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*A Knight’s Tale*: True Romance?

The film *A Knight’s Tale*, featuring Heath Ledger as William Thatcher, is an entertaining way to spend two hours. Despite some of its historical inaccuracies, the film maintains a sense of integrity and does not take “too many risks in “modernizing” history for the big screen.” While neither King Arthur nor Sir Gawain jousted to the music of AC/DC or Queen, the film contains the true spirit of a medieval text: a brave knight on a heroic quest to defeat an evil enemy.

Many classic medieval texts feature a brave knight, as does *A Knight’s Tale*—with a twist. William Thatcher is the son of a peasant who is determined to “change his stars.” When his lord Sir Ector dies in the middle of a jousting tournament, William captures his chance to change his life and the lives of his friends, Roland and Wat. William finishes the tournament as Sir Ector and convinces his friends to support his efforts to take on a new identity: Sir Ulrich von Lichtenstein of Gelderland. He defeats many tournament opponents, but his bravery becomes most apparent in his final battle against Count Adhemar. When William fights Adhemar without any armor, he proves his bravery and dedication to himself.