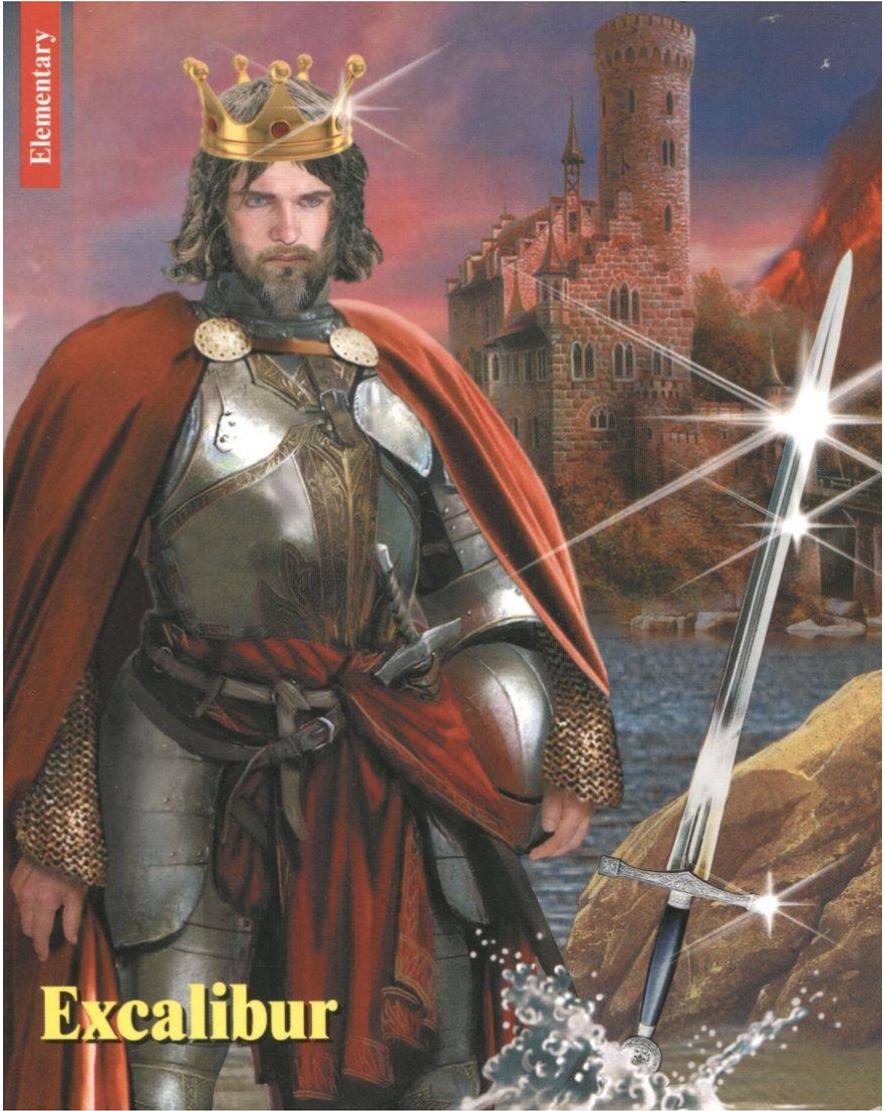


Elementary

Excalibur





YOUNG ARTHUR

Uther Pendragon became the King of Britain. He was a good and kind king though PENDRAGON meant "head dragon".

He had an adviser. His name was Merlin. Merlin was a magician.

King Uther loved a very beautiful lady, Igraine. Merlin helped Uther to marry her.

But he asked Uther to give him a first child for that. Igraine had a daughter, Morgana. Uther took her daughter and went to the town of Glastonbury. He found a nunnery with high walls. There, holy women — or nuns — lived and never went outside.

"Morgana will be a nun," Uther said. "She will stay inside the nunnery walls. No man shall see her face again."

King Uther and Igraine got a son, Arthur.

Merlin came to the castle and said, "Your son must grow up away from your home! If you give your son to me, I promise he will be a king of Britain."

King Uther and Igraine were very sad. Arthur was just some days old. But Uther kept his promise.

One dark rainy night Merlin came to the castle and took Arthur away.

Merlin gave the baby to Sir Ector and his wife. They took good care of Arthur.

Sir Ector had his own son, Kay. Kay was the same age as Arthur. Sir Ector taught the

boys to fight, to use the sword. Arthur and Kay were friends.

Fifteen years passed. King Uther died and Britain had no king. The country had many problems. Merlin decided that it was time to make Arthur the king.

Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury and said, "Britain must have a king. We must find one. Call all the knights of the kingdom. Tell them to meet at the great church in London on Christmas Day. There, God will show us the new king."

On Christmas Day, all the knights were in the great church. Outside the church there was a big stone with a sword in it. These words were on the big stone:

He who pulls the sword out of this stone is the true King of Britain.

THE SWORD IN THE STONE

The knights had a competition in London on the Christmas Eve. They competed to see who the strongest knight was. After the competition they tried to pull the sword out of the stone. No one was able to do it.

A very large tall man with broad shoulders and long dark hair stepped up to try. The knights waited quietly when he took the handle of the sword. He pulled with all his strength, but the sword did not move. The man walked away.

"Arthur! Where is my sword?" asked Kay.

Arthur, a squire of the knight Kay could not find the sword and, in a panic, ran to find another sword for his master.

Arthur ran to the rock and saw a sword in it. He pulled it from the rock and ran to his master, happy to have a sword.

"Arthur! Where did you get this?" asked Kay.

"From a rock, just behind the trees."

The knights around them were surprised.

"The boy! He pulled the sword from the rock."

Arthur became nervous.

Merlin appeared beside the boy and put a hand on his shoulder.

"This boy is the son of Uther, the last king of England. He is our new king."

No one believed that this boy could be a king. Only Merlin knew because he gave a baby Arthur to Kay's father.

Merlin knew how to show the people that Arthur was a true King's son.

He told Arthur to put the sword back into the rock. Arthur did. Merlin asked Kay and others to try to pull it out. No one could.

"If this boy, Arthur, pulls the sword from the rock, he is the true King of England and you must do as he says."

Arthur pulled the sword from the rock again and held it up for everybody to see. The people knelt with respect.

This was the sign from God. He was the new King of Britain.

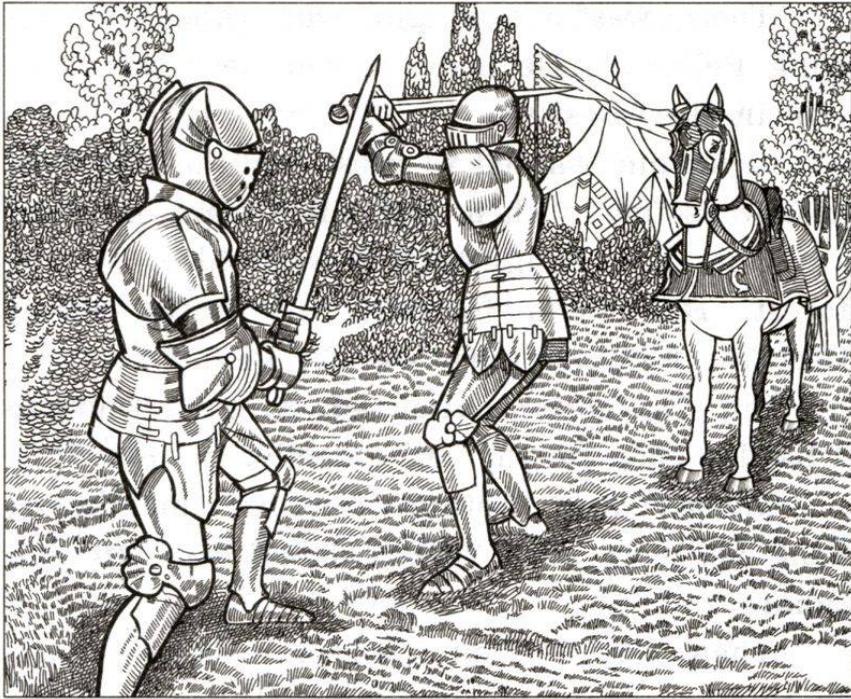
Sir Ector said, "Arthur, you are now the King of Britain."

Arthur said, "Father, I don't want to leave you!"

Sir Ector said, "I'm not your real father. I don't know who you are. The magician Merlin brought you to us when you were born. I raised you like a son, and I love you. Now you are a king. You must go and do your duty." Then the archbishop led Arthur to the church. The archbishop took the sword and laid it on the altar. Then Arthur knelt in front of the altar and prayed.

For a day and a night, Arthur prayed in the great church. He asked God to help him. He wanted to be a good and just king.

Three months passed. At the beginning of spring, Arthur was crowned as king in Winchester Cathedral. When the archbishop put the crown on Arthur's head, all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"



BRITAIN HAS A KING

Arthur was a young king. He was about twenty years old. He lived at Camelot. His first years as king were difficult. He fought against many enemies from other lands.

King Arthur was very brave. He liked riding his horse and looking for adventures. He was courageous, reliable and friendly. His people loved him. But some knights of his

court caused trouble. They did not want to obey a young king.

There was one knight who called himself King Pellinore. He made a tent near the fountain in the forest.

If anyone wanted to pass near the fountain, he always fought them and killed many knights.

One day, King Arthur was riding in the forest. He saw a fountain with clear water. Near the fountain there was Sir Pellinore.

Sir Pellinore challenged King Arthur to a battle. They fought very angrily.

When King Arthur fell off his horse, King Pellinore said, "I will defeat you fair and square."

Then they pull out their swords and started to fight again in close fight. When Arthur's sword broke, King Pellinore held his sword against King Arthur's neck.

Then... flash! The sword against King Arthur's throat dropped. Merlin stood behind a bush and he was telling a magical spell. King Pellinore fell to the ground.

When Arthur woke, he asked Merlin, shocked, "Did you kill him?"

Merlin said, "No, I only put him to sleep. He is the greatest fighter and a very noble knight. He will be your friend."

Now they had a problem. Arthur needed a new sword.

EXCALIBUR

Arthur rode away with Merlin and said, "I broke my sword during the fight with Sir Pellinore. I must have another sword."

"Let us go and cure your wounds first," said Merlin, "the sword will find you later."

They went to a small house in the forest and Merlin healed Arthur with some magic herbs.

"Come with me then," said Merlin three days later.

Arthur went with Merlin to a very clear water lake. In the middle of the lake, Arthur saw an arm in white clothes. The arm was holding a sword in a beautiful scabbard.

"Look!" said Merlin. "That is the sword and that is the Lady of the Lake."

Arthur saw a beautiful lady in a boat on the lake. He asked her, "Can I have that sword?"

She answered, "Yes, you can have it. Take my boat and go and get it. But promise to put it back into the lake when you don't need it anymore."

"I promise," said Arthur and went to the middle of the lake. There Arthur took the sword. He was very interested in it. He took the sword and looked at it. It was a beautiful sword with jewels on it.

"Look, Merlin," he said, "the word Excalibur is written on it."

"Yes, Excalibur is the greatest sword in the world. Whoever has it cannot be killed or lose a battle. But its scabbard is more precious."

"Why?" asked Arthur.

"It has a great magic power," said Merlin. "When you wear it, you never lose blood even if you are wounded. When you fight, you must always have the scabbard with you."

"The sword, Excalibur, is a gift from the Lady of the Lake," Merlin said. "One day, you must give it back to her."

"How shall I know that day?" asked Arthur.

"You will know that day when you come to this lake again," Merlin answered.



ARTHUR MEETS GUINEVERE

Merlin looked at Arthur. The young king was tall and strong and his hair was the colour of gold. Arthur had a handsome face and clear eyes. When people looked at him, they thought of a lion. The king's voice was soft and when he spoke, men listened. Men loved Arthur because he was polite and honest and

wise. They respected him because he was a great warrior and had won many battles.

A lot of enemies tried to invade Britain: the Saxons, the Jutes, the Pitts and others.

A big army of Saxons attacked King Leodegrance in his castle. He was the King of Cameliard. Young King Arthur and his knights fought against those Saxons and won.

King Leodegrance was very thankful to Arthur. He invited him and his knights to a royal dinner. At the dinner, Arthur met the King's daughter, Princess Guinevere.

Guinevere was young. She was one of the most beautiful women in the world. Arthur fell in love with her; he thought that she was the woman of his dreams. He wanted to marry her.

Merlin didn't like Arthur's choice. He said, "I can see dark future for you and her."

"I love Guinevere the Leodegrance King's daughter. He has the Round Table of my father Uther in his castle. She is the most courageous and fairest lady that I know, or yet that ever I could find," was Arthur's reply.

So, Merlin accepted his king's decision.

King Leodegrance, Guinevere's father, was very pleased.

"I am happy to give my daughter to our brave king!" said Guinevere's father. "My gift to King Arthur is the Round Table, which belonged to his father, King Uther."

That night there was a great feast in the castle. Leodegrance raised a cup and said, "Let us drink to the health of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere." And all the knights and people said, "Long live King Arthur and Queen Guinevere!"

Guinevere arrived at King Arthur's castle with her ladies and the Round Table. The very big Round Table had places for 150 knights. The table was round instead of rectangular. This meant that everyone who sat around it was seen as equal.

Arthur called the best knights of Britain to sit at the Round Table. Only the bravest knights were part of Arthur's court. They were called the Knights of the Round Table.

Arthur made up the rules for the Knights of the Round Table:

— Do not beat or murder anybody.

— Do not commit a crime against your country or king.

— Do not be cruel. Give mercy to those who ask, even in battle.

— The knight must promise to help women if they need it.

— Never "harm" women.

— Do not join in fights over anything less than god or country.

THE ROUND TABLE

Many knights joined King Arthur at Camelot. Three of those knights — Sir Bedivere, Sir Lancelot du Lac and Sir Gawain — would always be remembered.

Sir Bedivere was the first and most faithful knight.

Sir Lancelot du Lac was the bravest, the strongest and the most handsome knight.

Sir Gawain was often called the Greatest Knight because Gawain was polite and noble and he did great deeds.

As time passed, more knights came to Camelot. They, too, did many great and good deeds. All the knights sat in special seats at the Round Table. The seats were also called "sieges". Each knight's name was written on their siege in letters of gold. But one seat at the table was always empty. There was no name written on it.

"The empty seat is called the Siege Perilous," said Merlin. "Only one man may sit in this place. The man will be pure — a man

who has never done any evil deed. I do not know his name, but the man will come to Camelot one day. Meanwhile, no other man may sit on the Siege Perilous. If they do, they will die."

One day a strange girl came to the great hall of the castle. She said to Sir Lancelot, "Come with me! It's very important. I cannot tell you more. Please follow me."

Sir Lancelot followed the girl to the forest. They stopped at a church. Lancelot entered the church. He saw twelve nuns. One nun said, "Sir Lancelot, we bring you this young man. He is loyal and courageous. Please make him a knight."

The young man looked honest. Lancelot agreed to make him a knight. However, Lancelot did not recognize this young man. He was the son of Lancelot and Elaine, a lady he loved some years before. The young man's name was Galahad. Galahad's mother wanted him to be a knight, like his father.

The next day, Lancelot returned to Camelot with the young knight. King Arthur,

Queen Guinevere and the Knights of the Round Table were happy to meet Galahad.

When Sir Galahad sat down at the Round Table, his name appeared on the table. Everyone was surprised. Lancelot looked at Galahad carefully.

Suddenly, he understood that Galahad was his son! Lancelot was very happy and proud.

Morgana Le Fay also brought a young man to Camelot. Morgana wore the clothes of a holy woman.

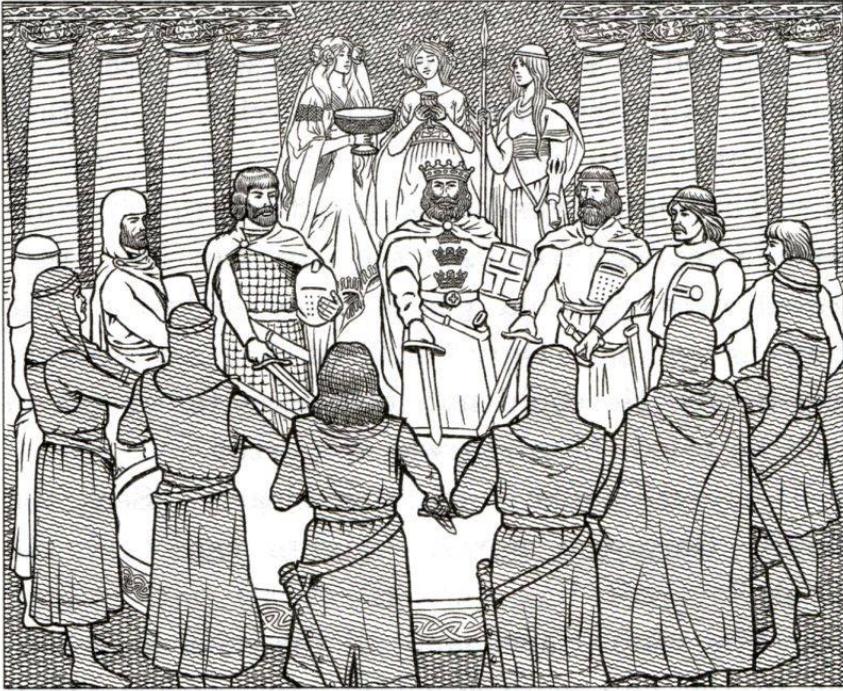
"I am Morgana of Glastonbury," she said to Arthur. "I bring a squire to your court. I hope he will become a knight. His name is Mordred."

Mordred was short and dark and broad. He had the body of a bear and a friendly smile — a smile that masked his evil mind. Men liked him at once. They said that he reminded them of King Arthur.

Arthur had never known his father. He did not know that Mordred looked like Uther Pendragon. And he did not know that Mordred was his own nephew. Also, he did

not know that Morgana of Glastonbury was his own half-sister. She was the wisest woman in the world. But her magic had no power over Arthur. While Arthur wore the sword Excalibur, Morgana could not touch him with her magic. The Knights of the Round Table stood up and welcomed Galahad and Mordred.

"Welcome to Camelot."



THE HOLY GRAIL

One day the knights were sitting at the Round Table. They had a religious holiday. Suddenly, there was a loud noise. Then there was a strong light. There came the sound of a great bell from above the earth. Then music came, from high above, together with the sound of voices singing. The hall was filled with light and the knights and ladies looked at

one another in shock. Then three ladies came into the hall. They were dressed in white and their faces were covered with white cloth. The first woman carried a spear. The second woman carried a dish. And the third woman carried a cup that was filled with light.

The light was so bright that the knights and ladies could not see the cup. But they were filled with joy and peace. They looked at the cup in wonder. Only Mordred hid his eyes in his hands. He could not look upon the holy cup and he cried. Mordred was unworthy.

A voice spoke softly and clearly. "Seek the Grail. Only the purest knights can find the Grail."

The vision faded and all the men and women in the hall were silent and astonished. They looked at King Arthur.

"That was the Holy Grail!" cried King Arthur. "That is where Christ's blood was kept after he was crucified. Who will seek the Grail?" he asked.

The knights were surprised. They all wanted to see the Holy Grail.

Sir Gawain said, "I want to look for the Grail for one year and one day."

"Yes, I want to look for the Grail too," said another knight.

All the knights wanted to find the Holy Grail. There was great enthusiasm at the Round Table.

King Arthur was very worried. He knew that the search for the Holy Grail was dangerous. In fact, many knights died during the search. Others never came back to Camelot.

Only three knights found the Holy Grail. They were Galahad, Percival and Bors. All three had pure hearts. Only those with pure hearts saw the Holy Grail. The three knights travelled to far-away lands. After many dangerous adventures, they found the Holy Grail.

When they saw it on a silver table, they thanked God for this great happiness. After finding the Grail, Galahad and Percival died. But Bors returned to Camelot. He told everyone about his wonderful experience.

MORGANA LE FAY

Merlin often went to the island of Avalon. There a young and very beautiful woman practiced the art of Magic. Merlin taught her. Her name was Morgana Le Fay. She could change herself into any shape, and heal all illnesses. But she wanted to cause evil and disharmony in the world. She thought this could make her truly powerful.

"You are young and foolish, Morgana. You have the greatest power there is. Yet, you want to destroy it."

Morgana asked Merlin to explain how evil is caused. He agreed because he wanted her to understand human pain. Merlin took out his crystal ball. In it, he showed Morgana what had happened between Lancelot, Guinevere and Arthur.

Morgana was not satisfied. She hated Arthur. She was his half-sister and thought it was not fair he was the King.

When Merlin left her, Morgana turned herself into a falcon and flew to Camelot. She

saw Lancelot and Gawain riding their horses through the forest. Morgana made a very strong wind and stopped them.

She took the form of Guinevere on horse back. Sir Gawain and Sir Lancelot stopped because of the wind and leaves which blinded them. They sat on their horses and saw the beautiful Guinevere riding towards them through the forest.

Guinevere told Gawain to stay with the horses and the servants while she led Lancelot by the hand some distance away, but still where Sir Gawain could see them.

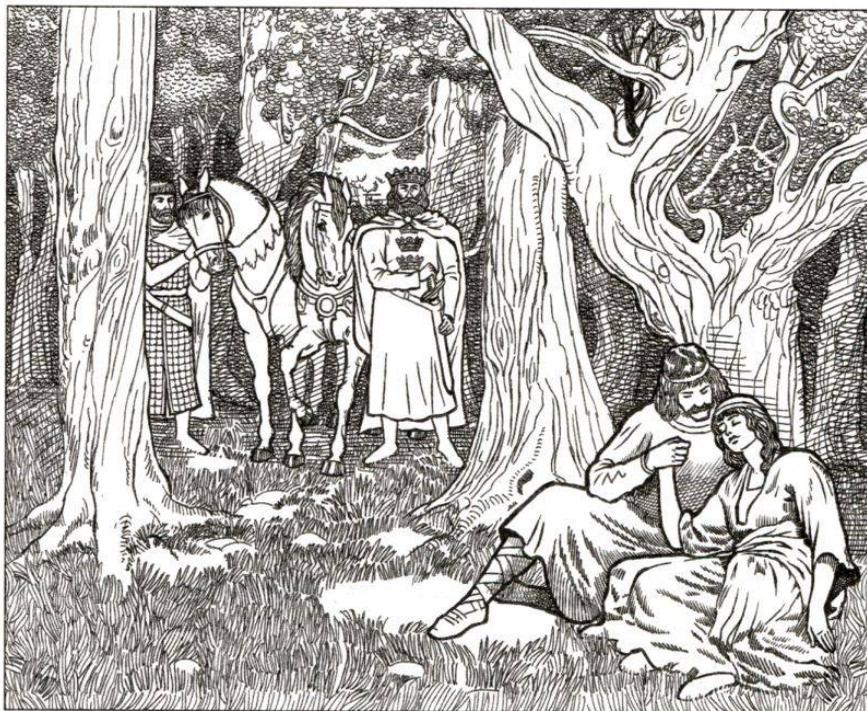
They kissed while Gawain watched with open eyes. Morgana left Lancelot and the forest as Guinevere. She flew through the air as an eagle and dived into the sea as a dolphin. When she returned to Avalon, she was satisfied. True power, she felt, was now hers.

Gawain told the King about this scene. The King called Lancelot before him. Lancelot, unable to lie, told everything.

"Your seat at the Round Table will be empty to show disloyalty and dishonour. Go away from Camelot. You betrayed me."

Lancelot took his punishment as his heart told him that he was wrong. Sir Gawain was happy with himself.

"Now I will be the King's favourite knight," he thought to himself.



MORDRED

Guinevere could not believe what she heard when the King told her about Lancelot. She didn't admit it.

"Lancelot told everything. I threw him away."

"He is lying! I didn't kiss him. You don't want to believe your own wife."

"But Sir Gawain said..."

"Sir Gawain is a fool. Look into his eyes. He does not know the difference between truth and fantasy. Call Lancelot here and we will settle it. Until then, I will see no one."

The Queen left. The King was alone, thinking, when Merlin appeared. Merlin knew that Morgana Le Fay was the cause of this trouble.

Merlin told Arthur to call the knights to the Round Table so he could speak to them. When the knights sat around King Arthur, Merlin stopped at Lancelot's empty seat.

"Evil, whatever its cause, touched one man. It means it touches you all. I saw the future. England will once again be at war."

Merlin rolled his crystal ball across the table. Gradually, it became a ball of blinding light until it stopped in the centre of the table. Inside the light, a golden cup appeared.

"Look at it, all of you. It is the Holy Grail, and it holds the secrets of truth and justice. Find it, and peace will return to England."

Thunder shook the walls of the castle and it began to rain. Merlin and the Grail disappeared. It became dark.

Merlin made a mistake when he showed Morgana the weakness of humans. He returned to Avalon to see if he was right.

Morgana trained a boy to fight like a warrior.

"Morgana, you didn't obey me. It must stop."

"Stop? But do you see this son of mine, Mordred? He will one day rule with all power!"

Merlin raised his hand to destroy magic power in Morgana, but she turned herself into a mirror. His spell reflected back on him. Merlin fell asleep forever.

Morgana turned back into the woman she was, and looked at her child.

"Mordred, now nothing will come between you and the throne."

GUINEVERE TAKES EXCALIBUR

Mordred watched Lancelot and Guinevere closely. He saw them ride together and followed them when they rode into the forest. They hunted deer together. He told his friends, "Guinevere is closer to Lancelot than to her husband King Arthur." Arthur heard the rumours, but he refused to believe them. Arthur was happy to rule wisely and well. He welcomed many knights and heard their stories, but he no longer rode out in search of adventure. His hair had turned from the colour of gold to the colour of silver.

Mordred spoke to his mother, Morgana Le Fay. "How can we make Arthur believe that Lancelot and Guinevere are unfaithful to him?" he asked.

"There is a secret garden in the woods," said Morgana Le Fay. "Lancelot and Guinevere meet there. I will put a magic spell on the garden so that Lancelot and Guinevere fall asleep. When they are asleep, you will

take Arthur and show him that his wife and his knight are lovers."

Mordred watched and waited. He saw Lancelot and Guinevere ride out of Camelot. The knight and the Queen rode into the wood. They came to the secret garden and sat down on the grass among the flowers. Suddenly they fell asleep — lying side by side.

Mordred rode back to Camelot and went to the King. "Sire," he said, "I saw two horses in the wood. The horses had no riders and they were the horses of Sir Lancelot and Our Lady Queen. Maybe they have some accident..."

So Arthur rode into the wood. Mordred led him to the secret garden. There Arthur saw Lancelot and Guinevere asleep on the grass among the flowers. They had their arms around each other.

Arthur took his sword Excalibur out. Mordred smiled. "I will kill this false knight," said Arthur. But when he raised his sword to kill Sir Lancelot, Merlin's words came into his mind.

"You will not draw the sword Excalibur in anger. You will draw that sword only to defend the right. And, while you fight for good against evil, you cannot fall in battle. The sword will protect you and you will defend the land."

Arthur put the sword into the ground next to Sir Lancelot's head. Then he turned away and rode back to Camelot. Mordred went with him and told everyone about this case. Soon all the court knew that Lancelot and Guinevere were unfaithful to their lord the King.

Lancelot and Guinevere awoke in the secret garden. They saw the sword Excalibur and cried out in terror. "Arthur!" Guinevere cried. "What shall we do? Where shall we hide?"

"Take the sword Excalibur," said Lancelot. "No man touched it except Arthur. Take it and keep it until the King needs it for battle."

Then Lancelot took Guinevere away into the west. "We did wrong," he said. "Now we

must part forever. We cannot go back to Camelot and we cannot go forward together."

Lancelot took Guinevere to the nunnery at Amesbury in the West. Guinevere took the sword Excalibur with her for the King's great need. There the women took the Queen into their nunnery and she became a nun. "Shut me behind high walls," she said, "so that no man may see my shame."

And so she lived in a simple room and spent her days in prayer. She kept the sword Excalibur in her room. It was her last service to her king and husband.

Lancelot rode into the west. He left his armour and sword at a church. He lived alone in the woods and never spoke to anyone again.

THE END OF THE ROUND TABLE

Mordred gathered the young knights around him. "Arthur lost his power," he said. "It is time to have a new king — a young king. The Round Table is old and powerless. We will fight the old knights."

Mordred and the young knights attacked Camelot. Sir Gawain and Sir Bors battled with Mordred on the banks of the river.

"Where is Arthur?" Mordred called. "Is he afraid to fight?"

Arthur sat in the castle. He sat at the Round Table with his faithful knight Sir Bedivere. "The Round Table is broken," he said. "There will never be so many noble knights together again."

Morgana Le Fay helped her son in the fight with her spell.

Many men died on the bridge. Mordred took his men and burnt the towns and villages. He killed many men, women and children, and his army grew larger. He

promised his men, "You can keep what you can take."

Arthur gathered all his men and rode after Sir Mordred. Mordred moved west and Arthur followed him.

Arthur came at night to the holy house at Amesbury. The nuns let him to Guinevere's cell. Guinevere could not speak or look at Arthur. She took the sword Excalibur from under her bed and handed it to the king.

"You are the only person to touch this sword," said Arthur. "Since I took it from the Lady of the Lake, no other people hold it. Remember me, and maybe we will meet again in another life. Then, I pray, we know each other for the first time."

He left the nunnery and Guinevere stayed there. She lived her days as a nun and never spoke again.

THE DEATH OF MORDRED

Arthur pushed Sir Mordred back to the land's end. They came to the hills where no man lived and nothing grew. From these hills, Arthur saw a valley and a lake in the far west. Beyond the lake lay a plain of sand. Beyond the plain of sand lay the ocean. Here, Mordred could go no further and he and Arthur prepared for their final battle.

Far away, in the middle of the great wood, Merlin woke for a short time from his long sleep. And Merlin's voice came to Arthur in a dream. He spoke of Excalibur and the Lady of the Lake. "One day you must give it back to her," he said. And Arthur asked, "How do I know that day?"

"You will know that day when you come to this lake again," Merlin answered. "Now, it is time for battle."

Merlin came to Morgana in her sleep. "Remember the dragon," he said. So Morgana prepared her spells to defend her son against her brother.

Merlin also came to Lancelot in his sleep. "Take your sword and go to your King," he said. So Lancelot took his sword and rode to the west.

Arthur rose and prepared for battle.

Morgana used her magic. She called the mist from out of the lake. Men could not see each other in the mist. They fought against shadows and killed both friends and enemies.

Suddenly a knight appeared. His sword shone in the sunlight. It was Lancelot. He fought Mordred's men and pushed them back towards the ocean shore.

Morgana saw Lancelot. She spoke words of great power. It was the most powerful spell. It was the spell that gave her the breath of the dragon. She breathed in the face of Arthur's men and in Lancelot when he prepared to kill Mordred. Lancelot fell and died on the sand.

But the dragon spell was too powerful for Morgana. She breathed fire and it burnt her. She fell to the ground and her evil burnt in the fire.

The mist cleared. The field was full with dead knights. Arthur stood alone with Sir Bedivere. Bedivere could not fight because of his wounded hand. All the other Knights of the Round Table were dead. And all the enemies of Arthur were dead. Only Mordred was still alive.

Mordred walked towards King Arthur. He carried his black war axe. Arthur held the sword Excalibur.

Arthur and Mordred fought and Arthur drove his sword Excalibur into the body of Mordred and killed him. But, before he fell, Mordred swung his black war axe and struck King Arthur on the head.



ARTHUR RETURNS EXCALIBUR TO THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Sir Bedivere carried King Arthur to a small church. On one side there was the lake and on the other there was the ocean. The moon was full.

"I will die before the morning," said King Arthur. "Take my sword Excalibur and throw it into the lake."

Sir Bedivere took the sword, sadly, and walked to the lake. He looked at the sword and saw that it was beautiful. "It is too good, I can't throw it away," he thought. And he hid the sword in the grass beside the lake and walked back to the king.

"What did you see?" Arthur asked.

"Nothing," said Sir Bedivere.

"Go again and do as I told you," said King Arthur.

Sir Bedivere went to the lake again and looked at the sword and hid the sword for the second time.

"What did you see?" Arthur whispered. His voice was weak.

"Nothing," said Sir Bedivere.

Arthur was angry. "Why don't you obey a dying king?" he asked. "Now, on your honour, go and do what I told you. This is my last request and final command."

Then Bedivere went quickly to the lake. He took the sword, closed his eyes and threw Excalibur into the middle of the lake. When he looked, he saw the sword flash in the

moonlight and fall towards the water. But the sword did not sink into the lake. A hand rose from the water. It was covered in white cloth. The hand caught the sword and waved it three times. Then the Lady of the Lake pulled the sword under the water.

Bedivere ran back to the king. Arthur looked at Bedivere's face. "Now carry me to the ocean shore, but be quick."

Bedivere carried Arthur to the ocean shore. A boat appeared in the moonlight. It moved without wind, sails or oars. Three queens stood in the boat. It was decorated with rich red cloth. Bedivere laid Arthur on a bed of rich red cushions. The three queens wept.

"Where will you go?" Sir Bedivere asked.

Arthur answered slowly: "I am going a long way with these women. I am going to the island of Avalon. It is an isle of rest where winter never comes. There I will be healed of my wound and will rest and wait. And one day I shall come again, for Merlin called me the Once and Future King."

"And where shall I go?" asked Sir Bedivere.

"You should travel through the world," said Arthur. "Tell of what you saw and what you heard — the stories of the Knights of the Round Table."

Then the three queens sang a sad song as the boat moved away from the shore. The boat gleamed in the moonlight.