

THE GARDEN OF EPISTEME

Written by

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EXT. FOREST OF DOUBT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A lone TRAVELER (25) in plain, ancient Greek garb pauses at the entrance of a shadowy path through thick woods to consider a sign that reads: "FOREST OF DOUBT."

He walks in and disappears down the path.

EXT. FOREST OF DOUBT PATHWAY - NIGHT

A clearing lit by a campfire opens ahead of the Traveler.

KAIROS (18), an athletic female warrior in leather armor with a bow, and PATHOS (35), a huge, hairy cave-man with a gnarly wooden club, sit and joke beside the fire.

Kairos looks up as soon as the light hits the Traveler.

KAIROS

Whoa, hang on a second!

He stops short as she approaches with her bow in hand.

KAIROS (CONT'D)

Where are you headed?

TRAVELER

I've heard this Garden of Episteme is supposed to be amazing. I just wanted to check it out...

PATHOS

Might you carry a Burden of Proof to contribute, kind sir?

The Traveler does a double-take at the eloquent gentleman's accent the cave-man speaks with.

TRAVELER

Don't have one. Is that a big deal?

KAIROS

Yes. Part of the reason our Garden is so peaceful is that we stopped letting anyone in without Proof.

She looks him up and down.

KAIROS (CONT'D)

But you don't look too dangerous. You can still continue on into the meadow if you want.

TRAVLER

Will I at least be able to see the Garden from there?

PATHOS

Why, yes. Just show proper credence to Ethos' rules. And if Logos notes you striving to slink into the Garden, you may rue that mistake. Otherwise, please enjoy.

MADAME SOPHIE (36), a gorgeous woman in royal robes and armed with an elegant bow, spies on them from the shadows.

EXT. FOREST OF DOUBT PATHWAY - DAWN

Sophie steps into the clearing and glides on without acknowledgment to Kairos and Pathos.

KAIROS

Excuse me, can I help you?

SOPHIE

Not really. I'm just heading for the Garden until my party arrives.

PATHOS

We lament, my dear Lady, that we cannot allow you by with the handsome weaponry you wield.

SOPHIE

Oh, you misunderstand. I am Madame Sophie. I have very important masters to bring to your Garden.

Kairos draws her bow and nocks an arrow.

KAIROS

I think you should leave, Madame.

Sophie resumes her strut. Kairos draws back the bow.

KAIROS (CONT'D)

(to her arrow)

Confirmatia -- Proof.

The incantation drifts from her lips and enchants the arrow with a silver shimmer.

She lets the arrow fly, but Sophie fluidly dodges it.

SOPHIE

Your 'proof' means little to those
with truly powerful magic, girl.

Sophie draws her bow and turns her attention to Pathos as he
trudges toward her, club in hand.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

(to her arrow)

Ad Populum -- Everyone else always
agrees that my masters should rule.

Tiny covered wagons encircle the arrow as it enchants.

The arrow carries the enchantment along with it when she
releases it to THUNK squarely into Pathos's huge chest.

He stops short as the bandwagons spread outward from the
arrow and engulf him into a zombie-like trance.

He turns toward Kairos and raises his club.

Her eyes widen.

She turns and sprints down the path to the meadow.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Well done. Come with me.

Pathos follows Sophie into the trail, past a sign that reads:
"MEADOW OF RITORIKÍ"

EXT. MEADOW OF RITORIKÍ PATHWAY - DAY

Kairos trots breathless up to ETHOS (35), a behemoth of a
mythical Greek knight in the Meadow's center, clad in
polished metal plates. A huge war-hammer hangs on his back.

KAIROS

Ethos! She's right behind me -- we
couldn't stop her.

She rambles between breaths when she reaches him.

KAIROS (CONT'D)

Some kind of magic -- doesn't need
any proof -- she can dodge arrows --
made Pathos work for her...

He shifts focus over her shoulder to path's opening.

ETHOS

Looks like she's already here.

Kairos spins around to see Sophie emerge from the woods, bow in hand, Pathos by her side.

ETHOS (CONT'D)

It's not news that Pathos gets flaky at the worst times. I'll take care of it.

Ethos draws the war-hammer and tromps off.

Across the Meadow, Sophie draws back an arrow and takes aim.

SOPHIE

Ad Auctoritate -- You will support my authority as royalty.

Tiny crowns enchant the arrow.

The arrow arches across the expanse between her and Ethos, but just bounces off his armor.

ETHOS

You are no royal of mine!

SOPHIE

Huh. Stronger than most.

She takes aim again.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Ad Vifyrkation -- It is either me or an evil ruler.

Black and white checkerboard squares enchant the arrow.

The arrow pierces through Ethos's chest-plate with a CLUNK.

Kairos watches in disbelief as the checkerboards possess him.

Ethos turns toward her with his hammer still drawn.

Kairos draws an arrow and nocks it with fear in her eyes.

Ethos starts toward her. Kairos draws the bow back.

KAIROS

(to her arrow)

Confirmatia -- Proof.

The arrow enchants.

Kairos hesitates, but Ethos still tromps her way in a trance.

ETHOS

I will not side with evil.

Her arrow flies a frozen rope but just bounces off of him.

LOGOS (O.S.)

Kairos! Fall back!

Kairos spins around and sprints for the garden gate.

EXT. GATE TO THE GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

LOGOS (35) stands square in front of the gate. He wears the robes of a classical academic; the only thing indicating he is a guard is the collection of blades that ring his belt.

LOGOS

I observed from across the meadow
but did not think it wise to leave
the gate unguarded.

KAIROS

It's okay. I expected Ethos to stop
this himself, too.

LOGOS

Well clearly it wasn't a job for a
meathead. I'll end it here though,
with some long overdue finesse.

KAIROS

They seem immune to Proof once she
got them with her magic though...

Logos glances up and slices an incoming arrow out of the air
an instant before it would have hit him.

LOGOS

Ah, but I have a Razor for anything
not supported by a premise of
Proof. She will not pass without.

In the distance, Sophie draws and enchants another arrow as
she walks. Pathos and Ethos flank her.

Sophie lets it fly. Logos slices it out of the air.

She keeps sending arrows as she walks but Logos blocks each.

She closes within a range that Logos and Kairos can hear her.

SOPHIE

Ad Hominem -- You're an arrogant
little prick.

Logos draws the corresponding Razor before she even releases.

LOGOS

Ah, resorting to personal attacks?
You must be out of real mischief.

Rather than release the arrow she lowers the bow and glares
at him for a moment.

SOPHIE

(to Pathos and Ethos)
We need him on our side. Hold him.

Pathos and Ethos charge.

With no time to re-arm, Logos slashes Pathos with his Ad
Hominem Razor as he closes. It only enrages him. Pathos gets
a hold of his wrist before he can strike again.

KAIROS

Confirmatia -- Proof.

Pathos doesn't seem to notice her arrow THUNK into his back.

Logos draws his Bandwagon Razor with his other hand, but
Ethos grabs that wrist before he can strike.

PATHOS

Will -- not -- be -- outcasts!

ETHOS

Your overconfidence almost led us
into evil, but no more.

Kairos fires an arrow at Ethos but it just glances off.

SOPHIE (O.S.)

Peculiari Actione -- I am above
your rules: they don't apply to me.

Sophie's arrow pierces deep into Logos's heart. It's
enchantment of tiny pleading hands encircle him.

His struggles cease.

Kairos's companions all turn on her with blank faces.

She shrinks back. Then she sprints away in terror.

SOPHIE (O.S.)(CONT'D)
 Never mind her. She would not be of
 much use to us. Nor is she a threat
 any longer.

They turn back toward Sophie as she produces three notebooks.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 The names within are the only ones
 you are to let through from now on.

She hands a notebook to each of them.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)
 Burdens of Proof are nice if they
 happen to bring them. But my
 preference is what matters now.

All three open the notebooks as she strolls into the gate.

EXT. FOREST OF DOUBT PATHWAY - NIGHT

Kairos lays alone by the fire, awake.

She glances over at the spot Pathos usually would sit.

She forces her eyes closed.

They pop back open and misery crosses her face.

EXT. MEADOW OF RITORIKÍ - DAY

Kairos cautiously approaches Ethos from the forest path. She notices a few new paths opening into the Meadow to circumvent her post. He sees her approach but seems indifferent.

ETHOS
 What do you want?

KAIROS
 Just to see how things are going...

She stares off to the garden in the distance. She saddens.

KAIROS (CONT'D)
 The Garden's not going to last long
 with her keeping out so many of
 those who brought Proof to feed it.
 What are those creepy-looking black
 things flying around in there?

ETHOS

Demons. The nice-looking glowing ones are gods and goddesses.

KAIROS

It's especially not going to last by letting in so many who obviously didn't bring any Proof for it...

ETHOS

You're not changing my mind.

His expression steels.

ETHOS (CONT'D)

Besides, my job has gotten easier. No more questions. No more judgement. Just check the book.

She glances at the book. He tightens his hold on it.

KAIROS

That doesn't sound like you.

ETHOS

Well it is, now. Although -- I'm even surprised with Logos, lately. All these exceptions to the rules he once held so high seems just plain dishonest.

Kairos's eyes light up.

KAIROS

Can't you just dispel that?

ETHOS

Sure. But as I said, I'm on Sophie's side. So I don't want to.

KAIROS

I don't believe you. I think you just can't do it. What spell could you possibly use?

ETHOS

Uhhh... Ethice -- special pleadings are a lapse of integrity.

The instant the unintentional incantation wisps from his lips Kairos snatches out an arrow, intercepts the ethical spell with it before it reaches his hammer, and bolts.

ETHOS (CONT'D)
Oh crap. Get back here!

She draws her bow on the run and lets fly before Logos even notices what she is up to.

EXT. GATE TO THE GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

The arrow buries itself in Logos's upper arm. He stumbles. Then both arrows disintegrate into nothingness.

He sighs in relief. He turns to Kairos as she runs up, freed of Sophie's trance by Ethos's spell.

LOGOS
Much appreciated Ma'am.

KAIROS
Quick! Ethos thinks he's either with her or he's with evil.

LOGOS
Ah, she tricked him with a false dichotomy of black or white.

Ethos tromps close behind her with his hammer in hand. She holds out an arrow to Logos for his spell. He understands.

LOGOS (CONT'D)
(to Kairos's arrow)
Logicae -- There are many better options than just Sophie or evil.

The moment the enchantment takes, she spins and KA-THUNK, splits the other arrow in Ethos's chest at short range.

Both arrows vanish as Logos's logical clarity expunges the ethical confusion of Sophie's spell. Ethos looks at his hammer with slight confusion then sheaths it on his back.

Kairos approaches nervously.

KAIROS
Do you remember we were better off without Her now? That it isn't a choice between her or evil?

ETHOS
Uh, yep. Thanks for that. It's good to be ourselves again --

He pulls out Sophie's book, glares at it, and chucks it.

ETHOS (CONT'D)

-- either of you seen Pathos?

LOGOS

Yes. In the Garden by her side.

KAIROS

Really? What for?

LOGOS

Acting as a bodyguard of sorts, it seems. She treats him as a pet. And I think he's gone off his nut.

Logos draws his copy of her book and tosses it aside.

LOGOS (CONT'D)

I can hear him in there: one minute shouting about love and the next minute preaching damnation.

Kairos leads through the gate with a new air of leadership.

EXT. THE GARDEN OF EPISTEME - DAY

The three of them halt once they see Sophie across the garden. She flirts with ZEUS (55), a huge, muscle-bound King with flowing white locks and beard.

Pathos attends to Sophie with servant-like obedience.

LOGOS

I'm sorry, He was top on her list.

KAIROS

You know him?

LOGOS

I know of Him. He's almost impossible to get out of gardens once He's in.

ETHOS

Crap. I don't think we'll be able to get rid of Him without Pathos.

LOGOS

Sadly, I think the main reason she dropped the proof requirement was to hand Him the Garden, for good.

ETHOS

Yep. And she told me He'd make us
more moral, despite having no
Proof. In the trance I bought it.

LOGOS

(to Kairos)

Can you make the shot? I know
Pathos is just following the crowd.

KAIROS

Sure can.

She holds out an arrow in Logos's direction.

LOGOS

(to the arrow)

Logicae -- Group acceptance does
not mean what she says is true.

Her long-distance shot catches Pathos completely by surprise
when it pierces his side. He sees them and turns in rage.

He charges toward them.

Sophie scans the situation but it does not worry her. She
goes back to her conversation.

KAIROS

Uh... She must know something we
don't. That's a little scary.

Kairos holds an arrow out toward Ethos.

ETHOS

(to the arrow)

Ethice -- Honest doubt can prevent
mass delusion.

Pathos is more than halfway to them. Her enchanted arrow digs
straight into his chest but doesn't slow him down.

LOGOS

Easy to fool but never was easy to
talk back out of anything...

Logos draws a Razor in each hand: Bandwagon and Appeal to
Popularity. Ethos draws his hammer and enchants it.

ETHOS

(to his hammer)

Ethice -- Integrity over
conformity.

Pathos leaps straight for Kairos but Ethos knocks him out of mid-air with a mighty overhand swing of his hammer.

Dazed, Pathos gets up on one knee.

LOGOS

This may sting a bit my friend.

Logos drives both enchanted Razors into Pathos, to the hilt.

Pathos's stubborn possession by Sophie's Appeal to the Bandwagon spell evaporates when the sum of Ethos's ethical spells and Logos's logical spells finally overpower it.

Pathos falls to his side in exhaustion, limp.

Logos glances up and slices down an arrow. Sophie trudges toward them while she draws and enchants another one.

KAIROS

Ethos, charge my arrows. Proof
doesn't work with her so I think
you're it. Logos, keep us safe.

Logos knocks another of Sophie's arrows out of the air as Kairos holds one of her own out to Ethos.

ETHOS

(to her arrow)

Ethice -- Verbal tricks that skew
the truth are dishonest.

Dodging Ethos and Kairos's arrows stops Sophie's progress but she keeps returning fire. Behind her a storm brews over Zeus as his annoyance grows.

They stay in a deadlock for a few more volleys.

Zeus reaches up.

ZEUS

Verbosium -- Act of a god!

Lightning shoots down into his hand and forms a spear of pure energy. He hurls it straight at Logos.

Ethos dives in front of Logos and the spear of lightning blasts him to the ground.

KAIROS

No!

Sophie shoots an arrow at the fallen Ethos, but Logos steps over his fallen comrade and blocks it.

Kairos, behind Logos, slaps an arrow on his shoulder as he protects all of them. The storm brews over Zeus.

KAIROS (CONT'D)

Give me something for Sophie's King. Quick!

LOGOS

Logicae -- True claims meet the Burden of Proof, and you have none.

Zeus reaches up for another bolt. Just as it forms, Kairos's arrow drives straight into his heart.

The full power of the lightning explodes in his hand.

The shock wave knocks all of them off their feet.

Logos and Kairos shake it off, see that Sophie is down, and shake Ethos with concern.

No reaction.

THUNK! An arrow sinks into the top of Logos's shoulder. Tiny men pushing burdens envelope him in a spell from it.

Kairos looks up to see Sophie kneeling with her bow, next arrow pointed right at her, with a sinister grin.

Behind Sophie the arrow in Zeus vanishes at the same rate the one in Logos possesses him and removes the need for Proof.

Zeus heaves back to his feet. Time stands still.

A primal roar booms from behind Kairos.

PATHOS (O.S.)

SENSUS -- RAAAAAGE!

Fear darts across Sophie's face. Her aim shifts and she fires past Kairos.

Pathos storms by in the form of an unstoppable rage-fueled weapon of a beast. Arrow after arrow from Sophie's bow lodge in his chest, unnoticed in his charge.

He crushes Sophie and her bow in a bear-hug, lifts her over his head, and hurls her out of the garden and into the moat.

Zeus raises his hand for another bolt.

Pathos barrels him to the ground before it forms.

They struggle but Pathos throws Zeus onto his shoulders and locks him into an inescapable fireman's carry.

Pathos lumbers over to the fence and heaves Zeus over into the moat with a massive splash.

Sophie swims across and dashes away without looking back.

Zeus wades to land, looks back over his shoulder in annoyance, and slogs off in the direction Sophie went.

Pathos's spell dissipates until he's back to his usual self. He beams with pride back at his recovering friends.

EXT. GATE OUT OF THE GARDEN - DUSK

Just inside the gate, Ethos clutches a struggling demon by the nape of the neck. He shoves it out hard, and it stumbles then flaps away as soon as it regains balance.

He wipes his hands in completion while the other three grin on in satisfaction.

ETHOS

That's the last of them.

PATHOS

Well, that was jolly strange. I'm still befuddled as to how I ever deemed you as sinister adversaries.

ETHOS

That's how she got us: convinced us we were doing the right thing.

PATHOS

Good thing it put my knickers in such a bunch once I finally got wise though, I should say.

KAIROS

Seriously...

LOGOS

Kairos, I think we all owe you an apology. You proved more than just a companion, but a leader.

KAIROS

Thanks. I know you wouldn't have done that of your own right minds.

PATHOS

So what now, Ma'am?

KAIROS

How about we stick together at the
gate from now on?

She shares a warm smile with all three of them.

PATHOS

While it was gratifying to have
first say myself, your wish does
seem prudent. We plainly execute
more effectively when unified.

The four of them step out of the garden, arms over shoulders,
and set up camp together at the mouth of the gate.

FADE OUT.