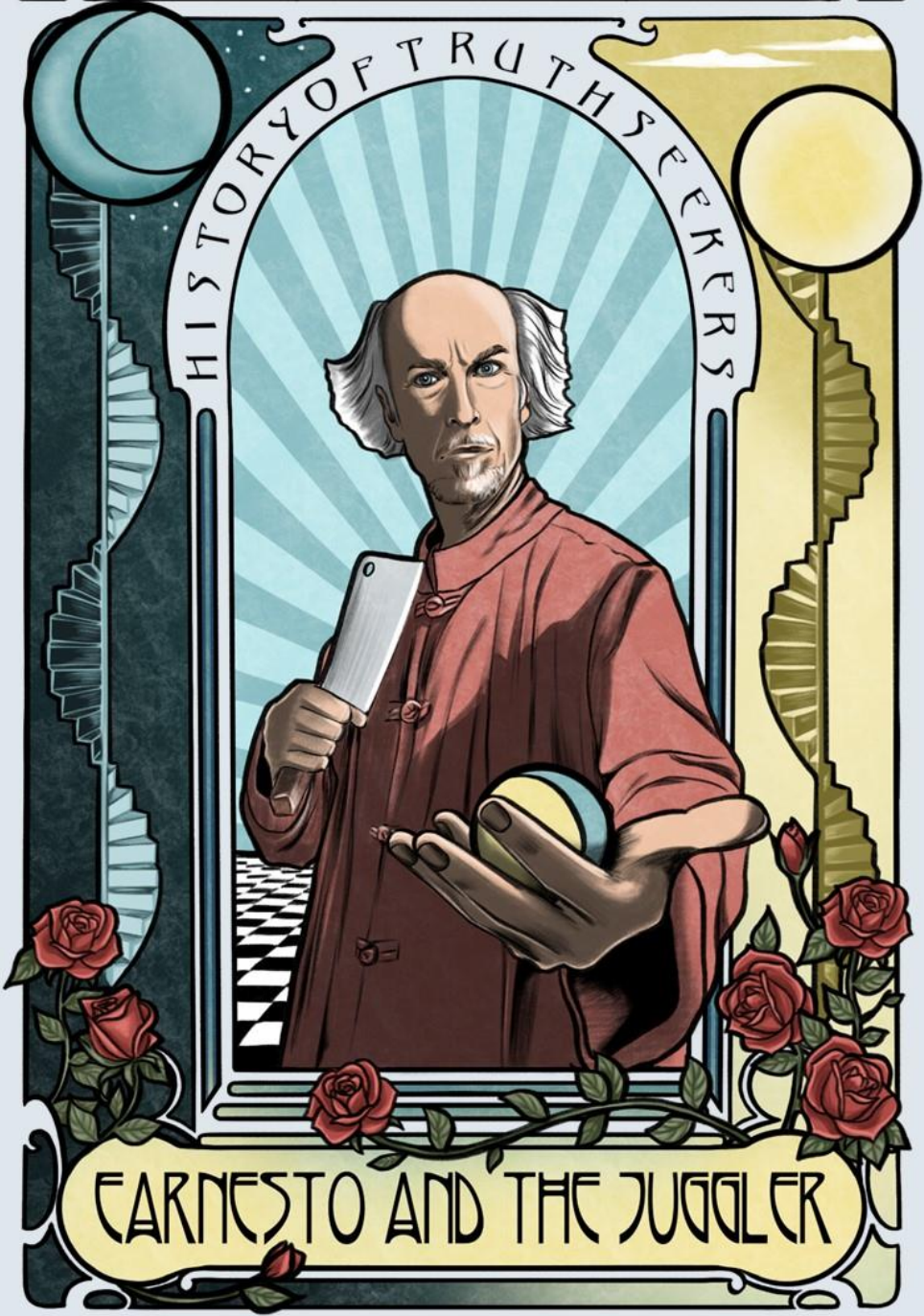


ARCHIVES OF FUDGEMORE



EARNESTO AND THE JUGGLER

The Archives of Fudgemore

A History of Truth Seekers

Volume 2 Issue 4: Earnesto and the Juggler

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Earnesto and the Juggler

In which Sophia receives a letter from Earnesto
and how he gives an explanation of both
his enlightenment and his death at the hands of the Juggler.

Sophia came home to find a letter in her post box. The letter was sealed with green wax, and the image embossed thereon was one of a frog. At seeing this, she knew it must be from a certain Earnesto, the same person she had sheltered in a time of need. "At last I shall find out why he was being pursued, and what he did to anger certain authorities" she thought. She made a cup of tea, opened the letter with anticipation and read:

Dear Sophia,

I will remind you that I was still within the walls of a certain cloister at the time I killed my brother the bright green frog. I will remind you also that my conscience had awoken with great force and remorse flooded my veins and I sought forgiveness for the cruel deed I had done to my childhood friend, the frog. In one clear moment of insight it was decided that my life should pursue a new course of action which did not rely on white and black books which were those of the cloister authorities, but rather on the dictates of my conscience, the same conscience which is given to all peoples without distinction. And now to continue from where I left off with you.

In this state I dropped my chores and began to run. I ran away from the cloister and ran straight into the side streets of the nearby town. There I hoped for what I did not know, but I hoped to hide my person from the authorities long enough to get my bearings and decide what to do next. I must escape this place with my conscience while my conscience is yet awake, I thought.

I was arrested on my path by a certain juggler who I was later to discover to be a truth seeker of considerable understanding. Holding me with his inquisitive gaze he asked "and what is the reason behind your current state?" Then I told him about the frog, and he begged me enter his tent and sit down. "Seeing you thus I am certain that I can give you some good medicine in the form of distraction" he said, and I being of no clear mind sat down. He then drew out three cups and placed them upside down on the table, and in one of them he placed a walnut. Mixing them up as such a magician has done from Cairo to Las Vegas, he asked me to guess under which cup the walnut was resting. Time after time I guessed and each time, no matter how sure I was of the whereabouts of the walnut, my guess was wrong. At first he asked "Do you know where is the walnut?" And though I knew, it was never where I thought it should be. "Seeing that you do not know, I should ask you now- where do you believe the walnut is now?" And I

saw his meaning and realized how subject to deception was my knowledge, and how no better was my belief. "You see how easy it is to fool you" said the juggler, "and yet you are doing your best to understand real things. Now that you see how difficult it is to know anything for certain, what business have you accepting what others tell you about life and death and the meaning thereof?"

"That is the point, I replied, of the white and black books. As regards the origin and afterlife, we are in no way capable of judging for ourselves, we must therefore believe something, and whom shall we trust if not our elders? But what does this have to do with my current situation?" I asked.

"We shall see" said the juggler, "watch again." And this time as he juggled the cups and the walnut he did so at a slow speed and I thought I perceived something which I had not perceived before.

"Where is the walnut?" he asked. And this time I guessed right.

"So why have you guessed right this time?"

"Because I saw how you used your little finger to grab the walnut, but I would not have seen this if you had not shown me."

"Good" said the juggler. "And did what I showed you now help you to have a better understanding of the truth regarding where the walnut is?"

"Indeed it did" I replied. "But how does this relate to my current situation?"

"We shall see." said the juggler, and he performed the same trick slightly faster each time, and time after time I guessed right.

"So?" he said "would you say that now you understand the trick, and both know and believe where the walnut is? And would not your knowledge and belief correspond with the truth?"

"Yes", I said "and I see your meaning, which surely is that what we call knowledge is the ability to correctly predict both cause and effect! That is truly brilliant, and I am humbled by the lesson, but what does this have to do with my current situation?"

"We shall see," said the Juggler "now that you are a man possessing knowledge which others would consider secret, and now that you can be sure of your own perception, watch again, that you might practice and be able to show off in front of others."

This was not my motivation, but after all, he was a sly man, and could see something selfish in me that was excited by my new found knowledge. And yes, it did cross my mind that I should be able to earn money in the flea markets only by betting against those who did not know and understand the trick.

And so he did the trick again, and even quite slowly so that I could see plainly how he took the walnut with his little finger and placed it in another shell. I did not understand why he was wasting my time in this way, until much to my surprise, on the third time I got it wrong. Then I got it wrong on the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and every other time afterward. Each time I got it wrong, the Jugglers smile grew larger so that I feared in the end that it might swallow his ears. And each time I got it wrong, both my sense of self and so called self confidence began to break down. At the end of ten tricks, the juggler threw his head back and laughed as it were uncontrollably. And I, on the other hand fell back in horror at what I now understood. Strange as it may sound to you, Sophia, my self confidence completely dissolved, was gone. And in its place a strange and great sensation and sense of wonder overtook my heart and mind. For what I saw then, which changed the entire course of my life, was the fact that truth is unknowable. No matter how sure we are, there is always the possibility that we are wrong, and this changed everything in the way I looked out upon the world. And I saw clearly now how in giving authority to others to explain things in terms of black and white books verily put an end to my search for truth. And I understood now the whole of my situation.

Just when I had received this simple enlightenment, I perceived outside a clamor of men and I heard my name called.

"I must run from this place" I said, "for those who teach from the white and black books regard me as their enemy, and wish to uphold justice in the form of skinning me alive."

"Thus it is" said the juggler, "it is an old story. Here exit by the back door and be off".

And without having the means to thank him, I was off and from there found my way to your doorstep. And inside your door, I confessed to you the cause of my first awakening. But there is more.

After I left your house, knowing that the authorities were coming door to door looking for my skin, I could think of no plan, and so I began to run. I was perceived by some few of them at which point I was in hot pursuit with nowhere to go. Ahead of me on the road, by some miracle, I found before me the tent of the Juggler. "If I must die" I said to myself, "let there be a witness in a friend who understands me well." Then I entered his tent in a state of emergent anxiety.

"Quickly put this on" said the Juggler.

"What is your meaning?" said I.

"I mean to kill you here and now." said the Juggler "Quickly, there is no time to waste."

I think you will agree that I was confronted with a strange situation. Of the two deaths, one at the hand of my adversaries in truth, and one at the hands of a friend, I chose the latter seeing as there was no means of escaping death, and that it must come to every living thing at a certain hour in any case.

"How are you going to kill me?" I asked.

“I am going to cut you in half.” said the Juggler, and he drew a great sword which had blood stains visible upon the blade. He then whispered something in my ear which I might not repeat here.

With a sudden flourish the tent doors were drawn open and three men appeared with ropes, spikes, shovels, knives and all manner of tools for the compassionate means they employed for saving lost souls.

“There he is!” they shouted, “get him, and teach him the immutable truth!”

“Too late!” Said the juggler, and he drew his sword and cut me in half so that my upper and lower body were in apparent disagreement. He then took my torso and laid it flat across the table for all to see, and there was blood everywhere.

“ He is dead!” they shouted and clapped their hands in delight. Then they commended the Juggler for enacting the will of heaven, and gave him a few farthings.

All this while, being dead, I lay motionless and when the coast was clear, he snapped his fingers and I awoke as it were from a dream. He undressed me from my costume, laughed and said. “Now you are dead. The authorities only pursue the living. How easy it is to fool believers.” And at that we parted ways and I vowed to never cease from seeking the truth. And this, Sophia, is the understanding I have cultivated each day. That opinion, belief and knowledge are one thing, Questioning opinion, belief and knowledge are another, and the practice of seeking truth is to ensure that these two are always kept in active harmonious balance. Thank you for helping to keep me alive long enough to have the understanding that I do now. I am free.

The End

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ARCHIVES OF FUDGEMORE

HISTORY OF TRUTH SEEKERS

Based on
The Philosophy of Meaning®

The Archives of Fudgemore contain hitherto unknown tales of heroic individuals from every corner of the earth, from every age, who have, sometimes accidentally but not without struggle, discovered certain truths about the meaning of life.

They also point out that meaning transcends all cultural and racial barriers, and has the potential to heal not only an individual heart, but the heart of human societies and of humanity as a whole.

The questions of meaning and truth, we come to understand are the most important questions we can face.

Earnesto and the Juggler follows Earnesto after his encounter with Sophia in the last issue "The Awakening of Earnesto". In this story we find out how Earnesto understood something about knowledge and belief, and how certain authorities found him, and how he was killed by the Juggler and set free.

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