUS’ CHAMBERS – NIGHT 2. UK.

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

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

MERLIN
Arthur’s mother?

GAIUS nods.

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

MERLIN
(realising)
To single combat?

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

MERLIN looks at him.

GAIUS
I thought it was just the ramblings of a dying man...
MERLIN
Men don’t just rise up from the dead though, no matter how angry they are.

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

MERLIN
A wraith?

GAIUS
The spirit of a dead man conjured from the grave.

MERLIN
So this is the work of a sorceror?

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

MERLIN
How do we stop it?

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

MERLIN
Surely there must be something...

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

MERLIN
And what’s that?

GAIUS
Revenge.

MERLIN
On Camelot?

GAIUS gives a slight nod.

MERLIN
What does that mean for Sir Pellinor?
GAIUS
I’m afraid it doesn’t look good.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) – DAY 3. FR.

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

UTHER is determined to hold his gaze.

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

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

ARTHUR
You’ve seen him fight.

SIR PELLINOR
(looking at the Black Knight)
He’s good.

ARTHUR
(forcing Sir Pellinor to look at him)
Not as good as you. Are you listening to me?

SIR PELLINOR nods.

ARTHUR
See the sun is low in the sky.

SIR PELLINOR glances toward the sun...

ARTHUR
Keep it behind you.

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

SIR PELLINOR
For the love of Camelot.

ARTHUR
For the love of Camelot.

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

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

MERLIN
Maybe you were wrong.

GAIUS
I hope so.

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

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

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

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

GWEN
The sword went in - I’m sure of it.

MORGANA
(worried)
I saw it too.

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

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

ARTHUR
I will not see anymore of my men die.
(a beat)
I, Arthur Pendragon, take up the challenge.

A murmur amongst the CROWD.
BLACK KNIGHT
So be it.

ARTHUR
(calling the shots)
Single combat. Noon tomorrow.

GAIUS catches UTHÉR’s eye. He is white-faced with shock.

CUT TO:

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

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

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

ARTHUR
No.
(turning on his father)
The Knights’ code must be upheld. That’s what you told me.

UTHÉR
This is different.

ARTHUR
Once a challenge is laid you cannot rescind it.

UTHÉR
You are the Crown Prince.

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

UTHÉR
I forbid you to fight

ARTHUR turns to face his father.

UTHÉR
No, Arthur, this will be your death!
ARTHUR
(he walks to the door)
I’m sorry you have so little faith
in me, father.

UTHER
Arthur!

ARTHUR keeps walking. UTHER hangs his head in despair.

CUT TO:

INT. GAIUS’ CHAMBERS - DAY 3. UK.

MERLIN and GAIUS discuss what to do.

MERLIN
You were right.

GAIUS
I wish I wasn’t.

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

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

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

GAIUS
How do you propose to do that?

He runs up the stairs to his room...

MERLIN
If no mortal sword will kill it...

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

MERLIN
Then I will have to. With mortal magic.

GAIUS
Merlin, it’s too dangerous...

MERLIN
We don’t have any choice.
GAIUS watches him turning the pages and quietly leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) — DAY 3. UK.

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

GAIUS
Good evening, Sire.

UTHER
Gaius.

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

UTHER
Then spit it out, man.

GAIUS
Tristan’s tomb is empty.

Uther’s face ices over.

GAIUS
I believe he has been conjured from the dead.

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

UTHER
How is this possible?

GAIUS
I believe he is a wraith.

UTHER
A spirit?

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

UTHER
(guilty)
It was magic that killed her. Not I.
GAIUS
(gently)
Nevertheless it was you he blamed.

GAIUS hesitates. He knows he must tread carefully.

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

UTHER
He will not listen to me.

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

UTHER
No.

GAIUS
You cannot hide the truth forever.

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

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

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

GAIUS
The boy is of age, he should know.

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

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

GAIUS
Very well, sire.
UTHER

Leave me.

GAIUS leaves the room. UTHER is clearly shaken by what he’s just heard.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMELOT (MAIN GATES) - NIGHT 3. FR.

The dead of night. The BLACK KNIGHT stands impassive, framed against the towers of Camelot.

MERLIN emerges from the shadows. Keeping to the shadow of the wall he slips along until the KNIGHT is in sight. The BLACK KNIGHT remains impassive, apparently oblivious to MERLIN’s presence.

MERLIN holds his hand out in front of himself and starts to incant a spell.

MERLIN

Cume her fyrbryne.

MERLIN’s eyes flash and a flame appears from nowhere. The fire races across the ground, encircles the knight and engulfs him in a ball of flames.

MERLIN waits, it looks like his magic has worked. But when the flames die down the BLACK KNIGHT is still standing, completely impassive.

MERLIN stares at him in complete astonishment.

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (ARTHUR’S CHAMBERS) - NIGHT 3. UK.

ARTHUR is preparing for the fight, rehearsing moves with his sword in slow motion, replaying and adjusting the angle of his wrist or the arc of each swing. He’s a coiled spring, as anxious as we’ve seen him. MERLIN comes rushing in, frantic.

ARTHUR

Merlin... you know that conversation we had about knocking...

MERLIN

You have to pull out!

ARTHUR stops what he’s doing and turns to look at him.

ARTHUR

And why’s that, Merlin?
MERLIN
Because he’ll kill you.

ARTHUR
Why does everybody think that?

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

ARTHUR
I am not a coward.

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

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

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

ARTHUR
I cannot back down.

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

ARTHUR
No one is unbeatable!

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

ARTHUR
I cannot listen to this, Merlin.

He throws the door open for MERLIN.

MERLIN
I’m trying to warn you, Arthur.
ARTHUR
And I’m warning you, Merlin.

He swings his sword. MERLIN darts from the room.

ARTHUR slams the door ...

CUT TO:

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

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

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

UTHER
(realising her involvement)
I should’ve known.

NIMUEH
(with sense of relish)
It is more than I had hoped for, Uther. Soon Arthur will be slain. You will have sent him to his death.

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

NIMUEH
Always so righteous, never to blame ...

UTHER
(angry)
Haven’t you had your fill of revenge?

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

UTHER
You brought it on yourselves with the evil you practised.
NIMUEH
(irked)
I was your friend, Uther! You welcomed me here.

UTHER
And you betrayed that friendship!

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

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

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

UTHER
You knew it would kill her!

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

UTHER
I wish you hadn’t.

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

UTHER
I will not let you take him.

NIMUEH
That is your choice.
(a faint smile)
I have watched so many people I love die at your hands, Uther Pendragon. Now it is your turn.

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

CUT TO:
INT. KING’S PALACE (HALL OF RECORDS) - NIGHT 3. UK.

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

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

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH glaring at him.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
How did you get in here?

MERLIN
The door was open.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
No, I locked it.

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

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

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

GEOFFREY’S tone softens, he looks at the open book, seeing the contents...

MERLIN
He thinks the Black Knight is a wraith.

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
Then Arthur’s in grave peril.

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

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

MERLIN leaps up, excited.

MERLIN
What did they say?
GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
Several fables speak of ancient swords...

MERLIN
That can kill the dead?

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

MERLIN
Can you show me one of these fables?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
Well let me think...

He starts to search the shelves.

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

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
You young people always are.

He continues searching as MERLIN follows his every move.

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

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

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

MERLIN
What did you say?

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH
And Sir Marhaus...

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

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

He looks up from the book but MERLIN has already disappeared.
INT. GWEN’S HOUSE - NIGHT 3 (UK.)

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

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

MERLIN
Oh, I’ve come to ask a favour.

GWEN
Yes?

MERLIN
I don’t know how to ask it.

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

MERLIN looks at her - slightly thrown.

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

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

GWEN
What for?

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

CUT TO:

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

ARTHUR stands in the window alone, he stares out at the BLACK KNIGHT. We can sense his doubts...
He hears a noise and quickly turns to the door. He finds MORGANA watching him.

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

ARTHUR stares at her, surprised by her conviction.

ARTHUR
Why not?

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

ARTHUR
(smiling)
You’re worried about me.

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

ARTHUR
(doubtful)
My father?

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

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

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

MORGANA
I understand.

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

CUT TO:
GAIUS is preparing for bed. A knock at the door. GAIUS goes to open it. He finds Uther standing outside.

Uther
Am I still welcome?

Gaius
Have you come to shout at me?

Uther
I’m sorry.

Gaius leads him inside.

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

Gaius
Not quite so literally.

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

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

Uther
Nimueh told me there would be a price.

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

Uther winces at the memory.

Uther
I cannot let Arthur die...

Gaius
Then you must stop the fight.

Uther
No... I will take his place.

Gaius
You realise what you’re saying?

Uther
Ygraine died for him and so must I.
GAIUS
Uther...

UTHER
I have no other choice.

GAIUS
There must be another way.

UTHER
No! My death will stop the wraith and Arthur will live.
   (he sets his eyes on Gaius)
It means that you will be the only person left who knows the truth about Arthur’s birth. You must swear to me that you will keep your oath.

GAIUS
(a moment - finally relenting)
I will take it to my grave.

UTHER
You always were a good friend, despite my temper.

GAIUS
I always thought that would be the death of you.

UTHER
(managing a smile)
I must ask you one last favour...

CUT TO:

INT. GWEN’S HOUSE – NIGHT 3. UK

GWEN returns to MERLIN carrying a sword ...

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

She hands it to MERLIN, he examines it.

MERLIN
It’s beautiful.

GWEN
(slight concern)
He’ll kill me if he finds I’ve taken it.
MERLIN
It’s for the love of Camelot.

GWEN
Mmm ... Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (ARMOURY CORRIDOR) – NIGHT 3. FR. 27
MERLIN hurries through the castle. He carries the sword with him, wrapped and hidden inside a cloth blanket.

INT. KING’S PALACE (UNDERGROUND STAIRS) – NIGHT 3. FR. 28
MERLIN hurries his way down into the depths of the citadel.

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (CAVERN) – NIGHT 3. UK. 29
MERLIN steps out once more onto the lip of rock overlooking the great cavern.

The GREAT DRAGON raises his eyes ...

GREAT DRAGON
Merlin!

MERLIN
D’you know why I’m here?

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

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

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

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

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

MERLIN reaches down to pick it up, but it disappears before his eyes ...
Instinctively, he looks down into the cavern and sees the sword hovering in the air before the GREAT DRAGON.

MERLIN
Will you burnish it to save Arthur?

The GREAT DRAGON considers this ...

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

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

The DRAGON considers this.

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

MERLIN
I know...

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

MERLIN
What do you mean?

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

MERLIN
I understand.

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

MERLIN nods.

MERLIN
I promise.

The GREAT DRAGON exhales an almighty blast of fire ... The sword is temporarily lost within the inferno.
When the flames recede we see the shining sword - the light flashes off it, almost blinding MERLIN. He turns his head away ... 

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

GREAT DRAGON
Heed my words ...

MERLIN stops and turns to the GREAT DRAGON ...

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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

GAIUS enters carrying a small phial.

ARTHUR
I’m fine. I don’t need it

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

ARTHUR finally concedes and downs the liquid with a grimace.

ARTHUR
I wouldn’t drink it for pleasure.
GAIUS
Why don’t you sit down for a moment?

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

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

ARTHUR
Quite enjoyable.

GAIUS
Lie back.

ARTHUR rests his head on his pillow.

GAIUS
How’re you feeling?

ARTHUR
Mmm...

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

CUT TO:

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (MORGANA’S CHAMBERS) - DAY 4. UK.

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

MORGANA
I’m not hungry.

GWEN
You must eat something.
MORGANA
I can’t.

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

MORGANA
(shrugs - lifeless)
If he dies, I fear for the future.

GWEN
Arthur will win. He will live to be King.

MORGANA
How can you be so sure?

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

UTHER
That’s a fine blade.

MERLIN
It’s for Arthur.

UTHER
He won’t be needing it today.

MERLIN looks confused.

UTHER
I will be taking Arthur’s place.
(realising that the sword is for Arthur only)
But, Sire...

UTHER
Prepare me for battle.

MERLIN
But Arthur should be the one...

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

MERLIN
I do not have your armour.

UTHER points to some armour placed nearby.

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

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

UTHER
This will be fine.

MERLIN looks horrified.

UTHER
Who made it?

MERLIN
Uh... Tom the Blacksmith.

UTHER
It’s worthy of a King.

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

UTHER slowly wields the sword...
UTHER
It has an almost perfect balance...
Tom is not the Royal Swordsmit.
I’m surprised Arthur went to him.

MERLIN
It was me.

UTHER looks at him.

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

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

MERLIN
It’s my job, Sire.

UTHER
But you go beyond the line duty.

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

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

UTHER’S P.O.V: The bright light, the noise of a large fight
crowd, a multitude of expectant faces and in the centre of
the Tournament Ground the BLACK KNIGHT standing motionless
and poised for battle...
UTHER steps forward. Shock rumbles through the crowd, including MORGANA and GWEN in the stands and MERLIN and GAIUS at the side of the fighting area.

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

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

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (ARTHUR’S CHAMBERS) – DAY 4. UK.

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

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

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) – DAY 4. FR.

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

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (ARTHUR’S CHAMBERS) – DAY 4. UK.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMELOT (TOURNAMENT GROUND) – DAY 4. FR.

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

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

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

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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

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

The CROWD’s shock turns to horror...

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

UTHER

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

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

The CROWD react...

An exhausted Uther looks down at the wraith’s remains – an empty suit of armour...

CUT TO:

INT. KING’S PALACE (COUNCIL CHAMBERS) – DAY 4. UK.

GAIUS dressing Uther’s wounded arm.

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

GAIUS
Yes, it was remarkable ...

He eyes the sword on the nearby table.

GAIUS
Was that a new sword?

UTHER
Best I’ve ever fought with.

GAIUS
May I have a look?

GAIUS examines the blade, looking at the runes.

UTHER
I was interested in those markings.

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

UTHER
What does that mean?

GAIUS
Where did you get it?
UTHER
Merlin gave it me. It was forged for Arthur.

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

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

UTHER
Thank you, Gaius. Thank you for everything.

GAIUS smiles and is gone.

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

UTHER
No ... You weren’t.

ARTHUR
The Knight’s code ...

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

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

ARTHUR
I’ve always thought ... well ...

UTHER
What?

ARTHUR
That ... I was a disappointment to you.

UTHER
That is my fault, not yours ... You are my only son.
(a smile)
And I would not wish for another.
ARTHUR is unsure how to react.

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

UTHER
Thank you.

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

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. GAIUS’ CHAMBERS - NIGHT 4. UK.

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

GAIUS
You know why I’m looking at you.

MERLIN
No.

GAIUS
Uther told me you gave him that sword today.

MERLIN says nothing.

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

MERLIN
No... I didn’t.

GAIUS
Who did then?

MERLIN
(he shakes his head)
Wasn’t me.
GAIUS gives him a look.

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

MERLIN
Well ...

GAIUS
Never mind.

They share a look, MERLIN smiles.

CUT TO:

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

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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

MERLIN
(nervous)
I’m sorry. Uther just took the sword...
GREAT DRAGON
You have betrayed me.

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

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

MERLIN
I couldn’t let him die...

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

MERLIN
I’ll get it back...

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

MERLIN
What do you mean?

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

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

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

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CUT TO:
Dawn. MERLIN leaves Camelot. He’s carrying a cloth bundle.

CUT TO:

The calm water of a vast lake.

MERLIN takes out the sword, he takes one last look, then throws it into the lake...

The swords hilt slowly sinks to the depths...

END OF EPISODE.