

Ultima IX: Ascension
Return of the Avatar

by
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INT. TAPESTRY WALL

Supered credits over a stately ECU pan-and-scan sequence of the large Britannian Tapestry. Scenes from Britannia's history unfold. The last scene of a dragon's shadow passing across the ground with other illuminated elements.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BLASTED PLAIN - DAY

Travelling helicopter shot over a rocky, desolate landscape. A wind whistles past. A shadow passes R2L

Possible supered title here.

As the shadow reaches the left edge of frame, a huge shape blurs in front of the camera, passing R2L.

EXT. ROCKY OUTCROPPING - MOMENTS LATER

A beat, then the shadow of the dragon crosses the landscape R2L along with a small swoosh. A beat

Possible supered title here.

Suddenly, a circle of brilliant light irises open near the top of the frame floating above the rock. A swirling vortex of magic ether rockets down from within the iris and expends itself on the rocky outcropping.

CRAB LEFT

A figure in battle garb appears within maelstrom facing right, forced to one knee but maintaining balance, bracing himself with his hands.

The figure is now facing away. The view reveals his position on a singular precipice. The land is blasted and dead. The sky burns with a sickly reddish light. The figure begins to rise to his feet

REV MED FIGURE

The figure rises into frame. He has a helmet on that obscures his features. After a moment, he reaches up and slowly removes the headpiece and reacts to the vista. It is the AVATAR. He is slightly disoriented as he glances about. He takes a step forward.

REV OTS AVATAR

CRANE UP AND RACK FOCUS over walking Avatar and ledge to reveal precipitous drop. In the distance, on the plain below, a ring of dragons circles a huge, misshapen tower crafted in the visage of the guardian. This is the Tower of Exaltation.

REV MED AVATAR

Avatar approaches a last step and reacts to view. He is confused and astonished.

REV MED OTS AVATAR

Avatar drops his helmet in his distraction. A moment of contemplation, then suddenly a huge shape fills the frame beyond the Avatar from below the cliff face.

REV WIDE HIGH AVATAR REACTION

Avatar recoils from some grave threat. The shape fills the foreground, obscuring the hero of Britannia.

REV OTS AVATAR LOW LONG

A huge DRAGON with someone astride its back hovers above our hero. The Avatar seems diminished in size in comparison.

CU DRAGON'S HEAD

A WYRMGUARD sits astride the dragons back. The Wyrmguard pulls a sword.

REV MED AVATAR

The Avatar instinctively reaches for his sword only to find it missing. He freezes and awaits the Wyrmguard's next move.

OFF-AXIS AVATAR L AND DRAGON W/ RIDER R

The moment is held as the dragon hovers beyond the cliff-face.

PREV DRAGON WYRMGUARD

The Wyrmguard lets out a war-cry and arcs his sword forward to point at the Avatar...

ON-AXIS CU DRAGON'S SNOUT

...and the dragon strikes, huge flames gouting out of its mouth directly at the camera.

OTS AVATAR

The flames overtake the Avatar. The avatar, a useless shield of his arms raised, is thrown out of the left of the frame. The camera is consumed by the flames. A strange blue light, accompanied by a magical sound, flashes from off left of frame where the Avatar disappeared.

OFF-AXIS RIGHT ELS OF PRECIPICE WITH DRAGON AND WYRMGUARD

Dragon's breath expended, pockets of fire burn on the rocky precipice. No sign of the avatar.

VFX DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SINISTER THRONE ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The image wavers slightly and the edges fade to black like a vignette. A dark hand passes in foreground and gestures. The image steadies.

WIDER ON BLACKTHORN

A dark sinister figure in fashionable black robe gilt with regal colors stands to left facing looking at a framed magic lens floating before him. It is BLACKTHORN. The lens appears to be a pool of water suspended within a ring of stones and gems, defying gravity as the construct stands on edge. Within the lens, the dragon and Wyrmguard hold, then arc away from sight.

BLACKTHORN

My Lord. The Avatar has arrived in
Britannia...

(proudly)

...and has been easily dispatched
by my Wyrm Guard.

The lens grows murky and clouded.

GUARDIAN (O.S.)
 Hmmmm. Do not be so sure. The
 meddling...

WIDER FROM ACROSS ROOM. REVEALING BACK CORNER OF ORNATE
 THRONE AT RIGHT OF FRAME

More of the chamber is revealed. It is deep in shadows.
 It's full dimension cannot be ascertained. A soft circle of
 light illuminates the central floor and spills on the gilt
 edges of the magic lens, the form of the throne and the
 moldings of ornate columns rising into the darkness. The
 floor has an intricate motif inscribed in its surface.

A knarled red hand and arm rests on the throne's arm-rest.

GUARDIAN (CONT.)
 ...Champion of Virtue is not so
 easily defeated.

BLACKTHORN
 Of course my Lord.
 (sarcastic)
 But, where is he now?

MED BLACKTHORN

BLACKTHORN (CONT')
 The Mirror of Darkness Lord
 British's lackey. If he yet lives--

GUARDIAN (O.S.)
 --The Avatar has...

OTS BLACKTHORN

GUARDIAN (CONT.)
 ...been teleported to a place
 hidden from the mirror's sight.
 Our...
 (sarcastic)
 ...Virtuous Paragon could only have
 been taken to Stonegate.
 (thoughtfully)
 And by one of great power.

PREV BLACKTHORN

BLACKTHORN

(droll)

Shall I reduce Stonegate to a
cinder my Lord?

GUARDIAN

(internal)

Nooo.

(pause)

REV THRONE ACROSS ROOM, CLOSER

The red being is revealed further but his face and shoulders
are still in shadow. His eyes can be seen glowing in the
dark. The camera pushes in.

GUARDIAN (CONT.)

I want the Champion of Britannia to
see what has become of the land and
its people.

(building)

I want to feel his rage burn as he
sees what I have done to Britannia.

CU BLACKTHORN - REACTION

GUARDIAN (CONT.)

(commanding)

You are to keep the Avatar occupied
while I complete my plan for
Britannia's conquest.

OTS GUARDIAN

GUARDIAN (CONT.)

What remains is yours when I am
finished.

(dismissive wave)

Now leave me.

MED BLACKTHORN

BLACKTHORN

(subservient but undertone
of dissent)

Yes, my lord.

Blackthorn backs away, bowing then turns away with a swish of his coat to be enveloped by darkness surrounding the room.

REV MATCH. BLACKTHORN FG

The silhouetted form of Blackthorn at left of frame pauses as light from opening doors reveal his face. The light fans across the floor. With drawn-out breath his expression drops from that of subservient to resentment. The Guardian is visible beyond in center of room his face still hidden by shadow. Blackthorn moves on and the doors close cutting off the light.

FULL GUARDIAN

GUARDIAN

(amused chuckle)

Blackthorn. You are indeed a fool
to want Britannia...

(leaning into light)

...once I have finished with it.

FADE TO BLACK