

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

By Christy Fredrickson and Donna Rice

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SYNOPSIS: Not just another King Arthur story, *Chaos in Camelot* combines several Arthurian legends with slapstick comedy and easy-to-stage special effects. A witch, Morgan Le Fay, is giving out magic potions in an attempt to take over the kingdom. Her bumbling assistants try to help with ridiculous assassination attempts on King Arthur. Even worse, a crazy ogre named Goric is demanding to know what women really want and threatening to eat everyone if he doesn't find out! Things seem to be looking up when Arthur finds a very ugly lady who tells him the answer to the ogre's riddle. Her price for saving the kingdom is to marry a knight, but nobody wants to marry her! Finally, Sir Gawain volunteers, but during the wedding everything goes awry when Sir Lancelot drinks the evil potions, falls in love with Guinevere, beats up the rest of the knights and runs off with the queen. Someone has to rescue Guinevere and stop Morgan, but who? Will it be the sword-happy knights, the man-crazy ladies, the minstrel who can't sing, or perhaps Merlin? It's magical, merry mayhem with a more-than-happy ending!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(7 male, 9 female, 6 either, 0-6 extras; gender flexible)

MEN

KING ARTHUR King of Camelot (122 lines)
SIR LANCELOT A knight, loves Elaine. (23 lines)
SIR TRISTAN Another knight. (17 lines)
SIR GAWAIN A noble knight. (21 lines)
SIR GARETH A young knight. (18 lines)
SIR PERCIVAL An old knight. (24 lines)
SIR KAY A not-too-bright knight. (26 lines)

WOMEN

- LADY ANNA..... A lady of Camelot. (8 lines)
LADY VIVIEN..... Another lady. (13 lines)
LADY MARGARET Spirited older lady. (31 lines)
LADY MARIAN Another older lady. (24 lines)
LADY ELAINE..... Loves Lancelot, has awful luck. (31 lines)
LADY CHARLOTTE..... A chatterbox. (23 lines)
LORENA Lady suffering from an ugly spell. (22 lines)
MORGAN LE FAY A witch. (65 lines)
QUEEN GUINEVERE Queen of Camelot. (71 lines)

EITHER

- GORIC..... An ogre. (45 lines)
MERLIN A magician. (66 lines)
*YULA Morgan's assistant. (51 lines)
LUG Yula's dimwitted assistant. (9 lines)
*MINSTREL..... A singer of terrible songs. All songs are
sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle."
(46 lines)
ROYAL ANNOUNCER..... Emcee for the kingdom. (4 lines)

**In this script, Yula is written as a male, Minstrel as a female.*

EXTRA

- SILENT KNIGHTS Optional, up to six. Gender flexible. (Non-
speaking)

ACT ONE
OUTSIDE CURTAIN

There are trees, plants, etc. depicting a forest. SIR LANCELOT and LADY ELAINE enter stage right.

LADY ELAINE: Oh, Sir Lancelot, have you ever seen such a beautiful evening in the forest?

SIR LANCELOT: Aye, my lady, 'tis a beautiful evening indeed, but not as beautiful as you.

LADY ELAINE: Oh, Lancelot, please don't say those things to me. You know we can never be together.

SIR LANCELOT: Why not?

LADY ELAINE: You know why not! I'm bad luck! If we married, you would have bad luck for the rest of your life!

SIR LANCELOT: That's just nonsense.

LADY ELAINE: *(Moving away.)* It's not nonsense! Bad luck follows me around!

SIR LANCELOT: *(Following her.)* That's silly. What could go wrong? *(Takes her hand and gets down on his knee.)* Lady Elaine, will you please marry me?

LADY ELAINE: Oh, Lancelot...

SIR LANCELOT: How many times do I have to ask? Five? Ten? Twenty-seven? You're not getting rid of me, my lady, so you might as well say yes.\

LADY ELAINE: But the bad luck...

SIR LANCELOT: *(Jumping up.)* Say yes!

LADY ELAINE: But what if...

SIR LANCELOT: SAY YES!!

LADY ELAINE: Yes.

SIR LANCELOT: *(Dropping her hands.)* What did you say?

LADY ELAINE: I said yes. I will marry you!

SIR LANCELOT: Whoo hoo!

LANCELOT swings ELAINE around in a hug - but before they can kiss, GORIC the ogre rushes in, stage left, roaring and waving a club.

GORIC: AARRGGHH!! Now I've got you, peasants! Get down on your knees!

SIR LANCELOT: No way! I don't want to marry you! *(Pulls out his sword.)* Prepare to die, ogre!

GORIC: *(Laughs.)* I don't think so, peasant! Did Arthur get my last message?

SIR LANCELOT: The message that said some deranged ogre wants to have tea with him? Yes, he got it.

GORIC: *(Jumping around as if deranged.)* Arrrgh! He said I'm deranged? I'm not deranged! I ought to eat him for saying that! Arrrgh! *(Stops suddenly and looks at LANCELOT.)* What else did he say?

SIR LANCELOT: He said that any knight who met the ogre and didn't kill him was a chicken. *(Lifts sword.)* And I'm no chicken!

GORIC: AAARRRGGGGHHHH!!

LANCELOT and GORIC rush at each other. GORIC hits LANCELOT with the club. LANCELOT crumples.

LADY ELAINE: *(Screams.)* Lancelot! Oh, Lancelot! *(To GORIC.)* What have you done, you monster?! Oh, I knew something like this would happen!

GORIC: Ah, don't worry, lady, he'll be back to normal in a few weeks.

LADY ELAINE: *(Aghast.)* A few weeks?

GORIC: Or a few months.

LADY ELAINE: A few months! But he just proposed to me! We were to be married!

GORIC: Ah, pipe down. He's just gotta sleep it off for awhile. Now take him home. But you tell your King Arthur he'd better meet with me ALONE, or I'll eat his knights for lunch! *(Exits stage left.)*

Lights out on ELAINE and LANCELOT, who then exit stage left.

Spotlight up on MORGAN's hut. MORGAN is stirring a cauldron or large pot. For added effect, a fog machine or dry ice may be used. YULA and LUG enter hut.

YULA: Madam! There's a crazy ogre loose in Camelot!

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MORGAN: What are you talking about?

YULA: A real ogre, Madam! The entire kingdom is in an uproar!

MORGAN: An ogre? Why, that's lovely! We haven't had an ogre in Camelot for a long time! Yula, this gives me a wonderful idea!

YULA AND LUG: (*Looking at each other.*) Oh no.

MORGAN: Oh, yes! Finally, the time is right. This time I shall succeed!

YULA: You're going to try to kill the king again?

MORGAN: Not try, Yula. I WILL kill the king. This time it will work!

YULA AND LUG: Oh, boy.

MORGAN: (*Laughs evilly and rubs her hands together.*) Hand me that bottle, Yula. I must mix a potion fit for a king!

YULA: Here we go again.

Lights out.

MORGAN, YULA and LUG exit hut as curtain begins to open.

CURTAIN OPENS

The set is KING ARTHUR's castle.

On a raised platform are two empty thrones. A round table is stage left. A small table or cart holding goblets is stage right.

SIRS GAWAIN, KAY and PERCIVAL and the MINSTREL are sitting or standing casually. SIR GARETH and SIR TRISTAN are having a friendly swordfight.

SIR GAWAIN: So finish telling us about your adventure, Gareth! What happened after you slayed the dragon?

SIR GARETH: Ah, the dragon was only the beginning! Suddenly, I was surrounded by fifty soldiers!

SIR TRISTAN: Fifty?! (*Puts his sword to GARETH's chest.*) I can't believe it!

SIR GARETH: Well, okay. (*Knocks TRISTAN's sword away with his own.*) Maybe it was only twelve. (*KNIGHTS laugh.*) But they all had swords aimed right at my heart!

MINSTREL: (*Leaping up.*) This calls for a song! (*KNIGHTS all groan and look disgusted. MINSTREL sings with enthusiasm.*)

MINSTREL: (*Sings to the tune of Yankee Doodle.*)

BRAVE SIR GARETH WENT TO FIGHT
HE SLAYED THE FEARSOME DRAGON
SAVED THE DAMSEL, WON THE WAR, ER...

Pauses, as if thinking hard.

AND CAME HOME IN A WAGON.

KNIGHTS all groan loudly and are even more disgusted.

SIR GARETH: I didn't come home in a wagon! I'm a knight! I'm a warrior! Warriors don't come home in wagons!

MINSTREL: It's the only thing I could think of that rhymes with dragon.

SIR GARETH: Well, don't sing it! I don't want people thinking I ride around in wagons! Sheesh!

SIR KAY: So finish your story, Gareth. You were surrounded by twelve soldiers?

SIR GARETH: (*Dramatically.*) Yes! And they all had swords pointed at my heart!

SIR PERCIVAL: (*Sarcastically.*) But since you're here to tell the tale, you must have conquered them all, rescued the girl and saved the day. The end.

SIR GARETH: (*Irritated.*) Er...yeah, that's pretty much what happened. Only I didn't get to tell the tale!

SIR GAWAIN: Why so gloomy, Percival? You're like a dragon with a toothache.

SIR PERCIVAL: If you young pups had the problems I have, you'd be gloomy too.

SIR TRISTAN: Now what kind of problems would an old knight like you have?

LADY MARGARET: (*Enters stage left with a basket over her arm.*)
Yoo hoo! Sir Percival!

LADY MARIAN: (*Bustles in quickly, also with a basket.*) Sir Percival, are you here? I made you a nice mutton stew!

SIR PERCIVAL: (*Looks around as if wanting to hide.*) Oh, no.

MARGARET and MARIAN cross quickly to PERCIVAL, each takes one of his arms.

SIR PERCIVAL: Hello, Lady Margaret, Lady Marian.

LADY MARGARET: (To MARIAN.) Go home, you old cow! Sir Percival hates mutton stew!

LADY MARIAN: He loves my mutton stew! He just hates old women...who look like mutton stew!

KNIGHTS all laugh, they are enjoying this. PERCIVAL is not.

SIR PERCIVAL: Er, thank you, ladies, but I've already eaten.

LADY MARGARET: I'll bet you haven't had dessert! How does a nice apple tart sound?

SIR GARETH: (Squeezing between MARGARET and PERCIVAL, tries to put his hand in the basket.) Sounds good to me!

LADY MARGARET: (Slapping GARETH's hand.) Sorry, young man, but this apple tart is just for Sir Percival! (Shoves her basket in PERCIVAL's belly.)

LADY MARIAN: Apple tart?! You're the tart, Lady Margaret! The way you throw yourself at Sir Percival!

SIR PERCIVAL: Ladies, please....

LADY MARGARET: (Pushing MARIAN.) I'm the tart? Why you're nothing but a brazen hussy, Lady Marian! Chasing Sir Percival all over the kingdom with mutton stew!

SIR PERCIVAL: (Louder.) Ladies, PLEASE!

LADY MARIAN: I'm the hussy? (Pushing back.) You're the hussy, Margaret! I saw you sneaking in to Sir Percival's stable! What were you doing there? Sweet talking his horse?

SIR PERCIVAL: (Roars.) LADIES! PLEASE STOP! I thank you for the food, but I'm...uh...busy now, I can't talk to you.

LADY MARGARET: (Sweetly, taking PERCIVAL's arm again.) What are you busy with, sweetums? Maybe I could help you.

LADY MARIAN: (Taking PERCIVAL's other arm and smoothing his hair.) Wouldn't you rather have a real woman help you, honeypie?

PERCIVAL pulls away and runs around, LADIES follow him. Finally, PERCIVAL hides behind GAWAIN.

SIR GAWAIN: *(Holding up hands to stop them.)* Sir Percival is helping me, ladies. I'm sorry, but we're very busy now.

SIR KAY: That's right, ladies! Percival's telling us the best way to skin a dragon!

LADY MARGARET: Skin a dragon? Ooooh! I fear I shall swoon! *(Pretends to swoon, sees nobody is going to catch her, so quickly backs up to the NEAREST KNIGHT and swoons into his arms.)*

LADY MARIAN: Oh, get up you old lump! You haven't swooned in years!

LADY MARGARET: *(Jumping up.)* A lump, am I? Well, take that, you old cow! *(LADIES begin to wrestle and fight.)*

SIR GAWAIN: Please, ladies, take it outside, eh? That's it, go on out now. *(Herds the LADIES toward the exit, where they push and shove each other off stage left.)*

SIR TRISTAN: *(Punches Sir PERCIVAL in the arm.)* Percival, you old dog! I didn't know you were such a ladies man!

SIR PERCIVAL: *(Adamantly.)* I have always been a bachelor, and I'll always BE a bachelor! No mutton stew is going to change my mind!

SIR KAY: *(Putting his arm around PERCIVAL.)* Ah, but what about apple tart? *(KNIGHTS laugh.)*

MINSTREL: *(Jumping up.)* This calls for a song! *(KNIGHTS groan and cover their ears.)*

MINSTREL:

SIR PERCIVAL WAS A GALLANT KNIGHT
HE CHASED THE LOVELY DAMSELS
HE KISSED A NEW ONE EVERY DAY
AND BROKE THEIR LITTLE HAMSLS.

SIR PERCIVAL: That's ridiculous! I don't chase them, they chase me!

SIR GARETH: Hamsels? What in the world is a hamsel?

MINSTREL: Well, you try finding something to rhyme with damsel!

ROYAL ANNOUNCER: *(Enters.)* His majesty, King Arthur!

ARTHUR: *(Entering briskly, stage left.)* Men! To the table!

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When ARTHUR enters, KNIGHTS all bow, fists over their hearts. MINSTREL exits stage right. ARTHUR goes to upstage side of round table but remains standing. KNIGHTS take their places at the table.

ARTHUR: Sit, please. We have much to do. (*KNIGHTS sit, ARTHUR stands.*)

SIR GAWAIN: What is it, sire? You look vexed.

ARTHUR: I am vexed! Vexed, provoked and plagued. And, I'm really ticked off.

SIR KAY: (*Jumps to his feet and pulls his sword.*) Who is vexing you, sire? I'll fight them! I'll impale the knave!

ARTHUR: Sit down, Kay. We can't just go rushing into this fight, we must plan strategy. This is no ordinary bad guy we're up against.

SIR GARETH: Tell us, sire.

ARTHUR: Wait. Where's Lancelot?

SIR TRISTAN: Last I knew, he was out walking with Lady Elaine.

ARTHUR: A fair lady can make any knight forget the time, but he needs to know what's going on! As soon as we are finished, Kay, go find Lancelot and tell him what transpires!

SIR KAY: (*Jumping up again.*) I swear I shall do it! Only...er...what does "transpire" mean?

SIR PERCIVAL: (*Exasperated.*) How did he get to be a knight?!

SIR GAWAIN: (*To KAY.*) It means tell him what's going on.

SIR KAY: I swear I shall do it!

ARTHUR: Good. Now sit down. (*KAY sits.*) I've just learned that an ogre is stalking Camelot. Ogres are strong and mean and they eat anything, including people!

KNIGHTS murmur in amazement.

SIR PERCIVAL: Has he killed anyone yet?

ARTHUR: Not yet, but we must destroy him before he does! Now Gawain, I want you and Gareth to go...

ROYAL ANNOUNCER: (*Enters.*) Her majesty, Queen Guinevere!

GUINEVERE enters stage right. KNIGHTS all stand and bow, fists over their hearts.

GUINEVERE: Arthur! I must speak to you!

ARTHUR: Guinevere, my queen! Uh... This is unexpected. We were in a council of war. (*He motions, and KNIGHTS sit.*)

GUINEVERE: I'm sorry to interrupt, but I thought you would want to see this. It was just delivered. (*Holds out a folded note. ARTHUR takes it.*)

ARTHUR: (*Reading.*) "Dear King Arthur, if you don't come and meet me ALONE, you will be very sorry. Signed, Goric." (*Looks up.*) Who's Goric?

GUINEVERE: Goric is the ogre!

ARTHUR: How'd you know? (*GUINEVERE hands him another note.*)

ARTHUR: (*Reading.*) "I am the ogre. My name is Goric." (*Crumples note and tosses it toward KAY.*) Men, we've got to stop him!

KNIGHTS all express outrage. "That's terrible!" "Horrible!" "We must fight him!" etc.

SIR KAY: (*Looking at note.*) I think it's good!

ARTHUR: What?

SIR KAY: His handwriting. It's really good for an ogre! (*KNIGHTS are disgusted, nearest knight shoves him.*)

ARTHUR: Sir Kay, why don't you go find Lancelot.

SIR KAY: As you wish, sire! (*KAY exits stage left.*)

ARTHUR: Now then, we don't have much time. Gawain, you and Gareth go into the village and warn the people.

GAWAIN and GARETH stand and put their fists over their hearts but do not leave.

ARTHUR: Percival, round up the rest of the knights.

PERCIVAL stands, puts his fist over his heart. Does not leave.

ARTHUR: Tristan, go down to the river...

He is interrupted by SIR KAY and ELAINE, who are dragging or carrying LANCELOT by his arms and legs.

SIR KAY: I found him, sire!

GUINEVERE: Oh, dear! What happened?

LADY ELAINE: (*Lying LANCELOT down and curtsying.*) Your majesties.

ARTHUR: Lady Elaine! What happened to my knight?

LADY ELAINE: It was an ogre, sire! My Lancelot tried to fight him, but the ogre was too strong! Oh, sire, will he live?

ARTHUR: Don't fret, Lady Elaine, it'll take more than an ogre to finish Lancelot.

LADY ELAINE: Sire, the ogre made me promise to give you a message. He wants you to meet with him alone, or he's going to eat all your knights!

KNIGHTS: (*All together, loudly.*) I'd like to see him try!!

ARTHUR: Silence, everyone! Very well, I have no choice. I must meet with this ogre.

SIR GARETH: I'll go with you, sire!

ALL KNIGHTS: Yes! We'll go with you! (*Etc.*)

ARTHUR: (*Walking around, thinking.*) No! Didn't you hear the messages? He wants to meet me alone. I must plan carefully to defeat him. Everyone leave me now!

Everyone exits stage left except GUINEVERE.

GUINEVERE: Arthur, I must speak to you.

ARTHUR: What is it, my dove?

GUINEVERE: Ogres are dangerous and powerful!

ARTHUR: That's true.

GUINEVERE: So if you are to fight him, you need more than a just a sword.

ARTHUR: More than Excalibur?

GUINEVERE: Yes. To defeat this ogre, you need...Merlin.

Sound/light cue: at the name "Merlin," a clap of thunder, dimming of lights. ARTHUR and GUINEVERE look stage left. MERLIN enters stage right and walks up behind them.

GUINEVERE: (*Looking toward stage left.*) Merlin?

MERLIN: You called?

ARTHUR: (*Jumping at the sound of MERLIN'S voice.*) Merlin! How'd you do that?

MERLIN: That, sire, is what we magicians call...an entrance!

ARTHUR: I'm impressed.

MERLIN: Thank you. Now, I hear you need some help defeating an ogre.

ARTHUR: How do you know these things?

MERLIN: (*Mysteriously.*) I am a magician, sire! I know the secrets of the universe, the hidden mysteries of the world! (*Less mysteriously.*) And...Guinevere told me.

ARTHUR: Yes, indeed. How do I fight this ogre?

MERLIN: You don't need to fight him, your majesty. Just meet with him. All will be well.

ARTHUR: How do you know?

MERLIN: (*Mysteriously again.*) I have foreseen the future! You shall not die today, you must first have many children!

ARTHUR: (*Looking at GUINEVERE.*) Children, eh?

MERLIN: Yes, sire.

ARTHUR: Great! That's great news! Okay, I'm off to meet the ogre! (*Begins to exit stage left.*)

GUINEVERE: Arthur, wait!

ARTHUR: What?

GUINEVERE: You can't go meet that ogre! He's crazy! There's no telling what he'll do to you!

ARTHUR: Don't worry, my dove! Merlin just said we're going to have a bunch of kids. I can't have kids if the ogre eats me! Besides, I have Excalibur, the most powerful sword in the world! (*Reaches for his sword, but doesn't have it.*) Oh. Guess I left it outside. Never fear, my dear, I'll be back by dinner! (*Exits stage left.*)

MERLIN: Don't fret, my lady. He'll be fine.

GUINEVERE: Do you really know for sure, Merlin?

MERLIN: My lady, have I ever been wrong?

GUINEVERE: Well, remember the time...

MERLIN: Hark! I hear the spirits calling! Farewell, my queen! (*Exits stage right.*)

GUINEVERE walks over to her throne and sits down, dejected. LADY VIVIEN, LADY CHARLOTTE and LADY ANNA enter stage left and sit by throne.

LADIES: *(All together while curtsying.)* Your majesty.

GUINEVERE: Oh, hello, ladies.

LADY VIVIEN: My lady, you seem dejected. Is anything wrong?

GUINEVERE: I'm worried about Arthur, ladies. He's gone to meet a dangerous enemy!

LADY ANNA: Don't fret, my lady. King Arthur is a valiant warrior!

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Jumping up and pretending to sword fight.)* And he has Excalibur! It's the greatest sword ever! Nobody better mess with a sword like that... *(Stops chattering when GUINEVERE holds up her hand.)*

GUINEVERE: Yes, but this time he's meeting an ogre! Oh, I'm so worried, I just don't know what to do!

MORGAN LE FAY and YULA enter stage right.

ROYAL ANNOUNCER: The sister of the king, Morgan Le Fay!

MORGAN: *(Bows.)* Your Majesty.

GUINEVERE: Hello, my sister-in-law, what brings you to the castle this day?

MORGAN: I have come to warn Arthur, he is in grave danger!

GUINEVERE: *(Terribly upset.)* I knew it! I knew he shouldn't have gone!

MORGAN: You were right to worry about the ogre, your majesty.

GUINEVERE: How did you know about that?

MORGAN: Oh, I know many things, your majesty. *(Mysteriously.)* I have foreseen the future, and my brother will die by tomorrow without my help.

LADY VIVIEN: Be careful, my lady! It could be a trick!

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Speaking quickly.)* You know what they say about Morgan Le Fay! Throw her out! She's trouble! She's no good! She's a tricky little...

GUINEVERE: *(Holding up her hand to stop CHARLOTTE's chatter.)* Nonsense! Morgan Le Fey is Arthur's half-sister. She has come to help him! Now then, you say you can help Arthur?

MORGAN: (*Smiling evilly.*) If you will come to my hut, I will give you a magic potion that can help Arthur defeat the ogre. It's a very special potion that must be shared to be the most powerful.

GUINEVERE: What do you mean?

YULA: (*Jumps in front of MORGAN excitedly.*) The knights have to drink it, too! The more that drink it, the stronger they'll be!

GUINEVERE: Very well, I'll come to your hut.

MORGAN: Good. We will be waiting.

MORGAN and YULA exit stage right.

LADY VIVIEN: My lady, please don't go!

LADY ANNA: It's too dangerous!

LADY VIVIEN: King Arthur has forbidden anyone to talk to her!

GUINEVERE: Enough! I must try to help Arthur. Charlotte, you come with me. (*Begins to exit stage right.*)

LADY CHARLOTTE: (*As they are exiting.*) Of course, my lady, but I wish you wouldn't! This is a bad idea! This is a really bad idea!

GUINEVERE and CHARLOTTE exit stage right.

LADY VIVIEN: This is terrible! What are we going to do?

LADY ANNA: We must warn the King! Come, quickly!

VIVIEN and ANNA exit stage left. CURTAIN.

OUTSIDE CURTAIN

Lights up on MORGAN's hut. MORGAN, YULA and LUG are inside.

GUINEVERE and CHARLOTTE enter hut.

MORGAN: Welcome to my humble abode, your majesty.

GUINEVERE: Yes, uh...thank you. Where is this wonderful potion?

MORGAN: I have it right here.

LADY CHARLOTTE: (*Looking around uneasily.*) I have a bad feeling about this, your majesty. It could be poison!

MORGAN: I thought you might be skeptical, so we prepared small demonstration. Yula? A small sip only, Yula. (*MORGAN gives YULA a drink from a DIFFERENT bottle than she will give GUINEVERE. This must be obvious to the audience.*)

YULA makes some funny sounds and faces, then roars, flexes his muscles and lifts MORGAN's cauldron over his head.

GUINEVERE: (*Clapping.*) That's wonderful! Please, give me the potion, and I will make sure Arthur and the knights drink it all.

MORGAN: Oh, it is not ready yet, my lady. The potion needs just one thing more.

GUINEVERE: What?

MORGAN plucks a hair from GUINEVERE'S head.

GUINEVERE: Ow! What was that for?

MORGAN: A hair from your head will make it the strongest potion in the world.

LADY CHARLOTTE: My lady, noooooo! Don't do this...

MORGAN points at CHARLOTTE with two fingers as if hexing her. CHARLOTTE falls silent with a gulp.

MORGAN: Very good. Now, you must give the men this potion by sundown tomorrow or Arthur will die.

GUINEVERE: Sundown tomorrow? Then we must hurry! Thank you, Morgan Le Fay. Come, Charlotte!

GUINEVERE and CHARLOTTE exit MORGAN's hut, then pause stage center.

GUINEVERE: We don't have much time, Charlotte. Find as many knights as you can and meet me at the castle. (*Exits stage right.*)

LADY CHARLOTTE: (*Talking to herself.*) A potion from Morgan Le Fay! She might as well give him poison! Chop off his head! Feed him to the goats! This is just terrible! I must warn the king! (*Exits stage left.*)

Spotlight returns to MORGAN's hut.

MORGAN: *(Laughs evilly.)* Finally, Yula! After so many years, the kingdom of Camelot shall be mine!

YULA: You didn't give her the strength potion did you?

MORGAN: Of course not. I gave her a love potion. Whoever drinks that potion will immediately fall in love with Guinevere.

YULA: That's why you put the queen's hair in it?

MORGAN: Yes. The knights and the king shall kill each other over a woman! *(Laughs evilly.)* It's just too delicious!

YULA: Then you will inherit the kingdom?

MORGAN: Yes. All these years I have waited, trying to find a way to get rid of my brother. But he always had Excalibur and those dratted knights! But now, at last, my time has come! *(Laughs evilly.)*

YULA: It's not going to work.

MORGAN: Excuse me?

YULA: Madam, how many times have you tried to kill the king?

MORGAN: *(Counting on her fingers to three.)* Twelve.

YULA: And how many times have you succeeded? *(MORGAN glares at him.)* Right. None. And do you know why?

MORGAN: I suppose you are going to tell me.

YULA: Your schemes are too complicated! Something is always going wrong.

MORGAN: My schemes are not too complicated!

YULA: They are! They never work! You need to get back to basics. Just walk right up and stab him! Or push him off a bridge! Or drop a boulder on him!

MORGAN: You know, Yula, you are absolutely right.

YULA: I know!

MORGAN: Something simple could work.

YULA: I know!

MORGAN: Do it tonight.

YULA: I kn...what??

MORGAN: Do it tonight! Just walk right up and stab him! Or push him off a bridge! Or drop a boulder on him!

YULA: M...Me???

MORGAN: You. The sooner, the better.

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

YULA: No way. I won't do it

MORGAN: (*Menacingly.*) You will do it, Yula, or else!

YULA: You don't scare me.

MORGAN: (*Dangerously.*) Really? Now, that's a pity. You should be scared.

LUG: Uh oh. You shouldn't have said that.

YULA: Why?

MORGAN: Because I am a witch, that's why! (*Raises her arms as if casting a spell.*)

Sound Cue: Thunderclap! Lights go out two to three seconds, then come back on. While dark, YULA hides under the table. When lights come on, MORGAN is holding a rubber rat by the tail.

MORGAN: (*Talking to the rat.*) You see, Yula? You really should be scared of me.

YULA'S VOICE: Help! Help! I don't want to be a rat!

MORGAN: Are you going to do what I say?

YULA'S VOICE: Yes! Yes! Change me back! I'll do whatever you want!

MORGAN: That's more like it. (*Raises arms.*)

Sound Cue (if possible): Thunderclap! Lights out. YULA comes out. When lights come up, YULA is down on all fours with MORGAN holding him by the back of his pants or shirt.

MORGAN: Now, get up and do as you're told.

YULA: Okay! Okay! I'll do it!

MORGAN: Good.

Lights out on MORGAN's hut.

OPEN CURTAIN

Silent KNIGHTS are gone. YULA, followed very closely by LUG, enters stage right. They are tiptoeing in unison and carrying a large rope.

LUG: *(Loudly.)* What're we doin', Yula?

YULA: *(Turning around to LUG.)* SHHHH!!

LUG: *(Turning around to whatever is behind him...wall, plant, etc.)*
SHHHH!!

YULA: We're going to catch the king. Help me put out this rope.

They stop center stage and arrange the rope in a large circle. As they are arranging, they back up to each other and bump backsides. Startled, they yelp loudly.

YULA AND LUG: *(To each other.)* SHHHH!!

They take the tail of the rope off stage center, then peek their heads out, waiting for ARTHUR. He enters stage left.

ARTHUR: *(Talking to himself and pacing around.)* Where the devil did I leave that sword? It's only the most powerful sword in the world! Nothing to worry about! Who cares if it falls into the wrong hands? How could I lose Excalibur?

As ARTHUR is pacing, he steps in the rope and then immediately out. YULA and LUG pull the rope, too late, and fall backwards. There is a sound of a crash backstage. ARTHUR doesn't notice. GORIC enters stage left.

GORIC: Arrrgh!

ARTHUR: So you must be Goric.

GORIC: I am Goric. And this, I believe, belongs to you? *(Holds up Excalibur.)*

ARTHUR: How did you get that? Give it back! *(Reaches for Excalibur.)*

GORIC: *(Holding it out of reach and then sticking it in his belt.)* I will. Just as soon as you answer a riddle.

ARTHUR: A riddle? You're terrorizing my people because of a riddle? You're crazy!

GORIC: *(While ARTHUR is speaking, GORIC puts something silly on his head...basket, woman's hat, flowers, etc.)* You know, I get that all the time. I don't know why...

ARTHUR: All right, what's the riddle?

GORIC: What do women want?

ARTHUR: *(Looking around.)* What women?

GORIC: That's the riddle, you dolt! What do women want? I need to know, and I need to know soon!

ARTHUR: "What do women want" is the riddle? How am I supposed to know?

GORIC: *(Furiously.)* I thought you were the smartest man in the kingdom! You're not smart, you're dumb as a door! *(Runs at ARTHUR waving his club.)*

ARTHUR: *(Dodging.)* Wait, wait! I'll tell you the answer!

GORIC: *(Happy now.)* Oh, good. What is it?

ARTHUR: I'm not going to tell you right now. I'm...uh...I'm too hungry! I can't think straight. I might tell you the wrong answer. Come back after dinner and I'll tell you.

GORIC: No! I've waited too long already! If I don't find the right answer soon, I'm going to look like this forever!

ARTHUR: You mean you're not really an ogre?

GORIC: None of your business! Tell me the answer now! *(Grabs ARTHUR by the shirtfront.)*

ARTHUR: No...

GORIC: AARRRGGGHHH! *(Shakes him.)*

ARTHUR: I'll let you keep the hat!

GORIC: *(Drops him.)* Deal! I'll be back after dinner. And you better tell me the answer or I'm going to eat everyone in the kingdom, starting with you! *(Exits stage left.)*

YULA enters stage right and sneaks up behind ARTHUR with an axe or sword. As ARTHUR says "you there," ARTHUR kneels, pointing at the audience member and YULA swings over ARTHUR'S head and misses. The momentum spins YULA around, and he exits stage right.

ARTHUR: (*Pacing.*) Great! That's just great! How am I supposed to know what women want? (*Turns to audience and points at a male audience member.*) You there! Do you know what women want?

SILENT KNIGHTS enter stage left.

ARTHUR: Hey! Guards! Any of you know what women want?

SILENT KNIGHTS all shake their heads or shrug.

ARTHUR: 'Course not. Then what're you doing here?!

SILENT KNIGHTS exit stage right. VIVIEN, CHARLOTTE, ELAINE, ANNA and MINSTREL run in stage left, very upset.

LADY CHARLOTTE: Your majesty! (*Women curtsy.*)

ARTHUR: Ladies, I'm glad to see you! Come, sit down! I need some advice, quick!

LADY VIVIEN: But your majesty, we must tell you something important!

ARTHUR: Not now! I need your help or the whole kingdom may perish!

LADY CHARLOTTE: But sire...

ARTHUR: (*Ignoring her.*) Listen carefully, ladies. I need to know...what do women really want?

LADIES look at each other, confused.

LADY ANNA: Sire?

ARTHUR: You know, what is it that women want most? What do women really want?

LADIES all start speaking together: "A handsome husband!" "A lot of money!" "Flowers and candy!" "Undying loyalty!" "A sense of humor" etc. etc. This goes on for several seconds, ARTHUR looking more and more confused.

ARTHUR: Okay... All right... Ladies, please... (*Yells.*) QUIET!

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

LADIES stop talking except CHARLOTTE, who jumps up and continues speaking.

LADY CHARLOTTE: ...Personally, I'd rather have a good horse...
(Looks around, looks embarrassed.) Oh. Sorry. (Sits.)

ARTHUR: Ladies, this won't do! I must have the correct answer tonight!

MINSTREL: Sire, this calls for a song!

ARTHUR: Not now!

MINSTREL: But this is a good one, sire, I promise!

ARTHUR: If my wife didn't love your stupid songs so much, I'd feed you to the fish. All right, this better be good.

MINSTREL:

WHAT DO WOMEN REALLY WANT?
THE ANSWER MAY DEFEAT US
ARTHUR BETTER FIND THE THING
OR THE OGRE'S GOING TO EAT US.

ARTHUR: How'd you know about that?

MINSTREL: The ogre told me! He ran over me when he left the castle.
Left hair all over my tunic! (Brushes off his shirt.)

LADY VIVIEN: Sire, is it true? The ogre's going to eat us?

ARTHUR: Yes, it's true...

LADIES all squeal and jump up.

LADY CHARLOTTE: I can't believe it!

LADY VIVIEN: Me either!

LADY CHARLOTTE: The minstrel got it right!

LADY VIVIEN: The first time ever!

MINSTREL: Hey! I get it right lots of times!

LADIES shake their heads.

MINSTREL: (Looking around.) Sometimes?

LADIES shake their heads.

MINSTREL: Once?

LADY ELAINE: Including this time.

LADY ANNA: I thought it was very nice, minstrel.

MINSTREL: Thank you, my lady.

LADY ANNA: It must be really hard to think up all those songs and make them rhyme and everything.

MINSTREL: Oh, it is! People don't realize...

ARTHUR: (*Interrupts, exasperated.*) Can we PLEASE get back to business?! We're in mortal peril here!

LADY MARIAN and LADY MARGARET enter stage left. While ARTHUR and THE LADIES are talking, YULA and LUG sneak in stage right, hiding behind set props or carrying a potted plant to hide behind.

MINSTREL: Sorry, your majesty.

LADY ANNA: Forgive us, sire.

ARTHUR: Lady Marian, Lady Margaret! Perhaps you know!

MARIAN and MARGARET curtsy.

LADY MARIAN: What is it you wish to know, sire?

ARTHUR: What do women really want?

LADY MARGARET: Why, sire, everybody knows that! What every woman wants is...nice...warm...socks!

LADY MARIAN: Don't listen to her, sire. What every woman wants is a backrub every Saturday.

LADY MARGARET: What would you know, you old prune? You eat cold mutton stew for breakfast!

LADY MARIAN: I do not, you batty old buzzard! (*MARGARET and MARIAN begin to wrestle, but stop after ELAINE speaks. ARTHUR throws up his hands, exasperated.*)

LADY ELAINE: Sire, women want lots of different things. There is no ONE answer. (*Other LADIES nod in agreement.*)

ARTHUR: There must be! There must be one thing above all else that women want!

LADIES look at each other and shake their heads or shrug helplessly.

ARTHUR: All right, leave me now, ladies. I must think. The future of Camelot is at stake here.

ALL LADIES except CHARLOTTE rise, curtsy and exit stage left.

LADY CHARLOTTE: Sire, about the queen...

ARTHUR: She's not here, she'll be back soon. Run along now, I must think. *(Distracted, ARTHUR does not see which way CHARLOTTE exits.)*

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Sighs.)* Yes, sire. *(Exits stage right.)*

ARTHUR: *(Pacing.)* What do women want? What do women want? *(Stops near YULA.)* I know what I want...food! Lady Charlotte! *(Exits stage center.)*

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Enters stage right and stops where ARTHUR was.)* Sire? You called me?

YULA leaps out, throws a blanket over CHARLOTTE and knocks her out.

LUG: *(Clapping his hands.)* We caught the king! We caught the king! *(Throws CHARLOTTE over his shoulder.)*

YULA: We'll take him to the hut. Come on! *(Starts to exit stage right, then notices the dress.)* Wait! It's not the king!

LUG: Not the king?

YULA: It's a girl! Quick, bring her over here!

LUG sets CHARLOTTE down near the throne and takes off the blanket. YULA tries to fix up her hair and dress.

ARTHUR: *(From offstage.)* Charlotte! Lady Charlotte?

YULA: Come on! *(YULA and LUG exit stage right.)*

ARTHUR: *(Entering stage center.)* Lady Charlotte! What happened to you?

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Rubbing her head.)* Sire, I think someone tried to kidnap me!

ARTHUR: Nonsense, this is Camelot! Things like that don't happen in Camelot! You probably just bumped into something.

LADY CHARLOTTE: *(Still rubbing her head.)* Whatever you say, sire.

ARTHUR: Lady Charlotte, I'm famished. Would you get me something to eat?

LADY CHARLOTTE: As you wish, sire. *(Stumbles off stage left.)*

LORENA enters stage right, wearing a veil.

LORENA: Your majesty. *(Curtsies.)*

ARTHUR: Who are you, and how'd you get in here?

LORENA: My name is Lorena, sire. I'm here to help you solve the riddle.

ARTHUR: How'd you know about that?

LORENA: I know all about Goric the ogre and his threats.

ARTHUR: How?!

LORENA: Never mind. The important thing is, I know the answer to the riddle.

ARTHUR: But how do I know it's the right answer? I don't know it, *(Indicates male audience member.)* that guy doesn't know it, women themselves don't even know it.

LORENA: Well, I do know it. Just hear me out, your majesty. If you think it's the correct answer, you can tell it to the ogre and save the kingdom. If you don't, you're no worse off, right?

ARTHUR: You have a point. Okay, let's hear it.

LORENA goes to him, whispers in his ear. ARTHUR begins to laugh.

ARTHUR: By Jove, I think you've got it! It IS the true answer! Ha ha! We're saved! *(Picks up LORENA by the waist and swings her around.)* Lady Lorena, I owe you my kingdom! How can I ever repay you?

LORENA: Now comes the hard part, sire. Brace yourself! *(She lifts her veil.)*

ARTHUR: *(Wails and staggers back.)* Aaaaagggghh! Put it down! Put it down!

LORENA puts veil back down and begins to sob.

ARTHUR: Please, forgive me. I was taken by surprise. Lady Lorena, please. *(Raises her veil.)* I've never seen a face... Whew! ...quite like that. It doesn't matter, though! You saved the kingdom and I shall repay you! What's your price? A new carriage? A flock of sheep? Your own castle?

LORENA: I want to marry one of your knights.

ARTHUR: What?! Marry a knight? Er... Are you sure you don't want your own flock of sheep? I'll even throw in a donkey!

LORENA: Sire, I am a good woman. I am wise and strong. I would make any man a good wife, but look at me! How else am I going to get a husband?

ARTHUR: *(Walking around her.)* I see your point.

LORENA: You promised to repay me for SAVING THE KINGDOM! I want a knight for a husband. Any of them will do. Come on now, you promised!

ARTHUR: Okay, okay, I promised! King Arthur's word is law! Come back here in an hour, and you shall meet your groom.

LORENA: *(Throws herself at his feet and hugs his legs.)* Oh, thank you! Thank you, sire!

ARTHUR: You're welcome. Run along now. *(LORENA exits stage left.)* I just hope the lucky groom doesn't kill me in my sleep. *(Exits stage right.)*

GUINEVERE: *(From offstage.)* Sir Tristan! Sir Percival! *(Enters stage left.)* Sir Kay! Sir Gawain!

GUINEVERE looks disheveled and carries the bottle of potion. She sits dejectedly.

GUINEVERE: Oh, where can they all be? I've looked everywhere! Arthur's going to die tomorrow, and it's all my fault! *(Puts her head in her hands.)*

SIR KAY and SIR TRISTAN enter stage left and bow, fists over their hearts.

BOTH KNIGHTS: Your majesty.

GUINEVERE: *(Jumping up.)* Sir Tristan! Sir Kay! I am so glad to see you! Please, sit down. Let me get you something to drink!

SIR KAY: No indeed, my queen! It is our job to serve you! Please, allow me! (*He takes the bottle from her.*) Tristan, a goblet for our queen!

SIR TRISTAN gets a goblet from table stage right.

GUINEVERE: No, no! You are brave warriors! I would be honored to serve you! (*She tries to get bottle back, but KAY holds it out of reach.*)

SIR TRISTAN: My queen, if the king found out you served us, he would chop off our heads.

SIR KAY: That's right, my lady! (*He begins to pour potion in the goblet, but gets fancy, raising the bottle high above the goblet, and spills some.*)

SIR TRISTAN: Stop you clumsy knave! Let me do it! (*He grabs the bottle, but KAY grabs it back.*)

SIR KAY: No way! I'll do it!

SIR TRISTAN: I'll do it!

SIR KAY: No! Me!

THE KNIGHTS fight over the bottle, slopping it everywhere, spilling the goblet.

GUINEVERE: Stop! Stop! Knights, please, you are spilling all the po...
I mean, the drink!

SIR TRISTAN: (*Kneeling before her.*) I beg your forgiveness, my lady!

SIR KAY: (*Kneeling.*) We forgot ourselves, my queen.

GUINEVERE: That's all right, please, just have a drink, both of you!

KNIGHTS bumble around, getting in each other's way getting up. GUINEVERE picks up the bottle and puts it on table stage right. MERLIN enters stage right.

MERLIN: Sir Kay, Sir Tristan! Where have you been? I have a message from the king!

KNIGHTS stand at attention.

MERLIN: Arthur says to go find the other knights and come back here, pronto!

SIR TRISTAN: It shall be done!

TRISTAN and KAY exit stage left.

GUINEVERE: Merlin, I've been worried! Have you seen Arthur?

MERLIN: I just talked to him, my queen. He's fine as frog's hair!

GUINEVERE: Did he meet the ogre? Did they do battle?

MERLIN: Nope. The ogre just asked him a riddle. He wanted to know what women want.

GUINEVERE: Oh no! We're doomed!

MERLIN: Don't fret, your majesty, everything's fine. Lorena helped him.

GUINEVERE: Who's Lorena?

MERLIN: She'll be along later. You'll like her. She has a great...personality.

GARETH, GAWAIN, KAY, PERCIVAL and TRISTAN enter stage left.

MERLIN: Very good, the knights are here! Knights of Camelot, the king has sent me with a very important mission. Wait. Where is Sir Lancelot?

SIR PERCIVAL: Probably out with Lady Elaine again.

SIR GARETH: No, he's not, he's coming! He's just moving a little slow after his fight with the ogre.

KNIGHTS all laugh.

MERLIN: Very well, we'll start without him. The king wanted you all here to decide something very important. As you all know, Camelot was in grave danger this day. The ogre threatened to eat everyone in the kingdom if Arthur didn't answer a riddle for him by sundown.

SIR GAWAIN: But it's almost sundown now!

MERLIN: Yes. Even as we speak, Arthur is meeting with the ogre to answer the riddle.

SIR KAY: Then we should be with him!

SIR TRISTAN: Let's go! Our king needs us!

KNIGHTS start to run out.

MERLIN: WAIT! Come back here! Arthur is fine. He knows the answer to the riddle.

SIR PERCIVAL: Merlin, what is the riddle?

MERLIN: The ogre wanted to know...WHAT WOMEN REALLY WANT.

SIR GARETH: Oh no!

SIR KAY: We're doomed!

SIR PERCIVAL: No man on earth knows that!

SIR GAWAIN: Wait. You said Arthur KNOWS the answer to the riddle? How'd he find out?

SIR TRISTAN: Yeah, I've been wanting to know that for years!

MERLIN: A lady helped him. A very wise lady. If it weren't for her, we would all be ogre food right now.

SIR PERCIVAL: Who is this lady?

MERLIN: Her name is Lorena, and she is the reason for this meeting. Her price for saving Camelot is to marry a knight.

MINSTREL: This calls for a song!

KNIGHTS and MERLIN groan loudly and cover their ears. TRISTAN and KAY cover each other's ears.

GUINEVERE: How lovely!

MINSTREL:

AN EVIL OGRE CAME TO TOWN
HE GAVE THE KING A RIDDLE
GOOD KING ARTHUR SAVED THE DAY
HE HIT HIM WITH A FIDDLE.

KNIGHTS roar with displeasure.

SIR GARETH: That was terrible!

SIR TRISTAN: The ogre didn't hit him with a fiddle!

SIR KAY: Arthur has the world's most powerful sword. Why would he use a fiddle?

MINSTREL: Okay, okay, I'm sorry! Sheesh! You expect me to get every little detail right? Picky, picky, picky!

MERLIN: As I was saying, Lady Lorena has saved the kingdom and her price is to marry a knight. Which of you will volunteer?

SIR GARETH: If she saved Camelot, she must be very wise and brave! I'll volunteer to marry her!

GUINEVERE: Oh, Sir Gareth! How very gallant of you!

SIR KAY: Wait a minute! Lorena's a pretty name, she's probably gorgeous! I'll marry her! (*Draws sword.*)

KAY and GARETH begin to duel.

SIR TRISTAN: Hold on! Maybe I want to marry her! (*Draws sword and enters duel.*)

SIR PERCIVAL: Merlin! How old is this lady?

MERLIN: That's hard to say, Sir Percival.

SIR PERCIVAL: Is she older than me?

MERLIN: Er...maybe not...

SIR PERCIVAL: Good enough, I'm in! (*Enters swordfight.*)

MERLIN: Wonderful! We have four noble volunteers! Now, we shall meet the lady. Lady Lorena?

KNIGHTS stop fighting and line up. LORENA enters stage right, wearing the veil. She curtsies to GUINEVERE.

LORENA: Your majesty.

GUINEVERE: Lady Lorena, you have the undying gratitude of the whole kingdom. And now you shall have your reward, you shall marry a knight!

MERLIN: Sir Kay! Sir Gareth! Sir Tristan! Sir Percival! (*Each knight steps forward as his name is called and does something...an elaborate bow, flexing his muscles, etc.*) These four noble knights have volunteered to marry you, my lady. You may choose which one you want.

LORENA: I am grateful that you all volunteered to marry me. But I must be fair. Look upon my face and then decide. You may change your minds.

SIR KAY: A knight of Camelot will never change his mind, my lady!

LORENA lifts her veil. THE KNIGHTS react wildly, yelling, gagging, etc.

SIR KAY: Aaaauughh!! I just changed my mind. *(He steps back.)*

SIR GARETH: I just remembered... I'm already married! *(He steps back.)*

SIR TRISTAN: I always wanted to be a priest! *(He steps back.)*

SIR PERCIVAL: I...want some, uh...mutton stew! *(He steps back.)*

LORENA begins to weep. GUINEVERE puts her arm over her shoulder.

GUINEVERE: Knights of Camelot, I am ashamed of you! This woman has saved us all from a fate worse than death, yet you mock her! *(To LORENA.)* Lady Lorena, how did this happen to you?

LORENA: It was an evil spell, your majesty. It was done to me by Morgan Le Fay.

GUINEVERE: Morgan Le Fay?!

MERLIN: That evil witch! Don't ever trust that old hag, your majesty! She's baaaaad!

GUINEVERE: But Morgan Le Fay helped me! She knew Arthur was in danger from the ogre! She gave me a magic potion to help him!

LANCELOT enters stage right. He walks to the bottle of potion, picks it up and takes a drink as GUINEVERE says, "It's there!"

MERLIN: A potion? This is terrible! My lady, where is this potion? We must destroy it immediately!

GUINEVERE: *(Points.)* It's there! In that bottle...

Everyone reacts as they see LANCELOT drink from the bottle. Gasps, cries of "No!" etc. LANCELOT shudders wildly, shakes his head and makes funny sounds. Then focuses on GUINEVERE.

SIR LANCELOT: *(Begins to walk toward GUINEVERE.)* Guinevere! My dearest love, Guinevere! You are the air I breathe! The water I drink! You are the heart of my soul!

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

ALL THE KNIGHTS form a line in front of GUINEVERE and draw their swords.

SIR PERCIVAL: You dare call the queen by her name? Prepare to fight!

MERLIN: STOP! He is under a spell! Do not let him near the queen, but do not hurt him! Just...grab him!

THREE KNIGHTS tackle LANCELOT, while others guard GUINEVERE. The fight can be as long as the director desires. While they are fighting, KNIGHTS close around LANCELOT and tie him up with a rope. ARTHUR enters stage left.

ARTHUR: What the devil's going on here?

KNIGHTS and MERLIN bow.

MERLIN: Sir Lancelot drank an evil potion, sire. It made him fall in love with the queen.

ARTHUR: (*Very concerned.*) Guinevere! Are you all right?

GUINEVERE: Yes, I'm fine.

ARTHUR: (*Much less concerned.*) And Lady Lorena...are you okay?

LORENA: Yes, sire.

ARTHUR: (*To himself.*) Pity. (*Louder.*) So Merlin, how long will this potion last?

MERLIN: A few weeks, maybe a few months. The important thing is, we cannot let Lancelot near the queen. If he kisses her, she will love him back!

ARTHUR: Guinevere and Lancelot?!

GUINEVERE: Don't worry, my love. I'll be careful.

ARTHUR: You better!

MERLIN: The potion will wear off eventually. But we have another problem. We haven't found a groom yet.

GUINEVERE: Yes, as I was saying...it's a dark day in Camelot! Whatever happened to chivalry? Whatever happened...

SIR GAWAIN: (*Interrupts her.*) I will marry the lady, my queen.

EVERYONE is surprised. ARTHUR motions him forward.

ARTHUR: Sir Gawain, you understand what you're doing here? No love potions?

SIR GAWAIN: No, sire. I value bravery, and the lady is VERY brave and VERY honest.

ARTHUR: *(Aside to GAWAIN.)* And VERY ugly!

GUINEVERE: Sir Gawain, you are noble and good. May God reward you. Lady Lorena, will you have this man?

LORENA: Yes, your majesty.

ARTHUR: You'll be married in the morning!

GUINEVERE: I have a wonderful idea! In honor of Lady Lorena, it will be a masquerade wedding! *(Claps her hands.)* Ladies! *(To ARTHUR.)* Now Arthur, you and your knights must leave. We have much to do!

MARIAN, MARGARET, ELAINE, CHARLOTTE, VIVIEN and ANNA enter stage left. LORENA puts down the veil.

ARTHUR: *(To GUINEVERE.)* You're throwing me out of my own castle?

GUINEVERE: Oh, you want to help decorate?

ARTHUR: Men! Let's go hunting!

SIR GARETH: Sire, what shall we do with Lancelot?

ARTHUR: Lock him in the dungeon for now.

KNIGHTS, MERLIN and ARTHUR exit stage left. MINSTREL exits stage right.

GUINEVERE: Ladies, this is Lady Lorena, and she will be marrying Sir Gawain in the morning. It will be a masquerade wedding! *(LADIES oooh and aaah excitedly.)* Get the wedding things!

ELAINE and MARGARET bring out a large basket or chest. It is filled with wedding decorations or wedding veils. THE LADIES decorate the castle or try on veils while they talk.

LADY CHARLOTTE: (*Jumping up and down with excitement.*) Oh, this is so exciting! A masquerade wedding! I love masquerades...and weddings!

LADY VIVIEN: How did you do it, Lady Lorena? I've been trying to get Sir Tristan to notice me for months!

LADY MARIAN: I'll bet you cooked up something delicious, didn't you, missy? The way to a man's heart is through his stomach!

LADY MARGARET: (*Indicating MARIAN.*) She's a crazy old bat, but she's right, the way to a man's heart IS through his stomach!

LADY MARIAN: (*Dreamily.*) I remember the first time I made mutton stew for my very first sweetheart.

LADY CHARLOTTE: Did he fall in love with you?

LADY MARGARET: He spent a week in the hospital!

MARIAN sticks her tongue out at MARGARET behind her back.

LADY VIVIEN: What about the first time you cooked for a man, Margaret?

LADY MARGARET: (*Dreamily.*) He was tall, dark and handsome...a brave warrior!

LADY ELAINE: What happened?

LADY MARIAN: He went screaming into the night!

MARGARET puts a veil, glove, etc. around MARIAN'S neck and pretends to choke her.

LADY VIVIEN: Maybe I'd better not try cooking. How did you get Sir Gawain to notice you, Lady Lorena?

LADY CHARLOTTE: (*Trying to see through veil.*) You must be very beautiful.

LORENA: You must remember, ladies, the outside of a person is not the most important!

LADY CHARLOTTE: That's true! But it helps!

GUINEVERE: Ladies, Lorena will need a wedding gown. Take her up and let her choose one of mine.

ALL LADIES except ELAINE start to exit stage left. MINSTREL runs in stage right

MINSTREL: My queen, I've written another song!

GUINEVERE: Lovely! Ladies, wait! Our minstrel has a song for us!

(LADIES turn back.)

MINSTREL:

WEDDINGS TAKE A LOT OF THINGS,
DRESSES, CAKE AND CHAMPAGNE
AND THE MOST IMPORTANT THING -
DARK GLASSES FOR SIR GAWAIN

LORENA reacts sadly. LADIES put their arms around her and lead her off stage left. LADY ANNA marches quickly up to MINSTREL, smacks her, then exits stage left.

GUINEVERE: Minstrel, you know I love your songs.

MINSTREL: Thank you, my lady!

GUINEVERE: *(Threateningly.)* But if you ever sing that song again, I will throw you in the moat! *(MINSTREL steps back, looking worried.)*
Come now, we have work to do. *(GUINEVERE exits stage right.)*

MINSTREL starts to exit behind GUINEVERE but ELAINE grabs her arm.

LADY ELAINE: Minstrel, please tell me what happened! Why is my Lancelot being punished?

MINSTREL: He drank a potion that made him fall in love with the queen.

LADY ELAINE: Oh, no!

MINSTREL: Oh, yes! But don't worry, it's only temporary.

LADY ELAINE: So the potion will wear off?

MINSTREL: That's what Merlin says, we just don't know how long it will take.

LADY ELAINE: Could it take days?

MERLIN: Days, months, years...

LADY ELAINE: Years? Oh, no! I'll never get to marry my Lancelot!
(Begins to cry.)

MINSTREL: Now, now, don't cry! It probably won't take years to wear off, it's just bad luck!

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

ELAINE wails loudly.

MINSTREL: Say! We have a wedding tomorrow, isn't that nice?
Everybody loves weddings!

ELAINE runs off stage left, crying.

MINSTREL: *(To audience.)* What did I say? *(Shrugs and exits stage right.)*

CURTAIN.

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ACT TWO
OUTSIDE CURTAIN

In front of curtain: LADY ELAINE enters stage left with a basket of flowers over her arm. She is picking flowers and looks sad. MORGAN and YULA enter stage right. MORGAN wears a scarf or hood so she is somewhat disguised.

MORGAN: Good evening, lovely maiden!

LADY ELAINE: *(Sadly.)* Good evening.

MORGAN: What pretty flowers you have.

LADY ELAINE: *(Still sad.)* They are for a wedding tomorrow.

MORGAN: A wedding? And whose wedding would that be?

LADY ELAINE: Sir Gawain and Lady Lorena. *(Sighs loudly.)*

YULA: You don't sound very happy about it.

LADY ELAINE: I wish it were my wedding. I was supposed to marry Sir Lancelot, but he drank an evil potion, and now he's in love with the queen! *(Starts to sob.)* They threw him in the dungeon! *(Runs off stage left.)*

MORGAN: Yula, I have another ideal. Oh, I'm such a genius!

YULA: What are you plotting now, Madam?

MORGAN: A strengthening potion.

YULA: A real one?

MORGAN: A real one. I will sneak in to the dungeon and give it to Lancelot. When he drinks it, he will become stronger than any other man! But he'll still be in love with Guinevere!

YULA: But madam, Arthur and his knights will fight to the death to protect their queen!

MORGAN: Precisely, Yula! They will fight each other until they're all gone! And then I, Morgan Le Fay, shall be queen! *(Laughs evilly.)*

YULA: Another complicated scheme.

MORGAN: *(Threatening.)* Don't you have a job to do?

YULA: Er...uh...yes! I'm off to kill the king!

MORGAN and YULA exit stage right.

CHAOS IN CAMELOT!

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