

CBC TRANS CANADA

SCRIPT ADAPTED BY: George Whalley

THEATRE 10:30

“THE TRAGEDY OF KING ARTHUR

[Radio 12 July 1971]

AND SIR LAUNCELOT” PART I –

“THE QUEST OF THE SANKGREALL”

CBL/CBC: TBA

PRODUCTION: John Reeves

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ANNOUNCER: THEATRE 10.30... We present “The Tragedy of King Arthur and Sir Launcelot” by George Whalley, adapted in five parts from the works of Sir Thomas Malory. Part One: “The Quest of the Sankgreall.”

*MUSIC #1: EST. & BG TO END OF NEXT*

MALORY: In the beginning of Arthur, after he was chosen king by fortune and by grace, since the most part of the barons knew not that he was Uther Pendragon’s son (unless Merlin were to make it openly known) many kings and lords yet made him great war for that cause. But well Arthur overcame them all, because that – for the most part of the days of his life – he was ruled by the counsel of Merlin. So it fell on a time King Arthur said unto Merlin –

ARTHUR: My barons will let me have no rest but needs I must take a wife, and I would none take but by thy counsel and advice.

MERLIN: It is well done that ye take a wife, for a man of your bounty and noblesse should not be without a wife. Now, is there any that ye love more than another?

ARTHUR: Yea, I love Guenevere, the king’s daughter of Lodegran, of the land of Camelard, the which holdeth in his house The Table Round that ye told

me he had it of my father Uther. And this damsel is the most valiant and fairest that I know living, or yet that ever I could find.

MERLIN: Certes, as of her beauty and fairness she is one of the fairest alive. But if ye loved her not so well as ye do, I should find you a damsel of beauty and of goodness that should like you and please you, if your heart were not set. But where a man's heart is set, he will be loth to turn away from.

ARTHUR: That is truth.

*MUSIC #2: BG NEXT*

MALORY: But Merlin warned the king covertly that Guenevere was not wholesome for him to take to wife. For he warned him that Launcelot should love her, and she him again.

So King Lodegraunce delivered his daughter Guenevere unto Merlin, and the Table Round with the hundred knights; and so they rode at once with great royalty, what by water and by land, till they came nigh unto London. When King Arthur heard of the coming of Queen Guenevere and the hundred knights with the Table Round, then King Arthur made great joy for their coming and for that rich present. And in all haste the king ordained all things for the marriage and the coronation in the most honourable wise that could be devised. Then was a high feast made ready, and the king was wedded at Camelot unto dame Guenevere in the church of Saint Stephen's with great solemnity.

*MUSIC #2: UP BRIEFLY, CONTINUE BG*

MALORY: It befell when King Arthur had wedded Queen Guenevere and fulfilled the Round Table, and so after his marvellous knights and he had vanquished

the most part of his enemies, then soon after came Sir Launcelot de Lake unto the court, and Sir Tristram came that time also, and then King Arthur held a royal feast and Table Round. Then all the knights of the Round Table made many jousts and tournaments. And some there were that were but knights increased in arms and worship passing all other of their fellows in prowess and noble deeds. But in especial it was proved on Sir Launcelot de Lake; for in all tournaments, jousts, and deeds of arms, both for life and death, he passed all other knights, and at no time was he overcome unless it were by treason or enchantment. So this Sir Launcelot increased so marvellously in worship and honour; therefore he is the first knight that the French book maketh mention of after King Arthur. Wherefore Queen Guenevere had him in great favour above all other knights, and so he loved the queen above all other ladies all the days of his life, and for her he did many deeds of arms and saved her from the fire through his noble chivalry.

*MUSIC #2: UP TO CADENCE. BRIEF PAUSE. EST NEW MUSIC, TO BG TO END OF NEXT*

MALORY: Thus Sir Launcelot rested him along with play and game; and then he thought himself to prove in strange adventures. So Sir Launcelot rode on his adventure till on a time he passed over the Pont de Corbyn. And there he saw the fairest tower that ever he saw, and thereunder was a fair little town full of people. And all the people, men and women, cried at once – “Welcome, Sir Launcelot, the flower of knighthood!” And so anon they brought Sir Launcelot into the tower. And therewithal came King Pelles, the good and noble king, and saluted Sir Launcelot and he him again.

PELLES: Now, fair knight, what is your name? I require you of your knighthood tell ye me.

LAUNCELOT: Sir, my name is Sir Launcelot de Lake.

PELLES: And my name is King Pelles, king of the foreign country and cousin nigh unto Joseph of Aramathaia.

MALORY: And then both of them made much of each other, and so they went into the castle to take their repast. And soon there came in a dove at a window, and in her mouth there seemed a little censer of gold, and therewithal there was such a savour as all the spicery of the world had been there. And forthwith there was upon the table all manner of meats and drinks that they could think upon.

So there came in a damsel passing fair and young, and she bare a vessel of gold betwixt her hands; and thereto the king kneeled devoutly and said his prayers, and so did all that were there.

LAUNCELOT: Ah, Jesu! What may this mean?

PELLES: Sir, this is the richest thing that any man hath living, and when this thing goeth abroad the Round Table shall be broken for a season. For this is the Holy Sankgreall that ye have here seen.

MALORY: So the king and Sir Launcelot passed the most part of that day together. And fain would King Pelles have found the means that Sir Launcelot should have lain by his daughter, fair Elain, and for this intent: the king knew well that Sir Launcelot should beget a chaste youth upon his daughter, which should be called Sir Galahad, the good knight by whom all the foreign country should be brought out of danger; and by him the Holy Graal should be won.

Then came forth a lady that was called dame Brusen, and she said unto the king –

BRUSEN: Sir, know you well Sir Launcelot loveth no lady in the world but all only Queen Guenevere. And therefore work ye by my counsel, and I shall make him to lie with your daughter, and he shall not know but that he lieth by Queen Guenevere.

MALORY: For this dame Brusen was one of the greatest enchanters that was that time in the world. And so anon by dame Brusen's cunning she made one to come to Sir Launcelot that he knew well, and this man brought a ring from Queen Guenevere like as it had come from her, and such one as she was wont for the most part to wear. And when Sir Launcelot saw that token, truly he was never so glad.

LAUNCELOT: Where is my lady?

BRUSEN: In the castle of Case, but five miles hence.

MALORY: Then thought Sir Launcelot to be there the same night. And then this dame Brusen, by the commandment of King Pelles, sent Elain to this castle with five and twenty knights, unto the castle of Case. Then Sir Launcelot against night rode unto the castle, and there anon he was received worshipfully with such people, to his seeming, as were about Queen Guenevere secret. So when Sir Launcelot had alighted he asked where the queen was. So dame Brusen said she was in her bed.

And then people were sent away and Sir Launcelot was led into her chamber. And then dame Brusen brought Sir Launcelot a cup of wine, and as soon as he had drunken that wine he was so smitten and mad that he might make no delay; and without any wait he went to bed. And so he thought that maiden Elain had been Queen Guenevere. And you may be

sure that Sir Launcelot was glad, and so was that Lady Elain that she had gotten Sir Launcelot in her arms, for well she knew that that same night should be begotten Sir Galahad upon her, that should prove the best knight of the world.

And so they lay together until forenoon of the next day; and all the windows and holes of that chamber were stopped, that no manner of day might be seen. And anon Sir Launcelot remembered him and arose up and went to the window, and as soon as he had unshut the window the enchantment was past. Then he knew that he had done amiss, and took at once his sword in his hand, and said –

LAUNCELOT: Alas! That I have lived so long, for now am I shamed. Thou traitoress! What art thou that I have lain by all this night? Thou shalt die right here of mine hands.

MALORY: Then this fair lady Elain skipped out of her bed all naked and kneeled down before Sir Launcelot, and said –

ELAIN: Fair courteous knight Sir Launcelot, ye are come of king's blood, and therefore I require you have mercy upon me. And as thou art renowned the most noble knight of the world, slay me not, for I have in my womb begotten of thee him who shall be the most noblest knight of the world.

LAUNCELOT: Ah, false traitoress! Why hast thou betrayed me? Tell me at once what thou art.

ELAIN: Sir, I am Elain, the daughter of King Pelles.

LAUNCELOT: Well, I will forgive you.

MALORY: And therewith he took her up in his arms and kissed her, for she was a fair lady and thereto lusty and young, and wise as any was that time living.

LAUNCELOT: So God me help, I may not blame this to you; but her that made this enchantment upon me and between you and me, if I may find her, that same lady dame Brusen shall lose her head for her witchcrafts, for there was never knight deceived as I am this night.

ELAIN: My lord, Sir Launcelot, I beseech you, see me as soon as ye may, for I have obeyed me unto the prophecy that my father told me. And by his commandment to fulfil this prophecy I have given thee the greatest riches and the fairest flower that ever I had, and that is my maidenhead that I shall never have again. And therefore, gentle knight, owe me your good will.

*MUSIC #3: BG FROM (X) BELOW. UP AT (Y), TO CADENCE AND OUT*

MALORY: And so Sir Launcelot arrayed him and armed him and took his leave mildly of that young lady Elain. And so he departed and rode to the castle of Corbyn where her father was. (X)

And as fast as her time came she was delivered of a fair child, and they christened him Galahad.

And so the noise sprang up in King Arthur's court that Sir Launcelot had gotten a child upon Elain, the daughter of King Pelles, wherefore Queen Guenevere was wroth, and she gave many rebukes to Sir Launcelot and called him false knight. And then Sir Launcelot told the queen all, and how he was made to lie by Elain, in the likeness of his lady the queen; and so the queen held Sir Launcelot excused. (Y)

And after that King Arthur had warred in France upon the mighty King Claudas and had won much of his lands, then was the renown also of

Launcelot strong through all the realm for the many strange adventures that befell him. And at the vigil of Pentecost, when all the fellowship of the Table Round were come unto Camelot, so at the last the tables were set ready to the meat, right so entered into the hall a fair gentlewoman on horseback that had ridden full fast, for her horse was all be-sweated. Then she there alighted and came before the king and saluted him –

ARTHUR: Damsel, God you bless!

DAMSEL: Sir, for God's sake tell me where is Sir Launcelot.

ARTHUR: He is yonder, ye may see him.

DAMSEL: Sir Launcelot, I salute you on King Pelles' behalf, and I also require you to come with me hereby in a forest.

LAUNCELOT: What will ye with me?

DAMSEL: Ye shall know when ye come thither.

LAUNCELOT: Well. I will gladly go with you.

MALORY: Right so departed Sir Launcelot, and rode until he came into a forest and into a great valley where they saw an abbey of nuns. And Sir Launcelot was welcomed by a fair fellowship, and they led him into the abbess's chamber and unarmed him. And while they talked together, there came in twelve nuns that brought with them Galahad, the which was passing fair and well made, that hardly in the world men might find his match.

NUN: Sir, we bring you here this young man the which we have nourished, and we pray you to make him knight, for of a more worthier man's hand may he not receive the Order of Knighthood.

MALORY: Sir Launcelot beheld this young squire and saw him seemly and demure as a dove, with all manner of good features, that he thought for his age never to have seen so fair a form of a man.

LAUNCELOT: Cometh this desire of himself?

NUN & GALAHAD: Yes.

LAUNCELOT: Then shall he receive the Order of Knighthood at the reverence of the high feast.

MALORY: And next day at the hour of prime at Galahad's desire Sir Launcelot made him knight, and said –

LAUNCELOT: God made you a good man, for of beauty lacketh you nothing as any that is now living. Now, fair sir, will ye come with me unto the court of King Arthur?

GALAHAD: Nay, I will not go with you at this time.

MALORY: Then Sir Launcelot took his two cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, with him. And so they came unto Camelot by the hour of Matins on Whitsunday. So by that time the king and the queen was gone to the minister to hear their service. So when the king and all the knights were come from service, the king bade haste unto dinner. So as they stood speaking, in came a squire that said unto the king –

SQUIRE: Sir, I bring unto you marvellous tidings.

ARTHUR: What be they?

SQUIRE: Sir, there is here beneath at the river a great stone which I saw float above the water, and therein I saw sticking a sword.

ARTHUR: I will see that marvel.

MALORY: So all the knights went with him. And when they came unto the river they found there a stone floating, as it were of red marble, and therein stuck a fair rich sword, and the pommel thereof was of precious stones wrought with letters of gold subtilly. Then the barons read the letters which said in this wise:

*Never shall man take me hence but only he by whose side I ought to hand and he shall be the best knight of the world.*

ARTHUR: Sir Launcelot, this sword ought to be yours, for I am sure ye be the best knight of the world.

LAUNCELOT: Sir, it is not my sword; also, I have no hardiness to set my hand thereto, for it belongeth not to hang by my side. Also, who that assayeth to take it and faileth of that sword, he shall receive a wound by that sword that he shall not be long whole after. And I will that ye know that this same day shall the adventure of the Sankgreall begin, that is called the holy vessel.

MALORY: Then commanded the king that Sir Gawain assay to take the sword from the stone; but he might not stir it. And Sir Perceval assayed, but might not move it. So the king and all they went unto the court, and every knight knew his own place and sat him therein – except the Seat Perilous which was empty for there were written letters of gold:

*Four hundred winters and four and fifty accomplished after the Passion of Our Lord Jesu Christ ought this seat to be fulfilled.*

MUSIC #4: *BG TO (X) BELOW*

MALORY: And suddenly there befell a marvellous adventure: that all the doors and windows of the place shut by themselves, but they were astonished that the hall was not greatly darkened. In the meanwhile came in a good old man and an ancient, clothed all in white, and there was no knight knew from whence he came. And with him he brought a young knight, and both on foot, in red armour, without sword or shield save a scabbard hanging by his side. Then the old man made the young man to unarm him. And he was in a coat of red silk, and bore a mantle upon his shoulders that was furred with ermine. And the old man led him at once to the Seat Perilous where beside sat Sir Launcelot, and the good man lifted up the cloth and found there the letters that said:

*This is the seat of Sir Galahad the High Prince. (X)* Then all the knights of the Table Round marvelled greatly of Sir Galahad that he dared sit there and was so tender of age, and knew nothing of whence he came but only that it was from God.

ARTHUR: This is he by whom the Sankgreall shall be won, for there sat never none but he there, but he came to disaster.

MALORY: Then Sir Launcelot beheld his son that he had begotten on the fair Elain and had great joy of him. Then the king took him by the hand and went down from the palace to show Galahad the adventures of the stone.

ARTHUR: Sir, here is a great marvel as ever I saw, and right good knights have assayed and failed.

GALAHAD: Sir, it is no marvel, for this adventure is not theirs but mine. And for the surety of this sword I brought none with me, but here by my side hangeth the scabbard.

MALORY: And at once he laid his hand on the sword, and lightly drew it out of the stone, and put it in the sheath. And therewith came riding down beside the river a lady on a white palfrey a great pace toward them. Then she saluted the king and the queen and asked if Sir Launcelot were there.

LAUNCELOT: I am here, my fair lady.

LADY: Ah, Sir Launcelot, how your great doing is changed since this day in the morn. For ye were this day in the morn the best knight of the world. But who should say so now, he should be a liar, for there is now one better than ye be, and well it is proved by the adventure of the sword whereto ye durst not set your hand. And that is the change of your name and living. Wherefore I make unto you a remembrance that ye shall not think from henceforth that ye be the best knight of the world.

LAUNCELOT: As touching unto that, I know well I was never none of the best.

LADY: Yes, that were ye, and are yet, of any *sinful* man of the world. And, sir King, Nacien the hermit sendeth thee word that there shall befall thee the greatest worship that ever befell king in Britain; for this day the Sankgreall shall appear in thy house and feed thee and all thy fellowship of the Round Table.

MALORY: Then the King, knowing that all the Round Table would depart at this quest of the Sankgreall, called them all into the meadow of Camelot, to joust and to tourney. Then Sir Galahad dressed him in the midst of the meadow and began to break spears marvellously that all men had wonder

of him, for he there surmounted all other knights, save only twain, that was Sir Launcelot and Sir Perceval. And then the king and all the estates went home unto Camelot, and after evensong went to supper.

*MUSIC #5: BG TO (X) BELOW*

MALORY: Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder that they thought the palace should all crumble. So in the midst of the blast enters a sunbeam, more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and on all alighted the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then entered into the hall the Holy Graal covered with white samite, but there was none that might see it nor who bore it. And there was the hall fulfilled with good odours, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved in this world. And when the Holy Graal had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly. (X) Then had they all breath to speak –

ARTHUR: Certes, we ought to thank our Lord Jesu Christ that he hath showed us this day at the reverence of this high feast of Pentecost.

MALORY: And Sir Gawain said –

GAWAIN: Now we have been served this day of what meats and drinks we thought on. But one thing beguiled us, that we might not see the Holy Graal: it was so preciously covered. Wherefore I will make here a vow that tomorrow, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sankgreall, and that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return unto the court again till I have seen it more openly than it hath been showed here. And if I may not speed I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of God.

MALORY: So when they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawain say so, they arose up the most part and made such vows as Sir Gawain had made. Anon as King Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he knew well he might not gainsay their vows.

ARTHUR: Alas! Sir Gawain, ye have nigh slain me for the vow ye have made, for through you ye have bereft me of the fairest and the truest of the knighthood that ever was seen together in any realm of the world. For when they depart from hence I am sure they all shall never meet more together in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it forethinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life. Wherefore it grieveth me right sore, the parting of this fellowship. Sir Gawain, ye have set me in great sorrow, for I have great fear that my true fellowship shall never meet here more again.

LAUNCELOT: Ah, sir, comfort yourself! For it shall be unto us a great honour, and much more than if we died in other places.

ARTHUR: (IN GREAT SORROW) Ah, Gawain, Gawain! Ye have betrayed me, for never shall my court be mended up by you. But ye will never be so sorry for me as I am for you.

MALORY: Then the queen departed into her chamber and held her there, that no man should perceive her great sorrow. When Sir Launcelot missed the queen he went to her chamber, and when she saw him she cried aloud and said –

GUENEVERE: Ah, Sir Launcelot! Ye have betrayed me and put me to death, for to leave thus my lord.

LAUNCELOT: Ah, madam, I pray you be not displeased, for I shall come again as soon as I may with my worship.

GUENEVERE: Alas, that ever I saw you! But He that suffered death upon the Cross for all mankind, He be unto you good conduct and safety, and all the whole fellowship.

MALORY: Right so departed Sir Launcelot and found his fellowship, and then they took their horses and rode through the street of Camelot. And on the morrow they were all agreed that they should depart each one his own way, and then every knight took the way that him liked best.

*MUSIC #6: BRIDGE*

MALORY: Now Sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong a wild forest and held no path but as wild adventure led him. And at the last he come to a stony cross which parted two ways in waste land. And there he laid him down to sleep upon his shield before the cross and dreamed that he saw the Holy Graal on a silver altar, but had no power to go to the holy vessel and raise it up. And when he waked and sat up, he heard a voice that said –

VOICE: Sir Launcelot, much harder than is the stone art thou, and more bitter than is the wood, and more naked and barer than is the leaf of the figtree! Therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from these holy places.

MALORY: Then Sir Launcelot went to the cross and found his helmet, his sword, and his horse gone, and said –

LAUNCELOT: My sin and my wickedness hath brought me unto great dishonour. For when I sought worldly adventures for worldly desires I ever achieved them and had the better in every place, and never was I discomfitted in no quarrel, were it right were it wrong. And now I take upon me the adventures to seek of holy things, now I see and understand that mine old

sin hindreth me and shameth me, that I had no power to stir nor speak when the holy blood appeared before me in my dream.

MALORY: So he departed from the cross on foot into a fair forest, and so by prime he came to a high hill and found a hermitage and a hermit therein. And then Sir Launcelot kneeled down and cried on our Lord mercy for his wicked works, and prayed the hermit for holy charity for to hear his life.

LAUNCELOT: My name is Sir Launcelot de Lake, that hath been right well said of. And now my good fortune is changed, for I am the most wretched of the world.

HERMIT: I will hear thy life with a good will. Sir, ye ought to thank God more than any other knight living, for He hath caused you to have more worldly worship than any knight that is now living. And for your presumption to take upon you in deadly sin for to be in His presence, where His flesh and His blood was, which caused you that ye might not see it with your worldly eyes, for He will not appear where such sinners be but if it be unto their great hurt or unto their shame. And there is no knight now living that ought to yield God so great thanks as ye, for He hath given you beauty, bounty, seemliness, and great strength over all other knights. And therefore ye are the more beholden unto God than any other man to love Him and dread Him, for your strength and your manhood will little avail you if God be against you. Sir, hide no old sin from me.

LAUNCELOT: Truly, that were me full loth to disclose, for these many years I never discovered one thing that I have done but that I now know my shame in it. All these years have I loved a queen unmeasurably and out of measure long. And all my great deeds of arms that I have done for the most part was for the queen's sake, and for her sake would I do battle were it right or wrong. And never did I battle for God's sake, but for to win worship

and to cause me the better to be beloved, and little or nothing I thanked never God of it. Sir, I pray you, counsel me.

HERMIT: Sir, I will counsel you, if ye shall ensure me by your knighthood ye shall no more come in that queen's fellowship as much as ye may forbear.

LAUNCELOT: I promise I will not come in her fellowship, by the faith of this body.

HERMIT: Sir, look that your heart and your mouth agree, and I shall ensure you ye shall have the more worship than ever ye had. Have ye no marvel of the words ye heard, for it seemeth well God loveth thee. Now take heed, Sir Launcelot, when the Holy Graal was brought before thee, He found in thee no fruit, nor good thought nor good will, and befouled with lechery.

LAUNCELOT: Certes, all that ye have said is true, and from henceforward I shall devise, by the grace of God, never to be so wicked as I have been but to follow knighthood and to do feats of arms.

MALORY: Then this good man enjoined upon Sir Launcelot such penance as he might do if he would follow knighthood, and so shrieved him.

HERMIT: Now I require you take this hair-shirt and put it next thy skin, and it shall prevail thee greatly. Also, sir, I charge thee that thou eat no flesh as long as ye be in the quest of Sankgreall, nor ye shall drink no wine, and that ye hear mass daily if ye may come thereto. Now have I warned thee of thy vainglory and of thy pride, that thou hast many time erred against thy Maker.

*MUSIC #7: BG FROM (X) BELOW*

MALORY: And the next day this holy man took Sir Launcelot to the water of Mortais, and there set him in a ship. (X) And when Sir Launcelot was there a month or more, a horse came and one riding upon him, and when he came nigh him he seemed a knight, Sir Galahad. So dwelled Sir Launcelot and Galahad within that ship half a year, and served God daily and nightly with all their power. And often they came ashore in islands far from folk, where there repaired none but wild beasts, and there they found many strange adventures and perilous which they brought to an end. But for those adventures were with wild beasts and not in the quest of the Sankgreall, therefore the tale maketh no mention thereof; for it would be too long to tell of all those adventures that befell them.

*MUSIC #7: UP AND OUT*

MALORY: So after, on a Monday, it befell that they landed in the edge of a forest before a cross. And then saw they a knight armed all in white, and was richly horsed, and led in his right hand a white horse. And so he came to the ship and saluted the two knights in the High Lord's behalf, and said unto Sir Galahad –

KNIGHT: Sir, ye have been long enough with your father. Therefore come out of the ship, and take thy horse and go where the adventures shall lead you in the quest of the Sankgreall.

MALORY: Then he went to his father and kissed him sweetly and said –

GALAHAD: Fair sweet father, I know not when I shall see you more till I see the body of Jesu Christ.

MALORY: And so he took his horse, and there they heard a voice that said –

VOICE: Each of you think to do well, for nevermore shall one see the other of you before the dreadful day of doom.

LAUNCELOT: Now, my son Sir Galahad, for God's love, pray to the Father that He hold me still in His service. Since we shall depart and neither of us see other more, I pray to that High Father keep safe you and me both.

GALAHAD: Sir, no prayer availeth so much as yours.

MALORY: And therewith Sir Galahad entered into the forest.

So it befell on a night, at midnight, Sir Launcelot arrived before a castle, the back side of which was rich and fair, and there was a postern opened toward the sea, and was open without any keeping, save two lions kept the entry; and the moon shone right clear. Anon Sir Launcelot heard a voice that said –

VOICE: Launcelot, go out of this ship, and enter into the castle where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire.

MALORY: Then he armed him, and so went to the gate, and passed by the two lions without hurt, and entered into the castle to the chief fortress, for he found no door but it was open. And at the last he found a chamber whereof the door was shut, and he set his hand thereto to have opened it, but he might not. Then he listened and heard a voice which sang so sweetly that it seemed no earthly thing, and him thought the voice said –

VOICE: Joy and honour be to the Father of Heaven.

MALORY: Then Sir Launcelot kneeled down before the chamber door, for well he knew that there was the Sankgreall within that chamber.

LAUNCELOT: Fair sweet Father, Jesu Christ! If ever I did thing that pleased thee, Lord, for Thy pity have me not in despite for my sins done beforetime, and that thou show me something of that I seek.

MALORY: And with that he saw the chamber door open, and there came out a great clearness, that the house was as bright as all the torches of the world had been there. So came he to the chamber door and would have entered. And at once a voice said –

VOICE: Sir Launcelot, flee and enter not. For if thou enter thou shalt regret it.

*MUSIC #8: BG FROM (X) BELOW. SUSPEND AT (Y)*

MALORY: Then he withdrew him aback right heavy in his heart. (X) Then looked he up into the midst of the chamber and saw a table of silver, and the holy vessel covered with red samite, and many angels about it, whereof one held a candle of wax burning and the other held a cross and the ornaments of an altar. And before the holy vessel he saw a good man clothed as a priest, and it seemed that he was at the sacering of the mass. And it seemed to Sir Launcelot that above the priest's hands were three men, whereof the two put the youngest by likeness between the priest's hands; and so he lifted him up right high, and it seemed to show so to the people.

And then Sir Launcelot marvelled not a little, for he thought the priest was so greatly charged of the vigour that he thought he should fall to the earth. And when he saw none about him that would help him, then came he to the door a great pace – (Y)

LAUNCELOT: Fair Father, Jesu Christ, take it not for no sin if I help the good man which hath great need of help.

*MUSIC #8: RESUME BG*

MALORY: Right so entered he into the chamber and came toward the table of silver, and when he came nigh it he felt a breath that he thought was intermingled with fire, which smote him so sore in the face that he thought it burned his face. And therewith he fell to the earth and had no power to arise, as he that was so stricken that had lost the power of his body and his hearing and sight. Then felt he many hands which took him up and bore him out of the chamber door and left him there seeming dead to all people.

*MUSIC #8: UP AND OUT*

MALORY: So they kept Sir Launcelot four-and-twenty days and as many nights, that ever he lay still as a dead man. And at the twenty-fifth day befell him after midday that he opened his eyes. And when he saw folk he made great sorrow –

LAUNCELOT: Why have ye awaked me? For I was more at ease than I am now. Ah, Jesu Christ, who might be so blessed that might see openly Thy great marvels of secretness there where no sinner may be. I have seen great marvels that no tongue may tell, and more than any heart can think. And had not my sin been beforetime, else I had seen much more.

VOICE: Sir Launcelot, the quest of the Sankgreall is achieved now right in you, and never shall ye see of Sankgreall more than ye have seen.

LAUNCELOT: Now I thank God for His great mercy of what I have seen, for it sufficeth me. For, as I suppose, no man in this world has lived better than I have done to achieve what I have done.

MALORY: And therewith he took the hairshirt and clothed him in it, and above that he put a linen shirt, and after that a robe of scarlet, fresh and new. And when he was so arrayed they marvelled all, for they knew him well that he was Sir Launcelot, the good knight.

And so he rode through many realms, and at the last came to a white abbey, where was the rich tomb of King Bagdemagus of Gore, slain by Sir Gawain. And then he came to the abbey where Sir Galahad had also been; and there had he great cheer all that night, and on the morrow he turned to Camelot where he found King Arthur and the queen.

But many of the knights of Round Table were slain and destroyed, more than half; and now three of them were come home, Sir Hector, Sir Gawain, and Sir Lionel, and many other that needeth not now to rehearse. And all the court were passing glad of Sir Launcelot, and the king asked him many tidings of his son Sir Galahad. And there Sir Launcelot told the king of his adventures that befell him since he departed. And also he told him of the adventures of Sir Galahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors.

ARTHUR: Now God would that they were all three here.

LAUNCELOT: That shall never be, for two of them shall ye never see. But one of them – Sir Bors – shall come home again.

MALORY: Thus endeth the tale of the Sankgreall that was briefly drawn out of French by Sir Thomas Malory, Knight.

*MUSIC #9: POSTLUDE*

ANNOUNCER:

*MUSIC #10: FILL TO TIME IF NEEDED*