

## SCENE 1

(Enter the TROUBADOUR, in colorful garb. They address the audience.)

TROUBADOUR

I know what you're thinking! Who is this attractive stranger, so stylishly dressed? I am a troubadour, a professional storyteller. And if there's one thing I know from experience it's that all of you are about to fall asleep. If I'm to prevent that from happening, my story needs certain important qualities.

(Enter a YOUNG MAN, preoccupied with hunger.)

YOUNG MAN

By the four winds, I would do anything for some pie.

(Across stage, a BAKER emerges with a plate with pie.)

BAKER

Would you care for some pie?

(The YOUNG MAN strides to the baker, takes the proffered pastry, and holds it aloft like a trophy.)

YOUNG MAN

Success!

TROUBADOUR

That is not a story. There's no struggle, no challenge to overcome.

(The YOUNG MAN and BAKER exit. A DUKE and DUCHESS enter.)

DUKE

Millicent my dove, where shall we spend the winter?

DUCHESS

I've heard lovely things about the Malderbeak Islands.

DUKE

True, but then there's the Valley of Floom, where the water tastes like graham crackers.

DUCHESS

Which to choose?

TROUBADOUR

Also a terrible story.

DUKE

But look, we have a tough decision to make!

TROUBADOUR

Yes, but either way, you're going to be exceedingly comfortable!

DUCHESS

(sharing a pleased look with her husband)

This is true.

(they exit)

TROUBADOUR

A great story needs pivotal moments, where you stand perched on the precipice, forced to choose between safety and challenge, between conscience and convenience, between the comfort of the familiar and the call of the open road. We have a name for the era in which such tales take place. Let me set the scene.

**(1. The Age of Adventure)**

TROUBADOUR

YOU'RE LOST IN THE WOODS, THE LIGHT FADING FAST,  
A SWORD AT YOUR SIDE

(we hear the clash of steel on steel)

YOU'RE HALF UP A WALL WHEN AN ARCHER APPEARS  
THERE'S NOWHERE TO HIDE

(the whoosh of arrows flying by)

YOU'RE RACING THROUGH AN ALLEY

YOU'RE DINING WITH A QUEEN

YOU'RE DIVVYING THE TREASURE

YOU'RE JUMPING A RAVINE

YOU'RE PONDERING A MYTHICAL TOME

ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN: YOU'RE MILES FROM HOME

THIS IS THE TIMES WHEN DARK FORCES GATHER  
AND FEW DARE TO TREAD

ENSEMBLE

THE AGE OF ADVENTURE!

TROUBADOUR

THERE'S TERRIBLE DANGER AND EVEN WORSE ODDS