



Synopsis: AFTER WEEKS OF DELAY, RORY McCOLM, KING OF IRELAND, WILL SPARE A FEW MINUTES TO HEAR WHAT KING ARTHUR HAS TO SAY THROUGH HIS REPRESENTATIVE. SO PRINCE VALIANT IS SUMMONED.



VAL HAS LEARNED MUCH FROM PATRICK AND THE GOSSIP AT THE FAIR. HE KNOWS THAT AMONG THIS GLITTERING THROUNG THERE ARE MANY WHO DESERVE THE THRONE MORE THAN RORY AND THAT ONLY HATRED OF EACH OTHER KEEPS THEM FROM UNITING TO HURL HIM FROM POWER.



KING ARTHUR'S KNIGHT FEELS VERY SMALL AS HE BEHOLDS THE PERFECT BODY, THE PROUD, HANDSOME FACE OF A MAN EVERY INCH THE PICTURE OF A WARRIOR KING.



BUT A PICTURE THAT CHANGES AS VAL STARES AT IT....NOT PRIDE BUT ARROGANCE....NOT COURAGE BUT A RUTHLESS FEROCITY....NOT A KING--A TYRANT!



"WHAT FAVOR DOES YOUR KING BEG OF US?" ASKS RORY CONTEMPTUOUSLY. "KING ARTHUR REQUESTS THAT YOU CEASE YOUR RAIDS ON THE COASTS OF BRITAIN!" ANSWERS VAL.

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"AND WHAT TRIBUTE WILL HE PAY US TO STAY AT HOME?"

THERE IS A MOMENT OF SILENCE WHILE VAL TRIES HARD TO CONTROL HIS RISING ANGER.

"NOTHING!" HE ANSWERS, SMILING.



THE IMPUDENCE OF THIS ANSWER BRINGS A DARK FLUSH TO KING RORY'S FACE AND IN HIS BLEAK EYES A LOOK THAT COULD MEAN DEATH!

NEXT WEEK--The Threat.



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