

Merlin - Winds of Change
Part One: The Spark of Life

Prologue

written by Alex Cohen

Adapted from [The Change Trilogy](#) by emmbrancsxx0 and mushroomtale

First Draft: December 8, 2021
Revision: 2nd Draft (12/27/21)

Made in Highland

MERLIN (V.O.)
Fifteen hundred years. It's been
over fifteen hundred years. I've
seen kingdoms rise and fall.

EXT. CAMELOT LOWER TOWN - DAY

CHYRON
Camelot. 526 AD.

The Saxons are invading Camelot, the knights of Camelot are fighting their best in the lower town but they are overwhelmed. LEON and PERCIVAL are in battle, aged but unwilling to not defend their city, taking down Saxon knights but it's no use. They are overwhelmed by several Saxons.

MERLIN (V.O.)
Seen all those I hold dear die.

INT. GWEN'S BEDROOM

Through the window the Saxon army breach the castle courtyard. GUINEVERE is in her bed, old and crippled. MERLIN, old and grey, rushes into the room, his eyes flash gold and the years melt away returning him to the youthful man we know. He takes off his gold and red robe to reveal his classic look underneath: brown trousers, light jacket, blue tunic and a red neck scarf.

MERLIN
The city is overrun.

He crosses the room and glances out the window, the Saxons battle closer and closer to the castle.

MERLIN
The Saxons have taken over. The townspeople are being sent into the forest for protection. We have to follow.

No response, he whips around to face GWEN.

MERLIN
Gwen!

GWEN
(slowly)
Yes, I heard you, Merlin.

MERLIN
We have to go now.

Made in Highland

GWEN

I cannot.

MERLIN

(forced laugh)

Course, you can! I'll help you!

GWEN

No, Merlin, I won't.

MERLIN

Why not?

GWEN

I will not leave my people. There are those who will stay behind to defend their livelihood. I will not abandon them, nor will I leave my knights.

MERLIN

What can you do for them from here?

GWEN

I can be their queen.

MERLIN kneels next to the bed.

MERLIN

Gwen. Camelot is lost.

GWEN

No, Merlin.

(knowingly)

As long as one of its citizens is alive, there will always be a Camelot.

MERLIN

You're the queen, Gwen. If you stay, they'll kill you. Not quickly, either! They'll make an example of you!

GWEN

(light laugh)

Whatever death they have in store for me cannot be as slow as death from age. I will not leave.

MERLIN

You *have* to.

GWEN
I won't. Arthur would not.

MERLIN
(angrily)
Well, he's not here!

GWEN
Merlin, I could not go on even if
I wanted to.

GWEN moves her hand frailly to take his, a sob escapes MERLIN as tears begin to fall.

MERLIN
(broken whisper)
I can't do it without you, Gwen.

GWEN
And I could not have done it
without you. You will never know
how thankful I am, Merlin. I just
wish I could have done more for
you.

MERLIN
(shakes his head)
You did all you could.

GWEN
You have to go, Merlin. You must
take care of our kingdom. Go with
my love. And, *when* you see Arthur
again, I know you will take care
of him, too. He will need you.

There is a commotion from outside the room as the Saxons break into the castle.

GWEN
Go, Merlin.

MERLIN would not leave her to the invading Saxons. He stands up, taking a moment to memorize her face, squeezes her hand and lets it go, bringing it to her cheek. GWEN holds eye contact and offers a brave smile, which MERLIN returns - she deserves to go out with something good. MERLIN's palm moves to rest on her forehead as he summons his magic uttering a few ancient words, his eyes glowing.

MERLIN
Goodbye, Gwen.

GWEN's eyes flicker closed, her hand falls from MERLIN's as she takes her last breath. Several Saxon knights suddenly break into the room. MERLIN kills them all with a frightening display of his power. He wipes the tears from his face, turns and leaves the room and down the corridor away from the Saxons.

EXT. FOREST OUTSIDE CAMELOT

MERLIN rides a horse to the forest edge, turns and looks back at Camelot. It's keep towers above the tree line, smoke billowing from the windows. He knows it's the last time he will ever see Camelot. He turns and rides into the forest.

MERLIN (V.O.)
And waited.

EXT. LAKE OF AVALON

MERLIN dismounts his horse and angrily walks towards the water edge. To the tower:

MERLIN
He was supposed to come back! He was supposed to return when his kingdom needed him. Camelot is gone!
(Weakly)
You were supposed to come back!

MERLIN falls to his knees defeated.

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
Searched for answers the world over.

EXT. CHURCH UNDER CONSTRUCTION

CHYRON
Glastonbury, England. 1191

A crowd has gathered around the abbey, anxiously waiting to hear the news. MERLIN, in his old man facade, is at the back of the crowd. The door opens and FATHER HENRY walks out and all chatter ceases.

FATHER HENRY
The rumors are true.
(MORE)

Made in Highland

FATHER HENRY (CONT'D)

During construction two skeletons dressed in full ceremonial garb have been found. An iron cross among them bearing the inscription *Hic jacet sepultus inclitus rex Arthurus in insula Avalonia.* - Here lies interred the famous King Arthur on the Isle of Avalon.

The crowd erupts in cheers. MERLIN glares at FATHER HENRY, pushes his way through the crowd and slips inside through a side entrance. Once inside his disguise drops, revealing young MERLIN once again. He stops in front of the altar, eyes fixed on the giant crucifix above him. A door next to the altar opens and a monk steps through, BROTHER AARON, who is not surprised to see MERLIN.

BROTHER AARON

Emrys, have you come to pray?

MERLIN

(glaring)

I've come for answers.

BROTHER AARON

Through the Lord, all answers - .

MERLIN

I'm not in the mood! What the hell is this? Hasn't this church got enough money already? Whose remains are those out there, really?

BROTHER AARON

I do not know.

MERLIN

They're not Arthur's!

BROTHER AARON

No, they are not. According to legend, he was not buried, and Guinevere's body was lost. You have not come for answers, Emrys. You've come for an argument, but you will find none with me. Perhaps take it up with Father Henry.

MERLIN

(scoffs)

Henry is a liar.

BROTHER AARON

He does what he must to strengthen
people's faith in God.

MERLIN

This wasn't for the faith. It was
about money for construction.

MERLIN

Perhaps, but that is not all. It
is for the same reason they say
your remains are buried in France,
and yet here you stand before me.
You already know the answer to
your question.

MERLIN turns away.

MERLIN

Because there can be no such thing
as immortal sorcerers and once and
future kings. It doesn't fit the
rules of your religion. People
can't believe in heathens and
magic. The Old Religion must be
forgotten so your God can live.

He turns back to BROTHER AARON, glaring.

MERLIN

Well, it looks like your faith has
won. The Old Religion has been
dead for a long time. I can feel
my magic fading...

BROTHER AARON

(shakes his head)

Not dead, just dormant. Do you
think your magic is the only
practice? The Old Religion is the
purest, and the strongest, but it
is not the only catalyst for
magic. Every civilization has
harnessed the power God bestowed
on this earth in different ways,
even the Christians. Have you ever
heard of the *Book of Enoch* of the
Dead Sea Scrolls?

MERLIN

(hands on his hips)

It's a grimoire. A book of magic.

BROTHER AARON

A pre-Christian book of magic. Our faith was built on the likes of it. You have allowed your mind to grow old, Emrys. You have forgotten that all forces in this world are connected, as God intended. We must not ignore the messages that He has given us since the beginning of time.

MERLIN

What messages?

BROTHER AARON

The messages of the world. Do you think your religion was the only one with prophecies?

MERLIN

(breathlessly)

There are other prophecies about Arthur?

BROTHER AARON

I have reason to believe that may be the case. Do not turn your nose up at other faiths you know nothing of. They may be able to help you. Your answers are not here, Emrys. You've known that for a long time. But they may be elsewhere, if only you are patient enough to search for them.

MERLIN

I've got nothing but time.

BROTHER AARON

(smirking)

Then use it. Broaden your worldview. I do not have to tell you that the world is ever changing. You must grow and advance with it, or else you will be buried with all to which you cling. If you need proof of that, go outside. Father Henry can show you your grave.

INT. STUDY

CHYRON

(MORE)

Made in Highland

CHYRON (CONT'D)
Salon-de-Provence, France. 1555.

The study holds an air of importance to it - thick books pack shelves and an exotic rug covers the polished wooden floor. The adorned desk is covered in books, maps, star charts, and writing utensils. A globe sit in one corner of the room, and a telescope directed at the night sky out the window in the other.

MERLIN peeks through the telescope and flicks the globe. He walks to the bookshelves and finds an extensive collection of medical texts, books on the occult, and some judicial astronomy almanacs Nostradamus had written over the years, he flips through a book or two.

The door creaks open, and a man walks in holding a candelabrum.

NOSTRADAMUS
Who let you in? My secretary did not inform me of a visitor!

MERLIN
Sorry. Didn't surprise you, did I? I shouldn't think that's possible, surprising you. I thought you knew I would be coming.

NOSTRADAMUS
I *did*.

NOSTRADAMUS closes the door and walks towards his desk, places the candelabrum on it and motions for MERLIN to take a seat.

NOSTRADAMUS
I did not know it would be tonight, but I have been expecting you for some time.

MERLIN
It's nice to be expected, Michel. Can I call you Michel?

NOSTRADAMUS
No. You will call me by the name the world knows, Nostradamus. And I will pay you the same respect, Emrys.

MERLIN
Well, since you know who I am, you probably know why I'm here.

NOSTRADAMUS

You seek a prediction for your king.

MERLIN

Yes. I want to know why he will return – and when, if you know such information.

NOSTRADAMUS

Hmmm. Such a thing may be very far in the future. It will take time, and it will cost a great sum.

MERLIN

Oh. I can – I can get money. I'm willing to pay whatever it costs.

NOSTRADAMUS

Perhaps that won't be necessary. I will do it as a favor, so long as I receive a favor in return.

MERLIN

Anything!

NOSTRADAMUS gets up and takes a book off a shelf, he puts it in front of MERLIN and gestures to it. MERLIN opens it and starts flipping through the pages. It was filled with handwritten notes and sketches, diagrams and charts.

NOSTRADAMUS

I have been looking through the centuries for many years now. I plan to publish my findings, the first of which will be out this year. It will be the first of many.

MERLIN

Oh?

NOSTRADAMUS

Your future is different from my usual clients, Emrys. What is in store for you will affect the world. It is, therefore, the world's future.

MERLIN

You want to put your predictions for me into your books.

NOSTRADAMUS

Mmm. They will fit into my narrative. It is very complicated to look through time without a fixed subject to read from. You, however, are fixed because of your immortality. I will be able to gain much insight into the fate of the world from your star charts.

MERLIN internally debates for a moment. He didn't like the idea of this man getting rich off of ARTHUR's destiny. However, he didn't really have much of an option.

MERLIN

Okay. We have a deal.

NOSTRADAMUS

Excellent! But you must understand, I have many other clients, Emrys. And none of them will live as long as you. I will begin work on your prophecies just as soon as you provide me with your birth chart.

MERLIN

(snorts)

Most astrologers create the birth chart for the client.

NOSTRADAMUS

Yes, but most astrologers do not have as many clients as I do. Besides, tracing all the elements of your life will take more time than I have left on this earth.

MERLIN

You can see that? You know when you're going to die?

NOSTRADAMUS

When and how.

MERLIN

What's that like?

NOSTRADAMUS

(quickly)

I like to be prepared.

NOSTRADAMUS

Send your birth chart at your earliest convenience. You may take the front door out. That way, you can let my secretary know where you are staying.

MERLIN stands up to leave. NOSTRADAMUS looks down to his paperwork, no longer acknowledging MERLIN

MERLIN

I'll have it to you by the morning.

NOSTRADAMUS

That will do. Have a pleasant evening, Emrys.

MERLIN

Thank you. Goodnight, Nostradamus.

INT. MERLIN'S ROOM AT AN INN

There is a knock on the door, MERLIN opens it to find the innkeeper at his door with a letter for him. He opens it.

NOSTRADAMUS (V.O.)

*From the sky will come a great
leader of frightening power:
To bring back to life the great
King of the Anglos
Before and after, Mars is to reign
for a good cause
In the seventh month of the year
1999*

*One will have cause to be reborn,
terror of mankind
Never more horror nor worse days
In the past than will come*

MERLIN

(to himself)

Mars? The god of war? So Arthur will return to fight a war? Will he start or end it? Will he rise before or during it? I have to wait... until... 1999?

INT. TIPI

CHYRON

(MORE)

Made in Highland

CHYRON (CONT'D)
The Great Plains, North America.
1699.

MERLIN and four other young Crow Tribe men are seated in a half circle in front of the tribe's medicine man, AKBAALIA as he prays over them, other member's of the tribe throw cold water against hot rocks creating steam. AKBAALIA burns herbs - sage, cedar, tobacco, spearmint and wafts the smoke towards the men. He fills a smoking pipe with peyote and mushrooms and passes it to the group, MERLIN instantly feels light headed as he smokes.

The group exits the tipi and into the desert - days and nights pass as MERLIN wanders in a daze. As MERLIN makes it back to the camp, an apprentice of AKBAALIA's meets him and brings him back to the tipi. Along the way, men and woman and children ducked their heads out of the flaps of their homes to peer at him with interest or relief or encouragement. MERLIN enters the tipi and sits in front of AKBAALIA.

AKBAALIA
You are the last to return,
Owíhaŋke Waníče. It has been six
days.

MERLIN
Six?

AKBAALIA
Tell me what you saw on your
quest.

MERLIN
I was in Ealdor - my home. I
didn't even know I still
remembered it, but I did. Every
hill, hut, every fire and hay
wagon just as I had left it. But
there weren't any people. I
followed a path into the forest,
my feet remembered the way before
I even realized where I was going.

AKBAALIA
The path of the quest is unique to
every man. You have followed the
way the Creator has given to you.

MERLIN
You mean, my destiny?

AKBAALIA
It is the same meaning.

Made in Highland

MERLIN lets out a small snort. AKBAALIA signals for him to continue.

MERLIN

I heard a noise, almost like a bird, but not quite. I recognized it but wasn't sure why. Then I saw her lying among the trees. Athuisa - a dragon.

(full fo regret and guilt)
I failed her.

AKBAALIA

Dragon? I do not know this word.

MERLIN

Oh. It's - it was a creature of magic. Like a - um, reptile? But big? And with wings?

AKBAALIA

Avanyu. The sky snake. This power animal is a rare one.

MERLIN

What does it mean?

AKBAALIA does not answer, only signals for him to continue. MERLIN wants to argue but does not.

MERLIN

She took flight, I tried to chase her but couldn't keep up. I had wandered off the path and was in a clearing. In the middle was...

MERLIN can't bring himself to say it out-loud.

AKBAALIA

The face of evil.

MERLIN

Mordred. He did nothing, said nothing.

(softly)

I never stopped fearing him. Even from the grave.

(back to normal)

I heard his voice in my head.

"Hello Emrys. I shall never forgive this, and I shall never forget." Then I woke up in the desert.

A long silence while AKBAALIA ponders what MERLIN had just told him.

AKBAALIA

The sky snake is the bringer of
change, just as the seasons change
and the storm changes the sky.
Something will change for you,
Owihaŋke Waniċe, and you must
beware it.

MERLIN

Mordred. Why did I see him?

AKBAALIA

The voices of the past are calling
for you. They are using the souls
that inhabit this world to reach
you.

AKBAALIA gestures towards the cracking twigs that fueled the
fire, the sand, everything around them.

AKBAALIA

Answer them.

MERLIN

How?

AKBAALIA

What you seek lies within you.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM

CHYRON

Östergötland, Sweden. 1892.

Merlin, sweat-matted and panting, is on his back in a bed as
AINO, a Swedish seer, rides him. She throws her head up to the
ceiling, shouting in tongues upon her release, she nods
acknowledging something unseen. Without a word, she gets off
MERLIN, covers herself with a satin robe.

AINO

I will begin the ritual, Emrys.
Join me in the parlor when you
have dressed.

She leaves the room. MERLIN stays in bed for a moment longer,
trying to catch his breath as chanting begins from the other
room. MERLIN rolls out of bed and dresses.

Made in Highland

MERLIN

(muttering to himself)
 There's gotta be an easier way...
 If only I could just do it myself
 anymore.

Once in the parlor, he spots AINO up on a loft, in the middle of an altar adorned with rugs, candles and a bowl of water in front of her. She holds a simple wooden staff, MERLIN does not interrupt her, taking a seat and waits. Time passes - day to night, before she descends to MERLIN.

AINO

There is news of your king, Emrys.

He sits up straight, not breathing.

MERLIN

(whisper)
 You know why he will return?

AINO looks at him, and MERLIN doesn't like what he sees - as if what she is about to say isn't good news. He readies himself.

AINO

I have seen two souls. They are bound together through a joint fate. As one falls, so must the other.

MERLIN

What does that mean? Is Arthur one of the souls? What fall?

AINO

It is unclear. But the Norns urge you not to let destiny repeat itself. That is what they have told me.

MERLIN

(scoffs in aggravation)
 I thought you were supposed to be the best.

AINO

(sharply)
 I am. This practice is never exact, Emrys. The future is shrouded in many unknowns. You of all people should know this.

MERLIN

Fine.

AINO
 There is one other thing. There
 will be a great change. It will
 unravel the threads of destiny.

MERLIN stands up in anticipation.

MERLIN
 What change?

AINO
 I have told you all I know.

MERLIN drops his shoulders. He pays AINO for the session and
 heads towards the door.

AINO
 Emrys.
 (smirking, she scans him from
 head to toe)
 If you are staying in Sweden, you
 are always welcome back. Next
 time, there will be no charge.

EXT. OPEN AIR TEMPLE

CHYRON
 Udaipur, India. 1927.

The small temple sits on the edge of the Udai Sagar Lake.

GURU VILOCHAN
 Inhale. Palms together. Exhale.
 Palms to the sky. Inhale. Hands
 down.

MERLIN can't tell where the voice is coming from as GURU
 VILOCHAN is circling around him, MERLIN winks one eye open.

GURU VILOCHAN
 Eyes closed, Emrys.

MERLIN
 (sighs)
 Sorry.

GURU VILOCHAN
 Let go of your regrets. They are
 an extension of your physical
 self-

MERLIN

-And I have to forget my physical self.

MERLIN drops his hands to his knees.

MERLIN

You remember I'm not here to break any life and death cycles, right? I don't think reincarnation is something we have to worry about with me.

GURU VILOCHAN sits down in front of MERLIN cross-legged, closes his eyes and meditates for a moment.

GURU VILOCHAN

You have to let go of yourself.
(opens his eyes)
You must focus on the power of the world around you.

MERLIN shakes out his arms and upper body, trying to get rid of all the tension he holds.

MERLIN

Okay, fine. Make the world one with me. I can do that.

GURU VILOCHAN

You still misunderstand. You must become one with the *world*, not the other way around. The world is a very busy place. You cannot expect its power to come to you. You must seek it out.

MERLIN

(pouts)
How?

GURU VILOCHAN

Forget yourself.
(he closes his eyes)
Forget your body and mind. Listen to the water, and to the wind. Think of the soft earth around it. Imagine the way they feel.

Suddenly MERLIN is no longer in Udai Sagar Lake. He is standing ankle deep in the waters of the Lake of Avalon.

GURU VILOCHAN (V.O.)

Let it go deeper than your skin.
(MORE)

Made in Highland

GURU VILOCHAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Become the water, and the forces
that make it flow. Become the air,
and the reason it blows. Become
the land, and breathe in the life
it sustains. Your body is made
from the same materials as the
world.

The scenes around MERLIN change, fading from the lake to various natural environments - a tropical rainforest, the top of a snowy mountain, among the clouds and the middle of a dense forest.

GURU VILOCHAN (V.O.)

Your mind is inconsequential. You
must exist without being. You must
become the forces that make the
water flow and the wind blow. You
must become the power that has
created the land.

GURU VILOCHAN (V.O.)

(combined with another voice)

You must become magic. You are
magic itself.

MERLIN floats beneath the waters of the Lake of Avalon - murky, silent with flashes of lightning. Suddenly, something strikes MERLIN - lightning? Magic? He jerks awake, back in the temple but he is alone. It is no longer sunny but raining and windy. MERLIN catches FREYA's face in one of the puddles, he blinks and she is gone. He looks up and BALINOR is standing against one of the pillars, he blinks and he is gone. Suddenly, the storm is stopped, back to the sunny day it was. MERLIN looks down at his hands - he can no longer sense the magic he began to feel. MERLIN looks up at GURU VILOCHAN.

GURU VILOCHAN

Your eyes - they turned gold.

INT. BUS

CHYRON

Nyeri, Kenya. 1983.

MERLIN is sitting by himself inside an old beat up bus, stuck in gridlocked traffic. It is extremely hot, sweat is beading off his forehead. He looks around the bus and makes sure no one is watching. He looks down and open the zipper to his backpack, inside a large emerald green egg, he touches the surface softly. He jerks his hand away as if he had been shocked.

Made in Highland

MERLIN looks up and finds BALINOR watching him from across the aisle, a sad look on his face. After a moment MERLIN blinks and he is gone.

MERLIN
(heavy)
It's time to go home.

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
Even fell in love a few times.

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. CROW TRIBE SETTLEMENT 1699 - NIGHT

MERLIN and LUYU, AKBAALIA's daughter, sit side by side around a massive bonfire during a celebration feast, she touches MERLIN's arm fondly. MERLIN takes in the scene around him, looking at everyone who has taken him in with what is as close to love as he believes he could ever be - he turns back to LUYU with the same look on his face.

EXT. MOROCCAN STREET BAZAAR 1815 - DAY

MERLIN and the son of a Moroccan Sultan are strolling the streets taking in all the sights and sounds. He is content for the first time in a long time. MERLIN smirks at the man and pushes him into a side alley, kissing him against the side of a building.

INT. STOCKHOLM APARTMENT BEDROOM 1892

MERLIN and MAJVY, she is a white haired beauty, are lounging in bed together. They chat enthusiastically about books and politics and social issues. They are both big smiles and all laughs. A fire burns in a small fire place as a blizzard rages on outside the window.

INT. MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITAL COMMUNITY ROOM 1996

MERLIN and SIMON, a doctor at Maudsley Hospital, sit together at a round table, chatting and playing a board game. SIMON laughs at something MERLIN said and he places his hand on MERLIN's thigh. SIMON stops laughing, realizing what he did and looks at MERLIN who looks back with a shy smile.

MERLIN (V.O)
Or at least I thought I was happy
for a moment.

END MONTAGE

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
And lost my mind... more than
once.

BEGIN MONTAGE

INT. DARK BEDROOM 1895

MERLIN is curled up in a bed, no motivation to do anything - not eat, bathe or explore his surroundings - his depressions were becoming more frequent and sometimes lasted for weeks at a time. He glances at a cup of water on a table across the room. He can't bring himself to get out of bed to retrieve it, he reaches his hand out but nothing happens. He tries harder, his eyes barely glow but still nothing happens. He sighs and turns over under the covers.

INT. PSYCH WARD PADDED ROOM 1932

MERLIN sits in the center of the room, rocking back in forth gently.

INT. MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITAL COMMUNITY ROOM 1996

MERLIN sits in a chair watching rain fall against the barred window. FREYA's face appears in the rain, sad. He turns away, watching other patients play Monopoly.

BALINOR
(from behind)
Merlin.

MERLIN spins around in terror.

MERLIN
You're not here.

BALINOR
(steps forward reaching out)
Son. You can not run from what you
are.

MERLIN
 (chanting)
 You're not here. You're not here.
 You're not here. You're not
 here...

BALINOR
 (sadly)
 Son...

MERLIN screams - a loud, feral roar as his eyes glow. The lights flicker, the picture on the television becomes only static, the pieces of the board game scatter and nearby patients are thrown through the air. BALINOR disappears. MERLIN stares wide eyed at what he has done, as if he hasn't done anything like it in a long time. SIMON, one of the doctors, rushes to restrain MERLIN.

MERLIN (V.O.)
 And did some things I still
 regret.

SIMON and several other doctors manage to get MERLIN back to his room. The others leave, but SIMON stays behind. SIMON puts his hands on MERLIN's shoulders.

SIMON
 Emrys, calm down.

SIMON moves one of his hands to cup MERLINS cheek.

SIMON
 Please, for me?

MERLIN
 I can't. It hurts all the time.
 The air pressing in on me, the
 water drowning me, the ground
 hurtling towards the sun. I feel
 it all - it's too much. The magic
 is too much. I wish I never let it
 back in!

MERLIN is bordering on manic, he pushes SIMON away from him and suddenly his eyes glow, his body goes stiff. A beam of gold light shots from his chest into SIMON, he hovers off the floor for a moment before falling to the ground, unconscious.

MERLIN
 SIMON?! No, no, no, no... what
 have I done?

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
Saw the beginnings of the end of
the world.

BEGIN MONTAGE

A woman is arrested for suspicion of witchcraft. Rioters protesting politicians for stricter laws against magic. Pro-magic group calling the restrictions a violation of human rights. Religious leader preaching damnation. Rural community burning a woman at the stake. A Neo-Druid rally, their leader NIGEL CYRUS preaches that magic users are a higher form of being and it was their responsibility to destroy all those who didn't practice magic. Radical views breed violence - murders, bombings, kidnappings. The gate of Avalon continues to open, returning magic and its creatures to the world - a griffin flies over Llanfair-yn-Neubwll. A news bulletin of six people dying from a Questing Beast attack in Essex. Goblins in London. Sirens near the Sheffield Islands. A troll at Buckingham Palace.

END MONTAGE

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
And saw it end.

BEGIN MONTAGE

The planet can not handle the sudden onslaught of magic causing extreme natural disasters - volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, blizzards, drought and wildfire, sandstorms, hurricanes and flooding. Nations go bankrupt in attempts to combat nature and one by one close their borders to refugees. Then the atomic bombs - a news bulletin of the first one, dated July 1999.

END MONTAGE

FADE TO BLACK

MERLIN (V.O.)
And yet I'm still here. Waiting.

INT. MERLIN'S BEDROOM

CHYRON
London, England. March 20, 2019.

We see a map of titled "The Provinces and Britain and Ireland" hanging on the wall above MERLIN, fast asleep in bed.

KILGHARRAH
Merlin... Merlin... Merlin!

Made in Highland

MERLIN gasps awake. There is the sound of sirens, crying, a helicopter in the distance, as it comes closer its lights shine through cracks in the curtains.

KILGHARRAH
Merlin. Merlin.

MERLIN gets out of bed and warily walks out of his room into the living room. There is a man sitting on the couch in the shadows. The helicopter beam shines on him - he is old, with a lined face like antique flaps of leather, messy grey hair, his outfit made vaguely steampunk. His eyes sag beneath bushy brows; they are a piercing gold - the only thing to give away that he wasn't human. He wasn't even a solid being.

KILGHARRAH
Hello, Young Warlock. Not so young anymore, I see.

MERLIN relaxes.

MERLIN
Kilgharrah.

KILGHARRAH
Sit down, Merlin. We have much to discuss.

MERLIN walks towards KILGHARRAH, bypassing the chair and couch, to sit crosslegged on the floor in front of him. It didn't feel right not looking up at him.

MERLIN
What is it?

KILGHARRAH
The time has come.

MERLIN's breath catches. His heart is pounding in his ears.

KILGHARRAH
Albion is in great peril.

MERLIN gestures towards the window, the wasteland beyond.

MERLIN
I hadn't noticed.

KILGHARRAH
(reproving)
Merlin. You must listen.

MERLIN leans forward.

KILGHARRAH

The return of the Once and Future
King is at hand.

MERLIN can't control the smile that breaks out on his face as he lets out a sob.

MERLIN

What must I do?

KILGHARRAH

It isn't what you must do, Merlin.
It's what Arthur must do.

MERLIN

Which is? I've been trying to
piece that together for ages!

KILGHARRAH

And the pieces will fall together,
Merlin, but you must hurry. The
Gates of Avalon have been opening
for many years. In that time, many
ancient creatures have slipped
through the veil. Today, the path
into this world has been set for
Arthur, but there will be more to
come. You must be wary, Merlin.
For some things that will pass
into this world will wish to do
Arthur harm. Heed my warnings,
Merlin, Your destiny will not so
easily be fulfilled.

MERLIN

When has it ever been - ?

MERLIN looks up. KILGHARRAH is gone.

MERLIN

Yeah, nice to see you again, too,
old friend.

MERLIN gets up and sprints to his room. He dumps the contents of his backpack on his bed and rummages through his dresser, throwing clothes he hopes will fit ARTHUR into it. His eye catches the du Bois sigil among his belongs it, picks it up and looks at it fondly before pocketing it. He packs his medical kit and then heads to the kitchen. He grabs two bottles of water and taps the top of one, FREYA appears within.

MERLIN

You make sure the prat doesn't
drown before I get there.

Made in Highland

FREYA grins widely before fading away, MERLIN packs the water bottles. MERLIN's eyes glow gold and he is suddenly old and grey again, he turns to leave.

EXT. LAKE OF AVALON

MERLIN, old with age, walks along the road next to the lake. He stops and looks out before continuing down the road.

MERLIN (V.O.)
Waiting for you to come back to
me.

Suddenly, we are under water. In the distance a figure is barely visible, as we move closer it takes shape until we realize it is ARTHUR in full chainmail, unconscious. His eyes snap open, he looks around panicked. From behind FREYA reaches under his arms to help him and he kicks off towards the surface. Just as he is about to break through:

CUT TO BLACK

FADE OUT