

LADY KNIGHTS, INC.
BY
KAITLYN WIGHTMAN

Kaitlyn Wightman
2082 Hillwood Drive
Lake Orion, MI 48360
312.909.0716
Kaitlynator@gmail.com

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CHARACTERS

BERTRAND, proud, charming, and naively goofy with British accent
ALISON, spunky, cranky, and witty with a Midwestern accent

SETTING

A room in a tall tower. A long grey bench at stage C and two windows in backdrop. Other decoration optional.

(At rise, BERTRAND, in ragged knight costume, is sitting on the bench with his head in his hands. After a beat, he gets up to look out each window. He sighs and returns to the bench in his former position. A loud old-door slam is heard offstage and he jumps.)

BERTRAND

(Hiding under bench.)

Not the dragon! Please don't burn me to a crisp! I don't want to die! I don't want to die!

(ALISON enters from SR wearing full metal armor. She walks to SC as BERTRAND stands up.)

BERTRAND

(Not believing his eyes.)

Are you here to rescue me?

(ALISON nods.)

BERTRAND

(Falls to her feet.)

Bless you, holy knight! My prayers have been answered! May King Arthur bestow you much honor at his court.

(BERTRAND stands.)

Let me see the face of my rescuer.

(ALISON takes off her helmet and lets her hair flow down.)

ALISON

Lady Alison of Lady Knights, Inc. at your service.

(ALISON pulls out a scroll from her armor and opens it up to quickly skim its writing.)

You are Sir Bertrand, right?

BERTRAND

(In horror.)

You're a...maiden. Not a sir!

ALISON

(Tries to move him along.)

We can discuss that on the road.

BERTRAND

(Pulls back.)

I'm not being rescued by a girl.

ALISON

The scroll says I'm rescuing you today. If I don't deliver you by the third day before Ides, I'll be fired. And that will surely melt my armor.

BERTRAND

I should have you arrested for impersonating a man.

ALISON

The scroll says you've been locked in here for three years.

BERTRAND

When chivalry was a man's word.

ALISON

(Reading scroll monotonously.)

'We apologize for the inconvenience you may have experienced for your delayed rescue.'

BERTRAND

Nevermind about me. What about my people? Do they miss me? My brother knights have kept them safe since my capturing?

ALISON

(Slipping scroll back into armor.)

Your brother knights have been **quite** busy.

BERTRAND

With angry giants? Blood-thirsty serpents? Naughty incubuses?

ALISON

With knitting. And sometimes embroidery.

BERTRAND

My brother knights would rather rescue me from this evil dragon than pick up a needle and thread.

ALISON

The annual fashion show in Hampshire is coming up in a few days.

BERTRAND

(Lying down on bench.)

This is just a dream. Sleep will cure this nonsense.

ALISON

(Pulls at him.)

My job is to rescue you, Sir...

(She lets go of him to pull out scroll and read it. He hits head on bench.)

Sir Bertrand. Of Westminster? You're **that** Sir Bertrand?

BERTRAND

(Looking suave.)

Why, yes I am.

ALISON

That explains a lot. I'm surprised we didn't rescue you sooner.

BERTRAND

Why didn't you? I've been here for three years!

ALISON

We only perform rescues for those that have made requests. Company policy.

BERTRAND

(Sitting up.)

So someone requested for me? Who is the lucky lady? Maiden Winifred? Lady Muriel? Or Countess Ann with the gold...en hair?

ALISON

(Squinting to read scroll.)

Dame Brunhild of Westminister.

BERTRAND

(Slumps in disappointment.)

My mother.

ALISON

(Reading.)

She scrolled 'must ploweth the land' as her reason for your rescue.

BERTRAND

She wants me home to do my chores.

ALISON

73% of male rescues have been requested by mothers.

BERTRAND

(Frustrated.)

I don't understand. Ladies in armor? Knights darning socks? The kingdom must be under an evil curse.

ALISON

All of this is because of you.

BERTRAND

Me? But I've been locked up in this tower.

ALISON

(Sitting next to BERTRAND.)

After this dragon captured you, your brother knights were speechless. That's being too nice. They were terrified, horrified. Not one knight has ever failed a quest—until you.

BERTRAND

(Adlibbing.)

I pulled a hamstring. I wasn't warmed up. Nobody gave me time to stretch. I barely slept the night before...

ALISON

So, to avoid future failure, they decided that the most gallant gesture that they could bestow upon England was to give up their knighthood. My husband is Sir Borin the Grand.

BERTRAND

I know Sir Borin the Grand.

(Makes gesture of his girth.)

ALISON

(Taps BERNARD's head with scroll.)

I clocked him on the head for his cowardice and told him to be useful around the house. I was sure that would send him back out with his sword, but instead he began polishing everything in sight. Soon he was doing all the washing and the cooking, and I was getting as rusty as his sword. So I made myself useful and applied for the job opening.

BERTRAND

At Lady Knights, Inc.? Are you telling me that King Arthur's court is full of tinsel-coated damsels?

ALISON

Someone has to protect the kingdom. Might as well be bored housewives.

BERTRAND

(Jumps from seat.)

I must return to the kingdom! Then you ladies can go back to your houses, and leave the monster-slaying to your spouses.

ALISON

Killing is against our policy. We have found more effective ways of rescuing our kingdom's people.

BERTRAND

(Imitating a dragon.)

Dragons breathe fire, you know.

ALISON

And dogs bite hands. But if you keep showing anger to a creature, you can only expect negative results. That's what I learned at training.

BERTRAND

(Approaches ALISON.)

And what did they teach you about ogres and werewolves? That they make good pets?

ALISON

(Reads scroll monotonously.)

Our goal at Lady Knights Incorporated is to improve a monster's perception on life so that both monsters and humans may live peacefully together.

BERTRAND

(Looking outside window.)

Are those maidens playing fetch with the dragon?!

ALISON

(Joining him at the window.)

Those are my co-workers. Lady Gloriana is a gossip and Lady Rose has the big nose.

BERTRAND

Where are their swords and shields?

ALISON

No need for those. We tamed the dragon before I climbed all those stairs. We named the dragon Rover.

BERTRAND

Now they're playing monkey in the middle!

ALISON

You never played with the dragon while you've been here? No wonder the creature didn't like you. It's quite a catch!

(Sighs.)

I hate how we have to say that.

BERTRAND

What's that beyond the dangling bridge?

ALISON

That's our Rescue Cart. It's here to pick you up.

BERTRAND

I must ride gallantly away on a horse.

ALISON

Rescue Cart. King Arthur's policy.

BERTRAND

King Arthur is your boss?

ALISON

A very nice boss. He let me have St. George's Day off.

BERTRAND

(Steps away from window.)

My family honor has become a woman's trade.

ALISON

Trade! I almost forgot.

(She pulls out the scroll and a quill pen.)

Do you remember where your castle is?

BERTRAND

(Makes a circle with his hands.)

As I know the shape of the Round Table.

ALISON

I need to send your bill there. Sign here.

BERTRAND

I don't know what they teach you at your sisterhood camp but knighthood is about honor, not about coins.

ALISON

Are you refusing to pay, Sir Bertrand?

BERTRAND

(Crosses arms.)

Over my dead body.

ALISON

(Pulls out chains from her armor.)

Then I guess I have to take you to the dungeon.

BERTRAND

But I'm already imprisoned!

ALISON

(From memorization.)

Under the Impound the Insolent Act, any person who refuses to pay the Lady Knights Incorporated for their rescuing services must be placed in the dungeon until willing to comply.

BERTRAND

All right, all right. I'll pay.

(He signs, then sits on bench.)

I just never thought that my happy ending would be so miserable.

ALISON

You really liked being a knight, didn't you?

(BERTRAND nods.)

You're cutting close to my lunch break, so I'll make you a deal. If I talk to King Arthur, I'll see if he can make a position for you on our team. But today's fine will be deducted from your first paycheck.

BERTRAND

Are you asking me to be a knight?

(ALISON scrunches up her face and struggles to answer.)

ALISON

Only if I get your lunch. It's roast turkey leg day.

BERTRAND

(Stands.)

I accept! I'll be remembered as the only man in King Arthur's kingdom with the courage to be a knight. Are you coming with me?

ALISON

(Pulling BERTRAND suddenly to stage DR.)

You're coming with **me**. I still have three rescues left before **my** day is over.

BERTRAND

Watch it there! My muscles are still weak from fighting the dragon.

ALISON

You've got a **lot** of training to do.

BLACKOUT