



CAMELOT FOREVER

PENDRAGON'S RETURN

Preview

Sample Chapters

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Camelot Forever Pendragon's Return

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Chapter 1

This story begins again in the place it all started many, many years ago...

The place? Outside of Midford Haven, Wales on a stretch of land protected on one side by the Midford Haven Waterways a port harbor used since the Middle Ages.

Once a large fishing community it had several oil refineries and the largest sources for liquefied natural gas in the world, putting them on the map for world energy.

It was also home to Sanctuary of The Knights of Camelot or S.K.O.C campus as the locals call it. A private school the local residents largely ignore

because it was largely self-sufficient and needed little local manpower to do work on campus.

Actually, to even enter the campus one had to be subjected to very thorough background check. The grounds security resembled a government facility more than a school campus.

In the corner of the campus sat a little café, The Shield and Sword many of the students visited between classes or during free time. The S&S, as most of its customers called it.

At small round table in the back, a trio of the young students gathered around, claiming it to be *their* “round table”.

Two of the three, the girls, were in a heated discussion while the third, the lone boy, huddled over his laptop.

One of the girls, a large book in her arms, pointed excitedly to the tome.

“Angela, that is not the way it was written. Many of the stories show he was defeated at the Holy Grail battle,” Sam declared.

She put her finger on the center of her glasses and pushed them back as if she stated her take on factual events. “Nowhere does it state that he vanished during the battle”.

“Well, I’m telling you he wasn’t there. Why do you think they lost, Sam? If he *had* been there he would have found a way to defeat Morgana’s army and recover the Holy Grail,” replied Angela, a blond-haired student who believed herself a proper detective and adventurer at the ripe old age of thirteen. “He was transported away by magic-”.

“Here we go again,” Sam cut her off mid-sentence. “*Magic.*”

“Yes, magic.” Angela replied getting a little louder. The outburst drew some of the attention of other students sitting in the café.

The third member of the group finally popped his head up and said, “If these stories are true then Excalibur had to have the density of Adamantium or a diamond-nanotube composite.”

Both girls looked at him but Angela was the first to reply.

“What?”

Richard turned his laptop around and showed the girls a picture on the screen of Excalibur in a stone. For Excalibur to slice through it, it would have to...”

Sam replied this time, “Richard, you *do* realize that Wolverine isn’t real and that he doesn’t really have adamantium claws?”

“Richard?”

But the girls had already lost him to his research about Excalibur and the swords of the knights. The swords of Camelot were something with which he had been fascinated since joining the group of young knights.

About that time a short woman walked up to the table, in her hands a cup of coffee with steam coming out of the small hole on the lid.

“Hello there, young knights,” she said.

“Hello, Mrs. Pritchard,” replied the girls while Richard remained hidden behind his laptop. Whispers of awe escaped him as he apparently found some new tidbit of Arthurian lore.

Mrs. Pritchard continued, “And are we having our daily discussion of the current whereabouts of King Arthur?”

Sam asked, “Mrs. Pritchard, since you’re our history teacher what do *you* think happened to King Arthur?” Samantha “Sam” had a tall, athletic build for a thirteen-year-old girl wearing glasses, and was prone to wearing t-shirts saying “Get Off Twitter and Read A Book” and the like. She gave Angela a smug look as she was certain of their teacher’s answer.

The woman let out a small chuckle and replied “Oh, no, you two aren’t dragging me into that

conversation. I'm sure you'll have it all figured out soon."

All three students reply "Yes, Ma'am."

She patted the table and smiled. "Carry on, young knights." and headed for the door, stopping long enough to remind a table of other students that she was still working with the headmistress to setup a class trip for next month.

Just as she started out the door, she popped her head back in and said, "Let no one forget we have a test tomorrow on chapter 34."

Groans and moans accompanied the mild chorus of "Yes, Mrs. Pritchard", from around the cafe.

Sam was the first to reply "You see, Angela? Mrs. Pritchard doesn't believe in magic but she won't stand up to you and that silly idea of yours simply because your mother is her boss."

"Samantha, I've seen Mrs. Pritchard and my mother in heated talks about her students and class trips. I really don't think who my mother is would keep her

from expressing her opinion.” Angela said as she looked down at the table counting the stars, each representing a knight of the round table, their bloodline and their families.

She looked up at the two and began the story,

“There truly is Magic and here’s how it really happened...”

Chapter Four

“Well, good king? Your answer?”

It was a voice Arthur had heard in his ear and his head for decades and one he wished would please go away for just a few precious moments to let him think.

Merlin.

“I intend to, wizard.” Arthur said, gloved fingers, stained almost black with demon’s blood, stroking his beard.

“You are getting your beard all grimy, in case you haven’t noticed.”

Arthur glared over his shoulder to see the mage balancing upon a rock, his long woolen robes covering the stone making him appear tall enough to tower over most men, a slight breeze making it bellow out behind him.

“I don’t care.”

Merlin’s eyebrow cocked, his violet eyes looking over his pupil, friend and king. “Truly? Are you aware that you are bleeding all over this land over which you are king?”

“Trust that I do, Merlin. And were you aware a rather large spider is in your hair?”

The mage chuckled as he “Of course there is. Oh, this is Anyelle. She’s learning to braid my locks. Now if I can just get her to stop storing her dinner there. Why is that look on your face, o king?”

Arthur looked embarrassed as he said, “I’m not overly fond of spiders is all.”

“Really? Well, she adores you. And I would think you would have a greater respect for one of your own subjects, even one with so many legs.”

“And eyes. Don’t forget the eyes. Ick.”

“She sees many things, Arthur, more than even I can sometimes...”

“Yes, well, how wonderful...”

“And none of this chit chat is going to win you the battle, Arthur.”

“But will I win the war? What does your Sight tell you about that? Or Anyelle’s?”

“The clarity of my Sight has been clouded by mists of doubt if I must be honest.”

“I despise your honesty at the moment if I must be honest as well.”

“How petty. How short-sighted. How-”

“Merlin, I have a battle to fight.”

“And yet you stand here conversing with your old friend and mentor, wiping demon’s blood all over your face.”

“Does it seem to you as though I have much of a choice in the matter?
You speak, no matter what...”

The wizard stepped forward and floated to the ground, his robes flowing behind as the air caught the woolen fabric interlaced with glowing threads of silver sown throughout.

He landed next to his king and said, “I cannot believe I am saying this out loud but perhaps you are thinking far too much.”

Arthur shook his head. “A far cry from my younger days, wizard.”

“Oh, to be sure, my king, but you puzzle over the threads of the tapestry instead of bearing witness to the whole tableau.

“You worry over Morgana’s plans and not what it will all mean for the future.” Merlin tried to wipe away from the muck in Arthur’s beard but had his hand knocked aside.

Arthur pushed the wizard’s hand away. “The future? Merlin, if I don’t defeat her demonic horde now there will not be much of a future to enjoy.”

Merlin stopped, considering the battlefield beyond, and then sighed. “You are right, old friend. The future lies before us, waiting, but if we do not win this day, then it all be for naught.” Merlin’s ringed finger traced through the demon’s blood staining the breastplate of Arthur’s armor over the crest of the dragon.

His long fingernail scratched at the pattern he'd traced as he said, "Arthur, your fight is out there this day, not in here." He tapped the breastplate over Arthur's heart. "There will be a future after this day, and ultimate victory shall be yours. Have faith."

Arthur looked down at the bony finger tapping his chest. "I do have it, Merlin. But these thoughts that plague me, of Guinevere, Lancelot, of Camelot and how it can never be as it once was. "

"Stop there," Merlin said, nearly pushing his king back with that one bony finger. "Camelot lives on and will again."

He turned away, saying, "As will we all, in some form or fashion."

"And you speak to me of puzzles, wizard? "
Merlin said nothing then, only looked into his friend's eyes as one bony finger prodded the blood-soaked gash in his armor. Arthur refused to cry out but the wincing on his face betrayed the pain.

“Hm. As I thought.”

“What?”

“You are wounded, Arthur.”

“Amazing. Did your Wizard’s Sight reveal that to your ancient eyes?”

“No, but these ancient ears hear your sarcasm just fine. Hold still.”

Merlin reached into the folds of his woolen robes and produced some small pouches. From one he took a pinch of an amber powder and flung it into the wound. Arthur gasped, as much from the smell as the sting of the crushed herbs coating the gash in his flesh.

Then Merlin mixed powders from two other pouches in his palm and poured wine from a skin produced from some other fold in his robes over the powders and rubbed it all together into a paste. This he

smear over the wound as Arthur clenched his jaw tight against the pain.

“Better?” The wizard asked.

“No, not at all.”

“The herbs will dull the pain and start to heal the wound in your flesh. However, there’s one more thing”

“What?”

“Oh, you won’t like it.”

“Just do it.”

Merlin looked Arthur in the eyes and said, “Deep breath and hold it.”

Arthur did as instructed as Merlin began whispering an incantation and making passes over the wound with his hand. Then he made a fist as if to punch the

king in the chest but stopped short. Arthur's body still rocked back as if struck.

Then Merlin extended his fingers. One of his rings, a silver band, began to unravel and snake toward Arthur's wound. Knowing wizardry was at work, Arthur still held his breath as the fine threads of silver pierced his skin and started to stitch the sides of the wound together in a dance that would have been mesmerizing but for the sequential stings of each piercing and pulling together.

One more phantom punch and the wind exploded from Arthur.

“Now, try not to undo my handiwork. I have a spell to gather ingredients for and conjure.”

Shouts came from the direction of the battlefield. Knights, squires and soldiers were raising the alarm as Morgana's forces appeared to be mustering for another attack.

“Camelot will live on, Merlin,” Arthur called back as he sheathed Excalibur and headed to the fight.

The wizard watched him go and said quietly, “Yes, my king. The future awaits. And waits for you”.

“Come, Anyelle,” he said to his spider. “Let us weave a tapestry of our own. And perhaps a spell or two, hm? What? So be it. Eight spells, one for each of your legs for good luck.”

“But would you mind not trapping those flies within my beard? Oh, you stored an acorn for my snack? How thoughtful.”

**Both authors are available for interviews at
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message title.**