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Opening extract from

Illustrated Tales of King Arthur

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Published by

Usborne Publishing Ltd

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The Sword in the Stone

In Britain, in the days of old, there lived a powerful wizard called Merlin who had deep and ancient magic within him. One day, he looked into the future and saw a great darkness coming. So he set out to visit the king of the Britons...

The king's name was Uther Pendragon, and he ruled the southern parts of Britain. For the moment, the lands he ruled were at peace. But Merlin had dark tidings for the king.

He found Uther at Tintagel, an enchanted castle in Cornwall. There he told the surprised king, "Soon you will have a son, a son destined for greatness. But, before two years have passed, you will die. If anyone knows of his existence, the child will be killed in the struggle for power after your death. The very hour the baby is born, you must deliver him to me, and never speak of him again. I will make sure he is safe until his time comes."

Uther could not bear the thought that any child of his might come to harm, and so he agreed.

On the night the baby was born, Merlin carried him away under the cover of darkness. No one had any idea what became of him.

After this, everything happened just as Merlin had predicted. Within two years, Uther was dead and his knights were fighting one another over who would take the throne. Soon, unrest spread throughout the land. Outlaws roamed the countryside, and everywhere there was looting, squabbling and uncertainty.

All the while, Merlin waited. At last, when the time was right, he set out to see the archbishop in London. He told him if he called a great gathering of knights on Christmas Day, the true-born King of all Britain would be found.

That Christmas Day, the cathedral was packed with knights. The service had just begun,