

Arthur Unknown - A tale of two faces

A cold wind blew as the stage coach lumbered down the streets of Bristol on a wobbly wheel. The town was busy with all sorts of people, nobles, shop keepers, peasants, and even beggars. This winter was particularly hard for the townsfolk, some much more than others. The coach stopped in front of one of the local taverns and the door opened. Out stepped a man dressed in fine clothes. Gabe shouted out to the man, "One farthing and I can fix that wheel for ya." "Aye, ye could, but alas ye wont, and thou wouldst be smart not to do as much as look at it if you are going to be begging me for change" said the nobleman. "I begged for nothing, I just offered my assistance," Gabe replied. "Well take thine ASSISTANCE elsewhere." Gabe glared at the man.

It seemed as though some of the people had forgotten about the guardians of the egg, and that it was them who were to protect the town. The cats in the back alley digging through the trash seemed to get thrown more of a bone than the starving guardians.

Gabe got up to head back to camp so he could continue his warrior training with Adria. As he passed the coach he saw in the distance a person in a long hooded cloak run into the woods at the edge of town. Curious he ran after the man, but as soon as he got to the forest line, the man had disappeared. Neither a broken twig, nor footstep to track was left upon the ground.

"WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!" the nobleman shouted. Gabe turned around to see the noblemen walking towards him with a furious look on his face. "I told you I neediest not help from a beggar, so now thou thinkst it be amusing to turn to thievery do ye." "I stole nothing from thou," Gabe shouted. "So I just am missing one farthing from mine pouch, the same coin thou didst ask for, just by coincidence then?" the nobleman said. "Look my word is my honor; I swearst I stole nothing from thou," Gabe stated. "You watch yourself boy, I have mine eye on thee, and all thyne beggar friends." The man walked back to his stage coach, opened the door, and on the seat was a slip of parchment that reads, "It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice. ~Author Unknown, Thank you for your donation." The furious nobleman speed off in disgust.

The notes did not end there. Lord Stafford was sitting on his front stoop pondering whether he should bring up a new proposal at the next council of the nobles meeting. He started to get nervous on whether it would be accepted by the rest of the nobles, so nervous in fact that a trip to the privy was necessary to calm him. As he returned to the stoop he noticed a note attached to his front door that read, "A genius is one who shoots at something no one else can see - and hits it. ~Author Unknown, Thank you for your donation." Upon further investigation, he too was missing a farthing from his pouch.

Notes were turning up all over town, Lady Arabella Stuart received one that read, "To the world you might be one person, but to one person you might be the world. ~Author Unknown, Thank you for the donation." Baron Burghley got one that read, "Curiosity is the very basis of education and if you tell me that curiosity killed the cat, I say only the cat died nobly. ~Author Unknown, Thank you for the donation."

Noble after noble were finding that they were missing a single coin and gaining a note in return. Some were Inspired, some were curious, some were furious. They started calling the person responsible “Arthur Unknown” in reference to the signature ending on the notes. It wasn’t until the sheriff got hit up with the note “Wickedness sucks in the greater part of its own venom, and poisons itself there with. ~Author Unknown, Thank you for your donation” The sheriff was furious and placed wanted posters all over Bristol. The picture showed a hooded man and read, “Wanted Arthur Unknown, for thievery and threatening the peace. A four shilling reward will be paid to the apprehension of this man.

Back at the camp of the twisted claw, Thoren, Talia, Lillith and Vashta were huddled around a small campfire. “Thoren did you see the posters all over town, they are paying 4 shillings for the capture of a thief named Arthur Unknown,” Lillith said. “Yes, I have,” Thoren replied. No sooner did Thoren reply, Lillith tugged on his sleeve, “And I think he’s breaking into your vardo.” Thoren quickly turned and saw a glance of a hooded figure slipping into his home. “Ha” Thoren laughed “I’ll take care of that.”

Thoren opened the door, and saw Arthur facing towards the wall. “So the nobles weren’t enough for ya Arthur were they.” “I’m not here to steal from you Master Grymm; I have something to tell you.” Arthur replied. “And I should believe this why? Face me when you speak to me boy.” Arthur turned to face Thoren.

Arthur was a man of average height; he wore a brown hooded cowl and suede mask. His Clothing was dirty and torn.

Thoren grabbed Arthur and threw him against the wall. The impact revealed a guardian’s necklace hanging around his neck. “Where did you get that, I will end your life now if you have hurt any of the guardians.” Thoren said. “I got it from you Master Grimm.” With this Arthur removed his mask. Thoren's eyes widened with confusion as he gazed upon a face that had a striking resemblance to a lost guardian. Although the structure of his face was the same, the details were different, as if the wild had gotten the best of him, “But you... What happened to you,” Thoren replied. “Never mind that now, you are being set up by a local merchant woman. She has planted the jewels you have been seeking somewhere in this wagon.” Arthur said. “How do you know this?” asked Thoren. “It takes a thief to know a thief.” replied Arthur. “So why should I not believe it to be you who is trying to set me up?” asked Thoren. “Because, Thoren, I don’t steal jewels, I only inspire for a reasonable price. I still need to survive and although I have not been protecting the egg up close, I never stopped watching from a distance, this is how I survive.” replied Arthur.

Outside the vardo, Lillith and Vashta, anxious to see what was going on watched as the masked Arthur opened the door, glanced at them and walked out into the woods. Soon after, Thoren came walking out. He walked over to the side of the vardo, got on his knees and reached up underneath to pull out a bag of jewels.

“Well looks like we caught one thief.” said Thoren.

“But why did you let him go.” Lillith said.

“He wasn’t the thief we were after.” Thoren replied.

That night a fire dimly lit up the night sky about fifty yards away from the egg. The surprised guardians and gypsies looked at the fire and cautiously proceeded towards it. As they neared the fire they saw a pig roasting on a spit above the medium sized blaze. The beast wasn’t large enough to fill all of the hungry stomachs that arrived, but it surely would help put a dent in quite a few.

Out of the corner of her eye, Talia saw a note hanging on a nearby tree. She ran over to the note and read it out loud for all to hear. “You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give. ~Author Unknown, Here is my donation.” A brief pause filled the night air, and then Thoren shouted “Rest guardians, for tonight we feast.” Laughter and song filled the campfire that night, but the whole Arthur situation, it just boggled Lillith’s mind. “Thoren I still don’t know why you just let him go.” She said. “Because, Lillith, he had work to do.” Thoren said. “What kind of work?” asked Lillith? “Some people guard the gates at the door, Arthur guards from a distance. He’s one of us.”

With that said, an eaves dropping Gabe jumped up and began to shout, “Nightph...” “Gabe,” Thoren, cut Gabe off. “Arthur is not who you think he is.”

Gabe replied, “Are you sure?”

“Yes Gabe, I am sure,” said Thoren. Gabe stood up and started to walk away in frustration. “This is the first time that I hope your wrong Thoren.” Gabe stormed off.

Vashta turned to Thoren, “Thoren, are you sure it’s not...” She said

“Yes, Vashta,” Thoren said, “he is not.” “At least he is not anymore.”

Gabe walked to his bed and threw himself into it. When he landed on the soft pile of hay, he hit his head on something hard. He turned to what he hit his head on, and he found that where his pillow should be was 5 small pieces of flat steel. Attached to the steel was a note which read, “An intelligent man knows that the only true constant to life is change, but a wise man is the one who willingly accepts it. Take this steel and change it to your need, but remember there will come a day where it’s not just the change in steel that will need acceptance. Arthur Unknown, This is my donation.”