

Sir Guinevere

FADE IN:

6th Century England. The Dark Age...

EXT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE - DAY

Dressed in boy's pants and tunic, GUINEVERE(12) springs up on her horse. Waiting on horseback is the KING LEODEGRANCE(35) on his massive warhorse and SIR JARIN(34), with three sturdy KNIGHTS and their SQUIRES.

KING

Quick now! Tuck that braid under
your hat before your Mother sees.

Guinevere quickly complies glancing up at the castle. The riders thunder out the gate and across the drawbridge.

EXT. LEODEGRANCE COUNTRYSIDE/PEASANT HOUSE - DAY

The King's men water the horses at a peasant house. The PEASANT MAN sits beside the King as he watches his daughter and Jarin.

Swoosh! The air rushes by with the force of the sword as it swings in a wide arc. Two heavily battered wooden swords clunk together.

The blow sends Guinevere flying. She pops back up and charges at Jarin. He grabs her sword and chuckles.

The King's stout frame vibrates with the effort to hold in laughter.

Guinevere ineffectively pounds the laughing Jarin with her fists.

KING

His reach is greater and his swing
is more powerful, but why does he
beat you?

Guinevere stops her attack and looks at her father crouched down beside her. He looks like a massive lion with his blonde hair and beard.

GUINEVERE

Because... because, when he swings
his sword I cannot stop it.

KING

So, how can you use that to your advantage?

Guinevere looks the chuckling Jarin up and down.

The King summons her over and whispers into her ear. Guinevere listens, and darts back to her place.

KING

Again!

Guinevere tosses her long blonde braid behind her shoulder. Jarin returns her sword. She adjusts her full skirts to allow her long legs to be unhindered.

Jarin's sword flies toward her. Guinevere glances at her father. He tips his head to the left. Guinevere quickly steps aside letting her wooden blade guide his sword to the ground.

Jarin steps forward to gain balance.

Guinevere springs to his left side and brings her sword crashing down on his ribs.

Jarin laughs as he clutches his side. Guinevere jumps up and down in victory and tackles her father.

The King hops up placing Guinevere on her feet as well. He smashes her hat down on her head. The King looks out at the golden fields of wheat.

KING

A good harvest for your family this year.

PEASANT

And for us to share with you, my lord.

The King slaps him on the back.

KING

Your hard work and loyalty are admirable.

PEASANT

Thank you, Sire.

The Knights and Squires bring the horses. The King and Guinevere saddle up.

KING

And thank you for the water.

PEASANT

Good day to you. And to you too
Young Master Guinevere.

The Peasant gives her a wink. Guinevere winks back and kicks her horse on. The riders continue on down the road.

EXT. MEADOW ENTRANCE - DAY

The King arrives at the end of the clearing just before Guinevere and pulls his massive steed to a halt.

The other riders catch up and stop. The King dismounts and hands the reins to a Squire. Guinevere follows suit. They walk together.

KING

Do you know why we are going to
meet The Lady of the Lake?

GUINEVERE

To make a pact to help each other?

KING

Yes. If our two kingdoms protect
each other, both will be safer.

GUINEVERE

Who is she?

KING

Some say she is an angel descended
to earth. Others say her sword is a
gift from God.

GUINEVERE

Is the sword magic?

KING

Only the selfless can wield it. The
one who holds the sword becomes the
ruler and cannot be defeated.

GUINEVERE

Then the Saxons will be afraid to
attack any of us. You are a wise
King, father.

KING

I was once rash and reckless!

The King pats his daughter's head.

GUINEVERE

How do I learn to be wise like you?

KING

By obeying your father and your
king!

The King stops next to a Knight holding the Leodegrance
Standard.

The King takes it. He hands it to Guinevere.

KING

You will carry this and represent
our kingdom well.

Guinevere takes the pole and looks up at the flag. The white
lion on the blue background seems to pounce in the breeze.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Dressed in his finest regal attire, King Leodegrance turns to
hear the soft but firm voice of the LADY OF THE LAKE(36).
Dappled sunlight shining through the vaulting trees gleams
off her armor as they walk. Her sword glows from its sheath.

LADY OF THE LAKE

How will you convince our
neighboring kingdoms to join us?

KING

After the sack of Farley's castle,
they all know our real enemies are
the foreign invaders.

LADY OF THE LAKE

Many of them would fight you still,
if they had the men to do it.

KING

I will convince them that fighting
among ourselves weakens us all.

LADY OF THE LAKE

Many are tyrants that have stolen
their kingdom by force. It will
take something more to unite them.

They stop at the edge of the tree line. The Lady of the
Lake's men are on one side of camp. The King's men are on the
other.

Guinevere and LANCELOT (15) practice their fighting skills against a helpless tree. Although Guinevere is tall, Lancelot stands a head length above her.

Confidently regal, like his mother the Lady of the Lake, Lancelot gracefully pulls back the bow string and sends his arrow into the center of the tree trunk.

Guinevere flings her knife and lands the blade next to Lancelot's arrow.

LADY OF THE LAKE

Your daughter is exceptional for
her age.

KING

In more ways than you know.

Now in competition, Lancelot fires off several arrows in rapid succession. Guinevere retrieves another knife from her arm holster and throws it.

She pulls another from her calf and hurls it at the defenseless tree.

They both laugh and retrieve their weapons.

EXT. MEADOW TREELINE - DAY

As the sun begins to set, shadows in the trees surrounding the glen begin to move. ROBBERS KNIGHTS in dark armor slip silently between the trees on horseback. They stop at the edge of the forest.

A colossal mass of man sits atop a beefy horse next to a smaller version. Both are armored in grimy grey leather and metal. MALLEWAS(45) motions to his son, MALLEGANT(19). They peer through the trees at the camp.

A FEMALE FIGURE in a black hooded cloak blows across the moist leafy ground. She blows up a fog that rises and drifts from the trees out into the meadow.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

The Lady of the Lake presents King Leodegrance with a jewel encrusted cup. He hands her a brightly painted shield.

Guinevere hands Lancelot a knife. It's handle has a knight on horseback carved into it.

Lancelot glances up at his mother and back at Guinevere. He holds out a sword sheath that glistens in the golden sinking sunlight.

GUINEVERE

It is so beautiful!

LANCELOT

It was my mother's. She insisted it was to be given to you. This sheath was made for Caladfwlch.

GUINEVERE

The Sword?

Guinevere looks at the Lady of the Lake's sword now held by a plain leather sheath.

The Robber Knights explode from the treeline. The eerie fog rolls in with them.

Guinevere's group, under attack, run for their horses.

Two of the King's men ride out to protect the King. Lancelot rides up as well sending arrows into the Robbers. They are hopelessly outnumbered and begin to fall back as the rest get on their horses.

The Lady of the Lake rides toward Lancelot. Mallegant leaps from behind a boulder and slashes her horse. As the Lady tumbles down, Mallegant slices the back of her unprotected arm.

He raises his sword for the final blow.

The Lady of the Lake thrusts Caladfwlch into the boulder with such force the ground shakes.

Mallegant stumbles but regains his balance. He lifts his sword to strike.

Guinevere pulls her knife from her side and hurls it at Mallegant.

Lancelot turns in time to see Guinevere's blade strike Mallegant's hardened leather breastplate and bounce off.

He quickly notches an arrow and sends it into Mallegant's exposed under arm. Mallegant's sword falls to the ground.

King Leodegrance, followed by two knights, ride up to the Lady. Lancelot joins them. The King hands the wounded Lady of the Lake up to Lancelot.

KING

Quickly! Get her to your healer.
We'll hold them to give you time.

Lancelot nods to the King and spurs his horse back to his men. The King starts toward Mallegant.

GUINEVERE

Father we must go!

The King looks up. Mallewas and ten men are charging toward them on their horses. The King tries to pull the Lady of the Lake's sword, but it is stuck deep in the boulder. He mounts his horse and thunders to Guinevere's side.

Lancelot's remaining two knights send arrows into Mallewas advancing group. They pull up and scatter to make a more difficult target.

The Lady of the Lake's two Knights turn and follow Lancelot's already tiny form in the distance.

The King and Guinevere thunder the opposite direction on the road home. Sir Jarin and the two Knights and two Squires left of his group lag behind to slow the enemy.

Mallewas looks down from his horse at Mallegant writhing on the ground. The arrow protrudes from the front and back of his arm.

MALLEWAS

Get up weakling!

MALLEGANT

My arm! My-

MALLEWAS

Break it off and stop your wailing
like a woman. Pull it out when we
catch them.

Mallegant tries to break the arrow with his good arm.

MALLEGANT

Ahhhh! Cannot break it with my left
hand!

Mallewas drops from his horse. He grips the arrow and breaks it. Mallegant stifles his scream.

MALLEWAS

Now, do you need a mother's teet to
suck, or can you get on your horse?

Mallewas rides off. His men follow.

The Female Figure brings Mallegant's horse to him. Her face is hidden in the shadow of the cloak hood.

FEMALE FIGURE

Prove to him you are strong.

Mallegant snatches the reins from her hand and climbs on pinning his wounded arm to his side. He rides after his father.

EXT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE GATE - NIGHT

The King, Guinevere, and their last three men ride into the gate. The lathered horses struggle for breath.

KING

Close the gates! Close them!

The King and Jarin jump down and run to the Gate. MERLIN emerges from the shadows. Although small in stature, his presence commands respect. His long robes swirl around him as he stops the King.

MERLIN

The gates are closing. Tell me.

The King stops and pulls in a deep breath.

KING

It was Mallewas. He attacked at the meeting.

Men begin to scramble around the castle taking up defense positions. The bridge gate creaks to a close, and heavy braces are locked into place.

MERLIN

Mallewas followed you?

KING

They tried to catch us, but we cut through the pass. I think he means to attack the castle.

The King appraises the positions of his men.

KING

Get some archers up on the wall!

Sir Jarin nods to the King and goes back to directing the men. The King turns to the castle.

Merlin looks after him. His face, softened with care for his friend, hardens with the wisdom from a life of seeing too much.

MERLIN

The snake will find a way to get his prey.

EXT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE - NIGHT

Mallewas and his men pull up at the forest edge before the castle. The castle is enclosed by a crude but sturdy stone and mortar wall. A deep, boggy trench surrounds the outer wall. The north side of the castle sits on a sheer rocky ledge.

MALLEWAS

Make camp here. Mallegant-

Mallegant rides up beside his father. A bloody cloth is tied to his shoulder.

MALLEWAS

-take three men. Bring back enough to take this castle.

MALLEGANT

I'll leave at first light.

Mallewas draws his sword and stabs the point just into Mallegant's wounded arm. A trickle of fresh blood seeps down.

MALLEWAS

You will be dead by morning. You have already cost me a swift victory.

Mallegant reins his horse away from the blade. He stops in front of the two biggest knights.

MALLEGANT

You two will come with me.

Mallegant kicks his horse into a gallop. The two knights follow.

Mallewas notices the hooded Female Figure.

MALLEWAS

Witch! Come here.

The Female Figure moves confidently to Mallewas.

MALLEWAS

Conjure some spell so we can take
this castle.

She turns her hooded head toward the castle.

FEMALE FIGURE

There is powerful magic here. Only
one other can cast this spell. You
will not take this castle by force.

MALLEWAS

Aghh... What use are you?!

Mallewas reins his horse away from her and back to his men.

The Female Figure looks back to the castle.

FEMALE FIGURE

Hello, old friend.

EXT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE - DAY - 3 MONTHS LATER

Merlin stares out into the trees where Mallewas men are
gathered. He squints and searches...

A haggard King Leodegrance stands on the wall with him.
Below, Mallewas men surround the castle staying just in the
cover of the forest edge.

MERLIN

Help will not come.

KING

My people are starving.

Merlin looks at the King. His face suddenly growing worn and
tired.

MERLIN

There is a way, but it will cost
you everything.

KING

My family will survive?

MERLIN

And the kingdoms will be united.

The King looks out at the enemy surrounding him. He looks
back at castle courtyard. Guinevere swings her metal sword
through the air at her imaginary opponent.

KING

That is more than enough.

INT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE/QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Luxurious folds of blue fabric reveal the tall and lean figure of LADY LEODEGRANCE(29) as she perches on the edge of a chair.

Merlin is barely visible in the shadows. The King and Guinevere face off in front of her.

GUINEVERE

If you are surrendering to Mallewas, then we will be protected.

KING

I cannot be sure he will honor his word and give us safe passage out.

GUINEVERE

Then why not go through the secret passage now? We can get away before he knows we are gone.

KING

You would leave our men and their families here to be slaughtered?

Guinevere turns to the slit of a window. Below, children play under the watchful eye of two mothers. Men at arms on the wall watch for the enemy.

Lady Leodegrance rises and puts a hand on Guinevere's shoulders.

LADY LEODEGRANCE

Our family has protected the people for many generations. Now it is our turn.

Guinevere pulls her eyes from the window and turns back.

GUINEVERE

I will do whatever you ask, Father.

KING

When I give the signal, Merlin will take you both into the passage.

Merlin drifts from the shadows.

The King takes Guinevere by the shoulders.

KING

You are not to come out until
Merlin takes you. Do you understand
that?

Lady Leodegrance rises and pulls Guinevere to her.

LADY LEODEGRANCE

I will keep her safe. You watch
after yourself, husband.

She kisses him tenderly.

EXT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE - DAY

Merlin gazes down from the castle ledge at the men below.
Only bits and pieces of the sound drift up to him.

He focuses on the hooded Female Figure just in the shadows.

Mallegant stands behind his father and gestures to the King's
men on the castle wall.

The King calls to his men and they all put down their arms.

Flanked by Sir Jarin and another Knight, King Leodegrance
hands his sword to Mallewas.

Mallewas admires the regal weapon in his hand. He hands it to
his son.

Mallegant hesitates, then takes the sword.

He looks at his father. Mallewas glares back.

Mallegant plunges the sword into the King. Mallewas men
attack Sir Jarin and the King's Knights leaving them all
dead. Mallewas points to the castle.

Mallegant stares at the dying King Leodegrance. Mallewas
shoves his son away. Mallegant follows a group of men running
into the castle.

Merlin flies inside. The Female Figure's head snaps up. She
searches the castle wall where Merlin stood.

INT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE/QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Merlin throws open the door. Lady Leodegrance and Guinevere
are on their knees before a cross. Guinevere pounces up.

MERLIN

Mallewas has betrayed us. Quick!
Into the passage. They are coming.

GUINEVERE

Father!

Guinevere bolts for the door, but Merlin catches her. Lady Leodegrance rushes to her daughter.

MERLIN

There is nothing you can do for him
now. Come quickly.

The group turns to the wall. Lady Leodegrance pulls a thrashing Guinevere along. Merlin blows into a hole between two stones. The stones swing open. Merlin tugs at the heavy stones.

Feet scrape and swords clink from the corridor as Mallewas men climb the stairs.

Lady Leodegrance pushes Guinevere to Merlin.

LADY LEODEGRANCE

Get her in the passage. Do not let
her out.

Lady Leodegrance rushes out the door toward the men.

Guinevere kicks and fights Merlin, but he manages to push the stone door open. He roughly tosses Guinevere inside and follows. He pulls the passage door closed against the screams of Lady Leodegrance.

INT. LEODEGRANCE CASTLE/QUEEN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Three bloody, dirty MEN shuffle into the room followed by the bruised faced Lady Leodegrance. Mallegant follows and gives her a shove sending her crashing to the ground.

He walks around the room examining the fine furnishings. A PIG-FACED man falls on Lady Leodegrance and begins to grope her. She beats at him but cannot move his body.

Mallegant kicks the man. Pig Face rolls off.

MALLEGANT

My father will slice your fingers
off one at a time if you touch her.

Mallewas stomps into the room followed by more grimy Robbers.

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