

Benedict Flynn
KING ARTHUR
and the Knights of the Round Table

Read by **Sean Bean**



1	Prologue – the reign of Uther Pendragon	1:58
2	The death of Uther Pendragon	2:34
3	A summons to the Great Council in London	6:54
4	The sword in the anvil	6:32
5	King Arthur learns from Merlin	4:29
6	Magic and Guinevere, the young daughter of King Leodegrance	6:48
7	From a lake, the sword Excalibur	7:01
8	Arthur, Guinevere and the Round Table	9:32
9	Merlin’s farewell, and a surprise arrival	5:15
10	A new knight – Sir Lancelot	7:54
11	Sir Gawain and the Green Knight	9:59
12	‘And there was the Green Knight’...	3:00
13	The adventures of Sir Lancelot at Corbenic Castle	10:45
14	‘Elaine refused to be comforted’	5:18
15	Mordred – black, black hair and cruel, pale eyes	2:58
16	The sword in the stone and the Holy Grail	8:23
17	The Holy Grail again	9:09
18	Lancelot and Guinevere	9:12
19	Guinevere is saved	4:38
20	Battle between Arthur and Lancelot	9:03
21	Mordred and Morgana le Fay plot	6:16
22	Face to face with Mordred	3:38
23	Excalibur returns to the Lady of the Lake	4:28
24	To Avalon...	2:33

Total time: 2:28:30

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There are still some places in Britain, hidden away, that are beyond the reach of time. On certain days, at certain times of the year, they can be found. But you have to know where to look unless you come across them by chance, which can happen.

At first there seems nothing remarkable about them: the entrance might be a hollow tree or a sea cave, perhaps a dark mountain lake. But if you climbed inside the hollow tree, or tried to find the end of the sea cave, or stared into the cold mountain water too long, you might find more than you expected to find.

Because in one such place beyond the reach of time, deep in a hillside, sleeps Arthur, King of England. He sleeps in shining armour on a bed of stone, waiting for the call to save his country in its hour of greatest need. With him there sits an old man, Merlin the Wise, protecting Arthur with his enchantment, until that day comes.

Merlin's magic is needed. There are those who would like to see Arthur never wake again. His arch-enemy, the wicked Morgana

le Fey, for one, who plotted so deviously against Arthur, hoping to win his kingdom for herself.

And Merlin's magic protects Arthur as he sleeps because there is no sword at his hand. His great shield leans against the cave wall, but Excalibur, the most beautiful and the most famous sword in the world, which no man could stand against, is not there with him. The Lady of the Lake has it safe in her keeping, until the day comes when Arthur is called on to wield it once again.

Who knows, when Arthur wakes perhaps he will call the best knights in the country to sit at another Round Table with him as he did before. And they will set out once again, to rid the country of the troubles that plague it, and bring peace, making the hall of a new Round Table ring with the stories of the brave deeds they perform and their perilous adventures.

Perhaps there will be a new Sir Lancelot, who the world knows was the greatest knight in the prowess of arms, except his son Sir Galahad, who sought and found the Holy

Grail; or a knight as brave as Sir Gawain, whose courage was tested by the strange Green Knight – or as kind as Sir Ector who looked after Arthur as a boy. Maybe there will even be a woman as beautiful as Queen Guinevere to be a new queen for Arthur.

But if you do discover a sleeping king dressed in shining armour, without a sword, and a withered man who looks like he might be a wizard, quietly go back the way you came, without disturbing their sleep. Now is not the time to wake them. But when the time comes, be ready: they may call on you.

Notes by Benedict Flynn

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NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues**

DE BOEK SYMPHONY IN G Royal Flanders Philharmonic Orchestra, Frédéric Devreese	8.223740
SORENSEN THE ECHOING GARDEN The Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Leif Segerstam	8.224039
SIBELIUS FINLANDIA CSR Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava), Kenneth Schermerhorn	8.550103
BUCK LANDSCAPES The Danish Chamber Players, Svend Aaquist	8.224034
MARSCHNER OVERTURES Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra (Kosice), Alfred Walter	8.223342
RAFF SYMPHONY No. 3 Czecho-Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra (Kosice), Urs Schneider	8.223321
ELGAR ENIGMA VARIATIONS Czecho-Slovak RSO, Adrian Leaper	8.550229

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These stories are about how, many years ago, Arthur, the once and future King of England, set out to save his country from the troubles that plagued it, aided by the brave knights of his Round Table, and the most famous sword in the world, Excalibur. How Merlin the Wizard fought against the wicked Morgana le Fay's enchantments, and how Arthur loved and lost the beautiful Guinevere, his Queen.



Sean Bean is known for his major roles in films such as *Goldeneye*, *When Saturday Comes*, *Patriot Games* and *Anna Karenina*, and for his TV roles in the *Sharpe* series, *Lady Chatterley*, *Clarissa* and *A Woman's Guide to Adultery*. His theatre credits include *Romeo and Juliet* and *Fair Maid of the West* for the RSC.

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