

THE BLADE'S BLESSING

By

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Opening Gate Scene

The ERLKING and their Dark Fae are gathered at the gate, entertaining and interacting with the audience.

The ERLKING spreads their hands wide and smiles in a way that's not entirely warm and friendly

ERLKING

Humans, mortals, darling little toys...It is truly a delight to see you all gathered here today. I hope you understand the very great privilege you have been granted this morning. It is not every day that the Fae travel from our native shores of Annwn to journey amidst the dust and quagmire of your quaint lands. Time here does weigh so drearily upon our shoulders and under normal circumstances we would not tarry here. It's entirely the wrong season for the Wild Hunt, after all...and that is another thing you should feel grateful for.

I am the Erlking. You humans have many names for me –

DARK FAE 1

The King of Elves!

DARK FAE 2

The Alder King!

ERLKING

- But today I will accept "Your Majesty".

We have been summoned here from the Magic Realms to your little Festival at the behest of a Would-Be Mortal Queen. She has promised me something truly tantalizing in return.

DARK FAE 3

Children?

ERLKING

Not today, sadly. We've business to attend to.

The Dark Fae grumble and complain while The ERLKING looks out over the crowd. They select one child (preferably one who doesn't look like this will utterly traumatize them) and point at them.

Well...maybe that one.

The Dark Fae begin to cheer and laugh. Their revelry is cut short by fanfare – the sound of a horn, or something similar – as MORGANA and her Retinue of Dark Knights appear.

MORGANA'S HERALD

Make way, make way for the Lady Morgana, Daughter of Igraine and Gorlois, and Heir of Camelot!

ERLKING

Heir of Camelot? Why, whatever has become of the Old Dragon, Uther?
There is real disdain in the ERLKING'S voice

MORGANA

Dead. Poisoned by some of the very people he sought to conquer.

The Dark Fae begin muttering among each other, whispering terrible stories about Uther to audience members they happen to be near. These can be realistic or utter, absolute rumor and falsehood (IE: I heard he stole every brown cow in Ulster! Or He used to hunt the Fae for fun!). The ERLKING holds up a hand to silence them.

ERLKING

This is indeed pleasing news but the last I heard, his heir was a Princeling...not *you*.

MORGANA is momentarily furious, but gets herself under control

MORGANA

This is why I summoned you here. His son, Arthur, has built a Court and is trying to ascend the throne. There will be a new Pendragon in Camelot.

DARK FAE 1

What do we care?

DARK FAE 2

Human problems are for Humans!

DARK FAE 3

This whole trip was a waste! We should return to the Unseen Realm!

DARK FAE 1

I saw we take some children! Road snacks!

ERLKING

Without shouting, but with deadly authority
ENOUGH.

The Dark Fae all go quiet. A few hide behind audience members. One even tries to crouch far down behind a child.

ERLKING (Cont'd)

Little Human, my subjects are correct – if somewhat irritating. What do the Elves of Annwn care for the politics of mortals?

MORGANA

Merlin has sent Arthur here to receive a magic sword to bless his new reign. A *fae* sword. He'll become more powerful and terrible than his father in a very short time if he's permitted to claim it. I've heard stories about what Uther did to your people. Do you want a greater power taking his place?

The Dark Fae shout and mutter again, more wild stories are passed around. A few are angry. A few gasp in dismay.

MORGANA (Cont'd)

I know all too well what a Pendragon is capable of. Uther destroyed my family. If Arthur is allowed to take the throne, we are all in danger.

ERLKING

You wish to form an alliance.

MORGANA

Well?

After a moment of tense silence, the ERLKING laughs out loud

ERLKING

You have courage...take care it does not become stupidity. Very well, you have your alliance. We shall meet at the sword's bequeathing ceremony and...make our displeasure known.

MORGANA

I overheard they will meet at the Noon Hour.

ERLKING

Very well! Away, my Faeries! We have much to prepare for.

They turn to the audience.

I extend an invitation to you, one and all, to join us for our little surprise party! I do so love an Audience.

They gesture towards the gate guards.

Guards! Open these gates that these mortals may take part in the day's revels. I hear the fine musicians already!

This is a fun place for the GUARDS to say no or just not react at all. I want them to have some agency and give them status for the audience since we partner with them.

MORGANA

Sighing

PLEASE open the gates?

The GUARDS can then step aside with comedic comments like “Well why didn’t you say so?” and “All you had to do was say please”.

The Fae and Dark Knights can slip through and mingle with the audience. ARTHUR and his retinue can be waiting on the other side further up so the audience gets to meet them as well.

THE BLADE'S BLESSING – SCENE ONE

The castle is setup in the usual way except there's a stone on the center stage.

You hear a clash of metal as bright lights flash from inside the castle.

BRIGIT, a tall, strong built fae, comes out of the bottom of a castle tower carrying a sword. She's in "blacksmith-but-make-it-fashion" attire.

BRIGIT admires the sword as she walks towards a stone on the stage. She stops at the stone and looks up at the audience, pleased.

BRIGIT

Good morning! I'm pleased to see you've all made it in time. Please allow me to introduce myself: I am Brigit! Queen of Fire! Lady of Craft! Goddess of Invention! I have been hard at work and the time has come. May I present my finest work...

BRIGIT brandishes the sword.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

It's called... Excelsior!

BRIGIT gazes lovingly at the sword, utterly deaf to the world.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

It is truly the only name worthy of such a fine blade!

Trumpets are heard in the background. BRIGIT comes back to reality as she takes a deep breath.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

The great wizard, Merlin, came to me and appealed to me to make a gift of the sword once it was complete. His young ward is about to ascend the throne in Camelot, but he requires a tool...a blessed symbol of his reign! So, it must be kept safe until the appropriate time has come.

BRIGIT moulinets the sword into the stone as a golden light bathes them. The golden light goes away as she lets go of the sword.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

There we are. That should hold it.

She lovingly taps the sword.

Trumpets blare as the royal procession arrive in ceremonial order.

At the front is ARTHUR, a young male dressed in knightly attire, doing his best to look regal, as he walks up to the stage. He looks to his friends for reassurance and they smile, ushering him forward.

The rest of the retinue orderly takes a square each facing the castle.

Arthur tries to bow to BRIGIT, but she clasps his forearm in greeting.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

Young Arthur.

ARTHUR

Lady Brigit.

They both stand to order on either side of the sword in the stone.

They wait.

And they wait.

And they wait some more until Arthur turns to BRIGIT unsurely.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Am I... meant to make a speech first?

BRIGIT

Have no fear, Young Arthur, for Merlin will guide you through the rite.

They look intently at Arthur's retinue and is surprised not to see their old friend.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

Arthur. *Where* is Merlin?

ARTHUR

He told me that this was a task I would have to undertake alone...to establish myself.

GUINIVERE clears her throat. His Retinue laughs good naturedly.

ARTHUR (Cont'd)

The tension is broken and he smiles

Oh alright, not alone. He said that it was time I relied on the strength of my Court to see me through.

BRIGIT

Very well, then! You're lucky. I'm not one to stand on ceremony. The old magics require intent, not an hour-long speech; So, let's make this quick.

Arthur, son of Uther Pendragon. I bequeath to you the sword, Excelsior -

LANCELOT politely interjects

LANCELOT

My lady? Merlin told us he had foreseen the sword would be named Excalibur?

BRIGIT looks upset.

BRIGIT

...Well that's a silly name. No one will possibly remember a name like that.

Now, as I was saying. With this sword, you will bring about a new age of peace and prosperity.

BRIGIT walks to stand behind the sword. As BRIGIT grips the sword, it hurts her (SFX/VFX optional).

BRIGIT yells in shock and lets go of the sword.

BRIGIT (Cont'd)

It burns!

Her head jerks up and she stares, her face gone solemn.

BRIGIT (Cont'd)

...What are *they* doing here?!

presence.

EVIL LAUGHTER fills the chessboard as many fae-like creatures scuttle out from behind the bleachers and castle. Arthur and the retinue stand guard looking concerned and bewildered. BRIGIT tends to their hands.

THE ERLKING, a tall ethereal creature comes from the castle back wall stairs followed by MORGANA, a young woman dressed in regal attire.

THE ERLKING

Halt, my sublime denizens. Give the humans time to breathe. After all, we're here to be...reasonable. And leave the children for now. We've different business to attend to.

The Erlking turns to Morgana.

THE ERLKING (CONT'D)

Now, Morgana, tell these mortals the reason we have deigned to grace them with our august presence.

Morgana turns to The Erlking and curtseys.

MORGANA

With pleasure, Your Majesty.

Morgana turns to the crowd.

MORGANA (CONT'D)

This sword, Excalibur -

BRIGIT

-Excelsior

MORGANA

- Is an immensely powerful weapon, capable of great destruction. As such, should not be wielded by the son of a man guilty of crimes against the people...the Fae people! In my concern, I brought the matter before the Erlking. Arthur must *not* be given this sword. Arthur must *not* take the throne. He is the son of a murderer.

THE ERLKING

The apple never does fall far from the tree.

Arthur steps up to Morgana, aghast.

ARTHUR

You can't believe this, Morgana.

Morgana turns away, careful not to make eye contact. Arthur turns to the Erlking.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I am not my father. I barely knew him. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. All I want is a better world - for *all* of us!

The Erlking leans in close to Arthur, then sweeps away to address the audience.

THE ERLKING

Words. Words without proof. Words mean nothing in the face of what my people have endured.

Brigit steps in, seeing the Erlking's growing malicious delight.

BRIGIT

Arthur has proven himself a kind and good-hearted prince!

THE ERLKING

Not. To. Me. Brigit, surrender the weapon into safe hands. We will not cede this.

The Erlking gestures towards the fae surrounding Arthur's retinue.

BRIGIT (CONT'D)

You want proof? Very well then. I propose a Game.

The ERLKING'S confidence changes to intrigue. Arthur and Morgana look confused as The ERLKING and BRIGIT ignore them.

ERLKING

Do tell me more?

BRIGIT

A game of kings to prove their mettle.

THE ERLKING

Ah, Battle Chess, then?

ARTHUR AND MORGANA

Don't we get a say?

BRIGIT and the Erlking turn towards Arthur and Morgana.

BRIGIT AND THE ERLKING

No.

The Erlking turns towards BRIGIT.

THE ERLKING

Very well then. Your human versus my human.

BRIGIT

Agreed.

BRIGIT turns towards the sword in the stone.

I'll just get Arthur a sword.

BRIGIT reaches for the sword and a golden glow emanates onto BRIGIT. The Erlking interrupts.

THE ERLKING

Waving their finger tauntingly

Attempting to claim the prize before the game is even won? Tsk, Brigit. I wouldn't touch that if I were you. You may get burned.

The Erlking raises a hand as the golden glow changes to red. BRIGIT pauses and raises an eyebrow as she looks at the Erlking.

After a long, tense moment, GUINIVERE steps out of line and clasps ARTHUR'S shoulder

GUINIVERE

Then we will play fair! I have an extra sword that Arthur can use. You watch, he'll prove that he's worthy even with the most common of swords!

The ERLKING looks her up and down with clear disdain before dismissing her.

ERLKING

Silence your Mongrel, or I will. The time for words is past! Show me what your humans are made of.

LANCELOT, ARTHUR, and the retinue look deeply offended on GUINIVERE'S behalf. GUINIVERE holds her chin high, refusing to accept the insult. BRIGIT gives her a look of approval and gestures for her to retrieve the sword for ARTHUR.

CHESS COMMENCES

The chessboard continues until the final fight for Arthur. Arthur takes a big hit but gets back up. Arthur takes another really big hit. He is silent. The fae creatures start to cheer but then Arthur struggles to his feet once more.

ARTHUR

I can do this all day!

ARTHUR continues the fight until he's pummeled up against the castle until the final blow smashes him through the wall. His opponent turns to the audience, thinking they've claimed a victory.

ERLKING

Brigit, survival against my ancient revelry is beyond them. The battle is lost and the sword is forfeit.

The Erlking walks over to the sword in the stone and raises a hand.

ARTHUR

Wait! I'm not done yet!

Arthur looking roughed up, stumbles out of the castle. His retinue raises a loud cheer.

MORGANA

No! Stay down!

BRIGIT

The sword isn't lost yet! He stands!

THE ERLKING

Accept your defeat. *(He moves to seize the sword)*

BRIGIT

No!

BRIGIT charges for the ERLKING, knocking them to the side. BRIGIT throws herself over the sword to keep it from being taken, screaming as the sword burns her hands. Distracted, BRIGIT has no time to defend as the Erlking, with a wave of their hand, throws them into the center of the board.

MORGANA

Enough of this. Attack!

The Black Side charges for BRIGIT.

ARTHUR

Camelot! Protect Brigit!

Arthur retinue goes into the battle. BRIGIT wielding their great magic, fends off all oncomers with ease. They make their way to the Erlking, claiming a sword as they go. The ERLKING raises both hands stopping the sword swing magically. The shockwave knocks all other fighters to the ground.

BRIGIT

Cheating! *(The words are a hiss)*

THE ERLKING

I committed no wrong. The human woman violated the rules of the game, not I. Shall I punish her?

They look menacingly at Morgana, who looks nervous.

BRIGIT

No! No. As the game is incomplete, I demand a rematch. A FAIR match this time. A tournament!

THE ERLKING

Very well. The deal is struck. Shall we begin?

BRIGIT

Arthur is yet wounded!

THE ERLKING

Oh, very well. See to your broken toys. We shall reconvene at two upon the clock.

BRIGIT

Agreed.

THE ERLKING

Gesturing to their retinue

Come away. We must leave the humans to lick their wounds.

BRIGIT goes over to the stone and looks longingly at her currently untouchable masterwork.

The people on the board slowly get back up as they move to their respective side, tending to their wounds.

THE BLADE'S BLESSING - SCENE TWO

ARTHUR is seated on the stage nearest the White Side. A healer is looking over his injuries while his retinue are spread out across the board discussing the previous board. A few look concerned they've gotten in over their heads. The Knights stand guard nearer to Arthur. This is a good time to chat with audience members and establish a rapport. LANCELOT and GUINIVERE are with BRIGIT in heated conversation near the sword. GUINIVERE is a pillar of righteous fury, LANCELOT is trying to keep the peace.

GUINIVERE

This is absurd!

LANCELOT

Guinivere, my lady...

GUINIVERE

No! Arthur is injured! We cannot continue playing this game! Who knows what could happen next time? The future of Camelot shouldn't even *be* a game.

BRIGIT

It's the only way to free the sword! I worked far too hard and far too long to see it rust away in a blasted rock until the end of time!

LANCELOT

Much more reasonably

Guinivere, we can't just walk away from this. If we don't stand up for Morgana now, she'll hound all of us all the way back to Camelot. Think of how many innocent people will get hurt if we don't settle this.

ARTHUR has heard their conversation and stands, waving off concern from his friends. GAWAIN assists him to stand on the stage.

ARTHUR

Lancelot is right. I had no idea my father's shadow stretched so far, but now that we know...it's our job to bring light to the darkness.

GUINIVERE

With a grimace, knowing that her friends are right

...You know, if I didn't find your sincerity charming, I'd absolutely hate it.

She watches until GAWAIN and his friends have ARTHUR steady on his feet

GUINIVERE (CONT'D)

...But you're right. If Arthur earns that sword in good faith then it really WILL prove he isn't his father. To everyone. Morgana and the Erlking have given us no choice, so we will fight!

She tries to look righteous for just a moment more while the white side CHEERS

LANCELOT

After the cheers dissipate

...You really want to beat Morgana up, don't you?

GUINIVERE

....Yes.

Speak of the devil – MORGANA arrives with fanfare, walking at the side of the ERLKING. Her head is held high, her back is straight, her eyes blazing.

MORGANA

Is that so?

She smells a guaranteed victory after the events of the previous board. The ERLKING serenely leads her over to one side of the board while their dark retinue roils, creeps, and jeers in a wave behind them. ARTHUR's retinue retreat to the opposite side, leaving BRIGIT at center and ARTHUR on the stage.

ERLKING

Well Brigit? We meet at the appointed hour. Are you ready to end this?

BRIGIT

As agreed! However, I wish to amend the challenge.

ERLKING

Intrigued and pleased

In the spirit of fairness, I will ask payment in return. State your terms.

BRIGIT

I demand that provisions be made to forbid interfering with combat. Another fracas like the one from last time shall be counted as an automatic forfeit for the guilty side.

ERLKING

Very well. Shall we begin?

BRIGIT

Confused by their easy acceptance.

What of your payment?

ERLKING

Smiling coldly and unconcerned

I will claim it when it comes due. Now then. TO YOUR SIDES.

TOURNAMENT begins. There are wins and losses on both sides, though things are tilting in ARTHUR'S favor. MORGANA tries to weaken the wounded ARTHUR by continually attempting to force him to fight. His friends and retinue prove their loyalty by stepping in as a champion to protect him every time. At last, the final fight is fought and won. There is general celebration from the white side while Arthur goes to claim the sword until...

The ERLKING begins to clap, slow and mocking. The sounds of celebration die away bit by bit and ARTHUR'S hand freezes before he can claim Excalibur/Excelsior.

ERLKING

Well done, young man, well done! I congratulate you on your victory. You have proven yourself a King of Warriors. Now, as for my payment...

They ignore MORGANA'S growing outrage and fury at her loss, raise a hand, and snap their fingers. Every person on the white side who lost a fight is suddenly compelled against their will towards the center of the board, where they kneel to the ERLKING.

GUINIVERE

With her weapon drawn

What foul magic is this?

MORGANA has stepped back and is watching the ERLKING warily. She is beginning to get a sense of just how dangerous they are.

BRIGIT

What is the meaning of this?!

ERLKING

Payment came due. Every warrior who failed on the field of combat now belongs to me. A small price to pay for a magical sword, would you not say Young King? My congratulations to you on your reign. Do invite me to your coronation.

The ERLKING bows in a mockingly humble manner before sweeping to leave, pulling MORGANA to join them. Dark Fae surge forward to claim the losers and drag them away. The white side is alarmed and horrified. ARTHUR stands with his hand still held out to the sword. He looks to his people, then to the sword, then to BRIGIT. He pulls his hand away from the sword as if burned and charges up onto the stage.

ARTHUR

WAIT!

I challenge you to a game! One last game!

The ERLKING pauses and smiles. LANCELOT and GUINIVERE run up to stand on either side of ARTHUR.

GUINIVERE

What are you doing?

ARTHUR

I can't abandon those people. They were fighting for me. I have to fight for *them*.

LANCELOT grasps his shoulder

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

To the ERLKING and MORGANA

I challenge you to one more game. If my side wins, then we get the sword and you release our people. If you win...

ERLKING

If I win?

ARTHUR

With great conviction

If you win, you get the sword...and me.

There is a great outcry from the White Side and BRIGIT steps forward, looking at Arthur in concern.

BRIGIT

Don't I get a say in this?

ARTHUR/ERLKING

One sad yet determined, the other delighted

No.

ERLKING

Very well then! I will magnanimously grant you one final game, winner take all. Don't be late.

He turns to MORGANA

And you...don't fail me.

MORGANA is less sure of her choice now than ever. She is swept along with the ERLKING's people as they depart the chessboard with great pomp. ARTHUR'S friends and teammates rush to his side while BRIGIT turns to the audience.

BRIGIT

Good people, please meet us here one final time at four upon the clock for the final stand of Arthur and the final battle for the Sword, Excel-

WHITE SIDE

EXCALIBUR.

BRIGIT

Oh...whatever!

THE BLADE'S BLESSING – SCENE THREE

The board is populated entirely by the Black Side.

MORGANA'S Dark Knights occupy the board. They converse amongst each other and with the audience. They are uneasy, now aware how truly dangerous their 'allies' really are. It should be a sharp opposition to Board 1 where they were full of swagger and assured of victory.

MORGANA speaks with a few of her Knights and paces restlessly at mid-board. She is troubled. ARTHUR is not how she remembered when they were children. He has not mocked or belittled her. He is not his father. Her earlier conviction is compromised.

MORGANA

I do not understand it!

She stops pacing, addressing her Knights and the audience.

MORGANA (cont'd)

He had victory in his grasp! Arthur won and he could have taken the sword and pranced all the way back to Camelot with it and his Merry Band of Hedge-born Idiots to keep living his privileged little life. So, why Why WHY did he throw it all away?

For a handful of rabble? His father would *never* have done something so...

She pauses, caught between frustration and epiphany. She looks to her own Retinue.

...His father would have never.

Raucous laughter interrupts her, cutting her realization short. MORGANA and her Retinue turn to see the ERLKING and their Dark Fae appearing on the castle and over the stage. The Humans shuffle uncertainly, unnerved but trying not to show it. The ERLKING takes center stage and smiles mockingly at MORGANA.

ERLKING

Please don't tell me you're getting cold feet, pet.

MORGANA

Her strong front is back in place

Of course not. I have no intention of failing.

ERLKING

I should hope not. Remember well, Morgana, being cast aside by Uther Pendragon. Remember the mockery, the insults, never being given your due. You are here because you fought tooth and nail for a seat at the table while that *boy* was given everything that should have been yours.

MORGANA looks sullen

AND, Morgana? Remember well that my people are owed vengeance. If you rob me of it, my wrath will make the sufferings of your childhood feel like a pleasant daydream in comparison.

MORGANA

...I will remember, your majesty.

She bows as the White Side takes the board with BRIGIT in the lead, followed by ARTHUR and his Retinue.

BRIGIT

Alright! I have had quite enough of playing sillybuggers! We are here at the appointed hour and we are going to settle this!

The White Side begins to immediately set up for Chess. From his position, ARTHUR speaks.

ARTHUR

Where are my people, Erlking?

ERLKING

Feigning surprise

Your people? Oh no, Princeling. They belong to me until you win them.

They gesture and the Black Side also sets up for Chess.

But I will be sporting. For every fight you win, I shall release one. After all, they aren't the real prize...and I can always capture more.

ARTHUR

Very well. Shall we play?

CHESS COMMENCES

The game is contentious, both teams fighting hard while they work to rally the audience. The energy is high and the Black Side is falling apart. The Dark Fae have an open dislike of the humans, the humans are butting heads with the Fae, and MORGANA's resolve against ARTHUR is failing as she watches how hard the White Side is fighting for their friends.

The final fight should be MORGANA v. ARTHUR ideally. As they square off to fight, ARTHUR speaks to MORGANA.

ARTHUR

You won't win this, Morgana.

It reignites her waning fury and they fight. In the end, she and ARTHUR has her on-point, but she looks prepared to keep fighting.

ARTHUR

You misunderstand, Morgana! You won't win because you're standing alone! Do you think the Erlking would rescue you? Would care?

MORGANA

Shut up! Uther killed my father! He stole my mother and left me with *nothing!* Then YOU come along and have EVERYTHING handed to you! Uther took my world from me and gave it all to you. I want it back!

ARTHUR

You want a world, Morgana? Then help me build one. I am *sorry* that you suffered because of my father, but I am not him. I won't see others suffer as you did. You can be a part of that. End this feud and join my Court!

MORGANA

Your....

MORGANA is stunned. Still on-point, she turns to look over the united White Side, this family ARTHUR has built.

ERLKING

Their playful malice is gone, replaced by pure rage
Don't. You. DARE.

MORGANA

Making eye contact with ARTHUR after looking over his united Retinue.
I YIELD!

With her formal yield, ARTHUR is the victor. The magic binding EXCALIBUR is released. The ERLKING, robbed of the vengeance they feel they are owed, rallies their Dark Fae (and any Knights that may still be on their side)

ERLKING

We will not kneel to humans again! ATTACK!

ARTHUR draws EXCALIBUR and holds it aloft

ARTHUR

FOR CAMELOT!

The final melee begins. At the end, the ERLKING, their Dark Fae, and any Knights still siding with them are defeated. ARTHUR, flanked by BRIGIT, GUINIVERE, and LANCELOT confront the ERLKING, who is on the ground.

ARTHUR

Rise.

He waits until the ERLKING stands.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

I never wanted you to kneel. I understand now that there is much damage my Court and I must undo, and much trust we must regain. I will start here. The game is over. You and your people are free to go in peace IF you swear a binding oath here and now that you will harm no one at Hoggstowne for as long as you remain.

ERLKING

*Curious and not entirely trusting
Amnesty?*

LANCELOT, GUINIVERE, AND ARTHUR

Amnesty.

ERLKING

...We will be watching you, Young King.

LANCELOT

You will see great things.

GUINIVERE

LONG LIVE THE KING!

The White Side repeats the call as the Black Side retreats to their side. MORGANA and BRIGIT join in the call. Try and get the Audience involved until ARTHUR begins the "We are the Thieves Guild" speech.