

The Knight and the Brigand

written by

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FADE IN ON

EXT. INNER FOREST BESIDE A LAKE - DAY

The shot slowly pans out of the face of a statue of a beautiful lady, downed in a traditional dress as expected from a noble princess of this era. As it continues to pan, the statue of the beautiful woman is shown to be holding a grail. This is a statue of the Lady of the Lake, the patron goddess of Albion.

The knight HENRY is seen kneeling in front of the lake, reciting his vows in front of the statue. He is dressed in colorful knightly armor, his family crest granting his colors distinction from other knights.

He can be seen mouthing the words of his vows, but they cannot be heard. The last words are finally audible.

HENRY

And I shall give my heart and soul
to the Lady I seek.

Upon getting up from kneeling, Henry turns his head to notice that he is being watched. He catches an observing peasant by surprise. ROLAND, young, outwardly rugged and wearing poor leather clothing. At first glance it looks like he has lived his entire life in the forest by his poor looking demeanor. But upon getting a close look at his face, you can tell he holds many qualities that would surprise anyone not born a peasant.

Upon noticing that he has been spotted, Roland does not hide further but instead continues to observe the knight. Realizing that he chooses not to hide, Henry stares back. Both lock eye contact for a moment, at least before Roland breaks it.

ROLAND

Are you not going to arrest me?

Henry continues to stare before taking a few steps forward before speaking.

HENRY

For what?

ROLAND

(sarcastic)

For desecrating the Lady by
standing in her presence, of
course.

Henry shakes his head.

HENRY

I am not that type of knight. You have nothing to fear.

ROLAND

Oh? And what are you?

Henry pauses with his comment, making the knight look down at the ground, and then at the statue of his Goddess. Finally, he looks back at Roland.

HENRY

A true knight of the Lady.

Roland's expression fouls, as if Henry's words upset him.

ROLAND

That's what you all pledge to be.

Henry's expression almost winces, but he also imagines what horrible knights this peasant has met.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Those words you were just reciting,
those were your vows, right? Do you
hold them true?

HENRY

Of course I do.

ROLAND

Then how come other knights do not?

ROLAND (CONT'D)

You haven't chased me off the Lady's "sacred grounds" already, so you already seem different than the rest.

HENRY

Even if the Lady blesses each and
every one of us to do good in her
name, her grace does not protect
every knight from corruption.

ROLAND

And you are different?

HENRY

I...

Henry looks downward, as if trying to reflect and think properly before answering his question.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I... I don't know.

These words of honesty causes Roland to step forward from the trees and walk up to the knight. His appearance of a rugged peasant is changed into one of a more formal attire. His longbow and quiver can be seen strapped to his back.

He does not walk towards Henry. As he realizes Henry will allow him to actually tread on these sacred grounds, he walks towards the lake and towards the statue of the Lady. Henry watches him carefully.

Roland stares at the statue, examining every part of it. Her face, her beauty, and the grail she is holding.

ROLAND

Is that it?

HENRY

What?

ROLAND

The cup she is holding, the grail.

HENRY

It is more than a cup. Far more.

ROLAND

But you would believe me if I didn't believe these tales. Being a lowly peasant, of course.

HENRY

You demean yourself far too much.

Roland turns back towards Henry.

ROLAND

Yes, well, I have experience with knights telling me my deserved place in this world.

HENRY

Then if these knights are as arrogant and haughty as they seem, they are wrong.

ROLAND

So makes every single knight that is not you, then.

HENRY
So it would seem.

The conversation pauses for a moment as Roland turns back around. They both continue to examine not only the statue, but perhaps the beauty of the scene as a whole. They take in the moment, and perhaps realize that there is an actual sense of wonder and magic in this area of the forest.

This makes Roland realize that this perhaps might actually be a sacred place.

ROLAND
What is your name, knight?

HENRY
Henry de Vienne.

ROLAND
(surprised)
Wait, you're brother to Alberic de Vienne?

Henry gently rolls his eyes, although Roland does not catch it.

HENRY
Yes. But do not believe all the stories you hear, only the more... boring ones.

ROLAND
His actions are practically legend among this land. That is, if you believe them all.

HENRY
Legend?

ROLAND
Oh, you would not believe the stories they tell about him. Almost every other peasant who participated in any battle recounts the same thing.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
At least, that is what they tell me.

Henry does not respond but stays silent.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

But not even the most naïve peasant
believes them all. But in times
like these, it is hard not too.

HENRY

Riding alongside with him, it is
hard for me as well.

Roland's partial excitement is stunned as he realizes what he
talked himself into. As he reads Henry's face, he sees the
type of life Henry must live.

He let the sting in the air settle before asking his next
question.

ROLAND

They only talk about your brother,
then.

HENRY

Nothing to talk about me, but how a
knight might earn the unfortunate
wound here or there.

After realizing that he managed to downplay the knight,
Roland thinks of a way to try and alleviate the conversation,
but his thoughts are interrupted.

HENRY (CONT'D)

What is your name?

ROLAND

Roland. No fancy house.

Henry takes one more moment to think, staring once more at
the statue of the Lady before taking a breath and preparing
to say his next words.

HENRY

Then it is about time you earn your
right place in this world, Roland.
We must leave before we are caught
in front of an actual proper
"knight". Follow me.

Henry gestures for Roland to follow as they leave the opening
in the forest, with the lake glistening in the background as
they both leave.

EXT. DE VIENNE CASTLE STABLES - DAY

Henry and Roland exit the forest into a clearing. Up ahead they both spot a rather small yet still proud looking castle, the castle of the De Vienne noble family. More closely is the castle stables, with the flag showing the family coat of arms: one sword and chevron on orange. It matches the emblems on Henry's armor.

As they approach the stable, Henry stops as he places his hand on Roland's shoulder.

HENRY

Wait here. Try not to show yourself.

Roland opens his mouth to speak but doesn't say anything. He then obeys and crouches, hidden under foliage. Henry walks towards the stable.

As he enters the stable, he quickly walks toward one of the stationed horses. A pale white stallion with a black mane, he gently pets him before unlocking his gate and setting a saddle. As he pulls the horse out of the station, he hears footsteps from behind. It is his brother, ALBERIC.

ALBERIC

Setting off already? And so soon?

HENRY

I told you I would leave today.

ALBERIC

And you are holding true to your word. There was just a small part of me that still did not believe you yesterday.

HENRY

Well, I spoke nothing but the truth.

Henry mounts on top of his horse and begins to ride towards the stable gate. Alberic remains stationary as he stares at Henry.

As his horse trots towards the exit, Henry gestures towards his horse to stop. He pauses, although not knowing that Alberic has one more thing to say.

ALBERIC

Good luck Henry. Lady's blessings on you.

Henry refuses to make eye contact with Alberic. He only turns his head sideways, as if thinking on Alberic's words.

HENRY

Thank you, Alberic.

As Henry orders his horse to trot forward again, he exits the stable and calmly rides back towards Roland's hiding spot.

He then finds Roland quite expertly hidden. It's quite clear he was listening in into the entire conversation.

ROLAND

Was that him?

HENRY

Yes.

ROLAND

Odd, I did not expect him to treat you so... casually. I guess I should have expected less.

HENRY

Based on the legends, he may be more normal than you hope.

Roland acknowledges in silence.

Henry's horse neighs while it idles, its neighing catches Roland's attention.

ROLAND

What's his name?

HENRY

Estrien.

Roland tries to pet the horse, but the horse ruffles his head and looks away, as if it were avoiding him.

HENRY (CONT'D)

It is alright, hold on.

Henry puts his hand out forward, and slowly leans it on Estrien's head, as if he is about to pet him. The horse gently offers his head as if expecting to be pet, and then Henry quietly pulls his hand away.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Here, try again.

Roland notices what he's done and uses the opportunity to pet the white stallion. Estrien gently neighs and embraces his hand, closing its eyes briefly as it enjoys the moment.

Roland smiles, and so does Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)

He just takes some convincing, that is all. But wait here.

Henry hops off and quickly runs toward the stable once more. As Roland waits, he looks at his horse as it remains perfectly still, as if Henry directed the order to wait at the horse and not at Roland.

Then, he sees Henry approach with another horse, a smaller gray one, tied to a small rope collar. Compared to Estrien, which is a proper knight's horse adorned in heraldry and blazons, this one is almost naked, only packed with a saddle.

Upon realizing, Roland steps back in shock.

ROLAND

A... horse.

Henry gently pulls the other horse forward. He puts out his hand to pet this horse as well, and unlike Estrien, this one quickly leans its head in, as if it was waiting to be pet.

After taking a moment to contemplate, Roland doesn't hesitate further and mounts on top of the saddle. His technique and lack of anxiety surprises Henry.

HENRY

You have ridden a horse before.

ROLAND

Well, yes.

HENRY

All the better, then. Means I do not have to bore you with what you already know.

Roland smiles, and leans in slightly to the side to take a better look at his horse. It seems as still as Henry's horse.

ROLAND

Does he have a name as well?

This one is a mare. A child of two of our older horses. Because our family size is rather small, nobody has had the chance to claim her yet.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

And why... give her to me?

HENRY

Now, I have not decided for you to keep her yet, but perhaps you can have her for now. It seems right.

ROLAND

Wait, right? What does that mean?

As Henry and Roland continue to talk, they ride off on a paved road. Roland follows Henry closely behind.

HENRY

Well, you are already familiar with how to ride a horse, as it seems.

As a way to assert his statement, Henry peers behind him to take a look at Roland riding his horse.

ROLAND

No, that's... that's not what I meant.

HENRY

I know, Roland. But I know you are perfectly capable, as well as deserving, to own a horse.

Roland takes in the moment to think on Henry's words.

As he looks off into the distance, he sees a part of the region he has never really noticed before. The beauty of the groves and rolling hills in the distance, along with the well kept forestry blends in exceedingly well from his position from atop a horse. This is the first time he's ever been in this sort of position, and wonders if this is what being a knight is like.

As they continue gently riding, the sun begins to finally set. Although Roland has chosen to stay silent, he takes the time to reflect on whether his views on knights is true or not.

After some time, he finally asks his next set of questions for the knight.

ROLAND

So, Henry.

HENRY

Yes?

ROLAND

Does this make me your squire now?

HENRY

I suppose it does, although not officially.

ROLAND

And what does that mean for me?

HENRY

It means that, by the end of this, I hope to make you a proper knight.

ROLAND

Even if-

HENRY

Even if yes, you do not have a noble family.

Roland shakes his head in confusion.

ROLAND

But... why? Why me? Surely you have met other peasants, or rather, more suitable ones.

HENRY

You are demeaning yourself again, thinking yourself inferior to other peasants. There is a reason I want you on this journey, Roland.

ROLAND

Journey to do what, exactly?

Henry pauses as he thinks on what to say. He knows his next words would probably stick with Roland, and takes time to be careful on what to say next.

HENRY

Journey to show you what a knight truly should be.

As they continue riding, Henry gestures for Roland to stop his horse as Henry stops his own.

HENRY (CONT'D)

We should stop here.

They both get off their horses and Henry takes off his pack.

He opens the bag and pulls out his book. From inside the bag, he pulls out a few objects including a quill and ink, a small chest, and a number of scrolls. He holds up the scroll with a single word written across the top.

ROLAND
What's that?

HENRY
A list of my initial errands.

ROLAND
Errands?

HENRY
The tasks I'm supposed to do, and the ones you will help me with.

ROLAND
Oh come on-

HENRY
This is the path you've chosen.

ROLAND
Why? What is the point?

HENRY
If a knight cannot perform basic tasks, then how could they possibly protect others, let alone himself?

ROLAND
I understand that, but... why?

HENRY
Because a knight must be able to do anything.

ROLAND
Like serve other knights...

HENRY
Or even be a knight in the first place.

ROLAND
That does not make any sense.

HENRY
It most certainly does. There nothing wrong with serving other knights. It is in our code.

ROLAND

There is something inherently wrong
with doing so when you don't have
the ability to-

HENRY

Enough. Are you going to help me
with these tasks or am I going to
do them myself?

Roland sits in silence.

ROLAND

All right.

Henry hands over the scrolls to Roland, who takes them and
quickly studies each one. He also takes the book back.

HENRY

Good. I will go ahead and explain
the tasks.

ROLAND

Sure.

HENRY

First, you will need to learn to read and write.

ROLAND

(mockingly)

Read... and write...

Henry writes out two letters on the first scroll, which has
an illustration of a letter at the top.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Read? And write? That's not an errand at all! That-that-

HENRY

And we'll start tonight. Trust me,
it is not hard, just tedious.

Henry finds a good spot to sit down, under the shade of a
large tree near an orchard, and begins to teach Roland the
basics of reading and writing.

DISSOLVE TO: EXT. SHADED SPOT UNDER AN ORCHARD TREE

ROLAND

I never thought I would be learning
how to read.

HENRY

You seem to be getting the hang of this quite easily.

ROLAND

To think every noble knows this...

HENRY

Well, everyone does not know everything. Same for knights.

HENRY (CONT'D)

After all, we become the characters we are known for not by coincidence or happenstance. We get there by work. Doing the little things no one sees but us.

Roland takes some time to reflect on this. After some time, he stares off and notices how dark it has gotten.

ROLAND

We should head back.

HENRY

Head back?

ROLAND

Home. To the castle.

HENRY

Oh, Roland.

Henry walks over to his horse Estrien and opens his saddle pack once more, taking out the supplies needed to set up camp and rest.

ROLAND

Wait, are we not going back?

HENRY

No, we are not.

ROLAND

But... I thought, I...

HENRY

If you wish to go back, Roland, I will not stop you. It is your choice. But I did promise you a journey.

Roland acknowledges in silence.

HENRY (CONT'D)
So, I'm trusting you to see this
through.

Roland nods.

With that, Henry and Roland set up camp and spend the night under the stars.

The following day, Henry wakes up early. While Roland is still asleep, he prepares his morning prayer. He finds a small spot away from camp while trying to remain quiet. As he kneels, he is approached by ELIAS.

ELIAS
Sir Henry! Do you mind if I join
you in a morning prayer?

Henry looks at Elias from the edge of his bed. He has the looks of an older man in ordinary robe you would expect out of a priest, with long white hair covering his shoulders.

HENRY
Of course not, Elias.

ELIAS
Thank you.

They get ready to chant as they kneel, with Henry's sword planted on the ground in front him. They both kneel in silence as they complete their prayers in their heads.

As they both finish their silent prayers, Henry glances out to where the sun has begun to rise.

Enjoying the moment, Henry smiles.

ELIAS (CONT'D)
The Lady blesses us each and every
day, Henry. I am glad to still see
you well.

HENRY
The same goes for you.

They stand in silence as the sun rises above them. The rays dance off the green grass as they hit Henry's face.

ELIAS
How fares the De Vienne family? Is
your father and brother alright?

Henry doesn't look at Elias in response, instead choosing to stare off at the horizon, lost in thought.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I would not blame you if you do not want to talk about it. I understand.

Henry finally turns to look at Elias and nods.

HENRY

My father died in battle when he was summoned by the last clarion call. When Alberic found out, he... he's been different. In our most recent skirmish, he did everything he could to try and perform as admirably as possible.

ELIAS

Oh, by the Lady, I am sorry Henry.

HENRY

It is fine. It has been a few months.

ELIAS

That is still... very unfortunate.

Henry nods in agreement.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

But that makes your brother the new head of the house, does it not?

Henry breaks contact and chooses to stare off at the morning sun.

HENRY

Yes, yes it does, and this is probably what scares me the most.

HENRY (CONT'D)

My brother is... he's not like my father, or even myself.

HENRY (CONT'D)

He's a good man, but he has a tendency to act rashly. And when he does, he tends to make mistakes.

ELIAS

And the peasant there, is he with you?

HENRY

Yes, he is joining me on my quest
for the Grail.

ELIAS

Joining you? A peasant?

HENRY

I know, Elias. But it is fine.

ELIAS

Do you realize what you're doing,
Henry? Bringing a peasant along
with you is against sacrament.

HENRY

I have made my choice in the
matter. Please, I can make my quest
succeed, with the success of my
friend here.

ELIAS

Friend, is it?

HENRY

Can I ask that you put faith in me,
just as you always have?

A close up of Elias' face shows an expression of shock, but
his change in demeanor shows that he knows how to control
himself as he takes a deep breath in.

ELIAS

Alright, Henry. I believe in you.
But... what will your brother say
about this?

HENRY

That's for me to think about, and
for me to eventually deal with.

Elias chooses silence as his response. After a brief moment,
he gets up and dusts off his robe.

ELIAS

I must leave then. I did not think
I would be encountering this
morning, but I must head back to
Corleon. They require me in the
monastery.

HENRY

Of course. I am blessed to have encountered you after so many months, Elias.

ELIAS

Farewell, Henry.

As Elias leaves Henry to be alone, Henry plucks his planted sword out of the ground and sheathes it. Henry then returns to the small campsite and finds Roland still sleeping.

He looks over to where the sun is rising, and decides to sit down next to Roland before he wakes up.

Roland stirs slightly as Henry sits down next to him. For a moment, Roland's face shows surprise, but then he puts on his normal face once more.

ROLAND

For a second there, I forgot where I was.

HENRY

Get ready. We are on our way to honor the Lady.

ROLAND

Ahh, the Grail. That is right. I remember now.

HENRY

Gather your things. We leave shortly.

ROLAND

Right away, sir knight.

Henry smiles, making Roland smirk as a result.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Guess some knights have a sense of humor too.

Before his response, Henry sighs.

HENRY

Not my brother.

Henry's sternness in his response wipes the smirk off Roland's face.

As they prepare to leave, Henry looks around at the land surrounding them.

The grass is tall and green, and the trees are full of life. The wind blows gently, carrying the scent of the forest into the air.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know, Roland, you seem to already know a thing or two about evilknights. Why is that?

ROLAND

Well, it comes with their actions.

HENRY

I see. Well, you should keep your eyes open. There are quite a few knights out there who do not follow the rules, who act against the will of the Lady, much to their dismay.

ROLAND

What about your brother? Is he one of those knights?

HENRY

I would like to believe he is not.

ROLAND

What makes you doubt him?

HENRY

He is stubborn. And he acts without thinking.

ROLAND

So you do not trust him?

HENRY

No.

ROLAND

But there has to be more to it than that.

HENRY

Because he does not listen to reason. He is as stubborn as a proud stallion.

HENRY (CONT'D)

It's not. It's just that he needs to learn when to listen and when to lead.

ROLAND
That can be a good thing.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
How long ago was it since he became
a knight?

HENRY
Seventeen years, five more than I.

HENRY About seventeen years, five more than I.

ROLAND
And he has been acting like this
for all that time?

HENRY
These qualities have started to crop more recently, but...

ROLAND
But?

HENRY
No. This is something for another
time.

Henry stands up and begins to walk towards the edge of the woods, looking at the horizon. Roland follows suit, and the two look at each other for a moment, but then turn their attention to the sky.

The sun rises higher, bathing the world in light.

ROLAND
So, where are we going?

HENRY
To find trouble.

ROLAND
Wait, what?

HENRY
Yes. And if you want to join me,
you will need to be prepared.

ROLAND
I am, it is just...

HENRY
Good. And I know you can handle an
enemy with that bow of yours.

ROLAND

I-

HENRY

Have you ever been in a fight?

ROLAND

Yes, but-

HENRY

Then you know how important it is
to be ready for anything.

HENRY (CONT'D)

We're about to go into a battle, so
you'd better prepare yourself.

ROLAND

With... who?

HENRY

You will see. Stay close.

Henry comes close to Roland, taking a closer look at his bow.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I hope you know how to use this thing, because we are raiding
a bandit camp not far from here.

EXT. INTERSCOPE OF THE WOODS - DUSK

Henry is standing there as Roland stands next to him, bow in
hand. In their view over the cliff, there is no sign of
danger. They spot four bandits, all sitting by the campfire.
They take a deep breath before turning back to each other,
meeting eye contact.

ROLAND

This is not right.

HENRY

These are bandits, Roland. They are
not like you. You will not win
against these men alone.

ROLAND

You think I cannot handle myself?

HENRY

Fine. If you say so. We may come across others on our way, and if we run into any more bandits, this will get dangerous.

As they peer at the campfire, they see the bandits occupied as they chat with each other. Suddenly, Henry and Roland appear steps from behind.

BANDIT ONE

A peasant?

Henry immediately unsheathes his sword. Roland steps back.

One of the bandits in the campfire looks up in shock.

BANDIT TWO

And a knight!

The three campfire bandits stand up, startled. One of them reaches for his own weapon, while the other two try to figure out what's happening.

Suddenly, the sound of footsteps echoes through the forest. The bandits look around, trying to locate its source.

Roland takes aim at the first bandit in front of him.

HENRY

Do not kill him!

ROLAND

Why not?

HENRY

He has not done anything wrong, but he must be brought in alive.

BANDIT TWO

You underestimate us. Typical for you lot.

BANDIT ONE

And what about you, peasant? Why are you with him?

The campfire bandits approach and begin to draw their weapons, pointing at Roland and Henry.

HENRY

Because we are allies now.

Roland gives Henry a quick, confused expression with a turn.

BANDIT ONE

Allies!?

They then point their blades at Roland.

BANDIT TWO

Why side with him? I know your reputation.

ROLAND

Reputation?

BANDIT TWO

Of course. You've always wanted to help your countrymen, don't you?

ROLAND

Well... yes, but...

HENRY

Lay down your swords.

BANDIT ONE

And miss the chance of robbing a knight? Not likely.

HENRY

Then prepare to face justice.

BANDIT TWO

That's fine. Never liked this one anyway.

Right after saying this, the bandits rush towards Henry and Roland. All five bandits attack at once, surrounding them. Henry swings his sword quickly, almost as if he were anticipating this moment. He cuts down Bandits one and two with little effort, while Roland kills Bandit four with a sudden arrow to the head. All movements are swift and simple, with the bandits inexperience showing when dueling Henry and Roland. As they continue fighting, another bandit steps onto the field before he is headshot by Roland.

HENRY

Good shot.

ROLAND

I told you.

One of the remaining bandits runs away, leaving only the two of them.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Are we leaving him?

HENRY

Yes, our job here is done.

ROLAND

But we should follow him.

HENRY

No, we cannot risk being seen
together again. Here, come help me
loot the place.

As Henry approaches the now empty campsite, Roland takes one long look at the dead bodies, sighs heavily, and walks towards the campfire, the once bustling fire now suddenly dead, ash scattered everywhere.

INT. DE VIENNE THRONE ROOM

Alberic sits in a regal outfit on the throne. On either side of him are several guards who carry heavy-looking spears. Beside him stands the mother of the De Vienne family, ALESIA. At the end of the room stands another noble, MITHRAS, dressed in formal attire. Alberic stares at him, waiting as Mithras approaches.

MITHRAS

Greetings, Lord Alberic. It is an
honor to finally meet you. Thank
you for meeting my request for an
audience.

ALBERIC

(smiles)

Lord Mithras. How nice it is to hear your voice. What brings you to to my court?

MITHRAS

To ask for your assistance, of
course. Regarding a bandit problem
that concerns both of our realms of
influence.

ALBERIC

More of those bandits? They seem
more common than usual. No doubt a
resurgence in leadership.

Mithras nods.

MITHRAS

Indeed. This time, however, they came close to killing a few people from my lands. My men managed to subdue them before they could cause too much damage, but there was some property loss.

ALBERIC

Property loss? This is new.

MITHRAS

It seems that these bandits have become quite bold recently.

Mithras turns to the side and looks over a large scroll, a map of the region, that is planted on a stone table.

MITHRAS (CONT'D)

Their numbers grow every monthly, and the damages keep rising. There's no telling when they'll strike next.

Alberic takes on a pensive face.

ALBERIC

Hmm. Yes, perhaps this is indeed something worth looking into. But let's talk about it later. But first!

Alberic raises his hand in the air.

ALBERIC (CONT'D)

Allow me to congratulate you on becoming head of your house!

Mithras turns back to Alberic.

MITHRAS

Thank you, Alberic. I heard the same news from your family as well. And thank you for offering your support last week to cement my rule.

Alesia smiles happily.

MITHRAS (CONT'D)

Now, I trust this means an inevitable end to the unrest in our lands?

ALBERIC

Certainly. This shall be a new age
for our people, where our kingdoms
may stand united against all
threats.

MITHRAS

You speak wisely, Alberic. Now
then, what would you say to a small
celebration? To celebrate our
newfound friendship. Perhaps even a
feast...

EXT. ALBION FARMLANDS - DAY

Henry and Roland sit by a riverbank, taking a break from
their journey. The sun sets over the horizon, casting its
golden rays across the sky. A cool breeze blows through the
air.

Roland leans back on a tree stump.

ROLAND

So tell me, what's next? This quest
to drink from the Grail, will you
actually achieve this?

HENRY

Whatever journey the Lady has set
out for me.

ROLAND

This again...

HENRY

What do you mean?

ROLAND

You will slay a dragon and then
find the Holy Grail handed to you
by a Goddess, is that it?

HENRY

Such doubt ruins the mind, but it
is understandable.

ROLAND

That does not sound very realistic.
Should peasants not have the chance
to become knights themselves?

HENRY

Has a peasant ever tried?

ROLAND

I am sure many did try, but were never given the opportunity. That is how life works, after all. You don't get to choose if or when things happen. If you want something badly enough, you must work hard and fight for it yourself.

Henry takes a moment to think before deciding not to respond. Instead, he gathers his equipment and walks his horse Estrien.

After a brief moment, Henry thinks of a way to change the topic.

HENRY

And what about your fellow companions, before you joined me?

ROLAND

They are doing fine. Why would you want to know?

HENRY

Because I am curious.

ROLAND

Well, they are still alive.

Roland sighs, noticing he's shutting down Henry too heavily.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

The others are good company. We've been through so much together already. Even though we had our differences.

HENRY

Differences?

ROLAND

Oh, nothing important. Just little things here and there. Nothing that matters.

Noticing his gesture to leave, Roland gets up and starts walking towards his own horse.

HENRY

Well, this was a good break. But we must continue on.

ROLAND

Where next, then? And don't say
"wherever the Lady takes us".

Henry sighs.

HENRY

We continue travelling. I am sure
you're quite used to that.

EXT. BANDIT HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Multiple bandits are seen sitting around a campfire. They all have relaxed poses, either sitting or leaning against logs. One bandit stands out more enthusiastic than the rest. He speaks while holding a mug.

BANDIT ONE

More ale, fellas?

There are several cheers in response. Bandit one pours and they all drink happily.

BANDIT TWO

Hey, what about more raid stories!

Another cheer comes from the other bandits.

BANDIT THREE

I got one! It happened a couple
months ago, right after we took
control of this territory.

BANDIT THREE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Okay, okay! Here goes: a few days after we settled here, some merchants came along with their caravan. We knew them, since we'd robbed a lot of their stuff. So naturally, they paid extra attention to their guards.

BANDIT THREE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Suddenly, the leader of the merchant party spots something strange happening at the edge of the forest. There's a lone rider, riding away into the night. He shouts for her men to stop him, but he rides past them without stopping. The man finally stops and turns back towards the group, only to see an arrow flying straight through his chest.

The bandit laughs. The sounds of horses galloping against heavy dirt and neighing can be heard in the distance.

BANDIT FOUR

Ha ha! Nice shot!

Bandit three continues laughing, throwing his hands in the air in a bashful manner.

BANDIT THREE

But the best part is yet to come.
As he falls off the horse, a second rider appears behind him. He looks scared and confused, as well as wounded. You can tell who did it, right?

The rest of the bandits point to another bandit, who is leaning against a beam with a drink in hand while grinning.

BANDIT FIVE

Yep! That's my lad. What a great shot.

He grins, raising his glass to toast his friends.

BANDIT THREE

Wait, wait! Shut up! Listen!

BANDIT TWO

I am listening! Keep going with the story!

BANDIT THREE

No, you idiot! Look-

One of the bandits are swiftly killed by a sword strike. All the other bandits turn to look where the attack came from, finding two riders standing approach out of nowhere. They are clad in armor, shield and sword, and they reveal themselves to be...

BANDIT ONE

Knights!

The bandits panic, trying to find cover and escape. The knight riding first grabs a nearby axe lying near the dead body and swings it with expertise, hitting several bandits. A brief skirmish starts.

From the back, the bandit previously leaning against a wooden support beam is no longer there.

One of the other cornered bandits placed in the front of the chaos looks back to find him but cannot spot him.

With his own sword in hand, then turns to parry a swing from a knight, but does not succeed.

Another hit hits him in the side, sending him crashing onto the ground. A third blow lands on his head, killing him instantly.

As the knight still mounted dismounts, he notices the rest of the bandits now dead on the ground. The two other knights assisting in clearing the hideout search the place but find nothing of importance.

A sudden arrow strikes one knight on the head, with his helmet proving useless as the arrow found its way into its opening through the sockets.

He collapses immediately, dying before anyone could react. The other knights find the last remaining bandit on top of a log across the hideout, holding a bow.

While the first knight gets on his horse and rides to cut off his exit, the other knight runs towards the bandit.

Their plan works perfectly, and the bandit, realizing he is cornered, drops his bow and draws his sword, ready to defend himself.

The knight approaches quickly, swinging his blade down to end the fight once and for all. The bandit manages to block the blow and dodge the next, allowing him time to draw a dagger.

His opponent has no intention of letting this opportunity go. With a swift stab, the knight hits him on the ground, also knocking his sword and his dagger away with ease, leaving him defenseless.

BANDIT

You haven't killed me already. What do you want?

KNIGHT ONE

Your leader was not here. Where is he?

The bandit scoffs while on the ground.

BANDIT

You already killed him.

KNIGHT ONE

You find that easy to believe?

BANDIT

What makes you think I will answer anything when you're about to kill me anyway?

The two knights look at each other briefly before continuing.

KNIGHT ONE

We have been sent by Lord Alberic himself to bring justice to those who steal from him. Now, where is he hiding?

BANDIT

Lord Alberic, huh?

Knight two turns to Knight one.

KNIGHT TWO

You are revealing too much.

The first knight takes a moment to think before deciding his next move.

KNIGHT ONE

Tell us the name of your leader and we will let you live.

The bandit thinks, then replies:

BANDIT

Consider yourselves fortunate to know that you'll never catch Roland in the first place.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE ROAD - DAY

Roland and Henry ride on their horses alone, heading south.

On either side, the road stretches long, connecting cities and villages alike. To his left, the land extends until reaching the horizon; to his right, the forest grows denser, making them lose sight of any landmarks or roads leading to civilization.

Henry sees something ahead of the road.

HENRY

Looks like a village. This would be a good place to ask for directions and possible problems in the area.

ROLAND
Wait, village?

Roland freezes in place. His eyes widen slightly.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Uh, I'm not sure if I should go in with you.

HENRY
This is a village, Roland. Are you trying to tell me you are not used to these types of places? Do you live entirely within the forest?

ROLAND
No, I just... hm.

Roland struggles to come up with words. Henry looks in confusion.

HENRY
I guess so. But do not worry, I will not force you to come with me. Just wait here.

Henry continues to ride until he finds the small village stable. He quietly leaves Estrien there after dismounting. He finds a good-looking man tending the animals, and asks him some questions.

FARMER
Hello, my lord! Welcome to our humble little village. Can I help you with anything?

Henry smiles politely.

HENRY
Yes, thank you very much. But please, do not treat me with such prestige. I do not deserve such praise.

FARMER
Apologies, my lord.

HENRY
It is fine. You were being polite. Is there a tavern nearby?

FARMER
Yes! The only one around is 'Le Grand Hame' over near the church.
(MORE)

FARMER (CONT'D)

It doesn't get too crowded during the weekdays though, since most people work in the fields outside.

HENRY

Thank you again.

Henry leaves and heads towards the inn. Once inside, he takes a good look around. There is an older woman, the tavern keeper, behind the counter, looking tired but happy. She greets Henry with a smile. There are few peasants inside sitting at tables, but they all take a moment to look at the only knight in the building.

TAVERN KEEPER

Welcome to Le Grand Hame, my lord!
It is a privilege to have nobility in our village. How may I serve you today?

Henry bows respectfully.

HENRY

My thanks, madam. I wish to ask if you have any sort of problem for me to deal with. Bandits, or...

The tavern keeper laughs heartily.

TAVERN KEEPER

Bandits?! Oh, goodness no. Not lately, at least. We did have a problem a week ago about one particular troublesome one, though. He is known here as 'the Brigand'.

Several people in the tavern hush their conversations at the mention of his title.

TAVERN KEEPER (CONT'D)

They've been causing trouble for the longest. A couple of villagers got hurt because of them, but nothing serious. I don't know if they just got scared from something the last time they came around.

HENRY

I see. Do you know the area? Could you perhaps give me directions to where they might be staying?

TAVERN KEEPER

I don't, but he might.

She points to a table in the back of the room. Two men sit there, drinking ale and laughing loudly together. One of them has white hair and a beard, with his legs set on the table while sitting. The other is bald and wears a black hat. Both are wearing dark blue cloaks.

Henry looks in their direction and notices the two cloaked figures the tavern keeper is pointing at. After tipping her, Henry walks over.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE

What can we do for you, m'lord?

Henry kneels down beside the table and introduces himself.

HENRY

I am Henry de Vienne. I am here to help you deal with your bandit problem.

The first cloaked man sets his legs down and looks at Henry.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE

So a noble, huh?

HENRY

Do you also see me more lowly?

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE

You seem like a smart knight.

Henry looks at the other cloaked man. Upon closer inspection, he realizes this man is holding onto a sword under the cloak.

Cloaked farmer one stands up and begins to speak.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE (CONT'D)

We can lead you there. But for a fee.

Henry looks surprised.

CLOAKED FIGURE TWO

Come on. We're risking our lives here, taking you directly to the problem. We're practically doing all the work for you.

Henry frowns.

HENRY

And the cost?

CLOAKED FIGURES
Twenty gold coins.

HENRY
I'm not naïve.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE
He is smart! How about ten, then?

Henry rolls his eyes and reaches into his pocket. He pulls out twenty silver pieces and hands them over.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE (CONT'D)

Good choice, my lord. Now, let us go before someone else starts following us.

EXT. VILLAGE BANDIT HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Henry and the two cloaked men walk through the forest until they come upon a small shack in the distance. Around the shack are several tents and crudely made buildings.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE
This is it.

HENRY
There is nobody here.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE
And you would prefer to be spotted?
Not all bandits are the same, you know.

Henry looks down in contemplation. First at the ground, then at the sword he is wielding, almost as if he is questioning his actions. Then, he readies his sword as he approaches while crouching. The two cloaked men follow closely behind him.

As soon as they reach the door of the shack, Henry reaches for the door handle only to find it locked.

HENRY
Locked? Let us try something else.

Henry walks backwards and prepares to kick the door down.

CLOAKED FIGURE TWO
Wait! That won't get you in. Trust me, let me handle it.

The second cloaked man gets out a lockpick and opens the door without making a sound. After unlocking it, he steps away, letting Henry enter first.

Right upon opening the door, his face turns into one of shock as he finds himself staring at Roland.

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE

Now!

HENRY

Roland?

Roland only stares back in disbelief.

CLOAKED FIGURES

Kill the knight Roland!

Henry frantically turns his head to find the other two cloaked men with swords drawn. Even knowing he could probably defeat them, that was not what was on his mind.

HENRY

What are you doing?

Roland, in disbelief, continues to remain silent.

CLOAKED FIGURE TWO

What are you waiting for!?

Suddenly, they hear the sounds of horses galloping in the distance. Before long, more knights arrive.

ALBERIC

Here! The brigand and his bandit friends! They have my brother cornered!

Alberic and several other knights arrive. They all dismount and quickly run towards the bandit hideout.

The two cloaked figures turn from Henry and, in a panicked manner, face Alberic and his knights.

CLOAKED FIGURE TWO

No, no, no!

CLOAKED FIGURE ONE

Run!

They both begin running off into the woods, but they are quickly cut off by another mounted knight. With little resistance, the first cloaked figure is easily killed.

Roland finally comes to his senses and musters the will to speak, but not before Henry speaks first.

HENRY

So you are the brigand.

ROLAND

Henry! You have to help me!

Henry only watches as the rest of the knights surrounds him.

His expression fouls, especially when he sees Alberic approaching.

HENRY

This whole time, you had me fooled.

Henry's expression changes from shock to disbelief in a manner of seconds. The other cloaked figure, realizing that his friend had just been killed by attempting to run, cowers on the ground.

ALBERIC

Henry! You seem to have caught the brigand before I have. Go on then, I will give you the honor of killing him.

Henry only stares at Roland as he exits the building.

Roland stares in fear as Henry actually pulls his sword.

ROLAND

Henry, please!

HENRY

It really is you?

ROLAND

Please, don't kill me! Let's talk!

Alberic laughs.

ALBERIC

Look at him resort to begging! Talk about what? Your plan failed miserably, so now you want to make some kind of deal? No matter how many times you change your name or disguise yourself, we always know who you are. Roland the Brigand.

Roland tries not to pay any attention to Alberic, but to Henry, who is still standing there struggling to accept reality.

HENRY

Now I know why you stayed behind...

ALBERIC

Stayed behind?

ROLAND

Look, I just- I needed time, alright? Before I could tell you any of this.

Alberic looks at Henry in confusion.

ALBERIC

What is he talking about?

After clenching his teeth, Henry finally looks away. He notices the several knights standing proudly by themselves in the distance. After realizing what he was doing, Alberic sighs.

ALBERIC (CONT'D)

I will do it myself, then.

HENRY

No! Wait.

ALBERIC

What!?

HENRY

He is a hero these people. You cannot.

ALBERIC

Hero?

HENRY

Please, listen to me. We finally captured the very person that has been causing us... problems. But, if we...

Henry pauses while Alberic sternly listens.

He knows what he is about to say next will be difficult to understand.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You know me, Alberic. Just this once, please, give him a chance.

For a minute, there is only silence. Then, Alberic slowly nods.

ALBERIC

You must ensure that this "peasant" is taken care of, and that his organization is disbanded. I care little about what you do with him.

Hesitantly, Alberic gestures for the other knights to leave. They capture the remaining cloaked bandit, tie his hands and toss him on a horse behind a mounted knight.

When they are gone, Alberic mounts and looks at Henry one more time. After giving him a reassuring nod, he rides off, leaving only Henry and Roland.

ROLAND

Henry?

HENRY

It is fine. He will leave you alone, for now.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Were those cloaked figures your friends?

ROLAND

Yes, but...

Roland takes a moment to look at the cloaked bandit corpse, the one who died.

After a moment, Henry also notices.

HENRY

I am sorry, but he chose his fate when these two decided to ambush me.

ROLAND

You're not mad at me for that?

HENRY

You are a changing man, Roland. I know you may be known as the brigand here, but I plan to change that.

Henry lets out a smile.

HENRY (CONT'D)

'Roland the Brigand', that's a good name, don't you think?

Roland catches on to a tiny change of his accent, as if he is imitating peasant speak.

ROLAND

But, your brother here, and the other knights. You could've easily taken me away. How did you convince him?

Henry shakes his head, hiding a smile.

HENRY

Because maybe, he saw his old squire in you, and he wanted to give me a chance as well.

FADE TO BLACK