

SARA. Why do you wear such loud shoes?

MATT. To keep my feet from falling asleep.

SARA. Very funny. Merlin, where's this Arthur?

MERLIN. I don't know. I told him to wait for me. Arthur?
Arthur!

(ARTHUR runs in.)

ARTHUR. Merlin, I think I found the hawk's nest! Right at the edge of the forest! I...hello.

SARA. Hello.

MERLIN. Arthur, this is Sara and her brother, Matt.

ARTHUR. You must be the surprise Merlin promised me. Well, I am truly surprised. I have never seen such boots in my life.

MATT. These aren't boots. They're Air Jordans, and they're incredibly fast. Watch. *(Does a series of basketball moves, ending with a Jordan-style jump toward an imaginary basket.)* He scores!

SARA. Thank you, Matt. Excellent jumping *(To ARTHUR.)* Where are we, exactly? Is this a castle?

ARTHUR. Yes, this is the castle of Sir Kay. It is protected by several splendid knights, and by Merlin's magic, of course...

MATT. Castle? Yeah, right. Look, Sara, I'll tell you where we are. We're in some kind of kooky dream. Watch—I'll prove it. In a dream, nothing hurts *(He bonks himself on the head with a handy medieval weapon or bone.)* Oh, boy. You know, I've always wanted to visit a castle.

SARA. You were saying, Arthur?

ARTHUR. Oh, just that the knights of this castle are the mightiest in England.

SARA. Oh, no—not Might Makes Right again.

ARTHUR. Yes, that's what the knights say!

MATT. Bingo.

SARA. And whom do they protect the castle from?

ARTHUR. Our enemies, like Morgan le Fay or the Green Knight.

SARA. Is the Green Knight mighty?

ARTHUR. Oh yes, they say he is a fierce warrior.

SARA. So the good knights are mighty, but so is the bad knight.

ARTHUR. Well, yes...

MATT. Why don't you just have this Jolly Green Giant guy arrested?

MERLIN. These are the Dark Ages, Matt, a lawless and savage period of history. Evil lurks in every corner of the realm, for no king rules England.

MATT. I thought England had lots of kings, like King Richard and King Henry and King...uh...King...Kong.

ARTHUR. No, we've never had a king, because no one can pass the test.

SARA. What test?

ARTHUR. There is a sword, stuck in a stone. On the sword is written, "Whoever Pulls this Sword from the Stone is the Rightful King of All England." Many strong men have tried, but all have failed.

MATT. Sounds like you just need some dynamite. Or maybe a laser blaster. (*Imitates the sound of a laser beam.*)

MERLIN. I have brought you two back to a dangerous land in a dangerous time...

MATT. Thanks a lot.

MERLIN. ...but for a very good reason.

SARA. To help you with some sort of lesson—right, Merlin?

MERLIN. Yes, Sara.

MATT. Maybe you wanted me to teach Artie here how to do a 360-reverse double-fake lay-up (*Tries doing one, and falls down, spectacularly.*)

ARTHUR. I think I can already do that.

MERLIN. I did not bring you across ten centuries to teach Arthur how to fall down.

SARA. What are you studying, Arthur?

ARTHUR. Right now it's history, like Alexander the Great. But last week, we studied birds of prey.

SARA. Really? I love birds. Which is your favorite?

ARTHUR. The falcon.

MERLIN. And which is the better hunter, the male or the female?

ARTHUR (*as though reciting an answer, and he's happy to get it right*). The female, who is stronger and faster than the male.

MERLIN. Correct!

MATT. The female? I told you birds were dumb. (*Music begins under dialogue.*)

(MUSIC #5: "THE LESSON SONG")

MERLIN. Arthur, why don't you give Sara some of the problems we've been working on?

ARTHUR. But, Merlin, she hasn't had you for a tutor. How could a girl possibly solve the problems?

MERLIN. Well, Arthur, there are other tutors in the world besides myself.

ARTHUR. But none nearly as clever, I'm sure.

MERLIN. He is a good pupil.

ARTHUR. I don't want her to feel embarrassed if she can't guess the answers.