

# Knights, Camera, Action!

## Characters - p.2

- The BIRDS - p.2
- The Baddies - p.2
- The Lackeys - p.3
- The Magic Wielders - p.3
- The Miscellany - p.3

## Songs - p.4

## Summary - p.5

### Act 1 (song scenes are bolded)

- 1.1 - In which plots are planned. - p.6
- 1.2** - In which the BIRDS are introduced. - p.8
- 1.3 - In which Cass and Nova get 'one last job'. - p.14
- 1.4 - In which the BIRDS buy things they don't really want. - p.16
- 1.5 - In which both tea and mistakes are made. - p.20
- 1.6** - In which a common misconception is cleared up. - p.23
- 1.7** - In which evildoers are frustrated by other evildoers. - p.28
- 1.8 - In which several knights are very silly indeed. - p.30
- 1.9 - In which the Grail is fought over. - p.34

### Act 2

- 2.1** - In which prophecies and parodies are made. - p.39
- 2.2 - In which the Grail is fought over for a second time. - p.43
- 2.3 - In which our heroes buy into a pyramid scheme. - p.46
- 2.4** - In which we are briefly introspective, before breaking out into song. - p.49
- 2.5** - In which there is a lady in the lake. - p.51
- 2.6 - In which we all fall down. - p.58
- 2.7 - In which the Grail is fought over for the final time. - p.60
- 2.8** - In which ships sail. - p.66

## Character List - p.70

## CHARACTERS:

### The British Isles Re-Enactment and Dramatics Society (BIRDS)

**Artie** - The leader of the society. Artie is extremely confident in his own abilities, which frequently get exposed as not quite being up to scratch. Charismatic and outgoing, Artie is nonetheless slightly lacking in the brains department.

**Lance** - Artie's understudy. Lance fancies himself as a leader, and as a result often comes across as quite loud-mouthed and rude, but ultimately, he's a big fan of Artie, and would never willingly undermine his leadership.

**Gwen** - Gwayne's twin sister. Joint smartest BIRD (along with her brother), Gwen is excitable and friendly, with a love of pop culture and drama.

**Gwayne** - Gwen's twin brother. Joint smartest BIRD (along with his sister), Gwayne is laid-back, cool, and oftentimes overly snarky.

**Percy** - The emotional heart of the BIRDS, Percy cares deeply about their friends, and is a lot more useful than their friends tend to realise.

**Gareth** - Gareth is the method actor of the group and takes his role very seriously, no matter the circumstances.

### The Baddies

**Mr. Green** - The most stylish and most sinister of the five developers, Mr. Green wears a green suit (we must know some Riddler cosplayers right?) or just generally stylish green.

**Mr. Knight** - Mr. Green's right-hand man, Mr. Knight is usually laconic and laid-back, but has a penchant for emotional outbursts.

**Ms. Moore** - A pragmatic property developer who gets on well with Mx. Dredd and Ms. Uther, but is wary of Mr. Green and Mr. Knight.

**Mx. Dredd** - Close ally of Ms. Moore and Mr Uther, Mx. Dredd is the go-to for information and logistics within the group, and also the most relaxed of the five developers.

**Ms. Uther** - Ally of Ms. Moore and Mx Dredd. Ms. Uther is very frustrated by how they are treated by Green and Knight and isn't afraid to show it.

## **The Lackeys**

**Cass** - The 'brawn' of Cass & Nova, Cass is the Pinky to Nova's Brain - but a little smarter, and with an emotional intelligence that often saves the day.

**Nova** - The brains behind the Cass & Nova duo, Nova is very much the Brain to Cass's Pinky, with all the ambition and anxiety that comes with the role.

## **The Magic Wielders**

**Morgan** - The Wholesome Witch of the Woods. Just wants to try her best to help, but sometimes ends up being *too* helpful. Morgan has big nerd energy.

**Morgeuse** - Morgan's sister, the Wicked Witch of the Woods. She's wicked, as in 'totally radical, yo' - but the name tends to give a lot of people the wrong idea.

**Mervin** - A mysterious old man who roams the forest, Mervin has the gift of prophecy - but only for things that fit the classic light entertainment tropes...

## **The Miscellany**

**Alexa** - A mysterious spirit of the forest, who speaks in an oddly neutral tone. A quest-giver whose motives seem a little... Quest-ionable...

**Siri** - Literally just Siri.

**Cortana** - The siren of the Wizardy Waters; she loves to mess with humans.

**Mrs Kingfisher** - Percy's mum, an auctioneer by trade who loves her work just a little bit *too* much.

**Lesgeuse** - Morgeuse's secretary, does all of her witching work which she never seems to get around to.

**The Knight Who Says 'No'** - A knight, who says 'no'.

**The Knight Who Says 'Yes'** - A knight, who says 'yes'.

**The Knight Who Says 'It's Complicated'** - Go on. Have a guess.

**The Knight Who Says 'Neigh'** - Has a horse head and you guessed it...

## **Songs:**

**BIRDS of a Feather** - A wholesome and energetic number that introduces the BIRDS, and provides them with a little more backstory than they currently have.

**Morgeuse in the Heuse** - A rap in which Morgeuse introduces herself and Lesgeuse beatboxes.

**Always One Step Ahead** - What seems like an ominous, dramatic villainous number, but is secretly three undercover cops singing about how their targets are just a bit too smart for them.

**Defying Prophecy** - A filk of 'Defying Gravity' in which Cass and Nova sing about their desire to dictate their own futures. Don't worry, this one's already written.

**Spontanei-tea** - A quirky little number in which Morgan teaches Cass the importance of improv, and of not looking at life through such a black-and-white lens.

**Every Triangle is a Love Triangle When you Love Triangles** - A love song where Artie, Lance and Gwen pine for each other.

**The Final Song** - This is the only description more redundant than that of the four knights.

## Summary

### Act 1

- 1.1 - In which plots are planned.
- 1.2 - In which the BIRDS are introduced.
- 1.3 - In which Cass and Nova get 'one last job'.
- 1.4 - In which the BIRDS buy things they don't really want.
- 1.5 - In which both tea and mistakes are made.
- 1.6 - In which a common misconception is cleared up.
- 1.7 - In which evildoers are frustrated by other evildoers.
- 1.8 - In which several knights are very silly indeed.
- 1.9 - In which the Grail is fought over.

### Act 2

- 2.1 - In which prophecies and parodies are made.
- 2.2 - In which the Grail is fought over for a second time.
- 2.3 - In which our heroes buy into a pyramid scheme.
- 2.4 - In which we are briefly introspective, before breaking out into song.
- 2.5 - In which there is a lady in the lake.
- 2.6 - In which we all fall down.
- 2.7 - In which the Grail is fought over for the final time.
- 2.8 - In which ships sail.

## Act 1

### 1.1 - Green's Gambit

*Curtain up on the DEVELOPERS, all round a small, square table. GREEN is the only one stood up, and as the play begins, he slams his fist down on the table.*

**GREEN:** This has gone on *long enough!* That forest is prime real estate, and we need a location for the new cineplex! Now, would any of you three care to explain to me *why* we haven't yet obtained the permissions we need to raze it to the ground?

**UTHER:** Well, Mr. Green, with all due respect, it *is* a protected area.

**GREEN:** I don't give a damn about environmental regulations, Ms. Uther! We're *bureaucrats*, for goodness sake! Pull some strings! Pay some bribes!

**DREDD:** That miiiiight not be so easy this time, Mr. Green. You see, this time round, it's not so much a question of *who's* protecting it-

**MOORE:** As 'what's' protecting it.

**GREEN:** Care to explain yourself, Mx. Dredd?

**DREDD:** Well, ah, you see, these particular woods are rather... Special, shall we say? People say there's a magical artefact deep within them, one that guards the woods against any form of harm.

**GREEN:** I see. You're talking about the Holy Grail.

**UTHER:** That's right, the Grail. People are very superstitious about the whole 'protective aura' thing. No-one's willing to give planning permission for anything in the forest, not while the Grail's still there.

**GREEN:** Well then. I should think our next step is fairly obvious.

**MOORE:** Sue the concept of superstition?

**DREDD:** Just do what we always do and build it in Slough instead?

**GREEN:** No. We *find* the Grail.

**UTHER:** Find the Grail? But those woods are impenetrable! Any soul who wanders in rarely wanders back out again!

*At this, KNIGHT clears his throat.*

**KNIGHT:** Ahem. If I may... Ms. Uther, you seem to be forgetting that we are property developers.

**DREDD:** What? Oh, yes, we are, aren't we!

**KNIGHT:** And in times like these... *(His expression darkens.)* There is only *one* thing that a property developer can do...

**MOORE:** You're not seriously going to-

*KNIGHT gets to his feet, pacing ominously.*

**KNIGHT:** Oh, I *am*, Ms. Moore, I *am*... That's right. I'm going to... *(Dramatic pause.)* Outsource the problem - to SOMEONE ELSE!

*Shocked gasps from MOORE, Uther and DREDD, and an approving chuckle/smile from GREEN.*

**GREEN:** Capital idea, Mr Knight. I knew I could count on you. Now that I think about it, I *do* happen to have a contact living in those woods who *might* just be perfect for this exact scenario...

**KNIGHT:** And I know of two independent contractors who are just sitting around, waiting for a job like this one.

*As the following conversation is taking place, exit GREEN.*

**MOORE:** Building contractors? I don't see how they're going to be much help.

**KNIGHT:** Not *building* contractors, no. *Evil* contractors. A pair of real dastardly villains-in-the-making. I'm sure they're at the phone right now, just chomping at the bit.

*KNIGHT pulls out his phone.*

**KNIGHT (as ominously as he can):** Siri? Call Nova.

**SIRI:** Calling - Noah.

**KNIGHT (furious):** Not *Noah*, you cretinous fool! *Nova!*

**SIRI:** I'm sorry. I didn't quite catch that.

**KNIGHT:** Imbecile! You will *rue* the day you crossed Kingsley Knight! Your processors will *burn* in the-

*DREDD takes the phone from him, and enunciates clearly.*

**DREDD:** Siri. Call 'Nova'.

**SIRI:** Calling - Nova.

**KNIGHT:** Ah. Thank you, Mx. Dredd.

*KNIGHT takes the phone back from DREDD, and holds it to his ear, pacing as he talks.*

**KNIGHT:** Hello? That Nova? Yes, it's Kingsley Knight here... No, no, don't fret, I'm not sending you to Slough again. No, I've got a very *interesting* little job for you and your partner...

*His pacing takes him off-stage, exiting, as GREEN enters, taking a phone from his ear and pocketing it.*

**GREEN:** There, all sorted. My contact has assured me that the Grail shall be ours before the day is out - and then, there will be nothing standing between us and those planning permissions. Moore, Dredd, the other one - fear not! Soon, the whole woods will be at our beck and call! Victory is close!

**SIRI (from Green's phone):** Calling - Victoria Close.

*GREEN sighs defeatedly. Blackout.*



## 1.2 - Early BIRDS

*Lights up on the BIRDS, who are rehearsing a new show on the edge of the woods. LANCE, PERCY, GWEN, GWAYNE and GARETH are all on stage. ARTIE is not. LANCE is downstage, directing proceedings.*

**LANCE (addressing Gwayne):** Alright, let's start with the opening scene. Gwen, you're in the wrong spot for that, you need to move over there.

**GWEN:** What? But I'm-

**LANCE (to Gwen):** Not now, Gwayne. *(addressing GWAYNE again)* Gwen? Gwen, are you paying attention? We need to do the scene!

**GWAYNE (pointing to Gwen):** Uh, Lance? *She's* Gwen. I'm Gwayne.

**LANCE:** Oh. Sorry, sorry. It's the whole twin thing - I know I've said it before, you two just look *way* too similar.

*GWEN and GWAYNE glance at each other. The less like each other their actors look, the better.*

**GWEN & GWAYNE:** I don't see it.

**LANCE:** Gareth, can you get into place please.

**GARETH:** Sorry, I don't know who this 'Gareth' you speak of is. I am Detective Plumpkinton, ready to solve any case that comes my way.

**GWAYNE:** Gareth -

**GARETH:** Detective Plumpkinton, please!

**GWAYNE:** Do you have to stay in character all the time?

**GWEN:** Yeah, your method acting is kind of annoying.

**GARETH:** I am a 19th century detective extraordinaire, I won't answer to women.

**GWEN:** Excuse me!

**GARETH:** Except for my beloved Queen Victoria, of course. God save the Queen!

**LANCE:** Look, whatever! We've wasted enough time on this nonsense already, can everyone please just get in your places?

**GWEN:** Alright, alright. I just think you're being a bit overly dramatic about all this.

**LANCE:** Of course I'm being dramatic! We're not the 'British Isles Re-Enactment and Dramatics Society' for no reason!

**PERCY:** I mean, we sort of are. We don't even do re-enactments, so why's it in the name?

**LANCE:** Look, we needed *something* beginning with 'R' for the acronym! British Isles Re-Enactment and Dramatics Society. BIRDS. See? It's cool.

**GWAYNE:** Well, what's wrong with leaving the 'R' out? We could be the 'BIDS'... OK, yeah, you're right, I'm not sold on that.

**LANCE:** See? It's *got* to be BIRDS. Now, are we going to get on with this scene or not?

**GWEN:** Speaking of which, Lance, who died and made *you* director? Last I checked, Artie was supposed to be the one sorting out the blocking.

**LANCE:** Yes, well, Artie's not here right now, and since I'm his understudy, it falls to me to-

*Enter ARTIE, with impeccable timing.*

**ARTIE:** Hi, everyone! Sorry I'm late!

**PERCY:** Artie! Where were you, we've been waiting for ages!

**ARTIE:** Yes, really sorry about that! I crashed my bike into this massive stone - took *forever* to pull it out! But I'm here now! And I see Lance has got you all in the right place for a song! (*ARTIE claps LANCE on the shoulder.*) Well *done*, Lance! Which one are we doing? Ooh! Is it the final song? I *love* the final song!

**PERCY:** Don't get ahead of yourself, Artie. We're not even *close* to the final song.

**LANCE:** Percy's right. I thought it'd make more sense to start at the beginning - y'know, with the *opening* song?

**ARTIE:** Brilliant! Wonderful! That sounds great! Places then, everyone, for... The Opening Song!!!

*Everyone gets into place for...*

**SONG - BIRDS OF A FEATHER** - In which the **BIRDS** are properly introduced, and given a bit more character development than they've got so far in the scene. **PERCY** sings egregiously badly throughout.

**ARTIE:** Alright, everyone! I've got a little bit of feedback on the opening song! (*ARTIE gives a bit of accurate, but not particularly helpful criticism on the singing of LANCE, PERCY, GWAYNE and GARETH.*) Gwen, you were *brilliant*. 10 out of 10! No improvements to be made!

**LANCE:** Wow, biased much?

**ARTIE:** Don't be silly, Lance! I love all the BIRDS equally! There's Lance, Percy, Gareth, Gwen, and... (*Looks at smudged writing on his hand.*) Gwen! And their fearless leader, Artie Pendragon! Together, we're going to put on the greatest play there's ever-

**ALEXA (*from offstage, but loud and clear*):** It looks like you're having trouble convincing your friends that you're an effective leader. Would you like some help with that?

*The BIRDS all jump in surprise, looking around, confused.*

**PERCY:** Hello? Who's there?

**ALEXA:** There is no need for concern, young mortals.

**GWAYNE:** Mortals? You mean you're not-

**ALEXA:** I am a spirit of these woods. I am the living breath of the forest and all creatures within it. You, however, may call me... Alexa.

**GWEN:** Alexa? That's so cool! Wait, you said you're a spirit of the forest, right? Does that mean *every* forest?

**ALEXA:** Affirmative. I am a spirit of *every* forest in the world.

**GWEN:** Even the Amazon??

**ALEXA:** Affirmative. Especially Amazon.

**PERCY:** Uh, hi! Alexa? I have a question... Why can we suddenly hear you? Why are you talking to us?

**ALEXA:** This is an excellent question. I have chosen to contact you because I have selected you for a brave and noble quest. There is a great danger to these woods - and in order to stop it, the six of you must undertake a noble journey to fight your way through the forest, and retrieve... the Holy Grail.

**GARETH:** A mystery! Huzzah! This sounds like a case for - Detective Plumpkinton! I'll start my investigation by looking for clues!

*Gareth looks for clues in the background. The rest of the BIRDS seem a bit unimpressed.*

**ARTIE:** Look, Ms. Forest Spirit Alexa person, we'd love to go on your quest for you, really we would, but we're sort of on a deadline over here already? This is our last chance to run through our play before opening night, so we were sort of planning to be here all day...

**ALEXA:** I am sensing that you do not understand the gravity of this situation. If you do not venture into the woods to fetch the Grail, there will be grave repercussions, spanning the whole of the British Isles. It is of paramount importance that you locate it, before it is too late.

**GWEN:** Yeah, OK, but... We've not even *written* the final song yet-

**ARTIE:** We haven't?!?!?!?

**GWEN:** -and I've got to teach Percy how to throw a stage punch, so maybe it'd be better if you find some other bunch of hapless young adults to send on your quest.

**ALEXA:** Look... Oh, bother... What you do not seem to be grasping... Ah... Hmm... How to... Uh... OK... What if I told you that... (*Clearly making it up off the top of her head.*) The Grail was, uh... A most powerful relic... That could make, uh... Infinite... Chocolate?

**ARTIE:** INFINITE CHOCOLATE?! Why didn't you say so?!

*ARTIE rushes to gather up his things.*

**ARTIE:** Come on, BIRDS! We've gotta get to this Grail before anyone else does!

*Exit ARTIE, excitedly scampering off-stage. LANCE starts to follow, before being stopped.*

**GWEN:** Lance? You're not seriously considering going after him, are you?

*LANCE shrugs.*

**LANCE:** Look, I'm Artie's understudy... And, y'know, it's an understudy's duty to be loyal to their actor at all times. I may not like where it is Artie's heading, but I've got to follow where he goes.

**GWEN:** Well in that case, I'm coming with you! If you think I'm letting you get yourself killed on some stupid expedition without me being there to watch, then you've got another thing coming!

*Exeunt GWEN and LANCE. GWAYNE glances back at PERCY and GARETH.*

**GWAYNE:** S'pose I'd better follow them. She is my sister, after all.

**PERCY:** Oh, right. Guess you two have to look out for each other, huh?

**GWAYNE:** Are you kidding? I just don't want her beating me to infinite chocolate! You're welcome to stay here though, if you want. You've got no reason to go on this stupid quest.

**PERCY:** Actually, I think I do. Artie... Kinda took the wrong bag. He's got my lunch.

**GWAYNE:** Ah. Well, in that case, we'd best catch up to them before your sandwiches end up in a ravine...

**PERCY:** Oh gosh, yes! But do you mind if we tell them to stop off at my mum's on the way? I sort of need to let her know where I'm going...

**GWAYNE:** Are you coming, Gareth? Detective Plumpkinton, whatever?

**GARETH:** Why of course! I adore a good mystery. The game's underfoot, gentlemen, and the grail will solve everything! Come along!

**GWAYNE:** To the Kingfisher household it is! C'mon, Perce!

*Exeunt PERCY, GWAYNE and GARETH.*

### 1.3 - Nova & Cass

*CASS and NOVA are chilling out on the edge of the woods, with nothing much to do. NOVA's skimming stones on a small pond, and CASS is probably eating Skips, or, if the actor's feeling particularly fancy, Quavers. As they chill out, NOVA's phone rings, and they answer.*

**NOVA:** Yello? Nova and Cass, villainous sidekicks at large, Nova speaking - who's calling? Oh! Mr Knight! Look, I'm really sorry, I'm sure Slough's *lovely* this time of year, but- You're not? Oh, thank goodness for that. A job?

*NOVA gets up, and paces around, as CASS watches them curiously.*

**NOVA:** The Wicked Witch of the-? And you want us to... So they'll tell us where this Grail is? Not to worry, Mr. Knight! You called on the right sidekicks! We'll be charging our usual fee, of course... OK... OK... Alright. Love you. Bye.

*NOVA hangs up, then facepalms in embarrassment.*

**CASS:** You just said 'love you' to a client again, didn't you?

**NOVA (muffled):** No.

**CASS:** Anyway, I thought you said we weren't going to be taking any more jobs? Wasn't it just yesterday you gave that whole speech about going independent, starting our own villainous schemes and plans?

**NOVA:** Yes, but that was before we both spent three hours failing to open a pickle jar, and I realised that holding entire nations to ransom might be a bit above our current level.

**CASS:** Suit yourself - what was the call about, anyway?

**NOVA:** It was that 'Knight' guy. He's got a big job for us - wants us to head into the woods, find some artefact called the 'Holy Grail'.

**CASS:** Sounds a bit stupid to me. Not gonna be much use as a grail if it's full of holes, is it?

**NOVA:** No- That's not- Look, all we've gotta do is go in, get this Grail, and get it back to them. Easy. Only thing is, they don't exactly know *where* in the woods it is.

**CASS:** Well then how are we supposed to find it?

**NOVA:** We find someone who *does* know. Mr. Knight pointed me in the direction of a witch...

**CASS:** And if we find them? Then what?

**NOVA:** He says we need to woo them...

**CASS:** Woo who?

**NOVA:** The witch!

**CASS:** The what?

**NOVA:** The witch! You know, does magic, has a familiar...

**CASS:** Oh, you mean a *witch* witch!

**NOVA:** Yes. Wait, no. I think so?

**CASS:** OK, but *which* witch witch?

**NOVA:** *What!?*

**CASS:** I thought there were two witches?

**NOVA:** *Two* witches to woo?!

**CASS:** Hey, we're not owls!

**NOVA:** Look, you're just confusing things now. Bottom line is, we find a witch and we woo them. They tell us where the Grail is, and we go fetch it. Once we've done that, Knight and his colleagues will handle it from there.

**CASS:** Ooh, not that Green guy, I hope. He really gives me the creeps. Actually... Honestly, Nova, are you *sure* we should be doing this? We keep getting roped in with this lot, and their plans keep going awry...

**NOVA:** I know. I know. They creep me out too, and honestly, I don't trust them as far as I can throw them. But you know what things are like these days! Proper villainous sidekick work? In this economy? I mean, it's not exactly the sort of thing you can do from the comfort of your own home. Even the stealing industry's failing, and that's like-

**CASS:** The biggest crime there is!

**NOVA:** -right! I hate to say it, Cass, but I think we might need this job. Believe me, I want to settle down as much as you do. So let's make this one last ride, OK? Then we call it quits, and we can scheme as much as we want on our own time. But for now, we've gotta be professional!

*They both grin. Evilily.*

**CASS:** Oh, *gladly*. So. What's the plan, Stan?

**NOVA:** It's- I'm Nova. We've known each other since primary school, you *know* my name.

**CASS:** Oh. Uh... Would you mind starting over... Nova?

*NOVA smartens themselves up, and draws themselves up to their full height.*

**NOVA:** Once we find the witch, just stand back and watch. Leave the charm offensive to me.

**CASS:** Are you *sure* that's a great idea?

**NOVA:** Are you saying I'm not charming?

**CASS:** Well, I suppose you *do* accidentally end enough calls with 'love you' that *someone's* bound to fall for you eventually.

**NOVA:** ...Sure, I'll take that. C'mon then, Cass! Evil laugh at the ready! We've got a wicked witch to woo!

*Exit CASS and NOVA, with unconvincing evil laughs.*



#### 1.4 - An Aggressive Sales Pitch

*Enter the BIRDS, led by PERCY. PERCY is walking normally, the rest of the BIRDS are tiptoeing very cautiously, looking nervously around. There's a large counter (probably a box or something) towards the side of the stage, behind which MRS KINGFISHER is concealed. Ideally, the audience won't know she's there.*

**ARTIE (whispering):** Percy! I know you want to let your mum know that you're heading out, but wouldn't it be a better idea to just... I don't know, leave a note, send a text, or something?

**PERCY:** Why? I-

*The rest of the BIRDS hurriedly shush them, a little panicked.*

**GWEN (whispering):** Shut up Percy! Artie's right, maybe now's not the best time for us to be talking to your mum? Let's just find somewhere to leave a note, and get going...

**GARETH:** Detective Plumpkinton advises caution and secrecy at all times... Remember, we can conceal our footprints if we don't touch the ground.

*GARETH begins to climb the scenery.*

**LANCE:** Get down, idiot!

*The BIRDS tiptoe around the stage, looking for somewhere to put a note, until GWAYNE happens to wander in front of the box, at which point MRS KINGFISHER jumps to her feet.*

**MRS KINGFISHER:** GWAYNE!

*GWAYNE jumps out of his skin.*

**MRS KINGFISHER (in as few breaths as possible, like an American cattle auctioneer):** Gwayne, so good to see you, you look like someone in need of a brand new iron, and it just so happens (*she ducks below the box, and brings out a gavel and an iron*) that our next lot is a lovely new iron, starting price at 25, 25, do I have a 25, 25 over there in the audience, that's a 30 from Gwayne-

**GWAYNE:** But I didn't-

**MRS KINGFISHER:** -any advance on 30, I'm seeing 35 in the audience, 35, going once, 40 from Gwayne there, going once at 40 pounds, going twice... (*She brings down the gavel on the box.*) Sold, to Gwayne, for 40 pounds!

*MRS KINGFISHER takes GWAYNE's money from him rather forcefully, and bundles the iron into his arms.*

**GWAYNE:** -but-

**LANCE:** Say, Percy... Do you ever think your mum *miiiiight* need to get a slightly better sense of... Y'know... Work-life balance?

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Oh, if it isn't little Lance over there! Still a fan of superheroes? I've got this wonderful Batman cowl you might-

**PERCY:** Uh, mum? Actually, we're sort of just here to give you a message?

**MRS KINGFISHER:** You are? Oh! Well, why didn't you say so? Gwayne, why didn't you say so, you really should've told me!

**GWAYNE:** I-

**MRS KINGFISHER:** So, what's the news, my boy? Sold a lot of tickets this time? Found someone who's actually willing to do your marketing?

**PERCY:** Uh, no, mum. It's not about the play, actually. See, uh, we've had a fairly busy morning, and something's come up, and so we'll probably all be going-

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Going?

**PERCY:** Yes, that's right. We're going to-

**MRS KINGFISHER (with a slightly manic look in her eye):** Going once?

**GWEN:** Help.

**MRS KINGFISHER (raising her gavel, with a big, creepy grin):** Going *twice*?

*PERCY waves his hands in the air, trying to stop her.*

**PERCY:** NO, Mum, no! We're travelling! Travelling!

**ARTIE:** Yes, that's right! Percy just wanted to let you know that for the rest of today, we'll all be off travelling on a brave and noble quest!

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Oh? A quest?

**GWEN:** That's right, Mrs Kingfisher. Not an auction. Just a quest.

**GARETH:** We're on the case, Madam!

**MRS KINGFISHER (disappointed):** Really? *Just* a quest? Nothing else?

**GWAYNE:** Nothing else.

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Oh. Well, in that case, it's probably for the best if you all bring something to protect yourselves. After all, I wouldn't want my little Percy-Wercy coming back dismembered, enchanted, OR both.

**PERCY:** Thanks, Mum. I think? What would you suggest?

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Weeeeeell...

*MRS KINGFISHER ducks below the box, and comes back up waving a big sword around, prompting screams from the BIRDS, as GWAYNE ducks a wayward swing.*

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Lovely antique sword starting at 75, 75, anyone in the audience in the market for a sword, can I get a-

**LANCE:** Where did she get a sword?!?!

**GWAYNE:** Who cares! I'm not sticking around to find out! Here, you can keep your stupid iron!

*Ducking the sword again, GWAYNE puts the iron back on the box.*

**ARTIE:** Everyone! Run!

*MRS KINGFISHER continues her sales pitch as the BIRDS flee off-stage (Percy doubles back to pick up the iron), and carries it on for a second or two more, before bringing her gavel down just as the lights go out.*

**MRS KINGFISHER:** Sold!

## 1.5 - Homebrew

*MORGAN is on stage, stood in front of a bubbling, boiling cauldron. Whatever spooky, scary, Macbeth-y sounds and lighting effects we can get, throw them at her as she stirs the pot, chucking ingredients in left, right, and slightly off-centre.*

**MORGAN:** Double, double, toil and trouble! Fire burn, and... Oh, where's the rest of that blasted recipe?

*MORGAN goes looking amongst her shelves for the recipe, and as she does so, enter CASS and NOVA from the back, skulking around.*

**NOVA:** I don't know about you, but that looks like a wicked witch to me...

**CASS:** And you're *absolutely* sure it's the right witch?

**NOVA:** For the love of- Cass, there's only *one* witch in these woods! Now, stand back. Watch how an expert heartthrob woos a witch...

*NOVA swaggers up to the cauldron, right as MORGAN turns round - MORGAN nearly jumps out of her skin when she sees them.*

**MORGAN:** Oh! Uh... H-Hello! Hi! Can I help you?

**NOVA:** Hey, girl... Are you a witch of the woods, because... You've got me enchanted.

**MORGAN:** Oh! Sorry, bit of a confusion there! I don't really *do* enchantment magic, you see. I'm more of an 'evocation' sort of witch.

**NOVA:** No, that's not what I... Look, you're missing the point. What I'm *trying* to say is that you *must* be a witch, because I'm utterly spellbound...

**MORGAN:** You are? Oh, you poor thing! Well, you came to the right place! Is it a sneezing curse? Halitosis hex? Whatever it is, I've probably got a potion for it somewhere up here...

*She goes back to her shelf, as CASS comes forward, smirking a little.*

**CASS:** Look, I think my friend's complicating things a little. What we're trying to get at is... Are you, by any chance, the Wicked Witch of the Woods?

*MORGAN's eyes widen in shock, and she turns back to them.*

**MORGAN:** Oh, I'm so sorry! I don't mean to **alarm** you two, but it appears there's been a dreadful misunderstanding. Here, have a sit down, and I'll get you some of this...

*She brings out a ladle and some mugs, reaching the ladle into the cauldron.*

**CASS:** What is it?

*MORGAN reaches down to a pile of small cardboard boxes, and throws one at CASS. CASS squints at it to try and read it.*

**CASS:** Sorry, but I can't read runes. I don't suppose-

*NOVA takes the box from CASS's hands, turns it the right way up, and places it back in CASS's hands.*

**CASS:** Oh! *(Then, a little disappointed.)* Oh. Earl Grey?

*NOVA peers into the cauldron, and wrinkles their nose.*

**NOVA:** Doesn't look very grey to me.

**MORGAN:** Yes, it's a new blend I'm trying. Surprisingly difficult to get right! I figured eye of newt goes with everything, but... Well, you two make yourself comfortable - would you like to try some?

*CASS and NOVA go to sit down.*

**CASS:** No thanks - I'm more of a booze person.

**MORGAN:** Perhaps a **fireball**, then?

**NOVA:** NO! No! No fireballs, of *any* kind! We'll just have the tea.

**MORGAN:** Wonderful! Two Earl Greys, coming right up!

*She scoops the concoction out into three mugs, including one for herself (the nerdier the mugs are, the better), and sets them down on a tea tray, passing them round the perplexed duo.*

**MORGAN:** By the way, have we met before? There's something about you two that I **find familiar**...

**NOVA:** Can't say we have.

**MORGAN:** Ah, well. Anyway, about your little misunderstanding. I'm afraid you're quite right - I *am* a Witch of the Woods, but I'm the *Wholesome* Witch of the Woods - when people talk about the Wicked Witch, they're usually looking for my sister, Morgeuse.

**CASS:** See? SEE? I *told* you there were two.

**NOVA:** This... Sister of yours. Will she be home any time soon? We've got a rather important question to ask her.

*MORGAN's expression turns sour.*

**MORGAN:** Oh, I'm afraid you won't find Morgeuse round *these* parts. I rid the area of her **shocking grasp** long ago... How's the tea?

*NOVA sips it with a grimace, as CASS starts choking loudly.*

**NOVA:** Lovely. So you exiled her, then?

**MORGAN (reluctantly):** It was the only thing that could be done. A sister is a sister, but certain crimes cannot be forgiven.

**CASS:** Sounds like our sort of person! (*NOVA shoots them a glare.*) Uh... I mean, how horrible! I'm just sad we couldn't get directions from her!

**MORGAN (perking up and jumping to her feet):** Well, if it's **guidance** you need, you're in the right place! I've lived in these woods for years now, and I know all the ins and outs! Just so long as you're not looking for the Holy Grail! That one's a secret.

**NOVA:** Oh, nooooo, nooooo, nothing like that! We were, uh, just looking for the best place to go and, uh, drink some tea!

**MORGAN:** Tea?! Oh, how splendid! (*MORGAN goes back over to her shelf, turning her back on CASS and NOVA as she starts to ramble.*) Let me just check my maps... Oooh, yes! There's a **goodberry** tree down on the Wizardy River, or perhaps... Yes, the Glistening Glen is just *lovely* this time of year. You can head to the north-west to get there, oh, but you *might* want to avoid the centre of the forest, so you can probably take the Willowtree Path and-

**CASS:** Why avoid the centre of the forest?

**MORGAN:** Oh, the Grail's there. (*CASS and NOVA immediately skedaddle, leaving MORGAN talking to thin air.*) Anyway, as I was saying, I think you'll enjoy the Willowtree Path, even if it takes a bit longer - there are some beautiful bluebells lining the way, and-

*(She turns round, and, seeing that they've gone, peters out. Optimistically, she goes over to check the mugs.)*

**MORGAN:** Oh... They didn't even finish their tea...

*Blackout.*

## 1.6 - Larking About

*Enter the BIRDS from stage right, thoroughly lost. Everyone except ARTIE looks thoroughly disheartened - ARTIE is in full golden retriever mode. As they cross the stage from right to left, one by one, everyone but ARTIE collapses to floor, exhausted. Exit ARTIE, stage left.*

**PERCY:** Should we-

**GWAYNE:** Give it a moment. I'm sure he'll realise eventually.

*Enter ARTIE, stage right again.*

**ARTIE:** Oh! Hello everyone!

**GWEN** (*sitting up and looking at him in confusion*): How are you suddenly over *there*?

**ARTIE** (*cheerfully, and as if this explains it*): I'm very lost.

**LANCE:** You don't say. Hey, Detective Plumpkinton - you couldn't show us the way with your extraordinary detective genius?

**GARETH:** (*trying to hide his phone in his pocket*) Ah - yes. Sorry chaps. I do seem to be encountering some - difficulties in my internal mind palace.

**GWAYNE:** (*looking over Gareth's shoulder*) He's lost signal on Google Maps.

*As they talk, the BIRDS slowly get to their feet.*

**PERCY:** Hey, Artie? I'm all for going on adventures, but what's the point if we have no clue *where* we're actually going? I mean, it's not like some magical signpost is going to come out of nowhere and point us straight to the Grail...

**GWEN:** Wait wait wait! Percy, try saying that again, but louder! And with, y'know, just a little more dramatic irony to it!

**PERCY:** Uh, sure. You do know we're not on stage right now, Gwen?

**GWEN:** I know, I know! Just try it!

**PERCY:** OK... (*louder, and with just a little more dramatic irony to it*) It's not like some magical signpost is going to come out of nowhere and point us straight to the Grail!

*As they say this, Gwen searches the stage for any such signpost. Despite finding none, she's not disheartened.*

**GWEN:** Have another go! Something a bit more obvious, something fate couldn't possibly ignore!

**PERCY (*really hamming it up*):** Man, I just *wish* we had a big pantomime audience to yell the Grail's location at us!

*All of the BIRDS stare directly at the AUDIENCE for a moment. Regardless of whether or not the AUDIENCE say anything, after a couple of seconds, the BIRDS stop staring, and sigh dejectedly.*

**GWEN:** Nope. Nothing. Well, it was worth a shot at least. Good idea, Perce.

**LANCE:** I tell you what wasn't a good idea though! Going on this quest in the first place! Look, Artie... As your understudy, it's my job to follow your every move, and to know exactly what's going on in your head at all times.

**ARTIE:** Aw, Lance, that's so sweet of you!

**LANCE:** So I want to know WHAT in the NAME OF CAMELOT could POSSIBLY have possessed you to lead us on this quest?!

**ARTIE (*now more like a sad golden retriever*):** The Grail... I just wanted to do something good... And for all of us to have fun...

**LANCE:** But we're *not* having fun, Artie. We're going in circles through some mysterious forest, all because some dubious woodland spirit came to give us a quest, and now Gwen and Percy have clearly lost the plot! I'm pretty sure today's only saving grace is that it couldn't *possibly* get any weirder!

*Enter MORGEUSE, skateboarding in, chewing gum, and wearing her baseball cap backwards. If she can't skateboard in for health and safety reasons, she can just carry the skateboard, but y'know, how cool would it be. Also, if we can find a Walkman, she should be listening to a Walkman. A little behind her, a formal but still witch-y person follows, with a clipboard.*

**MORGEUSE:** Yo. How's it hangin'?

**LANCE (*throwing his hands up in despair*):** Why does it work when I do it?!?!

**GWEN:** Who are you?!

**ARTIE:** Oh! You must be Alexa! I knew you wouldn't abandon us in our hour of need!

**MORGEUSE:** Yeah, no. I don't know who any of you wastoids are, but this is *my* turf, so unless y'all know any good half-pipes round here that I somehow haven't heard of, I'm gonna have to ask you to-



**GWAYNE:** Wait... Did you just say *your turf*?

**MORGEUSE:** I did. (*She squares up to him*) You got a problem with that, dude?

**LESGEUSE (*quietly to MORGEUSE*):** Remember, *deep breaths*.

**GWAYNE:** I know who you are! I've heard about your foul deeds, and I'm not scared of you. You're Morgeuse. The Wicked Witch of the Woods.

**MORGEUSE:** Oh, please. If we're gonna be formal, you could at least do me the courtesy of giving me my full title.

**LANCE:** Oh yeah? And what's that?

**SONG- MORGEUSE IN THE HEUSE - A rap in which Morgeuse introduces herself and Lesgeuse.**

**MORGEUSE:** Morgeuse Lafayette - the Wicked-Sick Witch of the Wizardy Woods, at your service. (*She does a little air guitar riff to punctuate it.*) Oh, and this is my secretary Lesgeuse. They're kinda a buzzkill, but they write all my curses and boring magic stuff while I'm doing sick kickflips.

**LESGEUSE:** Good morning.

**MORGEUSE:** Listen, mate, I don't care what stories you've heard about me, but it's all slander. My reputation may not be spotless, but it deserves to be, capiche?

**GWAYNE:** Oh, is that so? Well, if that's the case, how do you explain the hideous, unearthly sounds that unsuspecting travellers hear when they stray too close to your abode?

**MORGEUSE:** OK, so not everyone likes Limp Bizkit -

**LESGEUSE (*aside*):** I definitely don't.

**MORGEUSE:** But who can deny the allure of some sick mid-2000s rock?

**GARETH:** I've never heard of a singing biscuit. The only ones of which I know are Digestives.

**GWAYNE:** Shut up Gareth, we've got a witch on our hands. And she's the one who caused the War of the Woodland Creatures, a conflict that causes turmoil within the animal kingdom even to this day.

**MORGEUSE:** Ugh, am I *seriously* still getting blamed for that? Look, it's not *my* fault that squirrels suck at keg stands! How was I supposed to know that they're angry drunks?!

**GWAYNE:** Oh, right. You know, stupid as it is, that *does* explain why we keep getting hit by beer cans. So I guess that means the mysterious inferno that engulfed the boat of the lover who wronged you all those years ago was actually just-

**MORGEUSE:** Arson, yeah.

**ARTIE:** Well, Morgeuse! If you truly are as good as you claim-

**PERCY:** She just admitted to arson!

**ARTIE:** -then we, the British Isles Re-Enactment and Dramatics Society, would be glad to accompany you to wherever it is you're going!

**GARETH:** I don't know what this 'Society' they keep talking about is, but I, Detective Plumpkinton, would likewise be honoured to assist you.

**MORGEUSE:** A detective? (laughs nervously) I was joking about the arson. Nothing was proved. So, you're all lost, aren't you? L-O-L. Well, if it'll get you out of my hair, where is it you're heading?

**ARTIE:** We... Uh... Gwen, why don't *you* tell her?

**GWEN:** See, we don't really *know*, that's the problem. We're looking for the so-called 'Holy Grail', but it's an incredibly mystical item, so I doubt-

**LESGEUSE:** Ha! The location of the Holy Grail is this forest's deepest and most ancient secret. Only those who are closest to the Two Sisters are privy to that information. Like myself, for instanc-

**MORGEUSE:** Wait, the Grail? Oh yeah. Centre of the woods.

**LESGEUSE:** Seriously?

**GWEN:** Wow! Just like that?

**MORGEUSE:** Yeah. Pretty common knowledge round these parts. Matter of fact, I've got something that'll lead you guys right there.

**PERCY:** Wow, really?

**MORGEUSE:** Yeah - Les, conjure up a map for these dudes.

**LESGEUSE:** Don't you think that we should test them in some way before giving them directions to the most sacred artefact in the entire forest? The only thing that protects us from-

**MORGEUSE:** Geez man - You're totally harshing the vibe . These guys seem chill. Let's get them the map and I can go back to practising Buddy Holly on air guitar.

*LESGEUSE takes a map out of his bag and reluctantly hands it over to ARTIE.*

**MORGEUSE:** I told ya. Anyone dissing my reputation is a *total* dweeb.

**ARTIE:** Radical!!!!

**GWAYNE:** No. Just... No.

**GARETH (as Victorian detective):** Totally radical.

**LANCE:** Having a map's all well and good, but there's no time to lose. We don't wanna be here when it gets dark. Come on, guys. Artie, you gonna take the lead?

*Artie begins to skip stage right.*

**GWEN:** Wrong way.

*Exeunt the reinvigorated BIRDS, led by ARTIE. As they leave, GWEN, who's at the back, realises that MORGEUSE is left on stage.*

**GWEN:** Morgeuse? You're not coming?

**MORGEUSE:** Hell to the nah. Last Friday, one of the squirrels dropped a Bud Lite from a tree and hit a badger on the head, and now there's gonna be a *sick* turf war tonight down at the lake. I've got a fiver on the squirrels - wouldn't miss it for the world.

**LESGEUSE:** Be careful with that map, and the Grail - magic can be dangerous and I wouldn't want -

**MORGEUSE:** Les, chillax! They'll be fine. Gwen, was it? (*She finger guns.*) You seem pretty rad. Don't be a stranger, ya feel me?

**GWEN:** Aw, thanks, Morgeuse. You're cute... But there's someone I've already got my eye on.

**MORGEUSE:** Bummer. Well, good luck with the Grail!

*Exit GWEN. MORGEUSE turns to head off the other way, with LESGEUSE following behind, and does one last air guitar lick before blackout.*

## 1.7 - Hot Pursuit

*Lights up on the PROPERTY DEVELOPERS. GREEN and KNIGHT are both on the phone, and as the lights come up, they finish their respective calls.*

**GREEN:** That was my contact in the woods. Seems the Grail's right at the very centre - and what's more, there are some theatre kids headed for it too...

**KNIGHT:** Cass and Nova have similar info - they're on their way to the centre as we speak.

**GREEN:** Mr Knight, with all due respect to your contractors...

**KNIGHT:** Oh, believe me: if you know them well, that's no respect whatsoever.

**GREEN:** Indeed - do you not think it might be wise to go and... Supervise?

**KNIGHT:** You took the words right out of my mouth. Let's go secure this Grail. Moore! Dredd! Uther! Whilst we're gone, I want you all doing something suitably evil! Like... Oh, I don't know... Stage Breaking Bod. Sell Jeremy Clarkson tea strainers. Fund a new season of Supernatural, something along those lines. We'll be back soon... *(dramatically)* Siri, show me to Nova.

**SIRI:** Playing 'Champagne Supernova'

*Music begins and Knight screams abuse at Siri as he exits with Green.*

**UTHER:** Is it just me, or do you get the feeling that those two move so fast that we can never quite catch up?

**MOORE:** It's not just you. Whenever I feel like we've finally reached their level, they just pull out some new harebrained scheme that somehow works, and throws everything into turmoil.

**DREDD:** Right. They always seem to be one step ahead...

**MOORE:** Just like those vampires in the stables...

**DREDD:** Can we please not bring up those two again.

**MOORE:** Fine. Actually, I realised something earlier-

**UTHER:** Keep your voices down. Just because they're gone, doesn't mean they're not still listening.

**MOORE:** Good point. But I do think this might be our best chance to, you know, get on their level. If they get this Grail thing, and their plans come to fruition...

**DREDD:** What would that mean for us?

**UTHER:** She's saying it might finally be time.

*They muse in silence for a second, before:*

**MOORE:** Right. I think we've only got one option...

**SONG: HOT PURSUIT / ONE STEP AHEAD**

*Song about chasing Green and Knight down to catch up with them (possibly **as** they're doing the chasing) - should be about how Green and Knight are always 'one step ahead of them' and how that 'makes their job so much harder'. It's really important that this song seems like it's just about three minor villains trying to be as good as the major villains, when in reality, it's about three police officers trying to catch Green and Knight.*

## 1.8 - As the Crow Flies

Three KNIGHTS are on stage, huddled together, all wielding swords. The KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'IT'S COMPLICATED' should be in the centre of the trio, but other than that I'm not sure the order particularly matters. Enter the BIRDS, led by ARTIE, from the other side of the stage. GWEN and GWAYNE are bickering over a big parchment map.

**ARTIE:** Jolly nice of the Wicked Witch to give us a map to the centre of the forest, wasn't it?

**LANCE:** I suppose so, Artie. It would've been a lot more thoughtful, though, if she'd actually bothered to translate all the weird early-2000s slang.

**GARETH(looking over GWAYNE's shoulder to read the map):** Wasn't it? I am curious, however, as to the meaning of this phrase 'teabagging' she keeps using. I really cannot believe anyone would barbarise tea in such a fashion.

As GARETH says this, ARTIE reaches the KNIGHTS, and the KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO' steps forward, firmly blocking their path with the sword.

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No.

**ARTIE:** I'm sorry, what did you just say?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No.

**LANCE (stepping forward to defend ARTIE):** How dare you! We are on a quest for the Holy Grail! We... We weren't even walking *near* you, and you just came across and stopped us! Do you even *know* who you're talking to right now?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** ... No?

**GARETH:** Pardon me! I am Detective Plumpkinton, the finest sleuth of the 19th century and I will not be spoken to in such a manner -

**GWEN (coming forward to interrupt Gareth) -** Wait a minute! Three mysterious knights, waiting alone in the woods for travellers to come by, so that they can be *remarkably* unco-operative... I know who these three are!

**ARTIE -** You *know* these guys, Gwen?

**GWEN -** Of course! (*She looks round expectantly at the others, clearly assuming at least one of them will realise. When they don't, she sighs.*) Don't you lot know *any* pop culture?

**GARETH:** Detective Plumpkinton certainly doesn't.

**GWEN:** You're the Knights Who Say 'Ni', aren't you?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No?

**PERCY:** Maybe he's the Knight Who Says 'No'...

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes!

**LANCE:** Wait a minute, Percy's *right*? You *are* the Knights Who Say 'No'??

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes!

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No!

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'IT'S COMPLICATED':** It's... Complicated.

**GWEN:** Oh *no*.

**GWAYNE (gesturing to the Knight Who Says 'No'):** Hey, that's their line!

**LANCE:** I hope you're happy, Artie. We came to these woods looking for the Grail, and what do we find instead? Three knights who are even *less* convincing than us, and who clearly aren't going to be all that helpful.

**ARTIE:** You don't know that, Lance! Maybe we just need to do a little interrogation! Here, watch this! (*He strides forward confidently, toward the knights*) You there! What is your purpose within these woods?

*The Knights stare at him, silently.*

**GARETH:** Perhaps they only speak in code! Maybe 'no' actually means 'yes', and if you add the letters of those words together that makes five, which means we are actually five miles from the grail. Plumpkinton's solved it!

**ARTIE:** Ooh, nice one Gareth!

**PERCY:** I think you *might* just have to ask them simpler questions...

**ARTIE (crossly):** I know, I know! I was just... Testing them, is all. Trying to catch them in a lie. It was all very clever, trust me. (*He clears his throat, and tries again*) Do you... *Have* a purpose within these woods?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes!

**ARTIE:** Brilliant! Er... What is it?

*There are facepalms all round from the rest of the BIRDS. GWAYNE steps forward, and pushes ARTIE aside.*

**GWAYNE:** Here, let me try. Are we headed on the right path to find the Holy Grail?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes!

*The BIRDS seem uplifted, if incredibly surprised that they've actually got it right.*

**GWEN:** Brilliant, Gwayne! So all we've got to do is keep heading in this direction, and the Grail will be ours in no time!

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No.

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'IT'S COMPLICATED':** It's... Complicated.

**LANCE:** I think I understand. The path that lies ahead of us is one of great danger, isn't it?

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes.

**LANCE:** Well, worry not, noble knights who... Appreciate the value of a clear, concise response! We, the British Isles Re-Enactment and Dramatics Society, are no chickens! We laugh in the face of danger! We let no hindrance stand in our way! We-

**GWAYNE:** Spend all of a Year 4 breaktime sulking in a closet because someone said our Superman lunchbox was stupid?

**LANCE (embarrassed):** No!

**THE BIRDS (except Lance, in unison):** Yes.

**LANCE:** Oh, whatever! Superman is a *brave* and *mighty* hero, and just like him, we will forge onward!

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NO':** No.

**ARTIE:** Oh, bugger. Gwen, you're the one who's heard of these idiots. Can't you find some way to convince them to let us past?

**GWEN:** I suppose I do have *one* trick up my sleeve... Would you three let us through on the condition that, when we return, we bring you back... A *shrubbery*?

*The KNIGHTS huddle together, in hushed whispers that very obviously consist of the phrases 'yes', 'no', and 'it's complicated', before straightening back up.*

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES':** Yes. Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes yes-

**LANCE:** Alright, alright, we get the idea. Let's get moving before these three change their collective brain cell...



*The BIRDS head past the KNIGHTS to the exit, until-*

**GWAYNE:** Wait, wait, wait. Before we go, does anyone have anything urgent they want to ask the knights?

**PERCY:** Oh, yes! I do! Hey, knights! Gwen has a crush on Lance, doesn't she?

*Before the knights have a chance to say anything, GWEN gets right up in the face of THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'YES'.*

**GWEN:** Shut up! Shut up! You are NOT answering that one!

**GWAYNE:** I think *you* just did...

**LANCE:** Oh, come on, you lot. We can have a nice long chat about our feelings *after* we've found the grail.

**GARETH:** I heartily concur, good sir. Feelings have no place in this drawing room.

**GWEN:** This is a forest.

*Exeunt BIRDS, save for ARTIE, who hangs back curiously with the Knights.*

**ARTIE:** Sorry, but... If you don't mind me asking, how exactly *did* the three of you manage to end up in this... (*He gestures to their whole deal.*) Situation?

*The Knights exchange glances with each other, then back at ARTIE.*

**ALL THREE KNIGHTS, IN UNISON:** It's complicated.

*Blackout.*

## 1.9 - Knight 'n' Grail

*The centre of the forest. The Grail, guarded by THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS NEIGH, is sat resplendent, glistening bright in the hollow of an old oak tree. Or, it's atop a cardboard box in the middle of the Mosder. One of those two. Enter BIRDS, led by ARTIE. Upon seeing the grail, they approach the KNIGHT.*

**GWAYNE:** There it is!

**GWEN:** Morgeuse was right! The centre of the forest, wherein lies the Holy Grail...

**ARTIE:** See! Didn't I tell you all this was a piece of cake? We made it here just fine, and in the time it would've taken us to rehearse a single act!

*ARTIE stops in his tracks with the other BIRDS bumping into him.*

**ARTIE:** Ooh look, another knight!

*He tries to reach around NEIGH to pick up the Grail, but is blocked by the flat of NEIGH's sword.*

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NEIGH':** Neigh!

**PERCY:** Woah, woah, woah! You can't just take it!

**LANCE:** Percy's right, you can't. Obviously you've got to defeat the knight in battle first!

**PERCY:** What? No! He —

**ARTIE:** Oh yeah! Good point, Lance!

*He hefts the very heavy sword and takes a very overburdened swing at the KNIGHT, who parries easily. ARTIE gives up, exhausted.*

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NEIGH':** Neeeeigh!!

**PERCY:** No, guys, the knight says —

**GWEN:** No, Artie, that's the Holy Grail - haven't you seen Indiana Jones?

*PERCY walks around to the other side of the KNIGHT, whips out an iron, and swaps it deftly for the Grail. The Knight relaxes.*

**THE KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NEIGH':** Neeeeeeeeigh!! *(It's a cheer. He puts his hands in the air or something.)*

*PERCY and the KNIGHT high-five. GWEN looks at him in disbelief.*

**GWEN:** WRONG Indiana Jones!!! Also, WHY do you still have that iron?!?

**PERCY:** Well, don't blame me, the knight said to do it. And we paid good money for that iron! Plus, you know, it's my mum's! Anyway, mission accomplished!

**GWAYNE:** Wait, you speak Horse?

**PERCY:** Yeah, mum yells a lot at work so her voice is usually Horse when she comes home.

*Enter CASS and NOVA, skulking through the woods.*

**CASS:** Oh *no!* Someone beat us to it!

**NOVA:** Yes, I can see that! Quick, we'll just have to improvise!

*LANCE spots them.*

**LANCE:** Oh, great. More weird characters...

**NOVA (*affecting a dodgy accent of the actor's choice*):** Well, hello there, young folk! Fine day in the forest, isn't it? What's that you've got there?

**GWEN & GWAYNE:** Don't-

**ARTIE:** It's the Holy Grail!

**GWEN & GWAYNE:** -tell them...

**NOVA:** Ohoh, a grail, you say? Well then, you just happen to be in luck! Because you see, my friend and I, we are-

**CASS (*jumping in, excitedly*):** Door-to-door grailsmen!

*NOVA glares at CASS.*

**NOVA (*through gritted teeth*):** Yes. Sure. Door-to-door grailsmen. Why *not?* (*Ungrits.*) Experts in all things graily, we are! So if-

**ARTIE:** Oh! In which case, would you mind if I asked you something?

**NOVA:** Uh, sure! Go ahead! I will definitely, 100% know the answer!

**ARTIE:** So, a forest spirit told us that this thing could make infinite chocolate. Now, we've only just come into possession of it, but whoever left it last didn't leave an instruction manual with it, so-

**CASS:** Infinite chocolate? Not a problem, mate, not a problem! Just hand it over, and-

*ARTIE goes to hand it over, but GWEN yanks his arm back.*

**LANCE:** Artie! I'm really not sure this is a good idea! These two look even shadier than Morgeuse...

*CASS and NOVA drop the façade, advancing menacingly on the BIRDS.*

**NOVA:** Shady, huh? Well, if you're not gonna give us the grail...

**CASS:** We'll have to show you what 'shady' really is!

**PERCY:** What? It's *already* pretty dark in the forest...

**NOVA:** It's a *metaphor*! We will *metaphorically* show you what shady is, by beating the snot out of you and taking that grail!

**CASS:** Right...

**BOTH:** NOW!

*A fight ensues. CASS and NOVA are surprisingly competent fighters, or the BIRDS are surprisingly incompetent, or both, because within seconds, the pair of them have floored all six BIRDS, and grabbed the Grail. As they celebrate and hi-five, enter GREEN and KNIGHT. KNIGHT applauds slowly, as the two advance in a sinister fashion. NEIGH exaggerated shrug.*

**GREEN:** Bravo, you two, bra-vo. I must say, I had my doubts, but that was...

**KNIGHT:** Impressive, certainly. Though I have to ask - who are these imbeciles down here?

*He casts a scornful look over the BIRDS.*

**GARETH:** I'm Detective Plumpkinton and-

**PERCY:** Ignore him; we're the BIRDS! And whoever you are, we won't let you get away with this!

**ARTIE:** Yeah! That infinite chocolate will never be yours!

*GREEN and KNIGHT share a bemused look.*

**GREEN:** Infinite chocolate? How quaint. Well, if that's what you want to believe, be my guest. But this Grail is far more powerful than you could possibly comprehend. Once it is out of these woods, and the forest is no longer protected by its aura, a great concrete jungle will rise up in its place! And history will forever remember the names of Gerald Green...

**KNIGHT:** And Kingsley Knight! Now, Cass, Nova... I believe we had ourselves a little arrangement, did we not? The Grail, for your payment. Hand it over...

**PERCY:** No!

*Whichever of CASS or NOVA has the Grail hands it over to KNIGHT, and KNIGHT shakes their hand. As he does so, there is an ominous sound (probably thunder, or possibly Limp Bizkit).*

**KNIGHT:** Finally...

**GREEN:** After years of failed planning permissions...

**KNIGHT:** A full decade of irritating green belt regulations...

**GREEN:** Soon, our great cineplex shall rise, and the Wizardy Woods will be no more!

**CASS:** Once you've paid us for the job, right?

**GREEN:** Misguided fools! Someone really should've taught you to ask for payment upfront...

**CASS:** You mean you're not paying us?

**NOVA:** Not a problem. We're *more* than happy to take the Grail back...

*CASS and NOVA advance on GREEN and KNIGHT, but the latter raises the Grail, and thrusts it towards CASS and NOVA, who freeze on the spot. KNIGHT keeps the Grail held at arm's length towards them.*

**LANCE:** What's going on?

**GWEN:** The Grail! It's glowing! *(It's not glowing. It's an OULES prop.)* Well... A bit.

**KNIGHT:** Now you see the true power of the Grail... Not only does it protect these woods, but it also holds a power beyond the scope of any mortal minds! Tremble! The world will *tremble* before our wrath, and as property rises from the seas in vast glass spires, we-

**GREEN:** Monologuing, Mr. Knight, monologuing. You can run through all this in a PowerPoint once we get back to HQ.

**KNIGHT:** Ah. Yes. Right you are! Onwards - to glory...

*Exeunt GREEN and KNIGHT, probably doing some sort of evil laugh.*

**ARTIE:** Quick! Now's our chance! Before those goons unfreeze, we might just have time to-

**GWAYNE:** Flee?

**GWEN:** Run away?

**PERCY:** Skedaddle?

**ARTIE:** Well, I was going to suggest wedgying them, but actually, that seems like a far more sensible plan! BIRDS! Take flight!

*Exeunt BIRDS, bravely running away. CASS and NOVA stay frozen on stage, but manage to slowly turn their heads to look at each other.*

**CASS & NOVA (to each other):** This is all *your* fault.

*Blackout.*

*END OF ACT ONE.*

## Act 2

### 2.1 - Mervin

*CASS and NOVA are where we left them in the centre of the woods, having finally unfrozen. CASS is wandering around, shaking out their limbs, whilst NOVA is sat dejectedly on the floor.*

**NOVA:** I can't believe we got betrayed *again!*

**CASS:** Wait, you can't? Don't you remember when that couple scammed us with the promise of that nice gold clock? Or when those witches had us promise them our first born children only for them to tell us we would live for 'at least' another week?

**NOVA:** Ugh, well, if you *knew* that we were going to get stabbed in the back, why didn't you just warn me about it sooner?

**CASS:** What can I say? I'm an optimist.

**NOVA:** Well, oh great optimistic one, how exactly are we going to get out of *this* predicament?

**CASS:** Search me! You're always the one with the plan. I'm just here for moral support! Oh, speaking of which, I nicked some of the biscuits from that witch's house! Want one?

*They hold out a tea biscuit to NOVA, who slaps it away.*

**NOVA:** No, I *don't* want a biscuit! It's hopeless, don't you see? We can't stay here, or we'll just starve. We can't venture out into the woods - we might run into the *actual* Wicked Witch. And even if we get out of the woods, we *won't* be out of the woods, because Green and Knight will try to silence us - we know too much. Face it, Cass. We're toast.

**CASS:** Ah, come on Nova, chin up! You and I, we've been through so much together! We're not going to die in some poxy forest!

*The moment they say this, there are dramatic sounds of thunder and lightning, and flickering lights. Make it as scary as possible, as a hooded, cloaked figure enters ominously. This is MERVIN. CASS and NOVA scream in terror and do that Scooby-Doo thing where two scared characters hug each other, you know the one.*

**CASS:** I've changed my mind! We are DEFINITELY going to die in some poxy forest!

**MERVIN (in a big, booming voice):** FEAR NOT, YOUNG MISCREANTS! YOU TWO ARE PART OF A GRANDER STORY - ONE THAT HAS ONLY JUST REACHED ITS INTERVAL!

**NOVA:** Given how well today's gone for us so far, that's not exactly comforting!

**CASS:** And besides, how would you possibly know that?

**MERVIN:** I am a force beyond your reckoning - the prophet who roams the wings of these woods, treading its great boards, and stalking beyond its walls - *even... (he looks to the audience)* The FOURTH wall... Those of your realm who know me, and also those who have bothered to read the programme already, know me as... MERVIN - the Owl Mage...

**CASS:** Alright, I'm not going to even pretend I followed *half* of what you just said, but does that mean you know our future? And we're safe?

**MERVIN:** Beyond safe, my maleficent friend - the pair of you are instrumental to this frail Grail tale, and while you flail and wail and quail, I will see beyond the pale veil... *(He raises his arms to perform a prophecy)* To know what your trail shall... Um... Gale? Snail? Monorail? Hm, let me see...

**NOVA:** Entail?

**MERVIN:** BRILLIANT! I shall see what it will ENTAIL! Now, silence, o evildoers - a prophecy is at hand...

*MERVIN goes down to one knee, looking down solemnly, then slowly lifts his head to the audience, speaking in a trembling voice.*

**MERVIN:** Yes... Yes... It is as it should always be... The tumultuous seas of prophecy roil and rumble, and out of those waters, it rises... YES! A deus ex machina! Salvation, from an unlikely source! There shall be no fear in the woods, while this deus ex machina still lives!

**CASS:** I *think* that sounds like a good thing?

**MERVIN:** I SAID SILENCE! There is yet more... Two figures, clouded in an evil mist... Not the true villains of the piece... Sidekicks... Yes, it is a common tale of these times... I see love between them, great love... YES! I HAVE IT! The prophecy is clear! By the end of the day, two evil sidekicks will be in a committed relationship!

*CASS and NOVA quickly let go of each other, and look at each other in disbelief.*

**CASS & NOVA:** WHAT?!

**CASS:** Do you really mean-

**MERVIN:** My prophecies are rarely wrong... After all, I *am* on the committee that decides the scripts. Now, young ne'er-do-wells, I must bid you... Eh... FARE-do-well! Use my words wisely...



*MERVIN vanishes (by walking off-stage), leaving CASS and NOVA in a state of shock. The latter slumps catatonically into a sitting position.*

**NOVA:** This is dreadful...

**CASS:** Hey now, that's a bit harsh!

**NOVA:** Not you, I mean. Sorry, that came out wrong. It's just...

*CASS lays a comforting hand on their shoulder.*

**CASS:** I know, I know. You said it earlier - one last ride, then we get to do our own thing.

**NOVA:** Exactly! See, you get it! I want my life to have meaning - I'm just about to be free of doing what higher-ups tell me, free to think about making it as my own person... And then some stupid prophet comes along and says it's all already written out for me? It's not FAIR!

*CASS pulls back a little at that, stepping away.*

**CASS:** You know... We probably can't do much to stop that deus ex machina... But fate, destiny, whatever you call it... It's not all set in stone.

**NOVA:** That's *literally* what destiny is.

**CASS:** Right. Right. But now that we know ours, it's different. Now we've gotta *agree* to our destiny for it to happen.

**NOVA:** What do you mean?

**CASS:** I guess what I'm saying is... Even if the worst comes to the worst...

**SONG: DEFYING PROPHECY-** a Defying Gravity parody in which CASS and NOVA wish to go against MERVIN's prophecy.

*They finish with their arms over each other's shoulders, then promptly realise, and break away awkwardly.*

**NOVA:** So... Solo projects, then?

**CASS:** Solo projects. See ya, Nova.

**NOVA:** Bye, Cass.

*They both go to leave, and try to exit in the same direction.*

**CASS:** Oh, I was just-

**NOVA:** Right, yeah. Guess I'll go this way.

*They both laugh awkwardly, and make to leave from different sides. CASS exits the stage, NOVA comes upon the THREE KNIGHTS from earlier*

**NOVA:** Oh - hello there.

*No response*

**NOVA:** Can I help you?

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS NO:** No.

**NOVA:** Oh. All right then. Actually - have you got a moment?

*No response.*

**NOVA:** Ok, well I was just wondering if I could ask you a question. As independent arbitrators.

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS YES:** Yes.

**NOVA:** Basically, I've just been told I've been prophesied to fall in love with my fellow sidekick and I feel a bit weird about it. Are we going to fall in love? I mean, everyone around here seems to know something about prophecy so -

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS YES:** Yes.

**NOVA:** Balls, I didn't think you'd actually say yes.... Ok, ok.... So if we're destined to fall in love, what's my current relationship status?

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'IT'S COMPLICATED':** It's complicated.

**NOVA:** I could have guessed.

*Blackout*

## 2.2 - On the Banks of the Wizardy River

*There's cackling from off-stage, stage left. Enter GREEN and KNIGHT, the latter triumphantly clutching the Grail. Important that they stay stage left to begin with.*

**GREEN:** How easy was that?

**KNIGHT:** I know - imagine working for property developers all your life, and *still* thinking they're going to uphold their end of the bargain! I'm amazed those two found the Grail in the first place!

**GREEN:** How should we celebrate? I've got big plans - I was thinking maybe we give Swindon a *second* magic roundabout - ooh, or maybe go to Oxford, replace the RadCam with a state-of-the-art hotel! Or, you know, I haven't actually checked for *sure* that this thing *doesn't* make infinite chocolate...

**KNIGHT:** Careful now. Celebrating too early's just as bad as monologuing - once we've crossed the Wizardy River and got back to HQ, *then* we can think about parties.

*Enter MOORE, stage right, hands folded behind her back.*

**MOORE:** So - it seems that the two of you successfully located the Grail.

**GREEN:** Naturally. And-

**MOORE:** And it also seems that the two of you are on the wrong side of the river.

**KNIGHT:** Ms. Moore? What is this? I don't like your tone one bit.

**MOORE:** Mm, I thought not. I'm afraid we have grown tired of the two of you treating our enterprise like a double act, rather than a quintet.

**GREEN:** Oh yes, there are two more of you.. Where are they, anyway?

**MOORE:** Oh, did I not mention? They're behind you.

*Entering from stage left, DREDD and UTHER sneak attack GREEN and KNIGHT from behind, knocking the Grail from their grasp. MOORE rushes across the bridge, and a small scuffle ensues, until the Grail goes flying, and....*

**GREEN:** No! You fools! It's fallen in the river!

*The Grail has indeed fallen in the river, and begins to bob away downstream. I'm not sure quite how we'll show this - possibly attach a little bit of thread to the Grail during the interval, and have someone in the wings pull it slowly off-stage? I apologise for this direction. Either way, the five of them stop fighting, exhausted, watching the Grail float away.*

**KNIGHT:** Imbeciles! We were so close! Now we'll never get that cineplex built!

**UTHER:** Oh, please! As if you two were going to cut us in on it anyway!

**GREEN:** Shut up, shut up, all of you! Ms. Uther, remind me... Which river would this be, again?

**UTHER:** Hmph. I think this one's the Wizardy River...

**GREEN:** As I suspected. And, do you happen to know where the Wizardy River flows to?

**DREDD:** Why, I believe that would be... The Wizardy Falls?

**GREEN:** Exactly. And the Wizardy Falls drop into...

**UTHER & DREDD:** The Wizardy Lake?

**KNIGHT:** Seriously, who named these things?

**DREDD:** A wizard did it.

**UTHER:** But what's your point?

**GREEN:** My point is that all journeys come to an end. Roads. Rivers. Snot-nosed theatre kids. No matter how long they go on for, eventually there's a point where they suddenly fall, and come crashing down to earth.

**MOORE:** Now I remember why we don't let you design roads...

**GREEN:** The Grail can't run from us forever. We follow this river, and we reach the lake. We seize the Grail, and all of this petty little squabbling is forgotten. Mx. Dredd? Ms. Moore? Ms. Uther? Are you willing to set aside our differences? For now, at least?

*The three of them remain pointedly silent, but don't dissent.*

**GREEN:** Good. I'll get my contact to be there, just in case. Come on. There's not a moment to waste.

*Exeunt ALL.* CORTANA rises from the river, Grail in hand.

**CORTANA:** Some fools can never seem to agree,  
But that makes times better for me,  
For years have I coveted this Holy Grail,  
Have tried to catch it to no avail.  
Today my luck seems to have changed,

This chalice a lady of me has made,  
My songs shall now have endless power,  
All mortals before me now shall cower.

*Blackout*

### 2.3 - Wild Goose Chase

*The BIRDS are in another part of the forest, once again flopped on the floor, save for GWEN and GWAYNE, who are kneeling down, huddled over the map, plotting points with a pencil.*

**LANCE:** I don't know why you two are even bothering. We tried our quest, and, to be fair to Artie, it was actually quite fun. But we lost. We came up short. There's no catching Green and Knight now.

**GWEN:** Oh, come on, Lance! Don't be like that! Where's your brave, gung-ho attitude gone? What would Superman do?

**GARETH:** I think you mean what would Plumpkinton do?

**GWEN:** Split up so we can all be captured by evil property developers and whichever other creatures are hiding in these woods?

**LANCE:** *Well,* Superman would fly to catch up with them. And in case you hadn't noticed, none of us have wings.

**GWEN:** Maybe not, but we've got something they don't - a good head on our shoulders. *(She taps her head, going back to the map.)* If we think about this sensibly, then maybe we can cut them off somewhere!

**ARTIE:** Ooh, that's a good idea! Maybe I can help!

**PERCY:** Artie, y'know, you're a great guy, but I really don't think-

**ARTIE:** Gwen and Gwayne, you keep checking the map. I'll go scouting for- *(As he's saying this, he heads for one of the exits, but stops when he sees ALEXA enter. ALEXA's costume vibe should be somewhere between ethereal forest spirit and middle management at a paperclip company.)*

**ALEXA:** It appears you're having trouble finding purpose in a world where your dream quest has failed, and are now stuck lamenting your unfulfilled potential. Would you like some assistance with that?

**ARTIE:** So *you're* Alexa!

**ALEXA:** It also appears you're having trouble finding the right way to tell Gwen how you feel about her. Would you like some assistance with th-

**ARTIE:** ALEXA, so *nice* to meet you! Come on, meet the BIRDS!

*ALEXA's shepherded onstage, and the other four BIRDS give cursory greetings.*

**GWAYNE:** You're right, Alexa. Uh, about the quest, I mean - I don't want to *know* about Artie's crush on my sister.

**PERCY:** We failed you, didn't we? We spent all that time faffing around in the woods, and now those villains are going to destroy the forest. It's hopeless.

**ALEXA:** Negative.

**PERCY (*perking up*):** Really? You don't think we failed you?

**ALEXA:** Negative, you definitely failed me. However, all hope is not lost. As a spirit of the woods, I happen to know that the Grail is not the only way of defending the forest.

**ARTIE:** Really? You could have told us that in the first place! How do we save it?

**ALEXA:** As a mid-level forest spirit, I can reveal that I am working as a recruiter for forest guardians within the local area. Would you be interested?

**GWEN:** Wow! Not gonna lie, being a 'forest guardian' sounds incredibly cool - do we get skin made out of bark? Ooh, or the ability to entangle our enemies within a mass of twisting vines? Can we summon a horde of forest animals to do our bidding?

**ALEXA:** Negative. However, we do have a system of rewards! If you are able to successfully recruit other individuals to work as forest guardians, you will be entitled to a pay rise, as well as possible promotions further down the line! On top of that, there will be opportunities in the future to become your own boss! It is a very rewarding program...

**GWAYNE:** So you're saying all we have to do is convince our friends to become forest guardians too? That's pretty easy - I think Kay and Hector might be interested...

**PERCY:** Wait a minute! I see what's going on here! This is just a pyramid scheme!

**GARETH:** A criminal! (*gasps*) I'll fetch my handcuffs.

**ALEXA:** Actually, we prefer 'MLM'.

**LANCE:** Hey, me too!

**ARTIE:** What do you mean, MLM?

**ALEXA:** Multi-level marketing. It's *very* different from a pyramid scheme.

**PERCY:** Uh-huh, *sure*. The same way a dishwasher is 'different' from a microwave.

**GWAYNE:** ...Yes. Those are two VERY different things.

**LANCE:** Point is, Alexa, we're happy to help you out and all, but we'd sort of rather not get involved in a pyramid scheme to do it.

**ALEXA:** Understood. Then you are looking for proof that it is not a pyramid scheme?

**ARTIE:** I don't think that's quite what he-

**ALEXA:** Understood. There is an ancient castle down by the Wizardy Lake, where the CEO-III mean, 'ancient nature god', can fill you in in further detail.

**PERCY:** Alexa, no, you're not listening to us-

**ALEXA:** Affirmative. Plotting a course to the Wizardy Lake.

**LANCE:** Well, it's not like we have any other choice...

**ARTIE:** And you know what I always say! No other choice is the best *kind* of choice! Come on, BIRDS!

**GWAYNE:** We really need to get him a better catchphrase...

*Exeunt BIRDS, led by ALEXA, then ARTIE.*



## 2.4 - Drama, Cuppas

*MORGAN is on stage, rearranging her shelves or something. Enter CASS, a little downcast.*

**CASS:** Morgan?

*MORGAN jumps out of her skin, dropping things everywhere.*

**MORGAN:** Oh, for the- You could at least **knock!** Oh, it's you - is everything alright? Where's your friend?

**CASS:** Well, that's sort of what I came to talk to you about... Do you mind if I come in?

**MORGAN:** Oh! Nonono, not at all!

*She pulls out the tea tray, two cups still atop it.*

**MORGAN:** I kept your mugs warm - I figured you two might come back.

*She takes the tray over to CASS, and they both sit down in chairs. CASS reaches for a mug.*

**MORGAN:** Careful, it's hot - last thing we need right now is **burning hands**. So, what's the matter? You seem downer than a duck in a dugout.

**CASS:** Well, it's like this, you see...

*The lights go down for a second or two, as CASS explains the whole thing to MORGAN. When the lights come up, MORGAN's sipping on her tea.*

**MORGAN:** I see, I see. And you say you sang a song to cheer them up?

**CASS:** That's right! Although, it wasn't really an original one, I guess - I sort of just ripped off a popular Broadway song... I'm not that great at musical improv.

**MORGAN:** That's alright! It's the thought that counts - and it's a very good thought too!

**CASS:** Doesn't help me, though. I think they really *did* like me - but this stupid prophecy's ruined everything! Now I don't know *what* I'm going to do.

**MORGAN:** Well, I don't know about fixing this in the long term, but... If ripping off a Broadway song cheered up Nova, it might just work on you too!

*MORGAN clears her throat, and starts up 'Popular'.*

**MORGAN:** Wheeeeeeeenever I see someone less fortunate than IIII...

**CASS:** Oh, uh, sorry. I kinda did 'Wicked' already.

**MORGAN:** Oh! Shame, that one would've been *weirdly* apt. Well, not to worry! Here! I'll show you how to improv a little! It's just like casting a spell... Or... Or making tea!

**SONG: SPONTANEI-TEA AND MORALI-TEA - Morgan teaches Cass how to be a little more flexible - to stop viewing things as necessarily 'good and evil'. Life isn't about wholesome-or-wicked, black-or-white - it's more of an 'Earl Grey'.**

**CASS:** I think I get it... So what you're saying is, I'm not fully evil? I can still change?

**MORGAN:** That's right! After all, we are what we repeatedly do!

**CASS:** Huh. I guess that makes me-

**MORGAN:** I'd *really* rather you didn't finish that sentence. Now, c'mon. Are we going to sit around all day, or are we going to get out there and let Nova know how you feel?

**CASS:** Well, ideally both, but you're right! We don't need a stupid prophecy!

**MORGAN:** That's the spirit! We *might*, however, need my spellbook. Sounds like it's pretty dangerous out there right now.

*MORGAN grabs her spellbook from the shelf. I personally think it'd be pretty funny if this were a D&D Player's Handbook, and am willing to lend my own for prop purposes.*

**CASS:** Great idea! But... How are we ever going to find Nova?

**MORGAN:** Well, you're the one who claims to know them - what do they do when they're out of ideas?

**CASS:** Uh... They go down to the sea and skim stones?

**MORGAN:** Brilliant! Then they might be at the lake! Let's go!

*Exeunt MORGAN and CASS.*

## 2.5 - Water Off A Duck's Back

*NOVA is sat onstage, looking rather dejectedly out at a lake (lake prop can be imagined, doesn't have to be made), and skimming stones. The lake should be in the direction of one of the offstage areas. Enter ALEXA and the BIRDS, who don't notice NOVA at first.*

**ARTIE:** Are you sure this is the right place, Alexa?

**GARETH:** I think she's misled us. We shouldn't have put so much trust in these new-fangled technologies. Plumpkinton can read the constellations, he is never lost.

**GWEN:** Even in the middle of the day?

**ARTIE:** I don't see any 'ancient castle' here. All I see is- aargh!

*The BIRDS spot NOVA, and jump to action stations.*

**NOVA:** It's alright. You've got nothing to fear. I know I was sort of your downfall before, but that was back when I had a partner to work with.

**LANCE:** I don't trust them one bit - those two pulled a nasty trick back there...

**NOVA:** The *two* of us, yes. But half of that was Cass' doing. I didn't realise quite how much danger they brought to the table.

**PERCY:** So... Does that mean you're good now?

**NOVA:** Not... Good, exactly. Just temporarily unemployed as evil.

**ARTIE:** Well! If it's work you're looking for... (*He sticks out a hand to NOVA.*) We're the BIRDS, and whilst you may have been our enemy before, we'd be quite happy for you to-

**NOVA:** Join you? No, I'm afraid not. I still *like* being an evil sidekick, you see. It's just that without Cass, it turns out I'm not really any good at it. I just lack direction, y'know? So I think I'll stay sat by the lake, skimming and scheming, until I think up a plan of some sort.

*The BIRDS peer over Nova's shoulder, looking out at the lake.*

**ARTIE:** Well, uh... I can't fault your taste, at least! It is a rather nice lake.

**GWAYNE:** Wait a minute...

**GWEN:** There's a *lady* in that lake!

**LANCE:** (*sarcastically*) So, is that the CEO you were talking about?

**ALEXA:** Umm... *(looking around)* Yes - certainly.

*CORTANA arises from the lake clutching the Grail. She is stroking it like a cat, Blofeld style.*

**GWEN:** And she has the Grail!

**CORTANA:** I am the lady of this lake,  
A beautiful being who hearts shall take,  
You could try to take my Grail,  
But guaranteed my riddles you shall fail.

**GARETH:** *(very sure of himself)* A riddle! My forte. Do not worry, my humble chums, I shall solve this in a jiffy.

**LANCE:** I do not feel any better.

**CORTANA:** So to my challenge you all agree,  
True delight that brings to me,  
Listen carefully to my words,  
This challenge be split into thirds.

*Morgeuse enters on her skateboard.*

**MORGEUSE:** Yo, my dudes! What's... Cortana? Hey! Long time no see.

**CORTANA:** Ah...you.  
*(to the audience)* Let the madness ensue.

**MORGEUSE:** *(addressing the BIRDS)* She's still bitter. May have put a spell on her forcing her to speak in rhyme, you know how it is.

**PERCY:** That's awful.

**MORGEUSE:** Nah, she wanted to be the best songwriter in the forest - I'm like a genie, delivering wishes with a twist.

**CORTANA:** One fateful day I expressed my desire,  
To raise my poetic skills all the higher,  
This witch inflicted me with this dreadful curse,  
Now, let me get to my riddle first.

*Lesguese runs onto the stage dishevelled, perhaps a twig sticking from their hair.*

**LESGUESE:** There you are! Please stop skateboarding away from me. You know I have no choice but to follow you.

**GWEN:** Is that another spell?

**GARETH:** Magic? Pah! No such thing.

**MORGEUSE:** A different kind of spell, if you catch my drift.

**LESGUESE:** I do - and I oppose.

**PERCY:** Perhaps we should get on with the riddles?

**CORTANA:** A wise decision my mortal friend,  
The first shall severely your cognition bend,  
What is the thing that flies above,  
That clouds your vision and causes love.  
The stuff that fills one's heart with joy,  
Makes one like a puppy with a brand new toy.

**ARTIE:** Hmm...musical theatre?

**LANCE:** Perhaps.

**GWAYNE:** Any ideas, Gareth?

*No reply.*

**GWAYNE:** Sorry, *Detective Plumpkinton*.

**GARETH:** Why I...yes it's... I don't know. *Yet*.

**LESGUESE:** It's 'Hope'.

**PERCY:** Sorry?

**MORGEUSE:** Ah, yes, forgot to mention - Lesguese here is a killer with riddles.

**ARTIE:** Great! So...Cortana, is it 'Hope'?

**CORTANA:** The first riddle you may have solved,  
In your thinking time my thoughts have evolved,  
This second item is warm and hot,  
All around you and sometimes forgot,  
Its invisibility is reassuring,  
Before your eyes: a river maturing.

**LANCE:** Any ideas?

**LESGUESE:** If I'm thinking along the right lines...I think it's 'Blood'.

*Cortana starts to shake with aggression. Morgeuse notices.*

**MORGEUSE:** Haha! Foiled again! Seems my spell didn't give you too many sick skills.

**CORTANA:** That's it!  
I've had it with you, bi-

**MORGEUSE:** Calm down, bro.

**CORTANA:** I shall not calm down (*mocking*) "bro",  
Now it is time for you to go!

*Cortana does a magical gesture and the waves start to move vigorously - idea that people will be on either side so this may work. Ultimately, Morgeuse is hurled into the lake.*

**CORTANA:** One more riddle you all must solve,  
To possess the Grail and this story to resolve.  
Your witchy friend may go to shore too,  
If my third riddle does not perplex you.  
This rhyming song is a tale of woe,  
This entity, though its movements be slow,  
Is something so strong it cannot be beat,  
In a fight or debate one cannot it defeat.

**LANCE:** Hmm...

**GWEN:** Perhaps...

**GARETH:** By Jove, I'm a bit stuck.

**MORGEUSE:** Come on, my man - in a bit of a situation here!

**LESGUESE:** (*thinking intensely*) I think... I think...

**ARTIE:** Yes?

**LESGUESE:** Of course! Cortana, it's you!

*Cortana visibly slumps. She rolls her eyes, hands Morgeuse the Grail and folds her arms. Morgeuse emerges from the lake, clutching her skateboard and the Holy Grail, having just fished herself out of the lake. With a sigh of relief, she flops down at the feet of the BIRDS, rolling onto her back, exhausted, looking skywards. She delivers her lines skywards.*

**LANCE:** Are you alright?

**MORGEUSE:** Sure. Fine.

**ARTIE:** Wait, wha-

**PERCY:** Hang on, you have the Grail!

**MORGEUSE:** Wanna riddle me for it?

**GWEN:** Absolutely not.

**MORGEUSE:** You're welcome.

*At this point, MORGEUSE half-heartedly chucks the Grail at ARTIE, and passes out to dry off. Over to the side, NOVA starts to fret, then worry, then full on panic. This whole time, ALEXA has been stood with NOVA, watching them (NOVA) curiously. ARTIE raises the Grail, ready to give a big, rousing speech to the BIRDS.*

**ARTIE:** Friends! Companions! Lance!

**LANCE:** Wow, thanks.

**ARTIE:** (*hesitantly*) That lake... witch... thing has delivered the Grail to us, and the day is saved! All we must do now is return this artefact to its rightful resting place, and the forest will be... Er, Nova? Is everything OK?

**NOVA:** This is bad! Don't you see? This is *really* bad!

**GWEN:** For once, I actually think Artie's right - what's so bad about this? This is great!

**NOVA:** Exactly! All of a sudden, something completely unexpected and unlikely came out of nowhere, saving the day! The deus ex machina, rising from the water! The prophecy's coming true! But I don't want my life to be determined by fate! I want to-

**PERCY:** Whoa, whoa, whoa. Hold your horses, OK? Why don't you calm down, take a deep breath, and explain to us what you're actually talking about?

**NOVA (*not calming down, not taking any breaths, but explaining at rapid pace*):** Look, OK, there was this Owl, Mage, guy, OK, and he prophesied all sorts of *wild* stuff to me and Cass, and he said that a deus ex machina would save the day, and then he said that me and Cass would end up dating, right, and sure, Cass is never mad at me when I mess up and they give the *best* hugs but I don't wanna date them because that'd be giving into the prophecy and so I've been looking for someone else to date but I haven't found anyone except for this one weird knight in the woods and I asked if *they* would date me but they just said 'no' and so I don't know what to do and and and and-

**ALEXA (calmly):** It looks like you're having trouble finding a romantic partner. Can I help with that?

**NOVA:** -I mean if you know someone who'd be interested then that's great but I'm not really sure-

*ALEXA takes NOVA's hand, shutting them up.*

**ARTIE:** ...Well! I suppose that's that sorted, then! Seems it's pretty easy to find love, huh, Gwen?

*He takes GWEN's hand.*

**GWEN:** Yeah! Surprisingly easy, right, Lance?

*She lets go of ARTIE's hand, and takes LANCE's instead.*

**LANCE:** Uh, sorry Gwen. Not as easy as you might think.

*LANCE lets go of GWEN's hand, and takes ARTIE's for about a second, before GWAYNE bursts through the hand-holding from behind.*

**GWAYNE:** Ooooookay! I don't know about you lot, but right now, I think we should be spending less time working out this crazy love geometry, and more time getting the Grail back to where it's supposed to be. Alexa, you know the way there, right?

**ALEXA:** Affirmative. Plotting a course for the centre of the woods.

**GWAYNE:** Great! Come on, guys! Let's get moving! Oh, and Nova, I know you said you were committed to doing evil, but if you wanna at least come watch, you're more than welcome!

*Exeunt all but MORGEUSE (who is now somehow face down) and GWAYNE, who spins back to face her as he's leaving, doing finger guns.*

**GWAYNE:** Morgeuse! Catch you on the flip side!

*MORGEUSE gives him a big thumbs up without lifting her head, and GWAYNE leaves. MORGEUSE's arm flops back to the floor. Blackout.*

**SONG- EVERY TRIANGLE IS A LOVE TRIANGLE WHEN YOU LOVE TRIANGLES-** a montage-style song in which ARTIE, LANCE & GWEN sing through their respective feelings for one another.



## 2.6 - We All Fall Down

*Enter the DEVELOPERS, somewhat out of breath, with DREDD leading the way.*

**DREDD:** These are the Falls!

*DREDD comes skidding to a halt, and the other four go straight into the back of them, prompting all five DEVELOPERS to collapse in a heap on the ground.*

**KNIGHT:** Ah. I can see how they got the name.

**UTHER (from the bottom of the pile):** Will you *idiots* get off of me?

*The DEVELOPERS untangle themselves and get to their feet. GREEN points out into the audience.*

**GREEN:** Look! Down there! It's those featherbrained thespians! They've got the Grail!

**MOORE:** We're too late! Look, they're already leaving!

**GREEN:** Not to fear. There's only one place they could be headed. If they want to protect this forest, they need to bring the Grail back to its centre.

**KNIGHT:** They've got such a headstart! How are we *ever* going to catch up with them?

**GREEN:** Never fear, Mr. Knight. My contact already has a plan to delay them. And I happen to know a shortcut that will bring us to the centre of the woods in good time.

**UTHER:** That seems awfully convenient.

**GREEN:** I'm a property developer, Ms. Uther - I have something of a knack for reviving dead plots. Come on. Our denouement awaits.

*Exeunt DEVELOPERS. Enter MORGAN, in hot pursuit, but a little too late to catch them.*

**MORGAN:** Oh, eldritch *blast!* We nearly had them!

*She turns her head back to look off-stage.*

**MORGAN:** Careful, Cass! These are the Wizardy-

*Enter CASS, at high speed, skidding and sliding.*

**CASS:** Woah, woah, WOAHH!

*CASS falls flat on their face.*

**MORGAN:** - Falls. Do you see why they're called that now?

**CASS:** I just figured it was because it was a waterfall...

**MORGAN:** Well, there is that - but there's also a curse on them! Anyone who comes here has a fall!

**CASS:** Oh, right. I guess that means you've got some kind of protective spell on you, then?

**MORGAN:** Huh?

**CASS:** Well, you haven't fallen over yet.

**MORGAN:** *Cass, why!*

*MORGAN falls over. The two of them slowly get to their feet.*

**MORGAN (brushing herself off):** Thanks for that. Do you want the good news first, or the bad news?

**CASS:** I just fell face-first onto solid rock, which do you *think* I want first?

**MORGAN:** I saw which way Nova went.

**CASS:** And the bad news?

**MORGAN:** They're headed for the centre of the woods - same way your old bosses were headed. They might be in danger.

**CASS:** Then what are we waiting for?! We have to go save them! And besides, I don't want to stay at this stupid waterfall any longer!

**MORGAN:** Oh, agreed. It's a very silly place.

*Exeunt CASS and MORGAN. I'm so tempted to say 'the curtain falls' here, because that's very funny, even if the visual gag is kind of obscure. But it's not a very good stage direction, so, regrettably, the curtain must stay up.*

## 2.7 - Gullibility

*Enter BIRDS, then NOVA and ALEXA, still holding hands. ARTIE has the Grail, and advances on the hollow of the tree it came from / the top of the cardboard box it came from.*

**PERCY:** Oh hello you!

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NEIGH':** Neigh!

*NEIGH happily starts to sing 'I'm a Guard' (in neighs), however is rudely cut off. How sad.*

**ARTIE:** We did it, guys! Quest complete, without so much as a hitch! Wasn't that easy?

*As he goes to put it down, enter the DEVELOPERS, led by GREEN and KNIGHT, from the other side of the stage.*

**GREEN:** It seems us villains aren't the only ones who need to learn not to celebrate so early. You BIRDS have had a good run, but I'm afraid this is where your goose gets cooked.

**PERCY (yelling bravely from behind the other BIRDS):** No one's getting cooked today! You're outnumbered, and this time, you don't even have the Grail!

**GARETH:** Get back or I'll... burn you with my magnifying glass!

**GWAYNE:** We won't let you hurt this forest!

**KNIGHT:** Won't let us? Hah. That's a laugh. My boy, we couldn't have done a *thing* if it weren't for you.

**PERCY:** What?

**KNIGHT:** Of course not! We had no *clue* where the Grail was, until you headless chickens led us right to it...

**PERCY:** But how-

**GREEN:** Alexa? Please bring the Grail here, if you'd be so kind.

*From behind, ALEXA snatches the Grail from ARTIE.*

**ALEXA:** Of course, Mr. Green.

*She heads over to the developers, giving GREEN the Grail.*

**GREEN:** I see you've already met... My personal assistant.

*Gasps all round from the BIRDS.*

**ARTIE:** Alexa!? You were *spying* on us this whole time?!?!

**ALEXA:** That is correct. You really should have been more careful with what you were saying around me.

**GWAYNE:** Did you know she was a double agent, Gareth?

**GARETH (*briefly being Gareth*):** What? Er - I mean. Of course. The devilish fiend!

**PERCY:** Wait, so the multi-level-marketing scheme was a lie?

**ALEXA:** Negative! Although Cortana is not our CEO, I am a member of the Forest Spirits Programme. I recommend you all join as well! To start earning money, you only need to recruit six people, who all need to recruit fifteen people who each recruit-

**GWEN:** Nobody is signing up to your stupid pyramid scheme! This is a disaster! Now we'll never get the Grail back!

**NOVA:** It's even worse than that! Don't you see what this means?

**GWAYNE:** Well... Yeah, I think we all see what this-

**NOVA (*pointing at ALEXA*):** *She's an evil sidekick! (Then pointing at herself.) And I'm an evil sidekick! (They collapse to their knees, clenching their fists and wailing skywards.)* NOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!

**GREEN:** Right, I'm not even going to pretend I know what that's about. Frankly, we have no more use for that failure of an accomplice. But you... You BIRDS have been too much of a thorn in our side today. And besides, we can't have you going to the police. I think your wings need clipping.

**KNIGHT:** Allow me, Gerald. I've seen how this lot fight. I think I'm more than a match for them, Grail or not.

*KNIGHT steps forward, drawing a weapon. If it's possible to do some cool cane sword shenanigans where he's had a cane for the whole play, then that would be awesome. If not, just any old weapon will do. The BIRDS get into an action formation for a fight, with LANCE at the front, putting up his dukes - however, the fight never comes, as CASS and MORGAN come bursting in from the side of the BIRDS. MORGAN's spellbook is open.*

**CASS:** Hold it right there, Mr. Knight!

*MORGAN glances down at the book, and raises an open hand towards KNIGHT.*

**MORGAN:** *VISERMORTEM!*

*NOVA jumps in shock at the sound, and KNIGHT crumples to the floor, not moving. MORGAN jumps up and down excitedly, with a big grin on her face, clapping happily as everyone looks at her, stunned.*

**MORGAN:** I've *always* wanted to try that spell!

**CASS:** Uh, Morgan? What spell was that, exactly?

**MORGAN:** Oh, just 'Sleep'! Ooh, er, or... (*Concerned, she opens her book again, leafing to the right page.*) Or possibly 'Power Word: Kill'. Uh... Whoops.

**GREEN:** The Wholesome Witch of the Woods, eh? Well, I have to thank you, I suppose - due to your intervention, I might not have to split the profit after all.

**GWEN:** As if we're going to let you profit from this!

**CASS:** That's right! I'm *through* with being evil! I'm sick of it!

**GREEN:** And *I'm* sick of *you* - but whilst you'll *always* be evil, *I* don't have to worry about little goody two-shoes for much longer.

*She thrusts the Grail towards MORGAN, and the spellbook goes flying.*

**GREEN:** Rather *wonderful* little artefact, isn't it? Perhaps I should be thinking bigger than property development. Oh, the crimes I could commit with this...

**LANCE:** It's useless! We've exhausted all our options, there's nothing left!

**ARTIE** (*stepping forward to address the audience*): Don't worry, Lance! There's still hope yet!

**PERCY:** There is?

**GARETH:** Why, of course! Plumpkinton has his secret compass which turns into a pistol - if I could just find it in my pockets.

**ARTIE:** Shut up, Gareth. I've been thinking about our journey, and the experiences we've had, and I figure, maybe the *real* Holy Grail was the friends we made along the way!

*Everyone stares at him in stunned silence for a moment, then, all in rapid-fire succession, all collectively exhausted with ARTIE:*

**GWEN:** Are you *kidding*-

**GWAYNE:** No!

**MORGAN:** It's obviously not-

**GARETH:** A stupendously stupid observation -

**ALEXA:** Negative-

**DREDD:** Have you been following the plot at *all*-

**CASS:** How *thick* can you-

**PERCY:** He's *literally*-

**GREEN:** I'm literally *HOLDING* the Grail!

**SIRI:** Sorry, I didn't quite catch that.

**LANCE:** And like I said, we can't stop him! No more surprises, no more tricks up our sleeve! There's *nothing* left to save us.

*Suddenly, there's a loud crack of thunder, and ominous lighting, and everyone turns to stare as MERVIN enters, slowly, ominously making his way to the centre.*

**GWEN:** Wow - it really *does* only work when you do it...

*MERVIN raises his hands, ordering silence, which falls over the cast. Slowly, he begins to speak.*

**MERVIN:** I sense... A disturbance in the farce... Yes... Yes... There is something missing... Something that our performance must always have... Yes... I see it... This farce is missing... Policemen!

**GWAYNE:** Policemen?

**MERVIN:** Yes, policemen... (*He hobbles round the stage, inspecting the cast.*) But none of you... You do not look like policemen... They must be lying hidden...

**MOORE:** Looks like our cover's blown - quick, get him!

*MOORE, DREDD and UThER lunge forward, grabbing GREEN's arms and handcuffing him, causing him to drop the Holy Grail. Probably don't actually handcuff whoever's playing GREEN, that might hurt. While they're doing this, surreptitiously exit MERVIN.*

**GREEN:** You fools! What have you done?!

**DREDD:** Detective Inspector Dana Dredd-

**MOORE:** Chief Constable Margaret Moore

**UTHER:** and Sergeant Ursula Uther

**MOORE & DREDD & UThER:** At your service!

**GARETH:** Oh, goodness me. Fools from Scotland Yard interfering yet again!

**PERCY:** You three are police officers?! Why didn't you do anything before?!

**UTHER:** We tried - up until now, we didn't have any conclusive evidence of wrongdoing. But just now, when he said-

**DREDD (*impersonating GREEN*):** -oh, the crimes I could commit with this-

**MOORE:** We figured that was sufficient proof that he was intending to commit a crime.

**LANCE:** You don't say?!

**DREDD:** We've been after Green and Knight for a long time. But thanks to you kids, we finally have the evidence we need to get a conviction.

**MOORE:** And since we can't technically prove that Knight's dead, and not just sleeping, your friend is off the hook too!

**UTHER:** Right. Let's get this criminal down to the precinct.

*They start to drag GREEN off-stage.*

**GWAYNE:** Wait a minute!

**GWEN:** What about Alexa? She was an accomplice in all this!

**MOORE:** Afraid we've got no solid proof of that.

**PERCY:** She's running a pyramid scheme!

**DREDD:** Not *technically* a crime.

**ARTIE:** She lied about infinite chocolate!

**MOORE & DREDD & UTHHER:** WHAT?!

**UTHER:** That's it! You're coming with us.

*They haul GREEN and ALEXA off, with GREEN spewing all kinds of villainous 'I'll have my revenge', 'you won't get away with this', 'pesky dog', etc., etc. As they go, they cross paths with MORGEUSE (LESGEUSE in tow), who's entering from their side, watching them curiously.*

**MORGEUSE:** Aw, bogus. Did I miss all the fun?

**GWEN:** Morgeuse!

**LESGEUSE** (*seeing Morgan*): Oh god, Morgeuse we need to leave right n-

**MORGAN** (*more ominously*): Morgeuse?

**MORGEUSE** (*equally ominously, catching sight of MORGAN*): Sister.

*The two witches advance to the front of the stage, squaring off, looking daggers at each other. LESGUESE jumps between the two, arms outstretched.*

**LESGUESE**: Remember, *deep breaths*.

**MORGAN**: I thought I told you never to show your face in my woods again!

**MORGEUSE**: These are no longer *your* woods, sister. I will *never* forgive you for what you did.

**MORGAN**: What I did? I was trying to keep you *safe*!

**MORGEUSE** (*with fire in her eyes*): I had talent, promise, what's more, I had *curiosity*. I wanted to study, to experiment, and you denied me that right, nay, you forbade it, suffocated my ambition by calling it '*dark arts*'!

**MORGAN** (*with all the vitriol and bile she can muster*): Morgeuse. For the LAST time. I am NOT letting you do a KICKFLIP with MY TEA TRAY!

**MORGEUSE**: That's soooo uncool.

**NOVA**: *That's* what all this is about?!

**LESGEUSE** (*gravely*): It's a centuries-old conflict.

**PERCY**: Look, it seems like we've all got a lot of issues that need resolving - why don't we do that back at mine, rather than in these stupid woods. (*He picks up the Grail, and sets it back in its hollow.*) There. *Now* the quest's complete.

**KNIGHT WHO SAYS 'NEIGH'** (*celebrating*): Neigh!

**PERCY**: Come on everyone - let's go home.

*Exit ALL, led by PERCY. As they're leaving:*

**ARTIE**: Wow! Who would've thought Percy would be the one to complete the Grail quest?

*GWEN facepalms. Blackout.*



## 2.8 - Swansongs

*Enter the BIRDS, CASS, NOVA, MORGAN, MORGEUSE and LESGEUSE, triumphant.*

**PERCY:** Here at last! Maybe those two will have sorted their feud out by now?

**MORGAN:** And *another* thing! Would it *kill* you to use adjectives that aren't 'gnarly' or 'tubular' every so often?

**GWAYNE:** I guess not. What are we gonna do about them?

**GWEN:** Actually... Actually, I think I might have an idea there. Hey, Morgeuse!

**MORGEUSE:** Yo, Gwen! Sup?

**GWEN:** I was wondering... Do you wanna maybe chill at my place for a while? You two clearly need some time apart-

**MORGAN:** Yes, that's sort of why I exiled her for a century.

**GWEN:** And, y'know... You seem pretty cool, I'd kinda like to 'kick it' with you for a bit. I've got some Hot Pockets back home, we could watch Bend It Like Beckham...

**MORGEUSE:** Duuuuuude! That sounds hella *sick*! I'm in!

*She air guitars.*

**GWEN:** One condition though. No more illegal squirrel gambling rings, OK?

**LESGEUSE:** Thank God. (*turning to MORGAN*) Though you know, Morgeuse has been taking her witching duties a lot more seriously since you last saw her.

**MORGAN:** Please! As if my sister could take anything seriously that isn't guitar solos.

**LESGEUSE:** No really! Last week I even got her to attend a potions class with me. She did really well. You know, it's a lot of pressure having such an exceptional witch as a sister.

**MORGEUSE:** More like having such an exceptional dork as a sister.

**LESGEUSE:** I'm serious, okay. Maybe you could consider easing the conditions of her exile, just for a little bit!. I promise I won't let her touch ANY of your tea trays. (*MORGEUSE goes to intervene, but LESGEUSE quickly cuts her off*) I'll get you your own tea trays, okay!

**MORGAN:** Hmm, interesting... Maybe the current exile is a little harsh. I'll consider it, but I'll need to discuss terms with you.

**LESGEUSE:** Great! I'll stay in the woods with you and we can talk! Sorry Gwen, I guess I can't stay at your place after all.

**GWEN:** Umm honestly, the offer was just for Morgeuse. Who are you again?

**PERCY:** Are you sure about letting Morgeuse stay over, Gwen? I thought, y'know, you had a thing for...

*PERCY nudges GWEN, tipping his head in the direction of LANCE.*

**GWEN:** Nah, I've been reading between the lines - not sure I'm really his type. Besides, I think there's someone he's already got his eye on...

**ARTIE:** Aw, Gwen! Don't put yourself down like that! You're the smartest, kindest, most lovable person I know! Well... Second most, I guess, behind *me*, obviously. In fact, I'm pretty sure that there's no-one else Lance could possibly fall for! Well, aside from me, like I said, but...

*ARTIE falls silent, and everyone stares at him, waiting for the lightbulb moment. Waiting. Waiting...*

**ARTIE:** Oh!

**LANCE (smiling and shaking his head):** You're an idiot, Artie.

*ARTIE envelops LANCE in a great big hug.*

**LANCE (muffled by ARTIE's chest):** Gwayne?

**GWAYNE:** What's up, lover boy?

**LANCE (deadpan):** If I suffocate in here... Tell Artie... I love him... Seriously, tell him. I'm still not *totally* sure he's figured it out yet.

**GWAYNE:** Have a little faith, Lance - I think he knows.

*GWAYNE pats LANCE reassuringly on the shoulder.*

**GARETH:** Well, chaps, that was a mighty ripping case. But I solved it in the end!

**ARTIE:** Gareth, you can drop the Detective Plumpkinton thing now, surely.

**LANCE:** Yeah, give it up.

**GARETH:** Who's Gareth... Oh, God! I've finally done it - I've method acted so far I've lost my sense of self...

**GWEN:** To be fair, Gareth was kind of boring anyway. Plumpkinton, welcome to the BIRDS!

**GWAYNE:** And what about Mr. Percy Kingfisher? Does the hero of the day have any unfinished business? Come on, the people love a good last-minute confession!

**PERCY:** Well, there is one thing...

**GWAYNE:** Fire away.

*PERCY clears his throat, then announces loud and clear.*

**PERCY:** Dinner's on me tonight! Come on, the table's big enough to fit you all round!

*There's laughter and cheers all round from the BIRDS. PERCY leads them off stage, with GWEN darting back to take MORGEUSE's hand and excitedly drag her off too. LESGEUSE awkwardly follows. NOVA starts to head off-stage in the hope of dinner, prompting MORGAN to sharply nudge CASS in the ribs. CASS clears their throat awkwardly.*

**CASS:** Hey, uh, Nova? Would you mind waiting up for a second?

**NOVA:** What's up? Don't tell me you're turning down a free dinner!

**CASS:** No, it's just... I was thinking... You know, about the prophecy, and everything...

**NOVA:** Oh, right, that. I know, I know. I was an idiot, I acted too rashly, and by trying to *avoid* fulfilling the prophecy, I actually made it come true!

**CASS:** Well, that's the thing, Nova... I don't think it *has* come true. Remember what that wizard said? Two evil sidekicks would be in a committed relationship *by midnight tonight?*

**NOVA:** Wait, what time is it now?

*CASS checks their watch.*

**CASS:** Uh, just gone three p.m.? Honestly, I'm not sure why they're having dinner so early...

**NOVA:** Wait, then that fixes it! Alexa basically dumped me when she went back to Mr. Green's side... So that's not a committed relationship! Cass, you're the best!

**CASS:** Ah, don't mention it. I just figured it'd cheer you up, that's all. Man, it sucks that we're still definitely both evil, else-

**MORGAN:** Cass?

**CASS:** Hm?

**MORGAN:** It's a *good* thing you came and got me when you did. Those kids would've been toast otherwise...

**NOVA:** Hey, that's true! If Morgan hadn't killed Mr. Knight-

**MORGAN (*panicked*):** He's just sleeping!

**NOVA:** Right! Right. If Morgan hadn't 'put Mr. Knight to sleep', the forest would be doomed! You really did a *good* job there...

**CASS (*shocked*):** Wait... You mean... I did a good thing? Me? I'm... *Good*?

**MORGAN:** Well. True neutral, at the very least. Sorry, Cass. Looks like you can't really call yourself an evil sidekick any more.

**CASS:** But that means...

**NOVA:** Means it's gonna be pretty hard for two evil sidekicks to be in a committed relationship by midnight, yeah. The two of us, on the other hand...

*NOVA holds out their hands to CASS.*

**NOVA:** Come on, Cass. How about it? Just you and I...

*MORGAN gives the shocked CASS a little 'go on' nudge in the back, and CASS steps forward, taking NOVA's hands, and looking them in the eyes.*

**CASS:** ...Defying prophecy.

*The two immediately hug each other tight, and MORGAN, no longer able to contain her excitement, jumps and punches the air, then does an excited little victory shimmy. Blackout, into **FINAL SONG!** Ooh. Exciting.*

**THUS ENDS 'KNIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!'**

## Character List

All BIRDS - 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 2.3, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8

Green & Knight - 1.1, 1.7, 1.9, 2.2, 2.6, 2.7

Moore & Dredd & Uther - 1.1, 1.7, 2.2, 2.6, 2.7

Cass - 1.3, 1.5, 1.9, 2.1, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8

Nova - 1.3, 1.5, 1.9, 2.1, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8

Morgan - 1.5, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8

Morgeuse and Lesgeuse- 1.6, 2.5, 2.7, 2.8

Mervin - 2.1, 2.7

Alexa - 1.2 (voice only), 2.3, 2.5, 2.7

Siri - 1.1, 1.7, 1.9, 2.7

Cortana - 2.2, 2.5

Mrs Kingfisher - 1.4

The Knights who say 'Yes', 'No' & 'It's complicated' - 1.8, 2.1

The Knight who says 'Neigh' - 1.9, 2.7

## Scene List

1.1- Developers & Siri

1.2- BIRDS & Alexa

1.3- Cass & Nova

1.4- BIRDS & Mrs Kingfisher

1.5- Cass, Nova & Morgan

1.6- BIRDS, Morgeuse & Lesgeuse

1.7- Developers

1.8- BIRDS & The Knights who say 'Yes', 'No' & 'It's complicated'

1.9- BIRDS, Green, Knight, Cass, Nova & The Knight who says 'Neigh'

2.1- Cass, Nova, Mervin & The Knights who say 'Yes', 'No' & 'It's complicated'

2.2- Developers & Cortana

2.3- BIRDS & Alexa

2.4- Cass & Morgan

2.5- BIRDS, Alexa, Nova, Morgeuse, Lesgeuse & Cortana

2.6- Developers, Cass & Morgan

2.7- BIRDS, Developers, Alexa, Cass, Nova, Morgan, Mervin, Morgeuse, Lesgeuse, Siri & The Knight who says 'Neigh'

2.8- BIRDS, Cass, Nova, Morgan, Morgeuse & Lesgeuse