



**HOMEGROWN
THEATRE
CAMP**

The Sword in the Stone

In a new version by Anthony Delaney

1 or 2 Performer Edition

CAST

Arthur: A youthful squire
Merlin: A mysterious magician
Ankou: A nefarious god

1 Person Cast - Performer 1 plays all 3 parts.

**2 Person Cast - Performer 1 plays Arthur.
Performer 2 plays Merlin / Ankou.**

ACT 1 Scene 1

SETTING: MERLIN's cottage, One table with a journal and a writing utensil (Preferably a feather but anything will do) and a chair located downstage center. MERLIN is sitting in the chair. A single light, similar to a candle, can be seen in front of MERLIN illuminating MERLIN's face.

(MERLIN begins reading from his journal.)

MERLIN: A long time ago there was once a land called Albion. This was a land of magic and monsters, of wise kings and queens and brave knights. The King of Albion Uther Pendragon waged a war against those who practiced magic and hunted the great creatures of the land. At the final battle of the war Uther was mortally wounded by a magical creature of the underworld called Ankou yet Uther's knights won the day defeating the forces of magic and monsters. Despite his victory Uther Pendragon later died of his wounds. None of Uther's knights could decide who was to be the next ruler and so the throne has sat empty for many long years. Albion fell into an endless civil war and became a land without law or order. The strong prey upon the weak in this dark age.

(The light grows, illuminating the rest of the room. MERLIN begins writing in the journal. MERLIN speaks as he writes.)

MERLIN: Yet there is hope for Albion. Legend speaks of the Sword in the Stone. There rests upon a hill a stone and deep within this stone was thrust a marvelous sword. Upon

the sword's hilt is written "Whoso pulleth the sword from the stone is deemed worthy of the throne and crown of Albion." When the time is right the prophecy shall be fulfilled. "Guided by magic's hand shall the grand sword be drawn and with dawn's light will the night of Ankou be gone." But beware, for foul forces would seek to stop any true ruler from uniting the knights of the land. For many evil things have grown in this dark age.

(We see MERLIN set his writing utensil on the table and draws from beneath his robes a magic wand. With a flourish of his wand MERLIN speaks a spell.)

MERLIN: Hoc textu abscondam!

(MERLIN then carefully closes the journal.)

ACT 1 Scene 2

SETTING: *Forest, small tree trunk or just an obstacle located downstage right. Inside the obstacle or tree trunk is hidden MERLIN's journal. A fake rabbit and several small rocks.*

(We see ARTHUR walking into the forest from upstage left, frustrated, searching for something. After some silent searching ARTHUR stumbles upon a dead rabbit.)

ARTHUR: Oh my, poor thing.

(ARTHUR gingerly examines the rabbit.)

ARTHUR: I wonder if it was Sir Kay's arrow that shot you. Ever since father told Kay about his days as one of the King's legendary knights, Kay thinks he needs to shoot every last animal in the forest to impress him.

(ARTHUR finds a stick on the ground and begins swinging it around.)

ARTHUR: Someday they'll tell legends about me! And I'll help put an end to this war, as a knight of Albion! Just like Dad.

(ARTHUR smiles as they raise their stick high in triumph. Then they look back down at the rabbit and frowns. ARTHUR reveals a cloth and wraps the rabbit in it. ARTHUR

gathers some nearby rocks and builds a small cairn, ARTHUR places the rabbit inside the cairn. Continues looking for the arrow.)

ARTHUR: Stupid Kay and his stupid archery. It's not my fault he can't shoot an arrow straight! He sends me out wandering in the forest at night. If I didn't know better I'd think he wants the wolves to eat me!

(ARTHUR looks offstage, scared as they stare at what they can only assume is wolves. ARTHUR stops dead in their tracks and gulps.)

ARTHUR: *(pointing offstage)* WOLVES! M-Maybe they've already eaten today?

(ARTHUR looks down at the cairn)

ARTHUR: H-H-Hello? Wolves? Are you out there? I'm-I'm just here for my Brother's arrow... I'll be on my way once I find it thank you very much.

(ARTHUR lets out a yelp and runs behind the cover of the tree trunk or obstacle located downstage left.)

ARTHUR: *(panting)* Please! I'll leave as soon as I find Kay's arrow I swear it!

(ARTHUR puts their hands over their head and hides behind the tree trunk or obstacle. MERLIN's voice is heard yelling a spell.)

MERLIN: Vade Lupus Bestia!

(ARTHUR slowly lowers their hands and raises their head above their hiding spot searching for the wolves. They are nowhere to be found. Curious, ARTHUR reaches inside the tree trunk or obstacle pulling the journal out.)

ARTHUR: Was that... magic? Father said it was forbidden. But I'm glad someone still knows it... whoever that was. *(Looking at Journal)* Maybe you've got some answers for me. I've already been gone too long. I should go before the wolve's return.

ACT 1 Scene 3

SETTING: *ARTHUR's room, one table, chair, and a small blanket (Similar to MERLIN's cottage).*

(ARTHUR enters their room from upstage left rubbing the back of their head.)

ARTHUR: I know I came home late but I'm not sure I deserved *that* whacking. Ah well, at least I can start reading now.

(ARTHUR reveals the journal they found in the woods.)

ARTHUR: There is no name or signature of any kind here. Or even here, how odd... yet it seems as though this book is connected to whoever saved me in the forest. What- the pages are empty. Why in the world would somebody go out of their way to reveal an empty book to me?

(ARTHUR slams the book down onto their table, frustrated.)

ARTHUR: Perhaps this is a problem for tomorrow, I've got enough chores to do as it is. Goodnight mysterious book.

(ARTHUR picks up the book and lays under their small blanket with it. Closing their eyes ARTHUR falls asleep.)

ACT 2 Scene 1

SETTING: *MERLIN's cottage, a pot or cauldron sits on center stage and a table with several bottles of ingredients sits close by.*

(MERLIN is seen gathering bottles of ingredients for a potion. He announces the ingredients as he deposits them into the pot/cauldron.)

MERLIN: A dash of coltsfoot, a sprinkle of cinnamon, with a smidge of mugwort, a dose of vervain, and to top it all off, sage! Now then.

(MERLIN reveals his wand and utters a spell as he stirs the contents of the cauldron with his wand.)

MERLIN: *(as he stirs)* Ostende Mihi Faciem...Ostende Mihi Faciem... Ostende Mihi Faciem!

(With the final utterance of the spell MERLIN draws his wand out of the cauldron and stares inside.)

MERLIN: Ah yes, now I can see you clearly. Chores is it? No no no that wont do at all the child must learn from the journal they cannot spend their time on such mundane tasks. Arthur must find the sword. Before the dead walk this land. Arthur... your destiny is great and yet your curiosity has not been sated by the book? Odd. Let's take a look shall we?

(MERLIN waves his hand over the cauldron to reveal the journal and ARTHUR's room.)

MERLIN: What's this? The pages are blank? Confound it all! That invisibility charm should have worn off by now.

(MERLIN raises his wand aiming into the cauldron.)

MERLIN: Verba Revelare! That's better, now your learning may begin Arthur.

ACT 2 Scene 2

SETTING: *ARTHUR's room. Set up just as before.*

(ARTHUR is reading the journal intently pacing in their room.)

ARTHUR: “Ankou is an ancient magical god of the underworld, and as such he possesses powers of death. Ankou plays an important part in an ancient prophecy. Upon All Hallows Eve shall the veil between the land of the living and the land of the dead be at its thinnest, herein shall Ankou raise his army, if no true ruler can lay claim to the sword this army will conquer all the world.”

(Reading the last three words slowly as they realize what this means ARTHUR gulps.)

ARTHUR: Is this- No this can't be right. Ankou, All Hallows Eve, army of the dead, these are all fairytales, nightmares! No one could possibly think these things will actually happen right? Right??

(ARTHUR slumps into their chair.)

ARTHUR: What am I supposed to do? Fight off an undead army with a stick?! Only the Knights of the land, united once again could stop this from happening and that will never happen until a new ruler has been chosen. All Hallows Eve is just a day away. A new ruler can't be found or decided before that. I- I guess it is up to me. This is ridiculous I am a simple squire, I'm not strong enough to face magical monsters. Perhaps answers lie in the book.

(ARTHUR picks up the journal and resumes reading once again. After a few pages have been read ARTHUR speaks up.)

ARTHUR: "Only one worthy enough to pull the sword from the stone may stop Ankou, for it is only with the power of the sword, that such an ancient and evil magic can be halted." Well then, I have my answer, if only I knew where to find the sword.

(ARTHUR keeps flipping through its pages looking for anything about the sword's location.)

ARTHUR: Nothing!

(ARTHUR throws the book onto the ground in anger. ARTHUR picks the book back up. They open it again and start flipping through the pages until they hit the last page which is blank.)

ARTHUR: See? Nothing, I don't know why you think I'm capable of saving the world but I'm telling you, you've got the wrong person. I'm not even a knight yet! This couldn't have waited a few more years?

(ARTHUR looks back down at the blank last page of the book and now sees a map.)

ARTHUR: What? A map? To the sword! How did you- right, magic, of course. This is fantastic! Okay, it must be... this way!

ACT 3 Scene 1

SETTING: Ankou's cave, it is a dark cave. There is a cauldron/pot similar to Merlin's centerstage. There lay some bones, cobwebs, and a fake spider on the ground next to the cauldron.

ANKOU: Only mere moments until All Hallows Eve. Be not afraid my soldiers, friends of old. We will taste victory yet still for the land of Albion has grown unruly and wild in the years since our great defeat. The knights are scattered, divided, and leaderless. With no true ruler Albion will fall. Nothing can stand in our way now. NOTHING!... The time is upon us now.

(ANKOU picks up a bone and snaps it in half as he throws it into the cauldron.)

ANKOU: Immortuae!

(ANKOU picks up the cobweb and throws it into the cauldron.)

ANKOU: Exercitus!

(ANKOU grabs the spider and throws it into the cauldron.)

ANKOU: Natus!

(ANKOU extends one of his fingers pointing down at the cauldron and begins waving it as if to magically stir the cauldron's contents.)

ANKOU: Immortuae Exercitus Natus! Ahhhhh yesss it is done go forth my minions unleash your wrath upon this world! March, march to victory and the destruction of Albion!

ACT 3 Scene 2

SETTING: The Sword in the Stone. There stands a stone with a sword stuck inside of it, center stage.

(ARTHUR comes in and sees the sword.)

ARTHUR: There it is! The sword in the stone. Maybe Kay will finally grant me my knighthood! what a glorious day that will be!

(ARTHUR approaches the stone. They put their hand on the hilt and they try to pull. The sword doesn't budge. ARTHUR puts both their hands on the hilt and tries to pull. The sword does not move.)

ARTHUR: Oh come on.

(ARTHUR keeps both hands on the hilt and puts both feet up against the rock and tries to pull again. Nothing happens.)

ARTHUR: No, this can't be happening I've come all this way.

(ARTHUR begins pulling and pulling furiously until they are a mess kneeling before stone punching it.)

ARTHUR: Stupid hunk of rock! I'll never be worthy of the sword, or the glory.

(ARTHUR perks up as if they can hear the dead army and looks past the sword.)

ARTHUR: That's- That's the army of the dead. They're already here.

(ARTHUR slumps down, defeated.)

ARTHUR: It's all my fault, I wasn't strong enough, I wasn't brave enough. I'm not a knight, or wizard, or a king. I'm nobody.

(A few beats of silence ensue during which ARTHUR slowly rises from their defeated slumped position. Determined.)

ARTHUR: I have to try, not for my sake. For Albion, for its people, for father and Kay. I have to try.

(ARTHUR puts both hands on the hilt of the sword again, this time calmly, and slowly. They pull gently but firmly and the sword begins to slide out of the stone until the blade is raised high above ARTHUR's head.)

ARTHUR: I did it! I can't believe I did it!

(Ankou's army begins to fall and return to the underworld. ARTHUR looks in the direction offstage of Ankou's army.)

ARTHUR: The army of the dead is falling, they've been defeated, the power of Ankou is gone! We've won!

(Looking off to another direction. ARTHUR is startled.)

ARTHUR: *(Pointing sword)* Who are you? Stay Back!

(MERLIN enters)

MERLIN: I suppose I never properly introduced myself, my sincerest apologies, my young friend. I am the author of the journal you found. My name is Merlin, and it has been the greatest honor to guide the new ruler of Albion. If you like, I'll continue to advise at your side as you address your people and take the throne. Now we must go, your citizens and knights await your presence, your majesty. *(MERLIN Exits)*

ARTHUR: My citizens...*(Exiting in the same direction as MERLIN)* Merlin! Wait for me! And thank you!

End of Play

Production Specifications

*Signifies an item covered in the Tech Day Video on Thursday.

Costumes

- Merlin:** a robe and / or a wizard hat*
- Arthur:** A small cloak or Tunic
- Ankou:** A mask or hood

Props

- Sword*
- Cauldron/pot
- Blank Journal / Journal with Writing & Map (These can be the same journal, just flip to different pages when necessary in script.)
- Magic wand
- Five empty small bottles with various ingredients
- A stick
- Fake rabbit (Could be a stuffed toy.)
- Several small rocks
- Fake bone
- Fake cobweb
- Fake spider (could be a toy.)

Set

- Stone*
- Tree Trunk / Forest Set (This can be made with what you have available, it just needs to give Arthur something to hide behind, and a place to find the book. A bush for example would also work.)
- Chair
- Desk / Table

Sound

Music is not necessary or required, but if you'd like to include it, here are a few options.

- Dance of the Knights - Sergei Profokiev
- Symphony no. 25 in G Minor - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Gotterdammerung (Twilight of the Gods) Prologue: Siegfrieds Rheinfahrt - Richard Wagner
- Siegfried Idyll - Richard Wagner
- Fantasia in D minor K.397 - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- The Sword in the Stone Suite - Benjamin Britten