

The Merlin Saga  
- King Vortigern -

(c) Mar. 08, 2008 Michael Shire

Copyright (c) 2022 This screenplay may not be used or reproduced for any purpose including educational purposes without the expressed written permission of the author.

**EXT. CASTLE DINAS - CLARES ROOM - NIGHT**

CLOSEUP - gold chain necklace, with a simple gold falcon as pendant, hangs around the slender neck of a young woman.

In an upper room in Castle Dinas, two young women - PRINCESS CLARE, 15, and VIVIAN, 18, are here getting ready to go out to join festivities that can be heard outside the window. Vivian is Clare's handmaiden and good friend, and is weaving green vines and flowers into Clare's hair. We hear distant music, drums, and some laughter in the adjoining corridor.

**CLARE**

I don't want to be too late for the celebration, Vivian. It is Mid-summer, after all, and only comes once a year.

**VIVIAN**

(finishing her hair)  
I think it's enough. You look beautiful; as a princess should, my lady.

She finishes with her hair, and bows jokingly as Clare gets up.

**CLARE**

(smiling)  
Of course you'd think so.

**VIVIAN**

If you're ready - let's go.

They gather a wreath of flowers each and leave the room.

CAMERA tracks to look out the window. We see a large bonfire two hundred feet from the castle, on the edge of the grounds, and people dancing around it.

**EXT. CASTLE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT**

The front doors of the castle are open and the front steps leading down are lit by many torches. Two guards remain at the front of the castle. Clare and Vivian are leaving together, and KING DUNCAN must run a bit to catch up to them. He is followed by two other men-at-arms. They walk toward the bonfire.

**DUNCAN**

Dearest daughter. Allow me to escort you?

**CLARE**

I am honored, father.

They walk a few steps.

**DUNCAN**

I think tonight may be a special night. My Seer, and the high priest both see favorable signs.

**CLARE**

We have talked about this day. Do you think I'm to be betrothed?

**DUNCAN**

I have discussed it with CALDERS, the high priest. He assures me of a blessing for our people tonight.  
(a beat)

**CLARE**

May I ask - is it ... someone I know?

**DUNCAN**

I think they are pleased you're your Lord Garion.

**VIVIAN**

AH! Just who we'd hope it would be. I'm so happy for you Clare.

**EXT. STONE CIRCLE RITUAL - NIGHT**

At the fire, a large bonfire blazes, and people dance around it.

CAM MOVES IN slowly - There are 5 large upright stones (14' tall, 30 feet from each other), and five smaller stones (4' tall) within the circle that act as tables, and these have brazier fires burning on top of each. In the center is a larger fireplace holding the big fire.

About 100 people here are dancing around the fire. They have body and face paint, and all within the circle of stones. Some are almost naked, wearing leafy items like Adam and eve, while others wear simple tunics.

Musicians play flutes and drums and everyone is chanting some simple folk songs. There are DRUIDS here making rituals, walking around holding carved statues and chanting words. They all wear white robes, and masquerade masks - depicting birds, dogs, a bear, stag, wolf, etc.

There's a priest, CALDERS, with a special mask of a fox. He walks around with a giant chalice, and gives everyone a drink from it. He has an assistant who follows him with a giant wineskin, refilling the chalice.

Beside a large upright stone we see two women in their twenties, mostly naked and watching the ritual. They are witches - the sisters, SABBA, 18, and SAFFRA, 16, both dark-haired but pretty. They lean closer to speak over the loud singing.

**SABBA**

You have everything we need?

**SAFFRA**

(motioning to her pouch)  
Right here.

The KING arrives and is welcomed by everyone, as well as his guards and the young ladies. They are all given fancy head wreaths by a druid, and then escorted to a series of chairs, where they can watch the bonfire and ceremonies.

Clare and Vivian carry their wreaths and put them over their heads before they sit down.

Meanwhile CALDERS has been giving everyone a drink, and he comes to the king and princess and gives them each a drink.

Calders then goes to the big fire, grabs a handful of powder from a pouch on his side, makes a few big gestures, speaks some ancient Welsh and then throws the powder into the fire, making a big flash and POOF of smoke.

Near him we see quite a few young men drinking heavily out of large tankards. They are laughing. On one side of the giant bonfire, we see a few young men run and LEAP over the flames.

Calders then has a small baby lamb brought to him, carried by another druid in white robes. Together, they carry it to place it in front of the king on top of a stone table. Another druid comes and brings a brass basin. They all kneel down over the goat, and Caldery brings out a dagger that flashes in the firelight.

REACTION shot - Clare looks at this and winces a bit and looks sad. She looks over at Vivian too. They look at each other and back to the fire. Vivian then sees someone, and leans over to Clare, pointing him out subtly.

#### **VIVIAN**

There's your golden-haired boy.

Clare's eyes widen a moment and she smiles.

Across the fire she sees a young man looking at her. It is GARION, 20, with very blonde hair, who she recognises even with his face partially painted with stripes.

ON SABBA - her and her sister watch to see who Clare is looking at. They look at each other and nod. They both edge through the people to get closer to Clare.

Calders puts up his hand to hush everyone. The music stops, but there is still some quiet talking within the crowd.

#### **CALDERS**

Midsummer eve is a time for renewal, and tomorrow is the summer solstice. The land is at its best. We ask the gods for

favours, and we honour them with  
blood : blood of an innocent.

His assistant holds up the basin.

**CALDERS**

Any who want anointing of this  
blood come forth now.

The King stands up and goes to stand in front of Calders.  
He's followed by Clare and Vivian.

**CALDERS**

This blood is a gift to the gods  
and with it we are blessed.

Calders dips two fingers in the basin of blood and puts a  
smear of blood on the forehead of the king. The King bows a  
bit, turns and goes back to his seat. Clare is next. Garion  
now comes up behind Vivian.

Sabba walks past Clare's chair and, without being seen,  
drops a handful of diced mushrooms in Clare's large tankard  
sitting on her seat - and also in the king's. Then she goes  
to get in line up with a few others to get the blessing.

**LATER -**

Clare is dancing with Vivian, twirling, and the music is a  
lively jig. She spins too much and has to stop, dizzy. They  
step aside from the other dancers, laughing together.

The druids are all circled around the fire, and hold up a  
brass goblet each. They bring it back down, take a drink,  
and some blood spills onto their chins. They altogether  
toss the remainder of blood into the fire. One druid then  
takes the lifeless body of the lamb and tosses him onto the  
fire ! Everyone around cheers and takes a drink of ale or  
mead.

King Duncan comes to Clare and takes her by her hand. He's  
pretty drunk by now. He's got a wink for her.

**DUNCAN**

It's time.

**CLARE**

(smiling and drunk)

Oh... OK.

He walks with her to stand in front of the priest. Calders Takes the wreath off her neck and tosses it into the fire. The music stops and everyone claps. Calders again addresses everyone.

**CALDER**

Tonight we celebrate another blessing. Our princess is to be promised to her future husband. I present: PRINCESS CLARE.

She steps forward so everyone can see her, they clap for her.

**CALDER**

And her betrothed: LORD GARION, of noble blood, and the house of Alister.

They all clap again. The priest takes hers and Garion's hands and places them together.

**DUNCAN**

We shall have a wedding in three months time. And it will be a royal wedding!

Everyone cheers.

ON CLARE - She is still a bit bewildered, and she looks a bit dizzy. She puts her hand to her head, goes to sit down. King Duncan has gone and sat down.

**GARION**

Are you OK, Clare?

**CLARE**

I just need another sip.

Vivian is near and looks a bit concerned, but then another man comes and takes her away to dance.

**GARION**

I think you've had enough, my bride.

SABBA and SAFFRA see their chance and come to help. Sabba helps Clare into a chair. Saffra takes Garion aside.

**SAFFRA**

I have something special for you,  
my lord ... in celebration of your  
betrothal.

She takes Garion a few paces beyond Clare and brings forth  
a special root or herb from a pouch. She's smiling and  
trying to appear cute to him.

**SAFFRA**

This has special powers. It will  
help you with your lady. Go ahead  
... smell this.

Garion puts it to his nose and he recoils a bit.

**GARION**

That is strong stuff....

At that he gets a bit weak in the legs. Saffra gets under  
his arms and helps him to go just behind a large stone.

ON SABBA - This time she puts a powder into the drink and  
hands it to Clare.

**SABBA**

A special drink for you, your  
highness.

Clare smiles drunkenly, and drinks a bit. She begins to  
look a bit trance-like, staring ahead, in another world.

**SABBA**

... for such a special night.

She reaches over to grab the pendant of the falcon that  
hangs around Clare's neck. She looks left and right for  
guards and then pulls off the necklace. Clare does not  
notice, and Sabba puts it in her pouch.

Then she looks over at Saffra, at the edge of the ring of  
stones, and she sees Lord Garion stand up beside her.

CLOSE UP - Garion's eyes flash with a slight red glow.

Garion walks determined to go to Clare. He then picks her  
up, cradling her, and walks on toward the castle.

Sabba and Saffra get together and retreat into the crowd.

**INT. CLARES ROOM - NIGHT**

The room is very dark and the door opens. The dark figure of Garion holding Clare is backlit by torches in the corridor. He comes forward and brings her to the bed, laying her down.

He turns and goes back to the door and closes it. It is now dark in here but for a little moonlight. Through the open window the music of the ceremony continues.

ON CLARE - She is very drunken but also affectionate.

**CLARE**

Garion! Garion! I can't wait for our wedding. My passion for you is burning within me. Come close.

Garion says nothing, but comes close to her and gets on the bed and kisses her passionately.

It is hard to see them in the dark but he strips off his simple tunic, she lies down, and brings him closer to her.

**EXT. CASTLE -**

The two sisters are outside the castle, below Clare's window, in the partial moonlight.

Sabba is looking over a bowl of water. Saffra holds a lantern over the water to look. They watch the gold falcon symbol in the water, and then an image of the shadow figure of Garion in Clare's bed.

Clare turns over to reach out for her lover under the sheets, but at her touch the sheets collapse - there is no one there. The bed holds only Clare.

INSERT: ON SABBA-

**SABBA**

It is done.

**SAFFRA**

The prophecy comes to pass.

FADE OUT:

**EXT. STONE CIRCLE RITUAL - DAY**

ON THE ROUND FIREPLACE - we see it still has some SNOW in it. CAM TILTS UP - to frame the castle. We see there is still a little snow here and there, but the skies are blue and spring is close.

**INT. CASTLE DINAS - MAIN HALL - DAY**

King Duncan and Princess Clare are sitting at a long table, being served supper by the kitchen staff. Their plates are already full of food, and they are eating.

**DUNCAN**

It really feels like spring today, my dear. The snow will be gone in only a few weeks, I think.

**CLARE**

Thank the gods. It's been a long winter.

She then finishes her last bite of food, looks stuffed, and Pushes the plate away from her.

**CLARE**

I feel like I'm gonna burst.

**DUNCAN**

You've got an especially large appetite today, my dear. Tell me, when do the midwives say the child is due?

**CLARE**

Maybe a week, they say.

**DUNCAN**

Well, I pray your birthing goes well. Your unborn child may inherit this castle some day.

**CLARE**

Yes, father.

Clare pushes her seat back and goes to stand up. She holds her big belly with one hand. King Duncan stands up hurriedly, and calls to Vivian in the next room.

**DUNCAN**

Vivian!

Vivian comes into the room and sees Clare struggling a bit.

**DUNCAN**

Can you help her to her room?

**VIVIAN**

Yes, sire.

(then to Clare)

You know you should hardly be walking around in your condition.

**CLARE**

I don't want to be bed-ridden just yet.

**DUNCAN**

Please, daughter. Just rest.

They both leave the main hall and slowly climb the stairs. Duncan sits down and finishes his last bites.

**INT. CLARES ROOM - DAY**

The door opens and Vivian helps Clare to struggle to the bed.

**CLARE**

Oh... I'll be OK. Don't make so much fuss over me.

**VIVIAN**

I'm not. If you want a big fuss I can call Agnes to help.

**CLARE**

(laughing)

No, no. Just your help will do.

Clare sits on the bed side, then lies back on the bed, relaxing. Vivian sits beside her a moment.

**VIVIAN**

There. That's better isn't it?

Vivian stands up to leave, but Clare grabs her wrist, making her stay seated.

**CLARE**

Vivian. I've been having ...

**VIVIAN**

What is it?

**CLARE**

I've been having some pretty terrible dreams.

**VIVIAN**

(very concerned now)

What sort of dreams?

**CLARE**

Visions of dark shadowy creatures, attacking the castle. And ... that's not all. You remember last Midsummer's Eve? How I thought it was Garion with me? Well, now I'm pretty sure that it wasn't him.

**VIVIAN**

How is that possible?

**CLARE**

I talked to our priest about this. It was some sort of ... shadowy ?

**VIVIAN**

A what?

**CLARE**

An incubus. You know... an other-world creature or spirit, who preys on women... and I think the child is his.

**VIVIAN**

You mean it is not Lord Garion's ?

**CLARE**

I don't know.

**VIVIAN**

My dear Clare. Just because you

(CONT.) have dreams of these things does not make them true.

**CLARE**

(worried)

I can feel it....

**VIVIAN**

Don't worry, my lady! You're going to have a healthy baby - your father has seen to it. Now just lie down and think of pure thoughts.

Vivian gets up and looks at her one more time, holding her hand.

**VIVIAN**

Remember, I'm always here for you. We'll be friends for life.

**CLARE**

Yes - for life. (pause) I hope you're right.

**INT. CLARE'S ROOM - NIGHT**

The room is only lit by the dim fire in the small fireplace against one wall. Clare is turning in her bed, and dreaming. CAM tracks toward her.

DISSOLVE:

**DREAM - INSIDE CAVE GROTTO - NIGHT**

EST. SHOT - low ceiling cave, with glowing phosphorescent stalactites and stalagmites that surround a large pool of water covering most of the floor. Sounds of dripping water, steam rising from the pool.

TRACK IN to the surface of the water. We hear the roar of dragons fighting. Then out of the water comes a ghostlike apparition of a red dragon. It flies one time around the cavern, slowly. Then out of the water another dragon comes - a white one. It circles after the first dragon.

It then claws at the red dragon, and the first one makes a horrible scream. They are biting and clawing at each other.

**INT. CLARE'S ROOM - NIGHT**

CLOSE UP - Clare's face. Her eyes suddenly open. She's shaking a bit and sits up. Then she looks over at the fire. It has only glowing embers now. Clare calls out:

**CLARE**

Hello? Someone? My fire needs rebuilding ...

Clare gets out of bed, puts a heavy cloak on, slips her low-cut shoes on and goes to her door. She opens it.

**CASTLE CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Clare peeks her head out and looks both ways. She sees a single guardsman sleeping on the floor. She shakes him but he does not wake. She then sees a light orb - a will o'the wisp - and follows it down the corridor.

**CASTLE KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Clare walks into the room, and sees the large fire across the room. It feels good, so she walks over to it and warms her hands. She sees no one else yet.

She sees the orb again. Is it a fairy? She goes to look closer but the light flies under the door! Clare unlatches the outside door it, then opens it.

She sees a floating light bobbing down a path behind the castle, so she follows it, shutting the door behind her.

**EXT. BEHIND CASTLE - NIGHT**

Clare follows a small light going down a path and getting descending rough-cut steps. She walks slow and tries not to hurt her pregnant belly, and she keeps her cloak wrapped tightly.

**EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Clare steps into a small clearing and sees a tall and wide crack in the stone hillside under the castle. There is a single torch already lit, just inside. She watches as

(CONT.) the bobbing light flies into the entrance.

A sound of RUMBLING from the sky begins, and she looks up. The night sky is moving fast and dark clouds are forming above. It begins to rain, and she gets a little wet before she ducks into the entrance.

She sees another light ahead, and picks up the torch to go further into the cave.

**INT. GROTTA, UNDER THE CASTLE -**

Clare enters into a large underground cavern with a large pool of water, steam coming off it. Nearby are two young witches, SABBA and SAFFRA, who are fussing over a nearby wooden log frame bed with green boughs for the mattress. There is a good fire here for warmth. They are leveling out the boughs when they turn and see Clare.

**SABBA**

Ah. She's here.

**CLARE**

Who are you?

Sabba comes forward to greet her, and show her to the bed.

**SABBA**

I am Sabba. This is my sister Saffra. We are special midwives to help with child birthing. Come to the fire. Warm yourself.

Saffra unfurls a large fur hide and lays it down over the boughs on the bed. Clare comes closer.

**SAFFRA**

Come now. You must not strain yourself ... in your condition. Please come and lie down.

**CLARE**

I don't want to lie down.

Clare looks around in wonder.

**CLARE**

This place... I've dreamt of it.

**SAFFRA**

Yes. This is the place where your child will be born.

**CLARE**

My child? But why here? And it's at least a week from now.

**SABBA**

Don't worry. All is prepared. Aren't you feeling your pains yet?

Suddenly, Clare reaches for her belly and feels something paining. She winces and then looks alarmed.

**CLARE**

Oww. What are you doing to me?

**SABBA**

It's not us, it's your child. Come and lie down. We have foreseen this night. He picks his time to come into the world.

**CLARE**

Oh. What do you mean? How do you know it's a boy?

**SABBA**

It has been foretold.

**CLARE**

(worried)

You wouldn't hurt him ... or me?

**SAFFRA**

Hurt him? No. We are going to bless him. He's very special, don't you know?

Clare lies down on the bed, helped by the two women. They unroll another blanket and place it over her for warmth.

Sabba leans down at the fire and brings forth a hot drink in a metal cup.

**SABBA**

Here. Drink this. It will help to dull the pain.

Clare looks worried, but with her pain now, she agrees. She drinks half and gives it back, and winces in pain.

**CLARE**

That's all I can do. Oh! OH. My baby!

Sabba puts the cup down.

POV - CLARE - She looks at the two witches and her vision starts to blur - and double vision. Sabba brings forth the gold falcon symbol, and shows it to her.

**CLARE**

I... remember that charm.

**SABBA**

Yes. It has helped us to see the future of your child's life.

**CLARE**

Oh. May the gods have mercy on me. Don't let me die. I beg of you.

Just then an old man enters the grotto and walks quickly to the witches and the bed. It is AMBROSIUS, a hermit and powerful DRUID. He's about 60 yo. , half of his beard is grey, and he looks wise. He wears a large hooded cloak, and walks with a crooked wooden staff. He is also called AMBRY.

**AMBRY**

What are you two witches doing with this poor girl?

Sabba and Saffra are both taken aback at being discovered.

**SABBA**

Get away, Druid. This is the child's time.

Ambry reaches out and grabs the necklace from the witch. He puts it in his pocket.

**AMBRY**

Don't try your charms on me.  
(a beat)

I can see you've already started the labours. You better let me help her.

Ambry comes beside Clare and holds her hand. Clare is delirious and can't focus on who is there.

**SAFFRA**

We have been chosen to bring this child into the world.

**AMBRY**

Yes. I have seen this too. But it's too important to leave it up to you two. I have something that really will help her.

**SABBA**

Our powders are exceptional.

**AMBRY**

I'm sure they are. But have you studied sassafras with licorice? No? Then let me help.

Ambry reaches into a pocket and pulls out a very small tin, opens the lid and wipes his baby finger into the black ointment inside. He puts it to Clare's lips and then let's her eat it.

**AMBRY**

Go ahead, my lady. That should be enough.

Sabba and Saffra glare at him, not knowing what to do.

**AMBRY**

Don't worry. I can't deliver the baby by myself. You must assist me.

The two witches come closer. Saffra strokes Clare's face to soothe her. Sabba builds up the fire.

**SABBA**

It won't be too long now.

WIDE SHOT of grotto. Clare is moaning louder and louder in pain as CAM TILTS down to pool of water. The ghostly sound of dragons ROARING and FIGHTING is barely heard.

FADE OUT:

In BLACKNESS, the sound of an new-born CRYING.

**LATER -**

FADE IN:

The sisters are over the mother and baby, while Ambry washes his face in the water pool.

Saffra brings out a pouch with dried ground herbs and petals. She sprinkles them over Clare as she says the following, and then joined in unison by SABBA:

**SAFFRA**

May the power of the god LUDD, the silver handed;

**SAFFRA and SABBA**

... with the powers of the Goddess, the Lady of the Moon; and the Horned Hunter of the Sun; bless this child, and look over him all his days.

Ambry arrives just then. He looks at the golden falcon pendant in his hand.

**AMBRY**

And he shall be named MERLIN.

**INT. CASTLE DINAS, FRONT DOORS - MORNING**

The front doors open, and Ambrosius helps to support Clare as they walk into the castle entrance hall. Clare holds her child wrapped in a blanket. A few guards come up to help her. Then her father King Duncan comes in.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

Ambrosius the druid brought the princess with her child back to the castle. He was welcomed by King Duncan for keeping his daughter safe.

**INT. CLARE'S ROOM - DAYS**

In the room, we see the boy grow from an infant in a rocking cradle, then crawling, walking, and sitting near the fire as Clare reads him stories. Ambry comes to visit and Merlin runs to him to hug him.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

As the boy grew, the old hermit Ambrosius was like a wise old uncle to him. Clare was fond of his gentle ways and he became a good friend of the royal family.

**INT. MAIN HALL , CASTLE - DAY**

Ambry addresses about 20 of the kings councilmen at a long table.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

The King discovered that Ambrosius was well-read and wise. Soon he was welcomed to the royal council. He avoided the politics of the noble class, and always had a fresh point of view.

**EXT. FOREST, AMBRY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Ambry walks through the forest. He comes upon his simple wood and sod cabin house.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

Ambrosius was still a free man and came and went as he pleased. Before long, young Merlin was six years old and it was time for his first May-day celebration.

**EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - DAY**

EST. SHOT - Between the castle and the stone circle there is a large clearing and about 100 people are enjoying festivities around a 16 foot tall MAY POLE. 20 dancers are holding long ribbons attached to the top this pole and they weave in and out of each other as they go around the pole. Many musicians are playing lively, fun, folk music. There are a number of carts here and vendors are hawking some fruits, cakes, tarts, pies.

Clare walks into frame, holding the hand of young six-year old Merlin. He has blonde hair and mischievous eyes, but is quite likable. He waves around a stick with a ribbon

(CONT.) on the end. Clare bends down to him.

**CLARE**

You want something to eat, Merlin?

**MERLIN**

Oh yes, can I have another cake?

**CLARE**

I don't see why not.

She stands up, reaches over to the vendor selling cakes, picks one up, and gives it to Merlin. Then she looks around and sees Ambrosius coming towards them, smiling.

**AMBRY**

Hello, you two. Are you having fun, young man?

**MERLIN**

Oh yes. I especially liked your magic, Ambry.

**AMBRY**

Well, thank you, young man. I should be teaching you some of those tricks soon. I think you're ready.

**CLARE**

(looking around)

Have you seen Lord Garion?

They all look around a moment through the crowd.

**MERLIN**

Um... there he is.

Merlin points out Lord Garion talking with two women and laughing.

**CLARE**

Hmmf.

Ambry looks at her, then looks down and winks at Merlin.

**AMBRY**

Watch this.

Ambry does some subtle motions with his hands while watching Garion. Suddenly Garion starts to itch and scratch, and he can't help himself. The girls he's with stand back from him in case they might catch something.

**CLARE**

Ambry. Did you do that?

Clare can't help but laugh a bit. Merlin and Ambry both laugh a bit too.

An older woman, in her forties, a midwife, comes to address Clare.

**MIDWIFE**

Your highness. Excuse me.

**CLARE**

Yes. What is it?

**MIDWIFE**

(looking happy)

It's Vivian. She's gone into labour just now.

**CLARE**

Oh, that is good news. I'll be right there.

The midwife walks away.

**AMBRY**

Well, I'm not needed with you. Things will go fine.

**CLARE**

Come see tomorrow, then. We always welcome you.

Clare reaches over and gives the old man a kiss on the cheek. He smiles. She takes Merlin's hand and follows after the midwife. Merlin looks back, winks at Ambry, who makes a face at him.

**INT. VIVIAN'S SMALL ROOM - EVENING**

It is dusk. Through the window we see the grounds below, there are a large number of people milling around the May

pole. We see a dozen small braziers around the area, and about a dozen dancers still dancing around the pole (without the ribbons). We hear the screaming of a woman giving birth, the sound of a SLAP, and then an infant's first WAIL.

CAM pulls back and we reveal Vivian's room. It's a small stone walled room, the window is open, and Vivian is on her bed, surrounded by a few old women, and Clare. The midwife wraps the new-born in a small sheet and hands her back to her mother. Clare looks very happy for her.

**CLARE**

Oh, Vivian. Now you have your very own child too. I'm very happy for you.

**VIVIAN**

(tired, and happy)  
Thank you.

A knock on the door. A man's voice.

**VOICE** (o.c.)

Sounds like a baby's cry. Am I a father yet?

**VIVIAN**

Oh ... (laughing) ...let in Lord Nicholas.

A midwife goes to the door and unlatches it. Lord NICHOLAS, 25, dark hair, tall, opens the door and peeks in, smiling. Just under him, holding his hand, is young Merlin.

**NICHOLAS**

Merlin and I couldn't wait to see the baby.

Nicholas walks in and comes to the bed.

**NICHOLAS**

So, tell me, is it a son or daughter?

**VIVIAN**

It's a beautiful daughter.

Nicholas looks down at the little baby.

**CLARE**

Do you want to hold her?

**NICHOLAS**

(a little reluctant)

I... should I?

**MERLIN**

(positively)

I want to.

**CLARE**

(to Vivian)

Is it OK?

**VIVIAN**

Sure. She seems to be quieter now.

Merlin reaches out and Clare helps to get Merlin to hold the baby.

**CLARE**

This is the magic of a new human life, Merlin. Isn't she beautiful?

**MERLIN**

(looking doubtful)

Uh... I suppose. Uh ... what's her name?

**VIVIAN**

Her name will be Nimue ... after the spring flower.

After a moment, Nicholas then reaches down to take the baby too. He cradles her gently and brings her close.

**NICHOLAS**

Yes, of course she's beautiful.  
Just like her mother.

**INT. CASTLE, KITCHEN PANTRY - NIGHT**

Ambry is in a room adjacent to the kitchen and a little of the orange glow of the fire there comes into his room. He's face up, sleeping, covered with wolf-skins. There are a few cats sleeping on top of him too. It is quiet.

TRACK onto his face slowly. As we get closer to him, the echoed sounds of battle get louder. Horses hooves pounding, (CONT.) steel clanging, shouts and screams. <MUSIC builds>

Then he hears Clare's voice: "Ambry! Ambry HELP!" At this sound his eyes FLICK open. He listens a moment to the silence, and then gets up.

**EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS, STONE CIRCLE - PRE-DAWN**

The sky has a slight glow in the pre-dawn light. At the stone circle, framing the castle, horses come galloping by. CAM lifts up and soon there are a hundred men on horses nearing the castle front gates. Many are wielding spears.

**INT. CASTLE, INSIDE FRONT DOORS - PRE-DAWN**

In the darkness inside the castle entry hall, a hooded figure has killed a guardsman and goes to the main doors, quickly lifting the heavy wooden beam that bars the doors.

REVERSE - Ambry comes running into this entry hall in the dark, and spots the traitor.

Just as the traitor gets to one side, we hear the pounding of horses hooves on the front wooden bridge, and then up the stone steps.

REVERSE - Ambry looks shocked.

**AMBRY**

What have you done?

The two doors fly open and slam into the walls, clanging. The horsemen ride right into the castle. Ambry flattens himself into shadows on an alcove as many horsemen ride by him. Ambry puts his hands to his mouth, as a funnel, shouts into it, and the sound is heard throughout the castle, echoing by magic.

**AMBRY**

ENEMY! ENEMY IN THE CASTLE!

After the first wave of horsemen have entered, the invading KING VORTIGERN, 50, harsh looking, enters on horse, flanked by two knights in armour. The darkness is lit by a few torches carried by enemy horsemen. Vortigern talks to his

(CONT.) CAPTAIN and SIR EGRIC, also on horses.

**VORTIGERN**

Go straight for the Kings chamber.  
If we catch him there, it will be  
all over.

The two knights ride down a corridor.

Ambry puts his hood up and quickly crosses the hallway -  
but he is noticed by Vortigern.

**VORTIGERN**

You there! Get yourself outside or  
be killed.

Ambry does not look at him, but keeps going. He throws out  
his hand and Vortigern's horse rears, and the king must  
hang on tight or be thrown off!

Ambry runs up the far stairs, after the two knights.

**INT. UPSTAIRS, OUTSIDE CLARE'S ROOM -**

Now there is great confusion here, and many guardsmen are  
fighting with horses and pulling the enemy from their  
saddles. One horseman has speared a guard. Ambry rushes to  
the first door, and it is locked tightly. He shouts into  
the room.

**AMBRY**

OPEN THE DOOR! It's me AMBROSIUS.  
Quickly.

**INT. CLARE'S ROOM - MORNING**

Clare is standing beside the door, keeping Merlin close to  
her. She quickly unlocks the door. Ambry comes in hurriedly  
but is followed closely by an enemy soldier. He puts his  
hand up and the soldier is invisibly struck and staggers  
back. Ambry closes the door after him, locking it.

**AMBRY**

The enemy is here. We will be  
overtaken, that much is certain.  
You have to get out safe.

**CLARE**

How? And what about Vivian, and her baby?

**AMBRY**

(thinking)

I don't know... I'm not a soldier, you see. Let me try to see a way.

Ambry closes his eyes and relaxes his face. Clare and Merlin look at each other. Ambry opens his eyes.

**AMBRY**

I see... Nicholas is coming. Now.

Ambry opens the door and Nicholas is right there. He wants to come into the room but Ambry holds up his hand.

**AMBRY**

We must leave now. The only safe path is to our left.

Nicholas looks to Clare and Merlin.

**NICHOLAS**

You're alright? OK, let's go then.

Ambry leads the way down the hallway. A few castle guardsmen come running up behind them. They pass them and go into the next open door.

**GUARDSMAN**

In here.

The guardsmen all go into the room with their swords out, and pull down an enemy from his horse, but another has speared one of the guards.

Ambry sees this as they pass the open door. He waves to Clare, and the others, to follow him. They run to the next door, which is Vivian's room.

**INT. VIVIAN'S ROOM -**

Ambry pushes the door open and enters. He sees an unmanned horse, and two enemy soldiers fighting with VIVIAN'S GUARD. Nicholas sees this and pushes past Ambry and engages one of them with his sword.

Vivian is on the far side of the room with her baby wrapped up in cloth. She is terrified. Clare sees her, and shouts to her:

**CLARE**

Vivian! Come on. We must get out!

Vivian sees them and can hardly move with fear. Clare goes to one side, behind the four men fighting, and Vivian finally moves to her. The fighting suddenly comes close to her and Vivian screams! This distracts VIVIAN'S GUARD who is subsequently mortally stabbed. Nicholas sees this and uses all his strength to bat away the sword of the enemy he fights, allowing him to go and kill the other enemy.

Vivian then runs and meets up with Clare and the rest at the door.

Ambry steps forward as the last enemy soldier rushes to Nicholas, holds out his palm and invisibly strikes him. Lord Nicholas turns and kills the enemy.

From behind them, in the corridor, two enemy soldiers come behind them, and one thrusts his sword right through Clare! Ambry and Merlin turn to see a bloody sword sticking out of Clare's chest. In a moment of slow-motion, she is shocked, then she looks to Merlin, then goes limp closing her eyes.

**AMBRY**

Noooo!

Ambry uses his STRIKE magic at the first enemy soldier, then he goes to Clare's side. Suddenly Ambry himself is speared in his side by the other enemy. He falls to the floor holding the spear, as Merlin rushes to his mother on the floor, shouting at her.

Nicholas runs to the spearman and runs him through with his sword. The other enemy recovers and hastily defends himself as he is forced back down the corridor by Nicholas.

In the room, there is Clare, dead on the floor, Ambry holding a spear and bleeding, Merlin crying at his mother's side, and Vivian with her baby, pulling at Merlin.

**VIVIAN**

Come on Merlin. We have to go.

**AMBRY**

Yes. GO! Go through the kitchen.  
You should be safe.

**VIVIAN**

I'm so sorry, Ambry.

Ambry looks a moment at Merlin. He gives him a wink.

**AMBRY**

Live, Merlin. You must remember  
us. Now go.

Merlin releases his mother's limp hand, and goes out the door with Vivian. Ambry is now alone in the room.

Ambry crawls to lean up against a wall. He grabs the spear and pulls it out. Blood gushes from the wound as he reaches into his undershirt and pulls out a purse and opens the drawstrings. He grabs a black wad of chewy substance and takes a big bite of it, chewing it and swallowing. He drops the rest, and weakly pulls out a small metal round jar, putting it beside him.

Ambry hears more shouting and screaming in the corridor. He opens the metal jar and scoops out a handful of ground up herbs and oils - an ointment - and rubs it over his wound through the bloody hole in his under tunic. He winces.

He crawls to get beside Clare. He sees the gold falcon necklace and grabs it, putting in his pocket. Finally he is too weak, and passes out, slumping on the floor.

**INT. CASTLE MAIN HALL -**

There is lots of fighting here: twenty horsemen fight with sixty castle soldiers. King Vortigern, on his horse struggles to keep control of his horse.

King Duncan comes down steps, with his armour on and surrounded by four personal guards, who fight to protect him. One of them is Sir Garion, another is Sir Nicholas. Vortigern sees the king and calls his men to kill him:

**VORTIGERN**

It's Duncan! Finish him and it's  
all over!

The king and his four guards are pressed by fighting and have to retreat, getting a wall behind them.

Vortigern rides his horse near them, behind his men.

**VORTIGERN**

Your castle is overrun, king.  
Surrender, and your men need not  
die.

**DUNCAN**

Never! This is our land, and  
you'll have to kill us to take it.

**VORTIGERN**

If it has to be.

Vortigern moves his horse near a spearman, and grabs his spear. Then he flips it up in the air to right it, and expertly throws it right into Duncan's chest.

Duncan's men pause, seeing this, and two of them help Duncan to fall to the ground, dead. Sir Garion is very upset at this and goes into a rage.

Vortigern's men stop pressing their attack, and watch Duncan's men. They see Garion taking the spear out of Duncan, then turning and readying himself to throw it at Vortigern.

**GARION**

Murderer!

One of Vortigern's soldiers approaches him and stabs him through the chest with his sword.

Garion is suddenly stopped, and looks down at the blood coming out. His friends rise up to fight, but the other soldiers get close.

**VORTIGERN**

I'll only say it one more time.  
Surrender ... NOW.

The others looks around and see it is useless to fight. They throw down their swords. Nicholas has hate in his eyes but wisely says nothing.

**VORTIGERN**

Good. Now we'll have some men for ransoming. Take them to the dungeons.

**EXT. SIDE OF CASTLE - THE NEXT DAY**

Beside the castle is a steep cliff that drops down to twenty feet below, where there is a large pile of dead bodies, killed from the fighting. Some captured soldiers are dragging more bodies to the edge. A few soldiers are stripping armour and weapons and putting them in another pile nearby, before they are thrown over the cliff.

An enemy CAPTAIN watches over the proceedings. One of the soldiers calls to him as he drops another body near the edge. It is Ambry's body.

**SOLDIER**

That's just about the last of them.

**CAPTAIN**

Go and make sure. When we have them all here, we'll burn the bodies before nightfall.

He looks over at the sun which is around 5pm. In the distance we see some rain clouds gathering.

FADE:

**EXT. MONASTERY - NIGHT**

Night falls over a Monastery built on top of a large rocky hill. A horse comes riding from the darkness up to the foot of the structures walls. It is Lady Vivian. She's weak but she lets Merlin down to the ground, then gets off the horse, almost falling. She carries her baby girl, Nimue, and goes to the door, banging it with the heavy knocker.

**VIVIAN**

Help me. Help me.

She slumps down against the door and they huddle under her fur cloak, shivering. She breaks down and sobs.

**VIVIAN**

(weakly)

Help me.

She hears the sound of the small door opening. A monk appears carrying a lantern. He is PETER, 30, in brown robes. He kneels down to them.

**PETER**

No one should be out in such rain as this. Even the beasts have shelter. Come in, before you freeze.

They struggle to get to the door and the door closes.

FADE OUT:

**INT. MONASTERY, STUDY HALL - DAY**

A large room with a number of large tables. Peter shows Merlin (6 yo.) to a table, he sits down, looking at a large open book. Peter sits near him and starts to teach him the alphabet. Another monk comes by and bows to them.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

Lady Vivian left the boy Merlin at the monastery, to be raised among men of God, with the hope of a good education.

**EXT. MONASTERY, ANIMAL SHED - DAY**

Merlin (6 yo.) is going through the chicken coop and gathering eggs in a basket. Then he is sitting down beside a couple of goats and learning how to milk them from Peter.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

Safe from the world, he learns many things there, and becomes a good friend to the men in the brotherhood.

**INT. MONASTERY, MERLIN'S ROOM - DAY**

Merlin (6 yo.) is kneeling in a very small room. Evening light comes into the room and a single candle is burning.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

He was shown how to pray to one God, which he did with faith. He

(CONT.) looked to God for love,  
and it helped to fill the loss he  
felt for his mother.

**EXT. FOREST - DAY**

Summer - Merlin (now 15 yo.) is leaping and loping through the forest, pretending he's a fox, then we see the actual fox he chases - its big bushy tail behind him. Later, he is kneeling down in a clearing in a field and stroking the fox, feeding it some food. It is very friendly to him. Birds come to watch them and land on Merlin.

**NARRATION VOICE OVER:**

Almost ten years pass and Merlin finds himself drawn to the forest, where he feels a strong connection with the woodland creatures.

**EXT. FOREST, CLIFF - LATER**

Merlin walks along the top of a cliff-face. He walks with a tall stick, wears brown robes, and stops to look across a valley. He then hears a voice below in the distant:

**VOICE**

Help! Help! Wolf!

Merlin suddenly is alert, and looks for a way to get down below. He sees a narrow animal trail and descends.

**VOICE**

Wolf! Help! Wolf!

Merlin steps on a clump of grass that gives out! He tumbles and slides down a steep hill face, finally hitting a small tree with his chest. WHAM. The wind is knocked out of him, and he's scratched up, even on his face.

He is lying down a moment, resting from the fall, when he turns his head to listen. He hears a YELP! Then, quiet.

Weakly, he gets to his feet and finds his walking stick, then going down further into the forest. Just ahead, there is a man standing over a black wolf's body. Merlin comes forward into the clearing.

**EXT. FOREST, CLEARING -**

A man, HUNTER, 40, stands over the black wolf's body. He wears mostly green, has a tall bow on his back, a large dagger at his side, and he is re-loading his crossbow. Also on the ground is a peasant FARMER, who is getting to his feet. Merlin approaches and surprises the hunter, who spins quickly, on his guard against more wolves.

**HUNTER**

Hey you.

Hunter drops his aim at him and sees he's limping and his face is bleeding.

**HUNTER**

You're injured. Are you alright?

**MERLIN**

Yes. I'm alright. I heard cries for help, so came to see ...

**FARMER**

That was me. Luckily this hunter came along and killed this old wolf ... or it would've surely killed me.

Merlin comes closer, looking down at the wolf.

**MERLIN**

That's a big wolf. Too bad you had to kill him.

Merlin kneels down to touch the wolf's fur.

**FARMER**

Too bad? What a strange thing to say. But I can see you're a monk, and not used to the beasts of the forest.

**HUNTER**

Are you from the monastery over a league south?

**MERLIN**

Yes.

(then to farmer)

I'm sorry the wolf attacked you, sir. Did you see any others?

**HUNTER**

You think there's more?

**MERLIN**

Oh yes. They live in packs, and ...

Then he stops, puts up his hand to silence everyone, looking around the clearing edges slowly. He stops at one spot. CAM moves in slowly... A wolf's face appears in the heavy brush, looking directly at Merlin.

**MERLIN**

There.

Hunter sees it, putting his crossbow to his shoulder to aim down the sights. Merlin moves his eyes only and sees this.

**MERLIN**

No! Don't kill him. There are others.... look.

Hunter looks with his eyes left and then sees two other to the left, staying back on the edge of the clearing.

The farmer looks to the right and sees two more. He shakes in fear.

**FARMER**

Two more to the right.

**HUNTER**

You're right, lad. There's too many for us.

**MERLIN**

Just don't move a muscle. Let me.

Merlin stares hard at the first wolf for a moment. His eyes flash with a yellow light.

The wolf stares back, mouth closed.

Merlin holds up a free hand and opens his palm, then makes a few hand gestures. His face changes from serious to apologetic.

The wolf puts his nose down, then turns away and leaves.

To the left the wolves retreat, and then to the right.

Hunter lowers his crossbow, standing above Merlin, still kneeling. He looks around the clearing.

**HUNTER**

How did you do that, lad?

**MERLIN**

I have a way with animals, hunter.

**HUNTER**

What's your name?

**MERLIN**

Merlin.

**FARMER**

Well, I thank you, hunter, for saving my life, and also to you Merlin. That was some trick.

The farmer and hunter begin to walk away.

**HUNTER**

You staying here, lad?

Merlin gets to his feet, turning to face the hunter.

**MERLIN**

Just for a moment. Don't worry. Leave me alone with this wolf here.

**HUNTER**

Well, you say you're a monk but act like a druid. Alright then. We'll leave you here.

**MERLIN**

Thank you.

Hunter leaves down the trail following the farmer. Merlin kneels down again beside the wolf. When the hunter and farmer are out of sight, a black wolf comes into the clearing. Merlin looks over at it and nods his head. Merlin watches it come to him slowly, then reaches out and strokes his head.

**MERLIN**

Sorry, friend. It's just man's nature.

**INT. MONASTERY, HOSPITAL - DAY**

Merlin bends over a basin of water, splashes water on his face and towels it dry.

Peter is beside him and puts some salve on his scratched face. Nearby there are a few beds with injured men lying in them. Another monk is attending one, washing his face with a basin.

**PETER**

Tell me about the wolves again.

**MERLIN**

Well, somehow I let them know that I'm no threat. If I close my eyes and concentrate, I can sense what they feel.

**PETER**

(looking around carefully)  
Don't tell anyone about this. They might think you've got a devil in you.

**MERLIN**

But it's just the way I am. I don't mean ...

**PETER**

It's OK.

(a beat)

You and I both know, over the last year, you've been showing more signs of ... a power I don't recognize. It could be a gift from God ... but you still need to be careful.

**MERLIN**

The hunter said I acted like a druid.

**PETER**

(thinking)

Yes ... a druid. That might be true. That's the old pagan ways. The people used to worship many gods before the one true God revealed himself.

**MERLIN**

Do you think there still are druids out there?

**PETER**

I'm sure there is. Not everyone has the same beliefs we have.

**INT. MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Merlin is kneeling beside his bed, praying, with the one single candle light.

**MERLIN**

God? Is this a gift from you? I love your creatures big and small. Let me care for them.

(a beat)

And help me to not forget about my mother, or my father. And keep Lady Vivian and Nimue safe.

(a beat)

And that old man from my youth, what was his name ... ? He used to do magic.

Merlin opens his eyes and looks down, distracted now.

**MERLIN**

He did magic ....

**INT. MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Only a bit of moonlight comes into the narrow room. Merlin is sleeping on his bed, but his head moves a bit.

**MERLIN'S DREAM - GROTTO - NIGHT**

A vision of the watery pool in the grotto. Nearby is a fire, and the firelight flickers throughout the cavern.

CAM slowly moves in - near the fire a woman is lying in a bed, shouting loudly in pain, and her belly is huge. With a final scream, her belly goes down flat. Then she's holding a baby above her, who cries. She takes him closer and he stops crying. Now looking directly down on her, it is CLARE, who looks up and says:

**CLARE**

Merlin, I love you.

From behind him he hears a commanding voice.

**AMBRY**

Did you see the witches?

Merlin turns to see Ambry coming. Merlin then steps away from the bed. Ambry comes beside the bed. The bed is now empty.

**MERLIN**

No... but, I remember you...

**AMBRY**

And you should. I'm your godfather.

Ambry then lies down on the bed and closes his eyes.

**MERLIN**

But what's your name?

Merlin looks over Ambry again, then notices the fire getting bigger, brighter. A wind rises over the pool and he sees swirling of mist and black smoke.

Suddenly something tugs at his sleeve. He turns, startled. It is the witch Saffra. She gets his attention and walks to go beside the bed. Sabba is on the other side and drawing charcoal on Ambry's face.

**MERLIN**

But what's his name?

**SABBA**

This is Ambrosius. He lost his way, the day your mother was killed.

**SAFFRA**

Help us to wake him.

**MERLIN**

But... where?

**SAFFRA**

We are below your castle, Merlin.  
Castle Dinas.

**SABBA**

Come home, Merlin. Ambrosius needs  
you.

Merlin looks at them and the shadow dragons come and swirl  
around them.

**INT. MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Merlin wakes up. He recalls the name now.

**MERLIN**

Ambrosius ... (a beat) Ambry!

**EXT. MONASTERY SIDE GATE - DAY**

Merlin is carrying a pack on his back and is talking with  
Peter.

**MERLIN**

It's about two days travel but I  
have some money. You know I have  
to help my godfather wherever he  
is.

**PETER**

I know you must go, but promise me  
you'll come back soon. And you'll  
take care of yourself.

**MERLIN**

I will. I trust in God to protect  
me.

**PETER**

I'll be praying for you.

Merlin hugs Peter. Then he turns and goes to the open door.

**PETER**

I'm sure it won't hurt to have St.  
Christopher watch over you. God be  
with you.

Merlin looks back once, and waves. Then he's gone.

**EXT. LONG ROAD - DAY**

Merlin walks down the road as a farmer drives his wagon,  
drawn by one horse. Merlin hitches a ride, jumping up and  
sitting beside the farmer.

**EXT. FOREST, TRAVELLERS CAMP - NIGHT**

Merlin comes into a clearing in the forest with a large  
fire burning. There are a few other vagabonds sitting near  
the fire. Merlin crouches and warms himself, while someone  
offers him a piece of bread. Merlin accepts, then goes to  
sit against a tree to rest.

**EXT. BRIDGE - DAY**

A narrow low bridge crosses a stream and Merlin crosses it.  
On the other side, Merlin takes his shoes off and puts his  
feet into the cool water. He watches as a group of soldiers  
on horseback gallop past on the bridge, kicking up dust.

**EXT. COTTAGE ON ROAD - DAY**

Merlin stops at a cottage beside the road and leans over  
the fence to ask directions from an old woman, tending a  
simple garden.

**MERLIN**

How much farther to Castle Dinas?

**OLD WOMAN**

You should make it there by  
mealtime, lad. Are you a monk?

**MERLIN**

That's something I don't know yet.

**MERLIN** (CONT.)

Oh ... do you know if there are any druids left in these parts?

**OLD WOMAN**

Druids? Not so many around here - and even less witches I'd say. King Vortigern makes sure of that.

**MERLIN**

Vortigern?

**OLD WOMAN**

That's who rules in Castle Dinas. Don't you know that?

**MERLIN**

I'm sorry. I'm new to the area.

Old woman gets a bit closer.

**OLD WOMAN**

I'll tell you what, if it's a druid you're looking for, there's a hermit nearby, lives in the forest, who they say is a druid.

**MERLIN**

I know of a name ... Ambry?

**OLD WOMAN**

Ambry? Yes, that's him! I can show you whereabouts he lives.

**MERLIN**

Yes, if you please.

The old woman points up onto a mountain.

**OLD WOMAN**

He lives way up there. Tries to stay away from everyone.

**MERLIN**

Thank you so much. God bless.

The old woman laughs a bit and goes back to her work as Merlin continues down the road. A few steps past the

(CONT.) cottage and he goes off the main road and into a forest path, heading up to the mountain.

**EXT. FOREST, RAVEN - DAY**

Through a dense forest, Merlin walks, and then stops to feed some wild hares. Then he sees a raven in the trees cawing loudly. He looks up to him and says:

**MERLIN**

Well, don't just sit there  
shouting at no one. You can show  
me to the hermit's house.

At that, the black bird tilts its head, then flies off a ways to another tree. Merlin follows.

**EXT. FOREST, AMBRY'S SOD HOUSE - DAY**

Merlin watches as the raven lands on a big mound of mossy grass, surrounded by trees. He walks to the front of a hidden sod house, built half into a slight rise. The door is small, and hard to recognize, but he goes up to it and knocks politely. After a moment, he tries to pull the door but it is not open. He sees it is overgrown with some vines. The raven caws. Merlin talks to it:

**MERLIN**

Well, it looks like he's not home.  
(he looks around)

The raven flies and lands directly above the door, cawing more.

**MERLIN**

Alright. I'll try to find the  
handle.

He puts his hands on the vines and they pull back by themselves, untwisting, unlocking the door. Merlin then opens the door by pulling, and enters.

**INT. AMBRY'S SOD HOUSE - DAY**

Merlin goes inside, and sees a very cluttered, one-room house. A dog is here. He barks twice but Merlin puts up his

hand and the dog senses he's friendly. He sniffs all over him for food. Merlin sees some food stuff on the floor, rummaged through by the dog.

To one side there is a handcrafted wooden table top on legs acting as a desk. On that there are stacks of papers, books, candle wax everywhere, and jars of liquids and powders. In the middle at the back is a small clay-brick fireplace and beside that is a large stack of cut wood. Nearest him is a simple wooden frame bed stuffed with grass and topped with sheepskins. On this he sees AMBRY lying there.

**MERLIN**

Ambrosius! God-father.

Merlin kneels down beside the bed. Ambry is unconscious and can not be wakened easily. His lips are chapped, and his skin is cracked. Merlin brings out his waterskin and gives Ambry a drink. Ambry barely comes alive, opens his eyes and is delirious. He hallucinates and sees the witches.

**AMBRY**

Oh. The witches. You can't kill me.

**LATER -**

**INT. AMBRY'S SOD HOUSE - NIGHT**

Ambry is sleeping on the bed here, and Merlin is sitting (CONT. ) beside him, watching him. Suddenly Ambry wakes up, and sees him. He lifts his head and looks around the room. The dog, named Rudy, comes up to him and licks his face.

**AMBRY**

Rudy. We're in my house. (pause)  
Young master Merlin ... is it you?

Ambry sits up more, looking carefully at him. The dog sits down nearby.

**AMBRY**

Merlin? That IS you, isn't it!

**MERLIN**

Yes. I've come to see you too. I have so many questions.

**AMBRY**

(staring at nothing)

I remember now ... Oh it's so good to see you.

**MERLIN**

(nodding)

I found you in some sort of trance. What happened to you?

**AMBRY**

That's quite a long story ...

Ambry stares off at nothing. The conversation drops off.

**MERLIN**

You were in bad shape, so I gave you a healing elixir.

(a beat)

Just rest more, and we can talk tomorrow.

Ambry leans back in the bed.

**AMBRY**

Yes ... you're a good lad.

**INT. AMBRY'S SOD HOUSE - MORNING**

The next morning, the door is open and there is fresh air and sunlight in the house. Merlin is sitting on the bed, and Ambry is making porridge in a pot over the fire. He produces two bowls and fills them.

**AMBRY**

I am starving. You must be hungry too.

**MERLIN**

Yes I am, thank you.

Merlin grabs a bowl, and blows on it to cool, then accepting a spoon from Ambry, he sits back down.

**AMBRY**

Looks like Rudy has had to fend for himself, hasn't he?

Ambry brings out some dried meat jerky. The dog gobbles it down.

**AMBRY**

Thank you Merlin for coming.  
You're right... I was not well.

**MERLIN**

You're welcome. Ambry. I thought  
about you. Did you ...?

**AMBRY**

I'm sorry, but I wasn't myself for  
quite a few years after ...

**MERLIN**

Did you look for me?

**AMBRY**

I'm sorry, no ... I lost my mind  
after ... your mother was killed.  
You know I almost died too. Most  
people thought I did.

**MERLIN**

I remember lots of soldiers ...  
they came into the room ... then  
they killed my mother ...

Merlin has tears in his eyes. He looks over at  
Ambry who also has red eyes. Ambry sees this.

**AMBRY**

Come here, boy.

Merlin gets up and goes to him. They hug for a  
moment.

**AMBRY**

I'm sorry for your mother. She was  
really special.

**MERLIN**

You know ... you're all I have for  
family.

**AMBRY**

And you're all of my family.

Ambry holds him away from him, smiling.

**AMBRY**

From now on, we have each other.

Merlin smiles, nods, and sits back down.

**AMBRY**

Oh, and I have something that  
needs to be returned to you.

Ambry brings out the golden falcon pendant, and gives it to  
Merlin.

**AMBRY**

That was your mothers.

Merlin puts it over his head and studies it.

**MERLIN**

I remember this. And you were  
there too ... speared through the  
side. I guess I thought you were  
killed too.

**INSERT - FLASHBACK : EXT. SIDE OF CASTLE - LATE DAY**

Beside the castle is a steep cliff that drops down to  
twenty feet below, where there is a large pile of dead  
bodies, killed from the fighting. Near the edge is Ambry.

CLOSE-UP on Ambry's face. He's on the top edge, above the  
cliff and his eyes slowly open. He looks around with his  
eyes only, and sees a dead body beside him. His eyes go  
wide.

The soldiers are looking through the weapons they've  
stripped off the bodies. Ambry crawls toward the cliff  
edge, falls down, rolling into a pile of bloody bodies  
there. He crawls over these bodies, wide-eyed and  
horrified, stumbling out past the pile, stepping on bodies.  
He holds his side in pain and rushes headlong into a  
thicket of brush and trees, tripping and rolling.

**AMBRY'S VOICE-OVER**

I remember a pile of dead bodies.  
It was such a shock to an old  
hermit like me, that it drove me

out of my mind. I knew Clare was dead, the castle captured ... I thought everyone was dead. I ran to the forest, and hid from the world...

**BACK TO: SOD HOUSE -**

**AMBRY**

I didn't talk to a soul for at least a year, and had terrible nightmares.

Merlin finishes eating, and sits back on the bed.

**MERLIN**

Aunt Vivian came to see me a few times. But I don't know where she is now.

**AMBRY**

When you're ready ... we'll look for her....

Ambry looks thoughtful.

**AMBRY**

How did you know to come look for me?

**MERLIN**

I had a dream that you were somewhere underground, sleeping, yet could not wake.

**AMBRY**

That's a powerful sense. The gift of a seer.

**MERLIN**

There were also two witches there who asked me to help you.

**AMBRY**

Yes. They were there when you were born. In the grotto beneath the castle.

**MERLIN**

Were you also there?

**AMBRY**

Of course! I'm the one who delivered you! I had to help the two witches, or it might not have went so well for you - or your mother.

**MERLIN**

Who are they?

**AMBRY**

The sisters? They believe in the old ways of curses and blessings. I think they have some real magic too.

**MERLIN**

What do they have to do with me?

**AMBRY**

I think they helped to bring you into this world.

**MERLIN**

How can that be? Did they know my father?

**AMBRY**

You were conceived on the night of the Summer Solstice. That's a very powerful time for the old gods.

**MERLIN**

So you know who was my father?

**AMBRY**

I don't think he was entirely a man. Some sort of incubus.

**MERLIN**

What is that?

**AMBRY**

Well... it's a woodland spirit, possibly controlled by a lesser god, that takes the form of a human. And I'm sorry, but I

(CONT.) haven't been able to discover any more.

Merlin falls silent, lost in thought.

**AMBRY**

That's enough talk for now. Let's go for a walk.

They get up to leave the house.

**LATER -**

**EXT. FOREST, LOG BRIDGE - DAY**

They are walking beside a small stream. Then they come upon a large log fallen across the stream. Ambry walks across it easily, and sits down on it. He waits for Merlin to catch up and sit down too. They look at the water a minute, and Merlin finally has to speak.

**MERLIN**

Tell me about king Vortigern.

**AMBRY**

He's a Saxon invader ... a true warlord. His soldiers killed our own king Duncan, and your mother, and our whole way of life here.

(a beat)

And would have been the death of you and I too.

Merlin falls silent. As a monk he wants peace on earth.

**AMBRY**

I spent the last year studying the old dragon lore... trying to discover a power that could destroy him. And ... now I have.

**MERLIN**

Your longing for vengeance ... I don't know... God says to forgive.

**AMBRY**

That's someone else's God. Someday you'll understand the way I feel. That man's a Devil.

**MERLIN**

Then tell me about the dragons.

**AMBRY**

Not just yet. I can tell you I am reading of the ancient ways ... of the druids.

**MERLIN**

The Druids. That was something I hoped you would help me with. You see, I ... I can communicate with animals - to a certain degree - and I feel so much at ease in the forest.

**AMBRY**

Sounds just like a druid. Why don't you stay here and I'll teach you what I know?

**MERLIN**

Really? I'd like that. But ... I told my brothers at the monastery that I'd be back within a month.

**AMBRY**

That's good. This little house is too small for both of us. You come and visit me when you can and I'll teach you something new.

Merlin smiles at Ambry.

**AMBRY**

Good. Now tell me how it was to be raised in the monastery.

**EXT. FOREST - NEXT DAY**

Ambry and Merlin are walking along a forest path with the dog, and Merlin has a large basket of plants he has collected. Ambry stops and points out a plant.

**AMBRY**

The last one for today will be 'Boneset'. It's a weed that can be used in protection spells. Just

(CONT.) pluck one only, so we can study it.

Merlin kneels down and grabs one only, then gets to his feet again. They continue along the path.

**AMBRY**

All these plants have a special purpose. Healing, protection, and some that can produce visions.

**MERLIN**

And druids use these in spells?

**AMBRY**

We make oils, salves, and teas. A druid uses only the plants that the earth has given to us. We must come to understand nature. You see, we believe that the source of life is the mother earth, not a heavenly God.

**MERLIN**

The monks believe there is one god who made the earth, the skies, the oceans ...

**AMBRY**

In many religions there is a creator of everything, and for them it is a God with no name.

**INT. AMBRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Merlin is grinding up some leaves in a little bowl, as Ambry is looking over an open book.

**MERLIN**

I thought that spells were for witches.

**AMBRY**

You're mostly right. We use very few spells. Whatever magic I do, comes from within me. The essence of these plants help me to be

closer to nature. And of course they are used for healing too.

**MERLIN**

Do druids also communicate with animals?

Ambry looks up from his book.

**AMBRY**

You did say you could communicate with animals. Tell me what happened.

**MERLIN**

When I walk through the forest, no animals seem to be afraid of me. And there was one time with some wolves ... I could sense what they were feeling, and I was able to keep them from attacking a farmer.

**AMBRY**

That's a great gift you have. Most druids have a favorable relationship to wildlife. I can help you understand it, and improve it.

Merlin brings his bowl over to Ambry, who puts it on the table beside his book.

**AMBRY**

Now, let's see what the book tells us about Lavender.

**MERLIN**

That's a large book. Did you write it?

**AMBRY**

Not entirely. I inherited these from my old teacher. I have since added to it with my own notes.

(pause)

Someday these books may be yours.

He looks over at Merlin, then reaches up to his shelf to grab a small book.

**AMBRY**

You know, I have a small book for you. I think it was the first book I read on the druid's craft.

He hands over the book to Merlin, but before he can open it he says:

**AMBRY**

You can read it later. For now let's continue with the plants you've prepared.

Ambry begins adding other ground plants to the bowl.

**EXT. OUTSIDE AMBRY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Ambry and Merlin are standing near each other. The dog is sitting there.

**MERLIN**

I'll try to come back as soon as I can, maybe a fortnight.

**AMBRY**

That's good. You take good care of that book. It's very rare you know.

**MERLIN**

I will. It's so good to be with you again, godfather.

Merlin hugs him and turns to leave.

**AMBRY**

Wait. One more thing to give you.

Ambry gives him a plant, wound into a small circle to be worn as an amulet. He puts it over Merlin's head. Then he shows Merlin he too wears one.

**AMBRY**

Motherwort. This is a protection amulet for druids. For a safe journey.

**MERLIN**

Thank you.

He turns and walks away.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. MONASTERY, MERLIN'S ROOM - DAY**

Merlin is here with Peter.

**MERLIN**

And I finally found him! My old godfather, Ambrosius.

**PETER**

That is wonderful news. You now know someone of your family out there. And how was he?

**MERLIN**

He lives a life of a hermit, but he was happy to see me too. He's going to teach me.

**PETER**

You can already read and write. What other things would he teach you?

**MERLIN**

He wants to show me some of the ancient ways ... of healing. He studies herbs and plants.

**PETER**

Healing is a great skill. I'm glad for you, Merlin. But now that you're back you must do all your chores. Everyone here contributes to the community.

**MERLIN**

I will.

Peter leaves, and closes the door. Merlin takes out the book that was hidden in his robes. He opens it and reads a bit.

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. MONASTERY, COURTYARD, WINERY - DAY**

Merlin is struggling to push a cart with baskets of berries and fruits to the attached WINERY shed. He comes in through the door and sees four other monks there sorting fruits into large bowls. Two monks work a giant wooden screw press that presses the juice from the fruit. One monk is BART, 45. They smile at him as he comes in.

**MONK BART**

Good to have you back young  
Merlin.

**MONK2**

Yes. We all missed you ... and  
your strong arms.

They all laugh at that.

**INT. MONASTERY, MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Merlin is lying in his bed, with the candle very low, and he's reading the book carefully. There's a noise outside the room and he folds the book up quickly, putting it under his sheets. He waits and no one comes into his room. He takes out his gold pendant and looks at it. He hides it again, then he reaches over and puts out the candle.

**EXT. OUTSIDE AMBRY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Merlin walks up and taps the door with his walking stick. Ambry opens it and is happy to see him, motioning him to come in.

**INT. AMBRY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Merlin is looking around the room as Ambry reads a book. Ambry is sitting on the chair across from Merlin. He puts down a book he's been reading to Merlin, and cleans his clay pipe out.

**AMBRY**

I think that's enough reading for  
today. Tell me about Sandalwood.

**MERLIN**

Ground into a tea. It is used for visions of other places. Sometimes combined with Mugwort, it can also bring visions of foretelling.

Ambry sits back and strokes his beard, thinking.

**AMBRY**

Your studies on herbs and plant life have been going very well.  
(a beat)

I'd like to show you something that may prove to be very helpful to you someday.

Ambry takes a small vial of oil from the table and drinks it. Then he turns around away from him.

**AMBRY**

Just give it a moment.

CLOSE ON AMBRY - He mutters some inaudible words. His face changes just slightly before our eyes. Behind him Merlin is concerned. Then Ambry turns around slowly, and we see Merlin's expression of bewilderment and confusion. Ambry speaks but his voice is changed too.

**AMBRY**

This special mixture changes your look and even your voice.

Merlin looks at him, getting up and coming to him to look closer. The dog cowers on the floor, looking up.

**MERLIN**

That IS completely amazing. I can still see a bit of you in there, but it's difficult.

**AMBRY**

This trick can last from an hour to almost a day. You should not use it too often, or too much though, because the plants are quite poisonous.

**MERLIN**

Does it hurt?

**AMBRY**

No. Just makes your face numb.

**EXT. FISHING STREAM - DAY**

Merlin watches as Ambry is standing in a small stream. He has a small net, within a large wooden circle hoop that he's made and has it in the water.

**AMBRY**

Hunting is not forbidden, nor is cutting down trees for shelter. These are things people need to do to survive. We are all part of the earth too.

Ambry gets a fish in the net and suddenly jerks it up and flings the fish onto the bank.

**AMBRY**

Here. You try now.

Merlin then goes to the same position and tries it.

**AMBRY**

The druids want harmony in nature. What we find distressing is excessive hunting or cutting. Too much and the land can not restore itself.

**MERLIN**

I think I got one too.

Merlin goes to throw the fish and he slips, falling into the water. Ambry laughs and goes into the water to help him up.

**AMBRY**

You might be able to talk to animals but ... fish are a different story.

The dog barks at something. Behind them, a black bear comes into the clearing. Merlin looks behind Ambry, who turns his head to see.

**AMBRY**

Don't panic, Merlin. It's only Greedy. He won't hurt us.

Ambry walks up to the bear and pets him.

**AMBRY**

This bear is wild, but he knows that I live here too. We share the stream. Why don't you bring him a fish?

**MERLIN**

He's just so ... big.

Merlin comes forward bringing a fish and tosses it to the bear, then pets him carefully too.

**EXT. NIGHT**

Starry night. They sit outside the house on chairs. They both look up at the sky.

**AMBRY**

Remember the dragon lore I mentioned? (pause)  
There's an old legend - that two dragons will fight one another.

**AMBRY**

In reality, the two dragons are ancient spirits of the land. That's all that remains now of them - ghosts of the past. They fight to resolve the conflict in our world. The white one is the invading Saxons, and the red one is Uther - the future king.

**MERLIN**

King Vortigern is the Saxon, but who is Uther?

**AMBRY**

Uther is my half-brother, a true celt. He is now a knight of Brittany, across the sea on the continent. He will come and

(CONT.) destroy Vortigern.

**MERLIN**

Have you seen this - in a vision?

**AMBRY**

I have been planning it for a long time. I wanted to tell you this ... to be ready. The battle will be soon.

**MERLIN**

This is all for revenge?

**AMBRY**

No. Justice.

(he pauses to think)

... that's the way of war.

**MERLIN**

An eye for an eye? (pause) I don't know...

**AMBRY**

When you leave tomorrow, I want you to be safe. Do not return for at least a fortnight. Can you do that?

**MERLIN**

Is something bad going to happen?

**AMBRY**

I'm sorry Merlin, but I must do this. For remembrance of everyone I ever loved. Even for you.

Merlin looks over and does not agree but also can't argue with him. Instead, he stands up.

**MERLIN**

I'm going to bed now. Must get up early.

Ambry watches Merlin go back inside. Ambry lights up a clay pipe. He looks over at the dog.

**AMBRY**

(to the dog)

Someday ... he will understand.

**EXT. FISHING STREAM - DAY**

Merlin and Ambry walk up to look over the stream here.

**AMBRY**

Blessings to you, Merlin.

Merlin turns to hug him. He feels dread.

**MERLIN**

Take care of yourself, Ambry.

They step apart from each other. Merlin is a bit teary eyed.

**AMBRY**

(reassuringly)

This isn't the end. Safe journey,  
now.

**MERLIN**

I hope I'm wrong.

Merlin bends down and pets Rudy, the dog.

**MERLIN**

Take care of him.

**AMBRY**

Oh, I will.

**MERLIN**

(chuckles)

I was talking to Rudy.

Merlin turns and walks away. After twenty paces he turns and waves at them both. Then Ambry also turns and leaves.

**AMBRY**

Come on old boy. He'll be back.

DISSOLVE:

**INT. GROTTO -**

The interior is barely lit, but Ambry walks forward with a glowing magical light orb on his walking stick. He comes

upon the edge of the underground pool of water. It is calm and quiet, and there is an echo of dripping water.

Ambry goes to the broken-down bed. He looks down at the small firepit, points and says:

**AMBRY**

ferno illumo

The fire itself lights up.

**LATER -**

Ambry is sitting in front of the fire, with the basin in front of him. On the floor is his leather bound book. He reaches into his robes, gets out a vial of oil, pours it into the bowl, and looks down into it.

DISSOLVE:

**INT. CASTLE, KING'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

Vortigern is sitting on the side of his royal canopied bed. A woman comes to him and he grabs her, pulling her close to him. She grabs some sliced fruit on a nearby plate and feeds him.

DISSOLVE:

**INT. BACK IN THE GROTTA -**

Ambry picks up his large book from the floor and opens it to a bookmark. He looks over the page and sets it aside again. Now, he pulls out a small bag of powder from his robe. He makes an incantation and throws some powder onto the fire that makes it turn deep red.

**AMBRY**

Compa rosso drago

The red light makes the smoke glow red and it is carried over the water where it solidifies into a red dragon spirit. It flies around the cavern and pushes into the ceiling to escape, making the cavern shake.

**INT. CASTLE, VORTIGERN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

Vortigern is eating some sliced fruit. The woman is hanging onto the bed post, and teases him.

**VORTIGERN**

If you play the mouse, then I will  
be the cat.

**LADY**

How else am I to be queen? After  
you've had your way with the other  
ladies, you've dismissed them.

**VORTIGERN**

You know you are so much more to  
me....

**LADY**

You say that to all the ladies?

Suddenly the room shakes a bit. The rumble is deep and  
Vortigern looks about concerned and listening.

**INT. GROTTO -**

The red dragon flies around making some ROARING sounds.  
Ambry is still sitting in front of the fire. This time he  
throws some powder onto the fire that makes it turn WHITE.

**AMBRY**

Compa bianco drago

The new WHITE light emanates from the fire, making the  
smoke whiter and it is carried over the water where it  
solidifies into a ghostly WHITE dragon spirit.

Ambry looks into the basin and makes a small incantation,  
calling for Uther.

**AMBRY**

visa verita

A mist comes over the bowl as he stares into the water. It  
becomes clearer and a vision appears.

**AMBRY**

Uther ... my brother.

DISSOLVE:

**INT. UTHER'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

Uther, 50ish, rugged warlord's face, is sleeping in his bed, in a stone castle room, when he is awaked by Ambry's disembodied voice:

**AMBRY** (v.o.)

Uther! It is your brother,  
Ambrosius, in Northumberland.

**UTHER**

Ambrosius?

**AMBRY** (v.o.)

Yes. Castle Dinas and the kingdom  
will finally be yours in five days  
time. It is their fate.

**UTHER**

My brother. I will leave at first  
light of dawn.

**AMBRY**

Good. Everything is ready for you.  
Your victory is assured.

**INT. GROTTO - NIGHT**

The red dragon and white dragon spirits battle each other and shake the foundations.

**EXT. CASTLE DINAS - NIGHT**

Some guards are on the outer walls, which are still under construction by scaffolds - when the shaking starts. The stones fall apart and the men plunge and fall off the walls. Most men avoid being crushed by stones.

**INT. CASTLE, VORTIGERN'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

The room shakes again and Vortigern gets to his feet, struggles to the window and looks out at the outer wall. He sees one man crushed by a large rolling stone. The shaking stops. Vortigern ignores the lady in his chamber, instead going to the closed door. He opens it and calls to a servant.

**VORTIGERN**

Call the councilmen. Get me my captain.

**EXT. MONASTERY, COURTYARD, WINERY - DAY**

Merlin works hard as he helps to work the giant wine press. As he does, we see the monk BART, tasting some older wine, as two monks fill up a cart full of smaller barrels from a huge barrel.

As Merlin works hard his druid amulet comes out of his robes. Bart sees this and looks skeptically at it. Merlin notices it a bit too late, but stuffs it back into his robes. The two of them exchange glances but nothing further is said as they get back to work.

**INT. MONASTERY, STUDY HALL - DAY**

A half-dozen monks are seated at large desks and reading or writing. It is very quiet. Merlin is studying too, when he hears some quiet talking of one monk to Peter. They look over at Merlin.

Peter walks up alone to Merlin.

**PETER**

Merlin. The Abbot wishes to speak to you. I hope it's not serious.

**MERLIN**

I don't know what it can be.

Merlin gets off the chair, and walks to the other monk, who leads him away. Peter looks worried.

**INT. MONASTERY, ABBOT'S OFFICE - DAY**

This room is large, and there is a big table at which is seated the ABBOT, 65, with grey hair. There's a knock at the door, and Merlin is shown in by the monk, who retreats and closes the door. Merlin steps in a bit and then waits.

**ABBOT**

I called you here, young master, because of concerns that you might be following a different path than

(CONT.) the rest of us.

He stands up and comes closer to Merlin.

**ABBOT**

Now, I've known you since you were brought here .. which was about ten years ago?

**MERLIN**

That's right.

**ABBOT**

Tell me the truth. Do you have an amulet? A pagan charm?

**MERLIN**

It was a gift from my godfather. He wanted me to be safe.

**ABBOT**

A person who follows God, has Him as protector. Show me.

Merlin pulls it out. The Abbot grabs it and pulls it, breaking the thin black thong holding it.

**ABBOT**

In these walls you shall NOT wear such pagan adornments. It's disrespectful to the other brothers here, and to me ...

Abbot goes back to behind his desk. He turns.

**ABBOT**

And to God!

The Abbot turns to a shelf behind him, picks up a book, then tosses it onto his desk in front of Merlin.

**ABBOT**

It's good that you're honest. That shows you have good character. Now, what about this book?

Merlin stares at it.

**ABBOT**

I had Brother Herley search your room. You know that we have sworn not to have any personal possessions here. It is all community - the community of God.

**MERLIN**

That was also a gift from my godfather.

**ABBOT**

(accusingly now)

This book is about the old ways of the druids. Do you fancy yourself a druid? Or are you a man of the one true God?

**MERLIN**

(looking downcast)

I don't know what I am.

**ABBOT**

(softening a bit)

That is at least a truthful answer. Come here Merlin.

Merlin is shaking a bit but comes closer.

**ABBOT**

When you came here we took you in gladly. Over time you've been a good friend to most of the brothers here. I know that you did not come here to become a monk. It is no fault of yours if you do not wish to spend your life in God's service. For this we need an oath of loyalty.

**MERLIN**

(looking at the book)

What about ....

**ABBOT**

This is the devils work, son. I'll keep it here. It's time for you to decide if you wish to stay among us. We'll speak more of it tomorrow.

Merlin looks even more sad. The abbot calls for the brother to come in. Merlin is lead out of the room as the Abbot picks up the book and puts it in a drawer.

**INT. CASTLE, VORTIGERN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT**

Vortigern is standing at his large window looking out at the broken stone outer wall. As he watches, the ground starts to shake again, and another section of stone wall comes apart, tumbling to the ground.

**INSERT - EXT. SHOT OF CASTLE -**

There is loud shouting as men scramble to get out of the way as stones fall down.

Vortigern stands his ground, looking out, holding onto the window sill, then looking up at his own ceiling as it drops a few pieces of plaster onto his bed.

Finally the shaking stops. Vortigern looks angry that this happened. He storms out of the room.

**INT. CASTLE, MAIN HALL -**

Vortigern is sitting at the throne as ten men sit around the council table heatedly arguing about why the ground has shook.

**COUNCILMAN**

It could be the giants from the north.

**COUNCILMAN2**

No. They'd have to be within a few leagues of us. And they why would it stop?

**COUNCILMAN3**

I've always thought we never give enough sacrifice on the solstice.

As Vortigern watches them argue an elderly man is brought to him. It is the castle ARCHITECT, 60.

**ARCHITECT**

Your highness.

**VORTIGERN**

You are my architect. Tell me why our walls are falling apart!

**ARCHITECT**

We all felt the ground shaking, my lord. This castle is built on a solid rock foundation. Where these tremors come from, I do not know.

**VORTIGERN**

So you have no idea....

Vortigern gets to his feet as they all hush to watch him.

**VORTIGERN**

... so does anyone here have any idea? You are my council! Give me something! Where's my seer?

Just then, the castle shudders a bit again, and shakes some dust from the rafters. They hear shouting outside. Then it stops.

**VORTIGERN**

We must do something to stop this! At this rate my castle will shake to the ground.

**COUNCILMAN2**

What if it is witchcraft, your highness? A curse?

**VORTIGERN**

That's the first new thought I've heard. Good. Round up the local witches and bring them here.

**INT. MONASTERY, MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Merlin stares up at his ceiling, and we hear the echoed, remembered voice of Ambrosius.

**AMBROSIUS (V.O.)**

Sounds just like a druid. Why don't you stay here and I'll teach you what I know?

Merlin closes his eyes. We hear the sounds of two dragons fighting as it fades out.

**INSERT: MERLIN'S DREAM - AMBRY IN GROTTA**

The two wispy-smoke dragon spirits chase each other around, flying just above the water, then fight, splashing into the water.

On the shore of the water, Ambry is sitting, casting his spells. The white dragon comes to the shore, and reforms into King Vortigern. He approaches Ambry, drawing his sword. Without warning, Vortigern takes his sword and thrusts it right into Ambry's back - going right through, sticking out his chest. The red dragon SCREAMS ... and the scream wakes up Merlin.

**INT. MONASTERY, MERLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Merlin opens his eyes.  
He sits up and looks around, then gets up out of bed.

**INT. MONASTERY, ABBOT'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

The door opens on the dark room. Merlin enters the room and goes to the shelf, looking for the book. He opens a drawer and sees it, along with the woven plant amulet. He grabs both and leaves the room.

**INT. CASTLE, MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

Vortigern is sitting at his throne and has SABBA and SAFFRA standing in front of him. To one side a few other ragged women are gathered by his order. Two soldiers are standing to one side to guard the witches. The councilmen all watch as the king interrogates them.

**VORTIGERN**

You two certainly look like  
witches.

**SABBA**

But my lord, we only do blessings  
and healings - not the dark arts.

**VORTIGERN**

(to everyone, mockingly)  
Well, that's a relief.

(pause)

Now tell me the truth, witch, is  
the ground trembling because of a  
curse?

**SABBA**

The ground quakes because of the  
battle of the spirits, my lord.  
It's an old fight - between the  
Saxons and the Celts.

**VORTIGERN**

(laughing)

I've been here a long time now...  
tell me why would it start now?

Saffra steps forward. She's afraid but still she speaks.

**SAFFRA**

Because ... your doom approaches.

Vortigern looks suddenly angry.

**VORTIGERN**

My doom? Do you suppose to  
prophesize to me? Where are my  
blessings then?

**SABBA**

My sister does have the gift of a  
seer, highness. She only tells you  
this as a warning.

**VORTIGERN**

Well then, what can I do to avoid  
my doom?

**SAFFRA**

You should seal up the cave,  
highness.

**VORTIGERN**

What cave?

**SAFFRA**

Below the castle. I have seen it.  
You should not go there my lord.

**VORTIGERN**

Do you know that it is treason to  
threaten the king? I think it is  
YOU who have put a curse on this  
castle. Guard! Take them away,  
lock them up until I decide what  
to do with them.

Two guards come and escort the witches out of the room.  
Vortigern motions his captain to come close.

**VORTIGERN**

What do you make of that?

**CAPTAIN**

(undecided)

I don't know ...

From one side, a soldier approaches the captain and  
whispers in his ear. The captain looks at him and nods.

**CAPTAIN**

You'll want to see this man, my  
king.

The captain motions the guard to bring the WINE STEWARD,  
50, to the king. The soldier bows before the king, then  
steps away. The king seems uninterested.

**VORTIGERN**

Very well. What news, steward?

The soldier pulls the servant by the arm to face the king.  
He bows down, then speaks.

**WINE STEWARD**

My lord. The tremors have opened a  
passage below the castle.

Vortigern sits up at this, now interested.

**VORTIGERN**

Below the castle you say... like a  
cave?

**WINE STEWARD**

Yes, your highness. The rock walls themselves have opened up.

Vortigern is stunned, recalling the witches prophecy.

**VORTIGERN**

How deep does it go?

**WINE STEWARD**

Very deep my lord. We were afraid to go down ... there may be goblins, or dwarrow... we thought...

**VORTIGERN**

(getting to his feet)

Alright. We shall go below and see where the path takes us. Captain! Get some men.

**INT. CASTLE, WINE CELLAR -**

In a dark, crowded wine cellar, lit by torches, the wine steward leads the CAPTAIN, followed by VORTIGERN, SIR EGRIC, 50 yo, and five soldiers, to a big hole in the wall. But there is some ancient archway that outlines it. Just beyond is a tall crack in the rock wall, and a path leads down.

**STEWARD**

Here it is my lord.

The steward bows and retreats, as the captain looks it over.

**CAPTAIN**

(to Vortigern)

Looks like it may be an old cave, but was blocked up by stones and plaster. Shall I lead?

**VORTIGERN**

You go first, with your best men, then I'll follow.

The captain holds his torch high and leads them into the crack. He's followed by two soldiers, then SIR EGRIC. Then

comes the king, who has a torch too, and the last three men follow him.

**INT. CASTLE DUNGEON - NIGHT**

Two guards escort the two witches down narrow steps to a dark, narrow area, with small doors. It is guard1, Sabba, Saffra, and guard2.

**SAFFRA**

Listen. You can't lock us up down here.

**GUARD**

Orders.

Saffra turns. He stops.

**SAFFRA**

Wouldn't you rather be with me?

Guard2 smiles at her, then he looks up to the other sister. Saffra lifts her hand and blows some powder in his face, and he looks surprised, then passes out, falling to the ground.

Saffra helps him to fall gently, as she calls out to the other guard.

**SAFFRA**

Guard! Something's wrong you're your friend here!

Sabba stops and looks back. The front guard stops, turns and looks past Sabba. Sabba looks up at him, smiles and reaches out for his hand.

CLOSE-UP - She has a small ring on her finger with a little needle. She grabs his hand and he feels a little prick there, pulling his hand back. Then he also goes faint, and falls to the ground.

**SABBA**

Very good sister. We can't be locked up now. We have a lot more to do.

They both exit back down the corridor and up the stairs.

**INT. GROTTA - NIGHT**

Vortigern's men enter the chamber through a constricting crack in the rock wall. They see and hear the roaring of wind and dragons as the red and white dragon spirits fly around and chase each other. The first man through the crack is the captain with his torch carried high. Two other men and Sir Egric follow him into the grotto.

They pause and look out at the sights of these spirits flying. The king stands beside them watching this spectacle for a moment.

Then the Captain sees the little fire of Ambrosius's across the water, and motions to the king, pointing. They nod and begin making their way around the large water to the other side.

At the fire, Ambrosius is focusing his energy, and in a trance of sorts. The Captain approaches him. Ambry is suddenly aware that someone else is here. He opens his eyes and tries to get to his feet, but the Captain is already grabbing him and holding him down. Sir EGRIC draws his dagger and puts it to Ambry's neck, which makes Ambry stay very still.

King Vortigern now approaches.

**VORTIGERN**

This is your doing? Are you some sort of sorcerer?

**AMBRY**

No. I am a druid ... your highness.

He sees his amulet and reaches over and grabs it, breaking the thong.

**VORTIGERN**

And this is an amulet? What sort of magic do you command?

He pauses and motions to the dragon spirits flying around.

**VORTIGERN (CONT.)**

These spirits... are they evil?

**AMBRY**

These are the spirits of the people, your highness. The white one is the saxons and the red one - the celts.

**VORTIGERN**

Now tell me no riddles! What exactly is this magic?

**AMBRY**

It is the prophecy of your doom, my lord.

Vortigern gets angry now, and draws his sword out. He lets the tip touch Ambry's chest.

**VORTIGERN**

That's what the witches said! My doom. What if it is foretelling YOUR doom?

**AMBRY**

I have only seen what will happen, king. It is only the truth I see.

Vortigern is insulted by his manner, then makes a decision.

**VORTIGERN**

And did you see your own death?

He thrusts his sword hard into Ambry's chest. Ambry looks shocked, and blood comes out of his mouth. But before he closes his eyes, he relaxes and chuckles, softly.

**AMBRY**

Soon... very soon for you too.

Vortigern looks at him with fear. What devil is this that laughs at his own death? Finally, Ambry gets weak, closes his eyes and falls over. Vortigern pulls out his sword.

Across the waters, the dragon spirits disappear, and the winds stop. It becomes quiet. The king turns and notices.

**VORTIGERN**

Ah .. the sorcery stops. Who the devil was he?

**SIR EGRIC**

I don't know your majesty, but  
you've saved the castle.

**VORTIGERN**

That's right - I have.

The captain reaches down and picks up the large dragon  
book. He looks at the cover, showing it to the king, and  
they see the dragon art on the cover.

**CAPTAIN**

This is undoubtedly his source of  
power. Should I burn it?

Vortigern still looks a bit shaken as he peers down at the  
dead druid.

**VORTIGERN**

No. It might be useful. Let's see  
what the witches know about it.  
Bring it with us - we're going  
back.

He grabs a torch from a guardsman and starts walking back.

**VORTIGERN**

And we'll have this cave sealed up  
- just like the witches said.

They walk away from Ambry, leaving him there, dead.

**EXT. AMBRY'S HOUSE - DAY**

Merlin walks into the clearing in front of Ambry's house,  
goes up to the door and knocks. Inside, the dog barks.  
Merlin is surprised that the door opens easily. He enters.

**INT. AMBRY'S HOUSE -**

Merlin comes in, looks quickly around and sees the two  
sisters here. Saffra is sitting on the bed and petting the  
dog. They both look very seriously at Merlin.

**MERLIN**

I know you two. What are you doing  
in Ambry's house?

Merlin comes in, and the dog comes to him, wagging his tail. Merlin pets him.

**SABBA**

So you have seen us in your dreams? That's good.

**SAFFRA**

Yes. We needed you to come.

**MERLIN**

I saw you quite a while ago too....

**SABBA**

That was how you found Ambrosius, hmm?

**MERLIN**

Yes.

**SAFFRA**

And this time you dreamt that he was killed?

**MERLIN**

(spins quickly)

Yes! What do you know about that?

**SAFFRA**

I'm sorry to tell you ...

(a beat)

... but I think you already know.

**MERLIN**

Ambry's dead? Oh God in Heaven.  
(he sits down)

That's horrible .... I can't believe it.

(tears well up in his eyes)

You know... he was my only real family I've known.

Merlin puts his head in his hands and is very distraught. Then he looks up at them.

**MERLIN** (cont.)

Was he killed by Vortigern?

Saffra and Sabba both nod yes. They stay back anticipating him becoming angry. Merlin stands up, paces a bit, getting more mad.

**MERLIN**

I was hoping that was just a dream. But WHY? Why would he want to kill him?

**SABBA**

Because Ambrosius brought forth the dragon spirits. They shake the foundations of the castle and threaten to bring it down on the king.

**MERLIN**

I don't care about these things. Just leave me alone.

Sabba and Saffra exchange glances and decide they must leave for now. They get up and go to the door.

**SABBA**

We're sorry about your godfather. He was a great druid.

**MERLIN**

Please. Just leave. I want to be alone.

The two sisters leave and close the door after them. Merlin lies down on the bed with tears in his eyes. The dog comes and lies down beside him.

**EXT. SEA SHORE AT BRITTANY - DAY**

Uther's army is amassing on the shores here. There is a small fleet of ships - twenty perhaps - and five hundred men boarding the ships. They have also brought two hundred horses.

CLOSE UP on the white flag with RED DRAGON on it. Below it stands Uther with his noble, but rugged, weather-worn face overseeing it all.

Sir NICHOLAS walks up beside him, and looks at the ships.

**EXT. CASTLE DINAS - NIGHT**

Workers are busy rebuilding the walls even at night. They are rolling carts heavily loaded with large stones, and keep piling them up.

The earth starts to shake and the men must get off the walls. They scramble to go down stone stairs even as they collapse.

**INT. THRONE ROOM - NIGHT**

Vortigern is sitting on his throne, with several men sitting around him, as they are eating. The castle starts to shake and one candelabra chandelier eventually shakes and comes crashing down near them. Vortigern stands up, looking incredulous.

**VORTIGERN**

I thought we took care of this!

**EXT. STONE CIRCLE - NIGHT**

As the ground shakes off in the distance, and many men are scrambling at the castle walls, the 3' tall stone slab in the center of the circle CRACKS. And the crack widens making the pieces of the slab fall down deep into a sort of bottomless well or pit.

DISSOLVE:

**EXT. STONE CIRCLE - MORNING**

Vortigern is standing over the pit, beside his knight, Egric, and looking down into the well.

**VORTIGERN**

Those damned witches! Scour the countryside and find them. Or... a seer. I need answers.

**EGRIC**

Yes, majesty.

**VORTIGERN**

And board this up, men!

Sir Egric rounds up a few men and they get on their horses. The king rides back to the castle too.

**EXT. NEW CASTLE DINAS - DAY**

The entire castle has been upgraded, and is still under construction. There is a curtain wall being built and they are finishing the front gatehouse.

Merlin walks by the pit as it is being boarded up with planks by workers. Then he follows a few peasants going to the castle. One is leading a horse with a large cart of vegetables.

Merlin is in a line at the front doors of the castle. It has been upgraded to a deep ditch and moat below and they must cross a drawbridge. The guards here are wearing the colors of King Vortigern, black and white. They stop everyone to question them. Merlin now faces a guard.

**GUARD**

What is your business here?

**MERLIN**

I am a traveler, on my way to a monastery.

**GUARD**

No visitors. By order of the king.

**MERLIN**

I was born here, and was hoping...

**GUARD**

We have no extra beds for travellers. You must go to the village. You'll find a hostel for pilgrims there.

Merlin lingers for a moment to look inside. The guard loses patience with him and shoves him away.

**GUARD**

Be on your way then.

Merlin turns and walks away slowly, looking back. When he sees that the guards are both busy, he ducks to one side of the castle, going around to the back. Here he has to get through lots of large stones, some workers cutting them to measured sizes, and masons mixing mortar.

**EXT. CASTLE DINAS, REAR - DAY**

Merlin walks to the rear, seeing the back curtain walls are completed, and a small rear gate with two guards.

He puts his hood up and goes past a few soldiers and stone workers, and goes into the castle.

**INT. CASTLE COURTROOM -**

Vortigern has an older priest, 50, in front of him.

**VORT**

So you say it is an old curse. I must find a man not born of a father, and shed his blood on the stones of the castle?

**PRIEST**

It's an old folk tale, but people around here still believe in it.

**VORT**

And where can I find someone like that?

**PRIEST**

I don't know who could... except maybe the witches.

**VORT**

Back to the witches now? Keep looking for another answer.

**INT. CASTLE DINAS, KITCHEN - DAY**

Merlin walks into the kitchen and sees the commotion of many staff cooking meat on spits and making bread. Before he gets any further, then older head cook sees him, and calls to his helper, a 16 yo. girl, Brianne.

**COOK**

Brianne! Can you show him out?

She sees him there and walks over quickly, turning him around.

**BRIANNE**

What are you doing in here? No beggars back here.

**MERLIN**

I'm not a beggar. I'm a pilgrim.

**BRIANNE**

Well, doesn't matter what you are, you can't come in here or you'll be in big trouble. You better get out.

She reaches close by and smoothly steals a fresh loaf of bread, and going up to him closely, stuffs it into his robes.

**BRIANNE**

(quietly)

Shhh. Don't say anything.

(then loudly)

You better get out.

**MERLIN**

Thank you ... listen. I'm looking for news.

**BRIANNE**

What news?

**MERLIN**

I'm looking for a druid. An old man. Have you heard anything?

The girl looks seriously at him. She takes him further outside to talk to him.

**BRIANNE**

Yes. I remember the old man. I heard that he was in a cave under the castle.

**MERLIN**

What happened?

**BRIANNE**

What I heard is the king killed him for doing sorcery. They say it was the druid who was shaking the foundations. Anyway, I'm sorry for your friend.

**MERLIN**

I was afraid of that. Thank you.

**BRIANNE**

I guess the entrance is now sealed up. They're still looking for the two witches that escaped too. If I were you, I'd not mention this to anyone else.

**MERLIN**

Thanks for the advice. Maybe we'll meet again.

The steward enters the kitchen, accompanied by ten guardsmen. The kitchen staff stand back and give them room to pass. Merlin sneaks out the back door.

**EXT. CASTLE DINAS, REAR - DAY**

Merlin now goes to the back gate to leave the castle. He passes an old man carrying a large load of wood on his back coming to the castle. He walks past the guards without being questioned. As he passes some beggars, he gives them his new loaf of bread. They bow to him as a thank you.

**EXT. HILL BEHIND CASTLE - DAY**

He now descends slowly along trails leading up to castle. He passes a better dressed lord and lady on his way down to the valley below.

Merlin sits beside a creek near the bottom and rests his head in his hands. There is the loud sound of water trickling down. He thinks to himself about the grotto.

Up in a tree nearby a big raven caws loudly, making Merlin look over at him.

**MERLIN**

Oh. Is that you again? You going  
to show me where the grotto is?

The bird caws again and flies off a bit upstream. Merlin looks quite surprised, and gets up to follow. He goes into the heavy woods.

**EXT. OUTSIDE THE GROTTA ENTRANCE - DAY**

Merlin comes out of the woods to the side of the cliff face below the castle. The raven sits on top of a very large stone, cawing. Merlin sees a trickle of water coming out from below the huge stone.

**MERLIN**

Well, raven, I believe this is it.  
But how to get inside?

Merlin looks it over carefully and then looks out across the valley.

**EXT. SOUTH SHORE OF ENGLAND - DAY**

On the southern shore of England, at a simple fishing port, Sir Uther's ship, bearing his flag, docks at a long pier. A heavy and wide gang-plank goes out onto the pier and Sir Uther rides his horse onto the long wooden pier. He is joined by his senior knights also on horses.

Three other ships of Uther's glide slowly up to the pier, and ropes fly out for sailors to catch and tie them to the dock posts.

From the shore, an informant of Vortigern's sits atop a horse. He witnesses all the ships arriving, then turns and rides off at a slow canter.

Another two ships weigh anchors close to shore and many row boats are lowered into the choppy water filled with Uther's loyal men.

**INT. AMBRY'S HOUSE - EVENING**

Merlin is studying a few books by candlelight.

CLOSE-UP on book illustrations. Merlin is frightened by some of the graphic pictures....

Then there is a tremor - a slight shaking of the ground. The bookshelves shake and the dog looks up. The shaking continues for a moment, then stops. In the silence Merlin tries to sense if something has happened.

A knock is heard at the door, which makes the dog bark. He gets up and goes to the door, calling to them outside without opening the door.

**MERLIN**

Who goes there?

**SABBA (O.C.)**

Sabba and Saffra. We have news for you, druid.

Merlin opens the door. The last rays of day are fading.

**MERLIN**

You know, I'm not really a druid.

The two enter. Saffra comments to him as she passes him.

**SAFFRA**

No, but you will be.

The two witches now sit down on the bed.

**SABBA**

Did you feel the ground shaking?

**MERLIN**

Yes. I was wondering about that.

**SAFFRA**

It is the power of the dragon spirits that shake the earth.

**SABBA**

But we've come to tell you something more important. Some news.

Merlin sits back down at the table, lighting a bigger candle with the short one.

**MERLIN**

What is it?

**SABBA**

The real red dragon comes.

**SAFFRA**

Yes. He comes from across the sea, and he brings many soldiers.

**MERLIN**

You mean - Sir Uther? Ambrosius's half-brother? I've seen him in a dream too.

**SABBA**

Yes. Very good. Ambrosius summoned him. But he will need your help to take the castle.

**SAFFRA**

He should be at Castle Dinas by tomorrow night.

**MERLIN**

You believe that he will conquer Vortigern and reclaim the castle for our people?

**SAFFRA**

(nods)

It has been the prophecy ever since Vortigern invaded and killed our own king. We knew it would happen ... and so did Ambrosius.

**MERLIN**

Then why did Ambry have to sacrifice himself?

**SABBA**

It's a tricky thing - looking into the future. You may see many things, but never your own future. This is hidden by the fates.

**MERLIN**

Tell me then - have you seen my death?

**SABBA**

We have not seen your death.

**SAFFRA**

That does not mean you can not be killed ... just that it is not a strong possibility.

**MERLIN**

Well, that is reassuring.

Merlin stands up now, pacing and thinking.

**MERLIN**

I think ... that it IS justice if Vortigern is overthrown. I have seen his cruelty. But it won't be by my hand ... I'm not a killer.

Merlin turns to them now, looking determined.

**MERLIN**

What can I do?

**SABBA**

Good! You must take control of the red dragon spirit and help Uther.

**SAFFRA**

And for that, you'll need your master's book.

**SABBA**

Yes. It is in the castle. In fact ... it's in the king's chambers.

Merlin looks a little worried now.

**SAFFRA**

Don't worry. We'll help.

**SABBA**

The only way to get into the castle now would be through the underground passages.

**SAFFRA**

I will take you to the grotto, and up into the castle cellars.

**MERLIN**

When?

**SABBA**

Let's go tonight. Then you'll have more time to study the dragon book.

**EXT. OUTSIDE THE GROTTO ENTRANCE - NIGHT**

Merlin follows Saffra through dark woods to the cave entrance. They enter a clearing and look out over the valley by moonlight. Then back to the cave entrance. Merlin can see it is still blocked by a large stone.

**MERLIN**

I HAVE been here before, and I was sure then that it was the entrance.

**SAFFRA**

It is sealed by magic, Merlin. You must incant an ancient spell...

Saffra and Merlin go closer to the large stone. She holds up her hands, palms towards the doorway.

**SAFFRA**

Like this... "veliri caverna"

The stone itself rolls to one side, revealing the narrow cavern entrance. Merlin is very impressed.

**MERLIN**

That was fantastic. How do you learn such powerful magic?

**SAFFRA**

Ah, but this grotto is ancient ... as is the magic that seals it.

(she looks sharply at him)

Remember - do NOT reveal this to anyone.

**MERLIN**

Of course.

Saffra turns and enters the cavern. It is completely dark in here. A FLASH of fire and Saffra has lit a lantern. She holds it in front of her and looks at Merlin.

**SAFFRA**

Come. I must close the door.

As the two continue into the cavern tunnel the large stone closes behind them and shuts completely.

**INT. CASTLE, MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

King Vortigern is sitting in his throne overseeing his council gathered at the long table before him.

**VORTIGERN**

A loyal messenger and spy has rode hard from the coast, to tell me that - Sir Uther, a powerful warlord from Brittany, has arrived on our shores with a small army. Any thoughts on this, councilmen?

**EGRIC**

How many soldiers with him, highness?

**VORTIGERN**

He reports there may be five hundred.

**CAPTAIN**

If he comes to attack you, your majesty, we can hold the castle against him.

**VORTIGERN**

Really? With the castle walls falling down every night?

**CAPTAIN**

In truth we are only two hundred able men, lord. But in the castle, we still have the advantage.

**VORTIGERN**

That may be... but we must be prepared. Call all the local men who have sworn fealty to me. They will be our army now.

**EGRIC**

Yes, Sire. At first light, we will start preparations.

**INT. GROTTTO - NIGHT**

The spirits of the two dragons can be heard in the grotto. The water has a white mist swirling over it. At the shore of the waters, Saffra and Merlin arrive carrying a single lantern that looks small in this large space.

**SAFFRA**

Ambrosius woke both dragons, and called them to battle. You must control these spirits or they will bring down the castle.

Merlin looks out over the water. He is unsure and scared.

**SAFFRA**

Don't be frightened, Merlin.

**MERLIN**

But I saw Ambry killed here. Where is his body?

**SAFFRA**

We took him and buried him respectfully.

**MERLIN**

You'll show me where?

**SAFFRA**

Yes. When this task is done.

**MERLIN**

I'm not so sure that I can control these spirits.

**ERIL**

You have the natural power in you,  
Merlin. Ambry felt it, as I do.  
You only need the book to focus.

**MERLIN**

Then let's get on our way to the  
castle. I'll be happy to leave  
this place.

The witch and the young wizard find a narrow path along the  
rock face and travel quickly. They soon find the vertical  
gap that leads to the castle.

**INT. CASTLE, WINE CELLAR - NIGHT**

It is dark at the back of the cellar, lit by one torch at  
the front door entrance only. It is quiet here - no one  
around. The old arch door way to the caves below is now  
boarded up with heavy planks. Suddenly the boards are  
kicked out from behind. Merlin's foot falls through a hole  
he created. He keeps kicking and forcing his way through  
the gap of a couple of planks. Now, once in the wine  
cellar, he turns and kneels down to talk to Saffra.

**MERLIN**

Thank you, Saffra. I'll return as  
quickly as I can. Wait here for me  
if you can.

**SAFFRA**

You must succeed, wizard. The  
underworld needs you to quiet the  
dragons again.

**MERLIN**

I'll do my best.

Merlin then leaves and, very stealthy, goes to the front  
doorway of the cellar. Then he makes his way to the  
kitchens.

**INT. CASTLE UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Merlin carries a platter of small tarts and cakes, and  
wears a bakers frock. He reaches the top of the stairs and  
looks both ways. Then he goes down the hallway a bit.

Very soon he sees the guarded entrance to the royal chamber. He spies two guards outside the door, and pauses.

Merlin then gets his courage up and starts walking again. Suddenly out of a doorway, the girl servant, Brianne comes out and bumps into Merlin, making him spill his platter of food onto the floor with a loud CLATTER. The guards both are watching now.

**BRIANNE**

Oh.. I'm so sorry.

She kneels down with Merlin and starts helping pick up pies and tarts, putting them back onto the platter.

Then she recognises him. Merlin looks at Brianne with pleading eyes. They speak low, so the guards can not hear.

**BRIANNE**

What are you doing here?

**MERLIN**

Help me, Brianne. I need to get into the king's chamber.

**BRIANNE**

Why?

**MERLIN**

The king has a very special book ... he took it from my master, the old druid.

**BRIANNE**

Why should I believe you?

**MERLIN**

Most of us here are still celts, right? So am I. I know of an army of our countrymen coming to free this castle from the rule of these Saxons.

Brianne looks at him incredulously.

**BRIANNE**

An army? Just who are you?

**MERLIN**

I was born in this castle, and I want it back. We can be rid of these Saxon murderers...

**INT. CASTLE, KINGS CHAMBERS - NIGHT**

King Vortigern is getting his final tightening of his armour by his personal servant and valet. The Captain is watching.

**VORTIGERN**

Very good. Now... I want to see the invading army for myself. We leave now.

The king and Captain walk to the door and open it.

**INT. CASTLE UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Merlin and Brianne are on the floor picking up food.

From the royal chamber, the door opens and the KING exits, wearing light armour, and escorted by his Captain. He comes towards them, and sees them on the floor.

Merlin keeps his head down and scuttles to the side of the hallway, along with Brianne, still collecting food from the floor.

The king comes up to them and stops. He looks down at Merlin.

**VORTIGERN**

You! Boy. Face your king.

Merlin gets to his feet and faces him, saying nothing.

**VORTIGERN**

What is this mess? Take it all back to the kitchen. No nobles shall eat food that has fallen on the floor.

Vortigern then spies his druid's amulet. It is the same as Ambry's !

**VORTIGERN**

What is that??!

He reaches out and grabs the amulet.

**VORTIGERN**

This is the symbol of the druids.  
Are you a druid, boy?

**MERLIN**

I'm too young, sir.

**VORTIGERN**

No matter! GUARDS! Take this boy  
down to the dungeons. And don't  
let him escape! When I return,  
I'll have questions.

(then to Merlin)

You have some time to consider  
your fate, druid.

Vortigern leaves the druids amulet on his neck and turns  
and walks away, going down stairs. But the two guards have  
a good hold on Merlin. They escort him down the stairs.

Merlin looks back at Brianne. She watches him with pity in  
her eyes.

**EXT. CASTLE WALLS - NIGHT**

The king, escorted by his Captain and three other horsemen,  
gallop off into the black night, and past the torchlight.

PAN back to the walls and then the shaking starts. Some  
stones shake a bit, and show cracks and dust falling but do  
not fall apart yet.

**INT. CASTLE DUNGEONS - NIGHT**

Merlin is escorted by both guardsmen, tossed into the  
dungeon cell and is locked up. He gets to his feet and  
watches the guards sit down at a small table and begin to  
play dice (bones) games.

Then as he sits down, he looks up and sees some dust  
falling down as the ground shakes.

**GUARD**

The earth shakes again. It's been every night for four nights now.

**GUARD2**

Mark my words... it's witchcraft. I'm sure of it. When the king rids us of them, we'll be safe again.

**GUARD**

I hope so.

FADE OUT

**EXT. ROADWAY TO UTHER'S CAMP - NIGHT**

PAN to follow the four horsemen galloping all night to go to see the invading army.

**EXT. VALLEY, UTHER'S ARMY CAMP - NIGHT**

EST. PAN over the valley to view lots of small fires and five hundred men, organized into smaller groups and camps.

From this far vantage point, Vortigern and his men carefully walk up to look over the scene. They see lots of the red dragon on white flag.

The king and his four men silently estimate the numbers.

**CAPTAIN**

Sire? Looks like your spy's estimate was right. About five hundred men.

**VORTIGERN**

But no siege machines. That's in our favour.

**CAPTAIN**

Yes Sire.

**VORTIGERN**

They'll be at the castle by tomorrow night. We need to be ready.

**CAPTAIN**

The men are preparing already,  
majesty.

**VORTIGERN**

Very good, Captain. I think you  
know what's at stake here. We  
can't lose the castle to these  
barbarians again.

**CAPTAIN**

Yes, Sire. You brought leadership  
to this kingdom.

**VORTIGERN**

And... a better religion. With  
only one God.  
(pause, then turns to go back.)

They don't appreciate what I've  
done for them.

**CAPTAIN**

No Sire. They're just barbarians.

They leave the hill crest, retreating to their horses.

**INT. CASTLE DUNGEONS - MORNING**

- FADE IN.

Merlin is sleeping in his cell. Morning daylight enters the  
cell through a small window. Merlin wakes up and looks  
over at the two guardsmen. They are still sleeping. Merlin  
stands up and looks anxiously at the stairs coming down.

**MERLIN**

Brianne ...

Then he hears BRIANNE coming down the stairs. She carries a  
wicker basket with cloth-wrapped food. The first guard  
wakes up and stands to meet her. He blocks her way.

**FIRST GUARD**

Why do you come down here, miss?

**BRIANNE**

Even prisoners need some food. I  
bet he's starved.

**FIRST GUARD**

Well, maybe we are starved too.  
What do you have there?

**BRIANNE**

Well.... there should be enough  
for you all. You soldiers take  
what you want. Just leave  
something for him.

The guard takes a handful of what she carries, and goes  
back to the table to give some to his partner. Both guards  
sit down. The first talks with a mouth full of food. They  
notice the powdered sugar on top.

**FIRST GUARD**

Delicious. You know what I think?  
That young man's got your fancy...

BRIANNE goes over to the closed cell with Merlin in it. She  
ignores the tarts on the tray and takes out the biscuit  
from her dress pocket and gives it to him. She winks at him  
as he takes a bite. He smiles at her. Now they talk  
quietly.

**MERLIN**

Thank you.

**BRIANNE**

I heard more rumours.  
(She looks at him a moment.)

Tell me. When is this army coming?

**MERLIN**

They should be here by tomorrow  
night.

**BRIANNE**

Yes. That's what I heard. I can  
trust you now. And I met Saffra.

**MERLIN**

What? She's here?

She looks over at the guards.

The guards both slump forward onto the table and pass out.  
Brianne quickly goes to the first guard and takes the key-  
ring off his waist.

**MERLIN**

Some sort of sleeping potion?

**BRIANNE**

Yes... from Saffra. She gave me a  
the white powder sweetener.

Brianne brings the keys to the cell door and finds the  
right one and unlocks the door.

From upstairs, SAFFRA comes down the stairs as Merlin exits  
the cell. She meets Merlin and Brianne in the guard room.

**SAFFRA**

You don't have much cover of  
night, but you can still use the  
cloak, wizard.

**BRIANNE**

If you hurry before the castle  
wakes up.

**MERLIN**

Oh, yes!

Merlin gets his satchel, pulls out the cloak, and unties  
it. It unfurls to full length. He pulls it around him, and  
in the direct torchlight it has no great effect.

**SAFFRA**

Try the shadows, Merlin.

Merlin retreats to the shadows here and he almost  
disappears. It blends into the dark shadows perfectly.

Brianne looks at him, then Saffra, and is impressed. Merlin  
steps back into the light, and is seen.

**MERLIN**

Excellent, Saffra. I will get the  
book, then we meet back at the  
wine cellar.

**SAFFRA**

You may have to get past more  
guards.

**BRIANNE**

Hmmm. I still have the pastries...

**MERLIN**

Give me those. If it worked on these men, it should work again. No one can resist these treats.

**SAFFRA**

Go now. The girl will be safe with me.

**MERLIN**

Right.

Merlin grabs the tray with the tarts and heads up the stairs. Behind him, Saffra picks up the partially eaten tarts and cleans up the scene.

**EXT. CASTLE - MORNING**

Vortigern and his four men come riding up the large front field up to the castle outer wall and the gate house. A guardsman calls down below.

**GATE GUARD**

Open the door. It's the King!

The gate is unlocked and it swings open enough to let in the men riding on horses.

Once inside the outer walls, the horsemen all dismount.

**VORTIGERN**

Make sure the men fortify the castle. Our lives depend on them.

**CAPTAIN**

Yes Sire. I'll contact you when we have news.

**INT. KING'S CHAMBER - EARLY MORNING**

The large room is dimly lit by two fat candles near the door. The door to the king's chamber is open. Merlin in the cloak. He stands in front of the cabinet holding the book.

**MERLIN**

(quietly, to himself)

It seems like I've become an expert thief.

He puts the large book into his satchel and goes to the door. He hears the king coming down the hall, and quickly leaves the room, practically vanishing.

As soon as he is gone, the king comes striding up to his door and sees two guards unconscious on the floor. The powdered tarts are in plain sight. Another guardsman arrives behind him. Vortigern turns to him.

**VORTIGERN**

What's this? More witchcraft?

The guardsman kneels down and checks them.

**GUARDSMAN**

They are not dead, your majesty.  
Only asleep.

**VORTIGERN**

At least that is something. Call for more help. And take these men away.

The guardsman walks away quickly leaving the king alone. He draws his sword and enters his room carefully. He looks around suspiciously, then goes to the cabinet. He opens the one drawer and sees the book is gone.

**VORTIGERN**

It WAS the witches. I'll see them burn for this.

**EXT. CASTLE WALLS - DAY**

The walls are very busy with many workers repairing the broken walls.

CAMERA TRACKS to the stone circle PIT, covered by heavy wooden planks. This well is ignored by the workers and the soldiers.

**INT. WELL BOTTOM - DAY**

CAMERA descends to show the pit under the planks. It is quite dark here, down below the surface. It is much like a jagged stone walled well. At the very bottom is a passage leading to the grotto.

**INT. GROTTA - DAY**

Merlin is here with the two witch sisters - Saffra, Sabba, and Brianne.

Merlin is sitting beside the large fire and studying the dragon book.

Sabba and Saffra both work on sorting out herbs and plants, and grind them up in small mortar and pestles. They sort the powders into small folded paper squares.

Brianne is quiet and watches Merlin as he reads. Sabba notices her watching and nudges Saffra. They both look and smile at each other knowingly. Brianne looks over suddenly aware of them.

**BRIANNE**

Saffra? Do you have any more of that white powder?

**SAFFRA**

Yes.

**BRIANNE**

Enough for a few jugs of wine?

**SAFFRA**

Yes.

**BRIANNE**

Then I think I'll serve the soldiers some wine before the battle begins tonight.

**SAFFRA**

But that will be too dangerous. Don't they all know you?

**BRIANNE**

Yes. I suppose. They're probably looking for all of us by now.

**MERLIN**

That's right. Shouldn't we make sure they don't come down here?

**SABBA**

You know... that's how they found Ambrosius.

They fall silent for a moment.

**SAFFRA**

I should go and put a spell on the passageway.

**MERLIN**

Brianne! I remember something given to me by Ambry.

Merlin pulls out a large wallet with different slots and pouches. He pulls out a small vial of oil.

**MERLIN**

Drink this, and your face will be changed for a while. My old master worked on this.

Brianne stands up and goes to Merlin and takes it from his hand, looks at it, then him.

**BRIANNE**

OK. I'll have to trust you.

**EXT. FOREST, 3 MILES FROM CASTLE - DAY**

Uther's banner flies in front of a large host of horsemen. A scout returns and reports to SIR NICHOLAS. Then the knight falls back a bit and addresses the king.

**NICHOLAS**

We are getting very close, my lord. Only about a league.

Sir Uther reins his horse to a stop.

**UTHER**

Alright. This is close enough until nightfall. Let's rest here.

Send our scouts to spy on the castle.

**INT. CASTLE, KITCHENS - EVENING**

The kitchen is very busy here. There are at least twenty servers here bringing back many plates and platters.

From stairs below, Brianne (as STRANGER) comes into the kitchen. It is too busy for them to not recognize her. She grabs two large wineskins and two empty pitchers, leaves the room and walks along a busy corridor.

Kneeling down in an alcove, the girl puts powder into each pitcher, then begins filling each with wine from the wineskins.

**INT. CASTLE - MAIN HALL - EVENING**

Brianne enters the main hall and it is filled with many men getting armour on and readying their weapons. About half are finishing their meals and taking some wine at the long tables. Many servants are clearing the foods.

Brianne begins to go to soldiers who hold a mug and fill a bit with wine. She quickly goes around filling a bit into all the wine cups she can find.

**INT. GROTTO - NIGHT**

Merlin is looking into a basin of water and is calling:

**MERLIN**

Uther! I am Merlin, friend of Ambrosius.

**INT. UTHER'S TENT - NIGHT**

Uther is in his large tent with a few braziers of light. He's lying on a cot, his eyes closed, and he hears the ghostly sound of Merlin's voice. He opens his eyes.

**MERLIN (V.O.)**

Uther! I call upon the spirit of the red dragon.

Uther looks around but listens carefully.

**MERLIN** (V.O)

Go now, and we will be victorious,  
together.

Uther sits up. Looks left and right, then stands up,  
calling to his guardsmen outside.

**UTHER**

GUARDS? SIR BORS!

Sir Bors enters the tent.

**UTHER** (CONT.)

It is time. The spirits of the red  
dragon have called to me.

**BORS**

Yes, Sire. At once.

Bors goes out of the tent and calls loudly to his captains.

**BORS**

All men to arms, captains. Get  
your men ready. It is time.

Suddenly the camp is alive with activity as everyone gets  
ready for battle.

#### **INT. CASTLE MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

Vortigern is at the doors of the main hall, and is  
intercepted by Sir Egric.

**EGRIC**

My lord, Uther's army is now  
advancing.

**VORTIGERN**

Good, get all the men to the  
walls.

Vortigern looks over at the hall of many men, fitting their  
armour. A few men seem to be sleeping at the long tables.  
Vortigern looks enraged. He marches over to them, shouting  
loudly.

**VORTIGERN**

How can a man even think it's time  
to sleep now? Get them up!

As the king gets close to one man, the guard's friend quickly shakes him to wake him, but it does no good. He quickly checks him and finds he's still breathing. The soldier looks fearfully at the king.

**SOLDIER**

Just like the guardsmen this  
morning, Sire. He is asleep!

**OTHER SOLDIER**

It must have been the wine, my  
lord!

**VORTIGERN**

Then it is more spellcraft? Find  
the one who served the wine!

A soldier from near the very back shouts.

**SOLDIER**

She's here, majesty.

As the soldier brings her forward, the king notices a few other soldiers falling asleep. About half of the men here are sleeping now. The soldier brings her face to face with Vortigern.

**VORTIGERN**

If you can not reverse your  
spells, I will kill you.

A soldier enters the room and shouts to them all.

**SOLDIER**

We can see their torches now.

**EGRIC**

Everyone to the walls, NOW!

As all the soldiers scramble to get up the stairs, Vortigern stares at his new found witch.

**VORTIGERN**

Well? Can you?

Panic and fear hit Brianne hard. Her face is still different from the pill she took. She decides to lie.

**BRIANNE**

Yes, I can. But I must get to the cellar.

**VORTIGERN**

I don't believe you. Do it here, or not at all.

(then to soldier)

Tie her up. Right there on that pillar.

The guard takes her to the pillar, and another guard comes with a length of rope and they tie her up.

**EXT. FRONT CASTLE FIELD - NIGHT**

A large wave of horsemen with riders carrying shields of white with red dragon on it, advance slowly. When they are within a hundred yards, the horses stop, and let the footmen advance. There is a mix of archers, spearmen, armoured knights, banner bearers, and torch bearers.

From atop the OUTER castle walls, there is a solid wall of men shoulder to shoulder. Most are archers, and some are armoured knights.

From on top the CASTLE front walls, higher than the outer walls, there are many archers as well.

Many men are passing large stones to each other as a few continue to pile them up to be thrown onto invading men.

Finally the first wave of footmen are close enough that the archers of the first walls fire a volley of arrows, some which are alit so they can estimate the distance.

But the footmen duck under shields. Some are crossbowmen who hide behind heavy large shields. The crossbowmen are the first to advance with their heavy shields in front of them. Uther's archers now fire a volley of arrows too. A few men are struck on the curtain wall.

Suddenly, the outer walls start to shake, and a few more men fall off the walls. Some of the stones shake apart and

fall down. Men start to panic and leave the outerwall and the gatehouse.

**INT. GROTTO - NIGHT**

Merlin is sitting in front of the fire, as the red dragon spirit flies around the grotto, bumping the ceiling. The white dragon spirit appears from a mist on the water. It materializes and claws at the red dragon. They make a ghostly GROWL / ROAR sound.

The witches are here beside him, sitting on the floor nearby.

**SABBA**

Merlin. You must control him now.

Merlin looks into the fire in front of him and open a velvet pouch and reaches in. He gets a handful of powder and throws it on the fire. It becomes red, and the smokes billows red too.

**MERLIN**

Compa rosso drago

The red dragon spirit flies over top of him and through the red billowing smoke. It now becomes more solid. The white dragon spirit flies at the red dragon and flies through it, not affecting it.

**SABBA**

Send him up to the surface,  
Merlin.

Merlin stares into the fire and holds out both hands, moving them and controlling the dragon.

From across the dark grotto, the red smoke dragon flies across the water. It goes into a crack that is another passage.

From the bottom of the well, the red dragon flies upwards and SMASHES through the wooden planks onto the surface.

**EXT. FRONT CASTLE GROUNDS - NIGHT**

Uther's army surrounds the old upright stones and the covered wooden pit. It is violently smashed out and upwards. The red smokey dragon spirit rises high into the night sky, as men look on in wonder.

Uther is on his horse beside Bors and Nicholas.

**UTHER**

That's the sign we've been waiting for. Now we attack.

The three of them raise their swords and shout 'FORWARD'. They spur their horses to attack, and the men in front also begin running and shouting. The entire army now moves like a wave to the outer castle walls.

The archers on the castle walls let loose arrows that find their targets and take down a few attacking men.

The red dragon stops circling and descends rapidly onto the castle. It strikes the outer walls and shakes it again, bringing down more of the walls.

The attackers make it to the gatehouse, and from the rear a large number of ladders are carried, and placed against the walls. Men start climbing.

There are some places that are only half the height now, and Uther's men pour through it. At the castle, the main doors are still open a small amount and allows for many men to retreat into the castle.

Some of Uther's men bravely face an onslaught of arrows as they go the gatehouse and struggle to unbar the heavy gate doors.

The Dragon comes around and now flies along the top of the castle walls striking a few men. They fire arrows at it but they do not strike it because it is only smoke.

**INT. CASTLE, INSIDE FRONT DOORS - NIGHT**

**CAPTAIN**

Get them in NOW. They'll just be slaughtered out there.

Vortigern is behind the large door, and watches as they bring in the last of their men, close and bar the heavy

main doors to reinforce them.

**VORTIGERN**

Get all the men to the parapets.  
We can hold them off indefinitely.

**EXT. FRONT CASTLE GROUNDS - NIGHT**

The gatehouse doors are forced open by soldiers. Uther, Bors, and Nicholas ride their horses through. They are followed by waves of men coming to attack the main doors.

Thirty additional men come through the gatehouse doors bringing a very large battering ram. They are attacked by arrows raining down on them, and many fall, bringing the log down.

**NICHOLAS**

Archers!

Many of Uther's archers gather in groups and begin to shoot arrows up at the defenders.

Below, many more men clear the dead, and pick up the battering ram again. This time they begin to RAM the door hard. Then they look up and see large stones falling on them.

From up above, the defenders begin throwing large stones down onto the men below. But then the dragon comes back again, flies low, strikes a few of them, making them fall off the parapets, screaming. It is mayhem.

**INT. GROTTO - NIGHT**

Merlin concentrates on the fire.

**SABBA**

Merlin. Take the dragon into the castle. You've got to kill Vortigern.

Merlin looks into the fire and sees a vision of the dragon flying. He steers him down a narrow spiral stairway. It strikes quite a few soldiers on the way down. They shout in fear at the dragon spirit.

**INT. CASTLE, MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

Vortigern enters the main hall, through the open doors, and sees half of his men unconscious. Many men are running and shouting. They hear the battering ram BANGING the door.

He goes to Brianne, whose face is now back to normal. He pulls out his sword and threatens her.

**VORTIGERN**

I thought you were an ugly witch.  
But, you're just the kitchen maid.

**BRIANNE**

That's right. The magic was the  
witches, not mine.

**VORTIGERN**

Can you wake my men or not?

Brianne looks defeated. She says nothing.

And suddenly even louder shouting from the front doors.  
Many men come running in fear through the hall, retreating.  
They are fleeing out the back door.

**SOLDIER**

DRAGON! DRAGON!

Vortigern turns, amazed. He sees a huge red smokey dragon enter the room.

It floats easily and moves slower now - searching.

**VORTIGERN**

It's your magic that brings this  
to life. But if you die ...

The king thrusts his sword through the girl in her abdomen.

**INT. GROTTA - NIGHT**

Merlin suddenly sees a vision of Brianne stabbed by the king's sword!

**MERLIN**

NO! Not again.

**INT. CASTLE, MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

Vortigern looks and sees the dragon smoke suddenly lose its shape and become smoke only that drifts away.

**VORTIGERN**

Ah ha! Now, men wake up! Come on men! Time to drive them back.

**INT. GROTTO - NIGHT**

The fire is normal now and Merlin is sitting beside it. He gets to his feet, in a rush.

**MERLIN**

I can't let this happen again.  
It's our fault.

**SABBA**

Don't go Merlin. Use the dragon!

**MERLIN**

I must try to save her.

**SABBA**

It might already be too late!

Merlin gathers his pack and runs to the crack that leads upstairs.

**EXT. CASTLE, FRONT DOORS - NIGHT**

The men continue to batter down the huge door, and the wood starts to crack. A few more hits and the door finally breaks open enough to let in many armoured men on foot. They fight very hard and the door begins to clear.

Nicholas and Bors are the first horsemen through the door. They fight many foot soldiers, then it is clear enough for Uther to join them. They shout amid the confusion.

**UTHER**

Where's the KING? If we can kill him, then we'll have the castle.

**NICHOLAS**

I've waited for many years for this revenge, Sir Uther. Let me do the killing stroke.

**UTHER**

If God wills it.

**BORS**

My lords! Together? Or separate?

**UTHER**

Separate. You go left, and you go right. I'll go forward.

**INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT**

Uther enters this room on horseback. The room is still - but he can hear fighting close by.

He sees all these men sleeping. There is no blood so it looks strange to him. While he's walking the horse slowly through here, Vortigern gets behind him stealthily, and thrusts his sword into Uther's side.

Uther is hurt but not too seriously because he has on metal armour. He holds his side and turns his horse, which threatens to stomp Vortigern. Uther rears the horse and chases Vortigern, who retreats behind a wooden pillar.

**VORTIGERN**

You! Come to my lands and try to kill a king?

**UTHER**

You're a murderer, Vortigern. It may be that was ten years ago now, but you're still a murderer.

**VORTIGERN**

But that's war. You know it.

**UTHER**

That's only how a WARLORD thinks.

MERLIN APPEARS - from the rear servant's entrance. He looks over and sees Brianne across the room, tied up, head hanging down, and bleeding. He goes to her, and tries to untie the ropes.

**VORTIGERN**

You're too late druid! You can't save your witch now.

**UTHER**

Merlin? Is that you?

**MERLIN**

Yes. I ... think she's dead.

**VORTIGERN**

You and the young druid?  
Conspiring to bring me down?

**MERLIN**

Why not? Your men murdered my mother. My grandfather ... everyone I loved? Now we shall all have justice.

Suddenly Vortigern tries to make a dash to the main door to escape. He gets to the open doors, chased by Uther on horseback.

Around the corner comes Nicholas on his horse, carrying a spear. In a flash he sees Uther coming, and recognises Vortigern. He lowers his spear and Vortigern runs right into it; it pierces him through the upper chest.

Uther stops his horse. He smiles at Nicholas.

**UTHER**

You got your wish, Sir Nicholas.

Uther turns his horse to return to Merlin, as Nicholas lets go of the spear. King Vortigern falls to the ground dead.

One of Uther's men arrives and sees the enemy king dead. He leaves and calls out to everyone loudly:

**SOLDIER**

The KING is dead. Vortigern is dead.

ON Merlin. He finally unties Brianne's ropes and he lets her down gently to the ground. He listens to her heart and he chokes back tears.

Sir Uther dismounts near him, then sits down beside him. He takes off his armoured chestplate, and examines his own wound.

**UTHER**

I think I could use some healer's magic, Merlin.

**MERLIN**

My lord! It's good to meet you. I will try my best to heal you.

Merlin gets a piece of the black gummy substance from a paper. He gives it to Uther to eat. Then he gets some black healing salve from a jar and applies it to his side wound.

**UTHER**

Is there anything you need?

**MERLIN**

Yes. I need the two witch sisters. They can help me with healing .. for everyone.

**UTHER**

As you wish, Merlin.

**EXT. CASTLE - DAY**

From the tall flagpoles, a few banners of Uther, white with red dragon, are flying in the wind today. Below, there are many dead, and the ground is red with blood. Many soldiers are dragging bodies away from the castle.

**INT. CASTLE, ROYAL BEDROOM - DAY**

From the window, a beam of sunlight brings light to this room. Uther is lying on the bed, looking up at Merlin. Sabba and Saffra are wrapping and putting away a few baskets of assorted plants, etc. They gather their stuff and leave the room. Sir Bors is guarding the door.

**MERLIN**

(smiles at Uther)  
You just rest now.

Merlin stands up and turns as he hears the heavy boots of a few men at the door. He sees Nicholas enter the room.

**NICHOLAS**

Merlin! You're our hero. They say it was you who commanded the dragon spirit.

**MERLIN**

Yes. It was the ancient magic of the druids.

Nicholas and Bors come beside the bed to see Uther.

**BORS**

Young master druid. There's no need to leave just yet.

**UTHER**

Yes. We want you to attend a victory feast tonight.

**BORS**

Not only that, but we'll be needing a good seer and council here.

**UTHER**

In short. I have decided to invite you to live here in castle Dinas.

**NICHOLAS**

What do you say to that offer?

Merlin pauses in thought.

**MERLIN**

It's all so sudden. I was just getting used to living in the forest with the animals.

**UTHER**

You can come and go as you like.

**BORS**

You are still a free man. No one can command you. Does that sound fair enough?

**MERLIN**

Then... Yes. I accept. But I wish  
to live in the tallest tower.

The men turn and leave, taking Merlin with them.

**UTHER**

I think we have just the place for  
you.

They walk away down the hallway.

FADE OUT

END