

**The Deal:** OIPEP Makes an Offer (Ch.32-36)

Landing in France, Alfred and Bennacio are whisked away to a secret hide-a-way in the French countryside. There they learn that OIPEP has negotiated with Mogart for the return of the sword but not to Bennacio and the secret order. OIPEP intends to keep the sword and become the new protectors, something Bennacio swears that he can not allow this, even if he must die to get it back. The secret hideout is discovered by Cabiri and Natalia who arrive unexpectedly. The relationship between Alfred and Natalia changes as she begins to realize that Alfred understands full well how she feels about losing a parent.

**The Oath:** Alfred Learns the Truth (Ch.s 37-38)

Bennacio tells Alfred that he is descended from Bedivere, the knight that disobeyed King Arthur's orders to throw Excalibur into the lake, and that if he ever gets the chance, he will do what his ancestor could not. Bennacio also tells Alfred the truth about his own father, that Alfred was Samson's son and a descendent of the knight Lancelot. Alfred then takes the oath of the order and promises to defend the sword against the A.O.D.

**A Deal Goes Bad:** The Last Knight Falls (Ch.s 39-41)

Finally OIPEP and Bennacio get ready to meet with Mogart at the rendezvous to make the exchange for the sword. Bennacio insists that Alfred accompanies them as his "second" and they leave for Stonehenge, England for the exchange. At Stonehenge Mogart double-crosses them and attacks. Mogart and Bennacio duel and Bennacio is killed. Alfred then attacks Mogart and gets the sword. He then takes the sword and runs.

**In Flight Again:** Alfred Gets Another Chance (Ch.s 42-45)

Alfred runs but has nowhere to go and is soon picked up by Mike Arnold. Alfred realizes that Mike was the one who set up Bennacio and brought about his death, as well as the deaths of the other knights. Alfred forces Mike from the car and flees again. While hiding in a hotel room, Alfred is phoned by Mogart who has discovered his hiding place. From Mogart Alfred finds out there is a massive manhunt for him in progress. Mogart then tells Alfred that he has Natalia and will exchange her for the sword.

**The Abyss:** (Ch.s 46-47)

Driving through the night in an A.O.D.'s "borrowed" car, Alfred arrives at the Caves of Merlin at Tintagel where the ruins of Camelot lay. There he meets up with Mike Arnold who is still trying to get the sword from him. Correctly suspecting that Mike double-crossed Natalia too, Alfred makes Mike take him to Mogart. In the cave, Alfred finds Mogart with Natalia held captive. When Alfred gives up the sword Mogart kills her, then after a furious fight, Mogart runs Excalibur through Alfred and imbeds it in the wall behind him.

**The Revelation and Transformation:** Miriam's Prophecy Fulfilled (Ch.s 48-50)

As Mogart struggles to remove the sword from Alfred's body and the rock of the cave, all Alfred's life ebbs away and he dreams of the Lady in White who urges him to "remember what has been forgotten." As the last of Alfred Kropp fades to blackness, he does remember and he knows who the true Master of the Sword is.

**The Atonement:** Mogart (Ch. 51)

Regaining consciousness, Alfred pulls Excalibur from his body and the rack (like King Arthur had done centuries before) and cuts off Mogart's head. He then crawls to Natalia and uses his blood to save her from death, which is the thing that he remembered he could do, and the reason he could not "stay dead."

**The Hero Returns Home:** The End and the Beginning (Ch.s 52-55)

Alfred and Natalia are taken to a hospital where they both eventually recover. Alfred is visited by agents of OIPEP who bring him a gift—Bennacio's sword—as well as an offer for him to join. The Tuttles come and bring Alfred back to Knoxville where he defeats Barry Lancaster and shows that he is now a "master of both worlds." Home is no longer the same for Alfred and he calls OIPEP in preparation for a new life.