

Morte d'Arthur (new version)

King Arthur lay dying on bloody Camlann
Ringed round with the slain, both of friend and of foe
Sir Bedwyr stood by, his face haggard and drawn
His body sore wounded, his heart full of woe

Said Arthur to Bedwyr, "Come take up my sword"
And cast it far out where the water runs deep;
Excalibur must to the lake be restored
To the hand of the Lady, in honor to keep."
 For the King that once was shall be King yet again
 And the glory of England shall rise
 For the King that once was is a King for all time
 And a Dream that is true never dies.

But Bedwyr could not bring himself to obey;
The sword he would hide in the reeds by the shore.
To Arthur he said, "I have cast it away;
The waves rose to meet it, I saw nothing more."

"Oh Bedwyr, oh Bedwyr, my first man and last,
You must not prove false now, we come to the end,
But do as I bid you, take heart and stand fast;
I charge you as Liege Lord, I ask as your friend."
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 And the glory of England shall rise
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At last loyal Bedwyr took up the King's blade
And cast it, he thought, to a watery grave.
From the lake rose an arm in rare samite arrayed.
It grasped the great sword-hilt and sank 'neath the wave.

Then out of the mist came a boat with black sails
Three sable-clad Queens it bore steadily on;
The Queen of Northgalis, the Queen of Far Isles,
And Morgaine, the King's sister, from fair Avalon
 For the King that once was shall be King yet again
 And the glory of England shall rise
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The Queens with great mourning took Arthur aboard;
They laid him out gently and cradled his head.
But Bedwyr cried out, "Do not leave me, my lord!
Depart not this world, or our dreams are all dead!"

"Oh Bedwyr, I go to fair Avalon's vale
To lay down my cares and to shrive me my soul.
Go forth from this place, of our deeds tell the tale,
And keep well my kingdom, united and whole."
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