

# The Pendragon Sacrifice

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*Gwenivere, Marcus, Arthur and Sir Lucan explore a city destroyed by Demons.*

**Cast List:**

**Marcus Pendragon:** Arthur's older brother, heir to the throne and a natural leader.

**Arthur Pendragon:** Early 20's, noble and earnest.

**Gwenivere De Lioness:** Marcus' fiancé. Noble born but a trained fighter.

**Merlin:** A studied mage, who is a father figure to Arthur.

**Gareth:** An accomplished military leader.

**Sir Lucan:** Charming, young and a famed poet and swordsman.

**Ridleigh:** Feminine travel partner of Bors du Ausment and deadly with bow and sword.

**Bors Du Ausment:** A powerful figure, very masculine.

**Seductresses 1-3:** Servants of the Lord of Darkness

**Demons 1-5:** Slayers, in service to the Lord of Darkness.

**Lord of the Portal:** The keeper of the portal.

**Survivors 1-3:** Survivors of the destroyed village.

*This show was produced by E.A. Laney High School in October of 2014. It was our competition piece and won awards for best fight choreography, Outstanding Director, and best actress (Laura Broadley as Gwenivere)*

*The original cast is as follows:*

**Marcus Pendragon:** Daniel Stinson

**Arthur Pendragon:** Austin Soles

**Gwenivere:** Laura Broadley

**Merlin:** J.T. Davis

**Gareth:** Roger Manypenny

**Sir Lucan:** Sean Perkins

**Bors Du Ausment:** Zavier Taylor

**Ridleigh:** Sarah Dillon

**Seductress 1:** Erin Bergmann

**Seductress 2:** Makayla Jackson

**Seductress 3:** Allie Simmons

**Demons:** Windy Daniels, Constance Leedham,

Danielle Harris, Phebe Crawshaw,

Abby Brinks

**Lord of Darkness:** Sam Weaver

*(A dim light on Merlin)*

**Merlin:** They were chosen by heart, in which only I could have truly judged them. For the choice came down to me to pick from those who were larger than life, the heroes, if you will, of this age to represent all men in a conflict. Failure would end in the destruction of our world and individual failure would mean death for those chosen, or worse. It was with a heavy heart that I made my selection.

*(The lights come on to find Merlin at a desk, he is writing in a book.)*

**Merlin:** I chose Sir Gareth. *(Spotlight on Gareth)* His bravery was beyond question and he was already an accomplished military tactician. Gareth was a soldier and reliable. Also, Sir Lucan from house Benivere. *(Spotlight on Lucan)* Since childhood he has been well loved by the people and is equally brilliant as a poet, bard and as swordsman. From the North I chose Ridleigh the Night Raven, *(Spotlight on Ridleigh)* who was legendary with her bow and bore an indomitable spirit. Bors Du Ausment *(Spotlight on Bors)* I also chose, for his heart yearns to prove it's worth. I knew that he would rise to this occasion and perform at his best.

*(Arthur enters)*

**Arthur:** *(with respect)* I believe they have all arrived, you told me to inform you when we were all gathered.

**Merlin:** Yes, Arthur. Thank you, I will be with you all as soon as I have written these last thoughts down.

**Arthur:** I will inform them that you will soon be with us.

**Merlin:** Thank you. *(Arthur leaves...as he does Merlin looks at him as a father watches his son)* I chose Lord Arthur, although it has pained me to do so. Arthur has a spirit which could make him the fairest and most just king in the history of Brittain, that is, if he had been born first and was destined for the throne. Lady Gwenivere and Lord Marcus Winterhaven round out the seven. The young Lord of Winterhaven's fame is without measure. Whether on the back of a mount in a tournament, or at a dinner with men, Lord Marcus commands a presence that is so tangible that it moves men to do great things. He is truly a great man, but he knows this very well. Arthur, his half brother and childhood friend loves him well and will follow him. So too will his betrothed of two seasons, Lady Gwenivere. Her love, and council, along with that of Lord Arthur can temper the blood that some time rises in the young Lord. *(he stops writing)*

**Merlin:** *(To himself as thunder rumbles)* There is so little time.

*(Merlin joins an assembly of the seven previously introduced characters. They are eating, some are at a table, others are not. Sir Lucan is entertaining part of the crowd with a song. All conversation stops when they see Merlin enter. Marcus is the first to regain his voice. As he starts to speak, thunder rumbles.)*

**Marcus:** *(plainly)* It is getting worse.

**Merlin:** I know.

**Gareth:** Is this why you gathered us here?

**Lucan:** *(Lost)* Wait, what are we talking about?

**Marcus:** Do you know the source?

**Gareth:** *(overlapping)* Is there a source?

**Gwenivere:** *(overlapping)* How long have you known?

**Merlin:** *(Impatient)* Silence! If you allow me to explain, I am sure I will answer all of your questions.

**Bors:** You have kept us waiting for hours. Bors Du Ausment is not a patient man.

**Merlin:** I will have to beg your pardon and thank you for your generous patience.

**Bors** *(haughtily)* Bors Du Ausment is not a generous man.

**Lucan:** *(to Ridleigh)* I thought *he* was Bors du Ausment.

**Arthur:** Shhh!

**Lucan:** *(whispering)* Seriously... Who is this guy, is he Bors' squire?

**Ridleigh:** *(laughing softly)* Some men become so fond of the stories they hear about themselves that they speak this way in order to make the bards work that much easier!

*(Arthur and Lucan laugh until thunder booms again. The atmosphere sobers)*

**Merlin:** *(Impatient)* If you are quite finished, there are things we must discuss and decide this in the immediate. Everyone you have ever loved may live or perish based on what happens this very night.

**Arthur:** *(sincerely)* We apologize Lord Mage. Please continue.

**Merlin:** *(appeased)* Thank you. Your agreement to meet with me here under such short notice is appreciated. I had wished that Sir Radimir and Lord Cloves were able to join this conclave, but time is too short and their journey too long. Lord Marcus, it is indeed getting worse.

**Bors:** What is getting worse?

**Merlin:** *(Thinking)* Ah, where to begin? I guess it would start with the storm of last summer.

**Arthur:** The one that lasted greater than a fortnight.

**Merlin:** Of course. It covered the entire land, and I believe that was when the fabric, so to speak, was rent.

**Ridleigh:** You speak in riddles...

**Lucan:** *(muttering)* To bad he doesn't speak in verse.

*(all shoot Lucan a look...he ignores it.)*

**Lucan:** Or in rhymes...

*(the looks harden further)*

**Merlin:** They are not riddles, and don't judge Sir Lucan too harshly... his demeanor and ability to smile in the darkest hours is a noble feature. But, back to the task at hand. Yes, last summer I believe was the start. Although I did not become suspicious until autumn. As Arthur well knows, I have spent the best part of the last year in study, and visiting the great libraries.

**Gareth:** And your conclusion?

**Merlin:** Nothing that I am going to say can be absolute fact, although I believe I have the key points. According to everything I have read my belief is that our world has become torn.

**Ridleigh:** (*confused*) Torn?

**Merlin:** For lack of a better word, Lady Ridleigh. That tear, which probably was ushered in by the great storm has literally opened a bridge to another plane of existence...

**Ridleigh:** Another plane of existence...

**Merlin:** You see I am a man who believes what he sees with his own two eyes and despite the evidence to the contrary, I still have not come to terms with the fact that our world seems to be in direct contact with Hades itself.

**Lucan:** Hades?

**Arthur:** (*explaining*) Hell.

**Lucan:** (*duh.*) I know what Hades is.

**Arthur:** Then why did you ask?

**Lucan:** I didn't... I just said (*using a questioning tone*) Hades? As a sort of way to add to the moment... I don't know. Just continue.

**Merlin:** (*patiently*) Thank you. Yes, I suppose that hell is an apt description.

**Marcus:** There is a tear in our world that has opened into hell?

**Merlin:** As far as I can tell, yes. But it is more grave than just that. A tome I found in the great library of Bransworth detailed similar circumstances to what I have witnessed in our own time. Each time men were dispatched to close the rent only to have it re-appear in the next generation, but much worse. In these histories I found great details of three different cataclysms.

**Gwenivere:** So this has happened before.

**Merlin:** Many times. I believe.

**Lucan:** There are stories... I've told them. I think we all know them... about the great earthquake. That's what you mean by the Cataclysm right?

**Merlin:** (*explaining*) Yes, Sir Lucan. That is correct. For several hundreds of years I can find nothing, but here in my own library I found a book written by my own great grandfather and in it he describes being sent as a part of an envoy on a very similar quest. I had read it before and thought that it was a tale meant to scare children, but upon reading it again I have concluded that it may be truth. The details of the quest are horrifying and in the end, although it is not said outright, I believe that they failed.

**Gareth:** When was this exactly?

**Merlin:** I know what you are thinking Sir Gareth and you are correct. It was almost 90 years back and coincided with the earthquakes that destroyed such a large part of this continent that the ruins of the lost cities can still be seen.

**Marcus:** You mentioned a quest...that your great grandfather set out with a group.

**Merlin:** Yes. That is why I summoned you here.

**Lucan:** (*groaning*) I knew he was going to say that.

**Merlin:** In the year before the upheaval there were reports of demons with unnatural powers destroying villages and devouring the men and women who lived there. Brave men and women fought these, but it was not enough. 90 years ago my great grandfather set out... just like was documented in each of the three histories I read, but in none of the three did the author claim victory.

**Arthur:** (*quizzically*) But if they had failed, wouldn't the rent have stayed open?

**Merlin:** Perhaps.

**Gwenivere:** Perhaps? How could that not be the case?

**Merlin:** I have speculated that the tear in our world is much like a woman giving birth. In each case, the men and women who sought to close the tear saw it with their own eyes but were unable to do anything to stop it. Most died, or worse.

**Lucan:** Worse... worse than Death? (*introspective*) Hard to imagine something worse than death... except maybe a really gruesome death.

**Merlin:** I will get to that. But I think now is the time for me to explain directly what I am asking each of you to do. It is up to you to

accept or decline, but I believe whole heartedly that the seven I see before me could have the fate of the entire world in their hands.

**Arthur:** (*To Lucan*) No pressure there...

(*Merlin shoots Arthur a glance*)

**Merlin:** Lord Marcus, I would ask you to lead this group.

**Marcus:** Of course. Lead them where?

**Merlin:** About three days ride south of here, at the edge of the Everwhite mountains there is a village.

**Bors:** (*remembering*) I know this village, Riveredge. Bors has been there several times.

**Merlin:** Wonderful. If the village still stands it will be there that you must branch out and explore. I believe that the rent is in that immediate area... I am sure of it. There must be a cave, my grandfather mentions a cave.

**Bors:** What do you mean if it still stands?

**Merlin:** There have been reports of (*pause*) unnatural things again, and I am afraid that Riveredge would be on the battlefield.

**Gwenivere:** And you would like us to go with Lord Marcus.

**Bors:** Me, follow him? It is Bors who should be leading.

**Lucan:** Oh... Ok. (*to Ridleigh in reference to Bors*) I get it now.

**Marcus:** I don't think that's an option, The Mage wishes me to lead and I accept.

**Gareth:** *(impatiently)* When do we leave?

**Merlin:** Not so quickly Lord Gareth. Once you agree...once you enter the gateway, where ever you find it...there is no turning back. Once in, I feel certain that you will be attacked and you will be tested.

**Bors:** That is nothing! No man can defeat Bors!

**Merlin:** It is more than a matter of swords Bors De Ausment. My grandfather speaks of being tested and to fail that test was worse than death.

**Lucan:** There's that "worse than death" thing again.

**Merlin:** I can't be certain, but failure seems to do something to the one tested. It is like they cease to exist or have never existed. Memory fades quickly but in all accounts it is agreed that more entered than exited the gateway, but none of those who did not leave could be remembered. *(apologetically)* If that makes any sense...

**Ridleigh:** So what your saying is...

**Marcus:** That if we fail to close this tear, or fail in some other way, that it would be like we never were born.

**Merlin:** As far as I can tell, that would be accurate.

*(The gravity of the moment sets in)*

**Merlin:** No one should be forced into this, that is why I ask for volunteers.

**Marcus:** You asked me to lead, so I will lead.

**Arthur:** *(solemnly)* Where you go brother, I go as well.

*(at this Merlin seems saddened)*

**Gwenivere:** *(to Marcus)* We are to be wed. You are not getting out of it that easily! I am in as well.

**Gareth:** If my sword is needed, I am here.

**Lucan:** Who wants to live forever anyways? *(he laughs)*

**Bors:** *(to Lucan)* I do not see humor in this. Bors De Ausment is no coward, Let us leave now.

**Ridleigh:** Guess that leaves me... sounds like a party I wouldn't want to miss. Count me in.

**Merlin:** In my heart I know that each of you will do your best.

**Bors:** Do you not travel with us?

**Merlin:** *(light heartedly)* No, my adventuring days are long in the past and frankly, I was never much of a warrior. I do have something to add to this quest though. If each of you would place your sword on the table here.

*(they look around curiously, but eventually all put their swords on the table. Bors' sword is much larger than the others)*

**Lucan:** Compensating for something there Bors?

*(the others laugh, except Marcus)*

**Bors:** *(exploding)* One more word from you and Bors de Ausment will use that sword to cut off that endlessly blathering set of lips and I will use them to clean the shite off of my boots!

*(there is a pause...everyone is stunned. Then raucous laughter)*

**Bors:** *(now joking...sort of)* That was not a jest.

**Merlin:** And on that note, I bless these weapons with a ward of righteousness. This spell, if you would call it such will make your weapons powerful against the evil of this world and the evil not of this world.

**Marcus:** *(astonished)* I didn't know you could do that.

**Merlin:** *(fatherly)* There are many things you do not know about me Lord Winterhaven. Pick up your weapon.

*(they do so)*

**Merlin:** In my old age I have to believe that all done for good will come of good in the end. Be strong of heart and stand tall when tested. You will be victorious where many others have failed.

**Marcus:** Unless there are more questions for the Mage, I would recommend that each of you get some rest. We leave at daybreak.

**Gwenivere:** *(objecting)* There are so many questions...

**Merlin:** and so few answers. My dear, I wish I had more to tell you.

**Gareth:** *(matter of factly)* daybreak it is then. Until the morrow.  
*(he leaves)*

*(Bors, Ridleigh, Lucan, Gwenivere and Marcus leave as well, each muttering parting words. Gwenivere and Marcus embrace before leaving. Only Arthur and Merlin remain)*

**Arthur:** Are you sure you will not travel with us?

**Merlin:** *(sadly)* This is the hardest decision I have ever had to make, but alas no. Although I pray for your success, I must be here in the case of failure.

**Arthur:** Is failure even an option?

**Merlin:** This time I think not, but I can not be certain. But if you fail and another cataclysm befalls us, then someone must remain to write the history, to instruct those who follow us on our mistakes.

**Arthur:** Do you think we have a chance?

**Merlin:** Lord Marcus is a capable leader, and the company is representative of the best our kingdom has to offer.

**Arthur:** *(pointedly)* You didn't answer the question.

**Merlin:** *(fatherly)* If I thought the mission doomed, I wouldn't allow you to go. Selfish as it may be, the fact you were practically raised in the walls of this castle, in my home... it would be too much. The fact that I am sending you should be evidence enough that I firmly believe that you will be successful.

*(Black Out)*

*(In Riveredge... the city is in ruin. Bodies lie strewn around. The Carnage is fresh. Gareth, Lucan and Marcus are on stage.)*

**Gareth:** It looks like the last of the action took place here. They fortified on that battlement there *(he points)* but it didn't last. Looking at the wounds... we couldn't have missed this by more than a day.

**Marcus:** This is worse than I thought. These people...

**Gareth:** *(disgusted)* Seem to have been chewed on.

**Lucan:** What could have done this?

**Marcus:** I'm not even sure Merlin knows.

**Gareth:** *(still observing)* I don't see a single fallen enemy.

**Marcus:** *(looking around)* Nor do I. Did they fail to slay a single foe?

**Lucan:** Or did they enemy collect their dead?

*(A short silence... followed by a hideous scream which is not human)*

**Lucan:** *(anxious)* What was that?

**Marcus:** We are not alone.

**Gareth:** *(quickly)* The others. Gwenivere and Arthur are still at the western gate... Bors and Ridleigh are scouting ahead.

*(Another unnatural scream.)*

**Marcus:** Lucan... Go get my brother and Gwenivere and bring them there. Gareth, collect the others and do the same. If there are more of these *(pause)* things around then I want us together.

**Lucan:** Do we meet here?

**Gareth:** If we are up for a fight, I would recommend what is left of that battlement over there. *(he points)*

**Marcus:** I will do what I can to build up the defenses. Get back swiftly.

*(Lucan and Gareth leave... another unnatural scream. Marcus busies himself preparing defenses. After several moments a demon like creature swoops onto stage, falls upon the first available corpse and starts eating)*

**Marcus:** *(seeing the demon)* Stop! I cannot allow you devour the remains of a man who died in battle.

*(The demon notices and then immediately runs to attack Marcus, who draws his sword. The demon has a weapon to match and the two battle. As Marcus strikes the killing blow the lights go out. When they return, the demon is gone.)*

**Marcus:** *(astounded)* Gone.

*(Arthur, Gwenivere, Lucan and three survivors from the village run on stage)*

**Arthur:** *(To Marcus)* You heard the scream.

**Marcus:** I just killed one. It was just here! As I stuck my sword in, it just...

**Lucan:** *(Excitedly)* What did it look like?

**Marcus:** It was in black, it's sword...

**Survivor 1:** *(excited)* Glowed like fire itself.

**Marcus:** Yes!

**Survivor 2:** You killed one?

**Marcus:** I think so. I struck it a killing blow and it... it... vanished.

**Survivor 1:** We never killed a single one... there were only three but our weapons could not stop them, or even slow them down.

**Survivor 3** *(looking at his blade)* Your sword, is it magic?

**Arthur:** *(To Marcus and himself)* Merlin!

**Marcus:** *(To the survivors)* How many of you are left?

**Survivor 1:** M'Lord, I do not know how many escaped into the wood, but there are us three and Alyssa *(points to Survivor 2)* has three children hidden in a storage hold beneath the keep. That is where we have hidden.

**Gwenivere:** It is not safe here for you.

**Survivor 2:** M'Lady... we have nowhere to go.

**Survivor 3:** *(To Marcus)* You are the Lord Winterhaven are you not?

**Marcus:** I am.

**Survivor 3:** My husband said you were the most just Lord in the kingdom! Surely you can take us to your castle, we have skills, we can work!

**Marcus:** *(Impatient)* Impossible. We are on a mission to end these creatures and we cannot stall to save every...

**Survivor 1:** But M'Lord...

**Marcus:** I would like to help, but we cannot. I wish you fair travels...

**Arthur:** *(interrupting)* Wait... *(To the survivors)* I am Arthur and my lands are a few days ride from here. We cannot ride with you, but if you head southwest through Hillsong, you will find my home.

**Survivor 2:** *(desperate)* My children are small, they will not last the journey.

**Arthur:** *(Thinking... then To Marcus)* The pass ahead is too steep for riding. Can we spare four horses for these people so that they can get to safety?

**Marcus:** *(disapproving)* Arthur...

**Gwenivere:** They may have my horse.

**Lucan:** *(Agreeing)* And mine.

**Marcus:** *(giving in)* Fine...fine... we will load the remaining three with our gear. Are you sure this is a good idea?

**Arthur:** *(cheerily)* Never more positive brother! *(To the survivors)* Now, when you arrive you will need to tell Madam Embry...

**Lucan:** Madam Mule kicker! *(he laughs)*