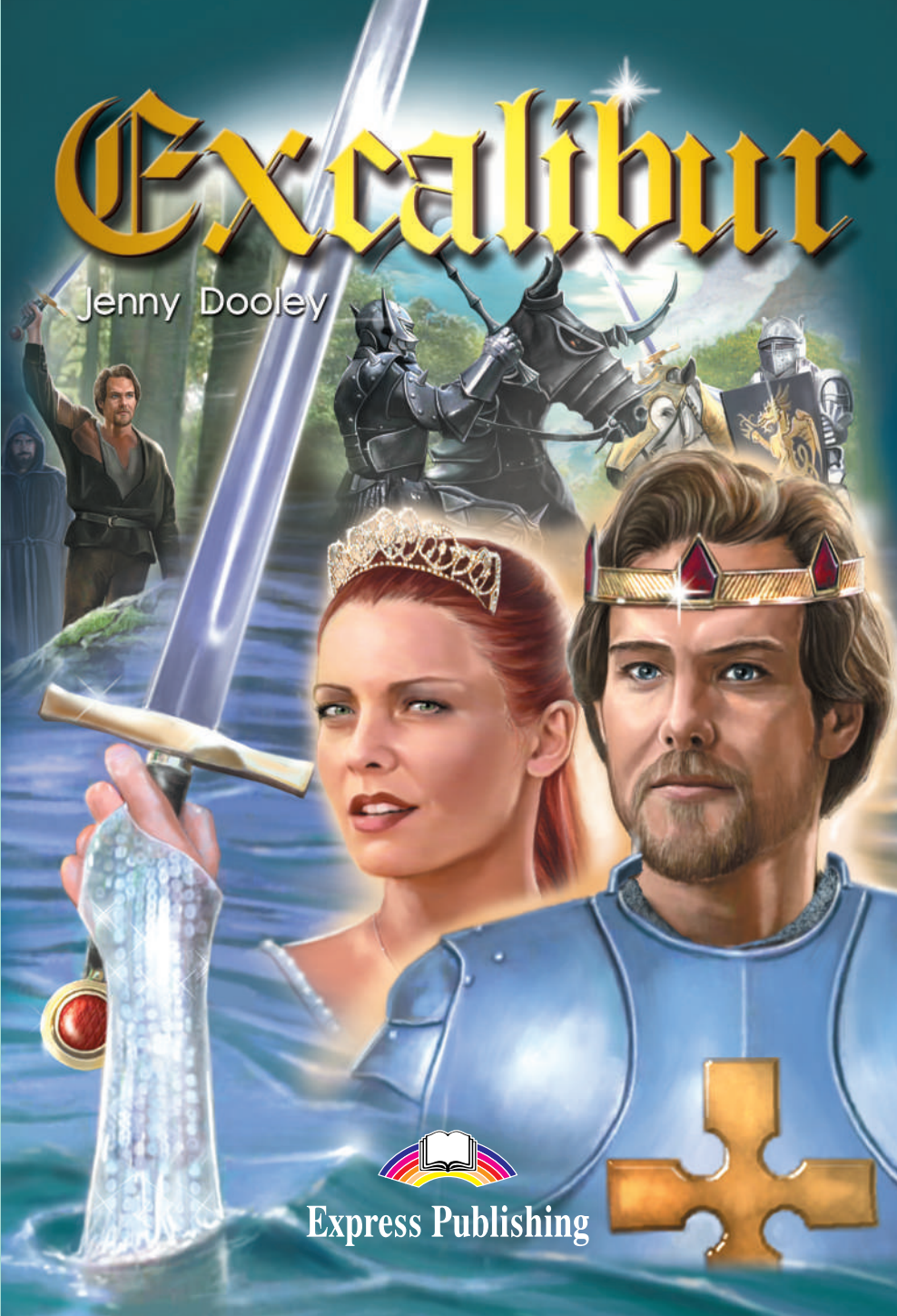


Excalibur

Jenny Dooley



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King Arthur

For many years after Uther's death, knights from all over the country tried to pull Excalibur from the stone, but none succeeded. They competed to see who was the strongest knight. When these competitions ended, the winner would go to the rock, with a crowd of people watching, to see if he would be the next King of England.

On one such day a very large man, over six feet tall, with broad shoulders and long dark hair, stepped up to Excalibur to try to lift it from its resting place of eighteen years. The country had suffered during these years as there had never been one ruler to bring peace to the entire land. The crowd waited quietly as the tall, dark-haired man grabbed the handle of Excalibur. He pulled with all his strength, but the sword would not move. The man walked away, disappointed, as a new round of games began to see who would try the sword next.

"Arthur! Where is my sword? The games are about to begin."

Arthur, the slave of a knight called Kay, was sent to bring Kay's sword for the next round of games. Arthur had misplaced Kay's sword, and in a panic, he ran trying to find another sword for his master.

Arthur ran with fear to the rock where Excalibur stood. He had never noticed the men trying to pull the sword from the rock, as he was always busy serving Kay. Arthur pulled it from the rock and ran to his master, happy to have found a sword.



Everyone knew Excalibur from its gold handle and its silver blade. Arthur handed it to Kay, who stood admiring its magnificence.

“Arthur! Where did you get this?”

“From a rock, just behind the trees.”

The crowd around them held their breath.

“The boy. He’s pulled the sword from the rock.”

Arthur became uneasy, not knowing what he had done. Merlin, in his long blue robe, appeared beside the boy and placed a hand on his shoulder.

“This boy is the son of Uther, the last King of England. He is the heir to the throne.”

There was much whispering among the crowd. No one believed that this servant boy could be a king. Only Merlin knew, as he had made Arthur a servant to teach him what it was like to be ruled by other men. He believed that when the time came for Arthur to be King, he would learn from his master’s mistakes and therefore be wiser than his father, Uther. Merlin also knew that he had to prove to the people that Arthur was truly the King’s son.

He told Arthur to put Excalibur back into the rock. Arthur did. Merlin asked Kay, and any others who thought they were worthy of the sword, to try to pull it out. No one could.

“If this boy, Arthur, pulls the sword from the rock, he is the true King of England and you must do as he says.”

Arthur pulled Excalibur from the rock and held it up for all the crowd to see. The people knelt with respect. As he held Excalibur, Arthur felt the same power his father had once felt run through his body.

“With this sword, I will unite England into a land of peace and prosperity.”

With these words, Arthur began to fulfill his promise.



Excalibur

- *Will Uther keep his promise and give his son to Merlin?*
- *Who will be the one to pull Excalibur out of the rock and become the ruler who will unite England?*
- *Is love enough to beat hatred and save Arthur and Lancelot's friendship?*
- *Will Morgan Le Fay's evil plans succeed?*
- *Will peace ever return to England?*

COMPONENTS:

◆ Reader

◆ Activity Book

◆ Teacher's Book

◆ Audio CD



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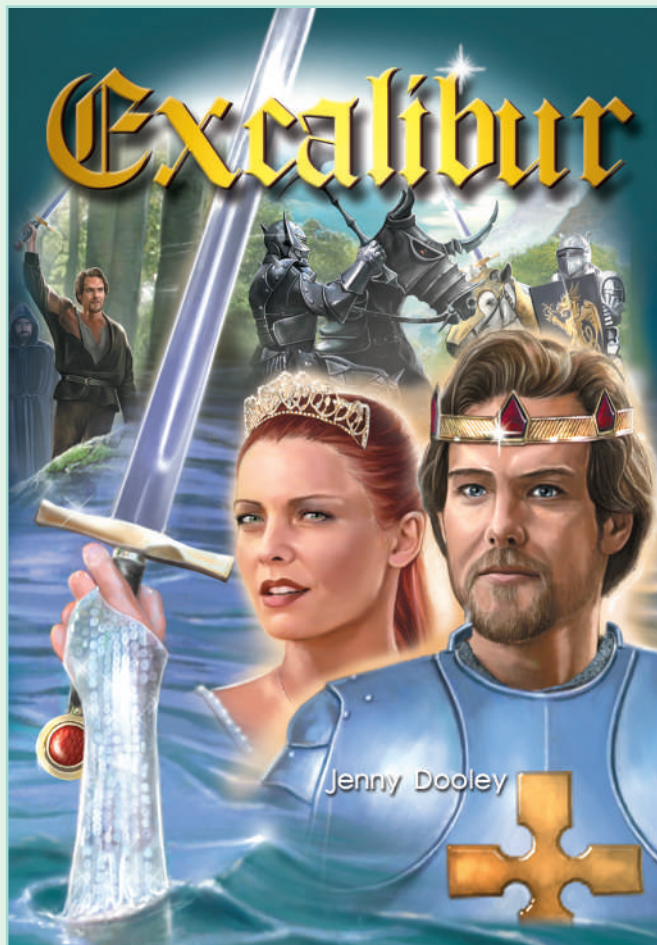


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Activity Book



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Arthur Fights Mordred

I. Listening



Listen to the recording and fill in the gaps with the correct word.

Arthur dreamed that he 1) Lancelot waiting for him. Sir Gawain was there watching them. 2) time Arthur approached Lancelot, Lancelot moved away, warning the 3) that they were being watched. Arthur also saw a 4) running. He ran after her, but before he could 5) her dress, she flew up into the air, leaving him 6) at the empty sky. He saw Merlin's 7), and he woke up terrified. The woman was not Guinevere, he knew it, and he 8) to realise that he had been cruelly deceived.

II. Comprehension questions

- 1 What separated Arthur and Mordred's men?
- 2 What time of day was the fight arranged for?
- 3 Who did Arthur see in his dream?
- 4 What did Arthur understand from his dream?
- 5 Where did Morgan wake up?
- 6 Who spoke to her? What did he say?
- 7 Why had Mordred's strength left him?
- 8 How was Arthur wounded?
- 9 What did he tell Lancelot to do?
- 10 What happened to Excalibur?

Chapter 10

III. Topics for discussion

- 1 Have you ever had a strange dream? Do you believe that dreams can tell us things?
- 2 Do you forgive people easily if they do something wrong?
- 3 “*A friend in need is a friend indeed*”. What does this mean? Do you agree with this saying?

IV. Activity

Go through the entire story of Excalibur. Do you remember who said what?

1 Arthur! Where is my sword? The games are about to begin.

2 You must promise me something if I allow you to take Excalibur from the lake.

3 I love you as my queen and as the king's wife.

4 You have saved my father, therefore, you have saved me. It would be unwise of me to refuse the hand of a man who is surely a king.

5 Merlin! I have kept my promise. I will leave Excalibur in the rock, but you must make my son a king.

6 As deep as my love for you, my king!

7 It is time, Mordred. You shall be king. Climb onto my back, and follow me to your glory.

8 Are you such a fool? You would give your own child for the price of a sword?

9 I will die if I do not kill and become king!

10 With this sword, I will unite England into a land of peace and prosperity.





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