

END COMMENTS [SAMPLE]

On Concept

The crossover of medieval and modern works very well. You know your genre. If anything, I say to lean into it *more*. Since you're reimagining a medieval quest, I might suggest jotting down a play-by-play of common quest structures, or think about following the Hero's Journey even more directly. You're already doing it! Hero's Journey: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero%27s_journey

On Plot

My thoughts on plot pretty much echo what I mentioned above. You're following a structure to amp up the tension, but there are areas that might be reorganized in order to make sure the tension starts from the very beginning. I think, with the current structure, the first page and a half can feel a little lost on the reader. Character specificity and vulnerability can help with that.

On Structure

Author Jamie Poissant mentioned once in a craft talk that the first chapter of a novel (or in the instance of a short story, the first page or two) should introduce the characters, stakes, and setting of the piece. That first page *teaches* the reader *how* to read the story. So, on the first page, I want to know where we are, what year it is, what the stakes are, and who the main character/characters is/are. So far, we get indications of some of this, but I think making these details more concrete can start your story off without any confusion.

On Characters

The characters are intriguing and funny, and the use of scumbag knights is excellent. There is irony built into these people, which makes for entertaining characters. But I am not fully engaging yet, likely because I don't know the characters well enough. I suggest identifying each character's personal quest (not necessarily in the story but separately), and then indicating it somehow in their introductions or dialogue, especially since this story is so medieval. As I said above, maybe play more into that old-age quest narrative.

On Dialogue

The dialogue is working well. Other than sometimes feeling jargon-heavy, you allow for context that helps with that. It is concise and witty. I think, for the most part, it could use more tension. Characters are obviously speaking from their experience and their desires, so identifying what those things are and directing the dialogue to allude to their internal world might prove to amp up that tension.

Recommendations

My first recommendation would be the Knight's Tale in the *Canterbury Tales*. It's a classic, and it mirrors what you're doing here. I'd glance back at it to analyze what makes that story work. I also recommend the first scene in the movie Jerry Zucker's *First Knight* (1995). It begins with a fire started by the villain, and it feels menacing. It may help you capture what you want even more with your first scene. As for medieval comedies, the tv show *Galavant* and Brian Helgeland's *A Knight's Tale* (2001) both work so well in marrying modern humor with medieval settings and themes.