

THE MAIDEN & THE DRAGON

RADIO DRAMA IN 6 x 30 MINUTE EPISODES

LORD LAMBTON

Lord Lambton is the owner of the estate on which the village of Harroton lies. As a young man, he saw battle in several campaigns overseas and on the Scottish borders. His military record saw him awarded his estate and title. He is well respected by the local villagers (villeins) who, as part of their tenancy, must do a certain amount of labour for him each year. His son and heir John, however, is not shaping up so well.

The character is 65yrs old.

Please ask a friend to play the other part in the audition piece so there is someone to interact with.

AUDITION PIECE – Lord Lambton and his son, John

Lord Lambton has had enough of his son's behaviour. Yesterday, John missed church *again*, and that is the last straw. He loves his son, so sending him away is not an easy decision.

INT. GREAT HALL AT LAMBTON MANOR

LORD L John. How are you feeling today, son?

JOHN (SHEEPISHLY) Quite well, thank you, Father.

LORD L That is good. The absence of the Lord of the manor's son in church is noted by the priest, as well as the good people of the village. I did explain to the priest that you had awoke with a slight fever and remained abed, to aid your recovery.

JOHN Aye, Father, I believe the rest has quite cleared my head and I am once more filled with vitality.

LORD L Ah, that is pleasing news. Because I have decided to arrange a little trip for you.

JOHN Thank you, my gracious father. May I ask to where I shall be traveling and when this adventure shall begin? I am not sure I deserve such an excursion.

LORD L Oh, I think the trip is very much what you deserve. For the manner in which you have conducted yourself since our little chat, not one month ago, about how noblemen must never neglect their duties. Hence, I have instructed my steward to make the necessary arrangements for you to travel, to Rome.

JOHN Rome, my Lord? The furthest I've ever been before is Hartlepool.

LORD (HE LAUGHS) Aye, it is a bit further than Hartlepool! But you will travel there as soon as I have made the necessary arrangements. And do you know what you will find there, lad?

JOHN I don't know, sir. My tutor told me it's a bit of a dump now, just a shadow of its glory days. Not even the Pope lives there now.

LORD Pope Gregory has moved the papacy back there, just this year. But, more to the point, it was my great friend, and fellow Knight Hospitaller, Juan Fernández de Heredia, who led the fleet that carried his Holiness from Avignon to Rome. It is he that I am sending you to.

JOHN But I do not understand. What am I supposed to find there, Father?

LORD Your soul, son. And with it, the worldliness and maturity to become the next Lord Lambton, when the time comes. Think of this not as a punishment, but rather as an education. I shall write Juan Fernández a letter asking him to take you under his wing and teach you the ways of the Knights Hospitaller. He owes me.

JOHN But Fa...

LORD No John, no need to thank me. When we last spoke on the matter, did I not tell you very clearly that there was to be no more drinking with your young upstart friends till dawn in the local tavern? No more playing dice when you ought be in archery lessons. And no more absences from church on the Sabbath.

JOHN But, yesterday I was unwell. I -

LORD But not unwell enough, I hear, to prevent you from going fishing!? You take me for a fool, sir! But worse, you fool yourself. Do you think our wealth, our status, gives us free rein to do as we please, to sport all day? While the lowly peasants exist solely to tend our crops and let us live at ease!? No sir! The manor and the farmers, we are as one. We serve each other, we care for each other. We rely on each other. And until you see the reality of your duties, I cannot know that the Lambton estate is safe in your hands. When I was your age, I fought as a proud Knight of Rhodes to defeat Andronicus and his Turkish hordes in defence of that blessed isle. When some years later I returned to these shores, I fought and won again, alongside King Edward, at Crécy. And the same year, I battled Scotland's King David, not far from here, and once more emerged victorious.

JOHN But father. I am not you. Nor can I ever venture to match your feats in battle.

LORD Perhaps not. But it is time for you to see what man you can become. And you won't do that here, I can see that. So, you will travel to Rome where you will learn all you can from Juan Fernández and, I pray, perhaps see battle too. He is a wise and courageous man, and he will be the next Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller when the great Robert de Juilly finally passes.

JOHN So, it is done. I am to be banished?

LORD Not banished, you dalcop, rather transformed. From an unworthy cumberworld to a man of honour and dignity. Tomorrow you shall ride to Hartlepool, and from there, my steward is arranging sea passage and land passage on to Rome. He will accompany you and keep me informed of progress. I am old so I do not know if I shall see you again, but I pray that I will, and that God will take my child and return me a man. This is for the best. God speed my beautiful boy, God speed.