

The Archer's Journey

By

Tshari Yancey

Music Cue: Gamelan

Image Cue: Clouds separate revealing Draco constellation kingdom.

NARRATOR

In the Ethereal Forest, the winds whisper ancient secrets. Two brothers embark on a journey that would change their lives forever. Within the massive forest of the Ganesha deity, there are three classes of people: the peasants, the warriors, and the royalty.

Image Cue: Mountains of Leicarres

NARRATOR

Far in the distance to the East lay the Mountains of Leicarres, birthplace of the greatest warriors, hunters and archers ever known.

Image Cue: Spring Star castle on Dragon's Peak

NARRATOR

Above the Village of the Golden Sun is Spring Star – the castle of Princess Elyssa and the ruling family. This ancient family was the first clan to be blessed by Ganesha.

Image Cue: Hindu Temple

NARRATOR

Below the castle, is the Hindu Temple of the Ethereal Forest. In the temple, everyone's the same, no man or woman is superior to the other. They are all children of Ganesha the Hindu god of new beginnings.

Image Cue: Village of Spring Star under Dragon's Peak

NARRATOR

The Village of Golden Sun in the valley is the home to commoners, the lowest of low, many of whom are farmers and sell their goods in the local market.

Image Cue: Outdoor market

NARRATOR

In a bustling market square, we meet the two brothers: Kunti, a modest farmhand with a stern demeanor, and his younger brother, Karna, a rebellious, adventurous spirit with a hunger for knowledge. The two brothers sell fruit under the blazing sun. Their faces are marked by hardship.

KUNTI

Two mangos for only one karsha! Two mangos for only one karsha!  
Juicy juicy mangoes!

KARNA

Look at the sun. It's nearing the peaks. We will be done soon.

KUNTI

Keep selling, brother! Enough of this foolishness. Staring at the sun will blind you.

KARNA

Sorry brother. Buy our mangos and the Gods will bless you! (beat) Kunti, you are so uptight. Let us retire and make our prayers to Ganesha. (beat) Maybe if we pray, it will bring a smile to your tired life.

KUNTI

[Grunts and throws a mango at Karna]  
I like my tired life!

KARNA

[Karna ducks]  
AH! You missed!

NARRATOR

DRONACHARYA, the renowned warrior of the Mountain of Leicarres, approaches the stand, eyeing the produce with disdain. KARNA's eyes widen in recognition as he gazes upon the legendary archer.

KARNA

(whispers to Kunti)

That's Dronacharya, the master archer!

NARRATOR

KARNA expresses his aspirations to become a warrior under Dronacharya's tutelage.

KARNA

Dronacharya, I've looked up to you since I was a small child. Our father would tell us the stories of your triumphant quests.

DRONACHARYA

(mockingly)

What is that noise? Do I hear a chattering monkey?

KARNA

I've made my own bow and wish to become a great archer.

DRONACHARYA

I have no time for the likes of you. My duty lies elsewhere, in the service of the kingdom. You will never carry a bow in my ranks, mango merchant.

NARRATOR

DRONACHARYA waves his hand in disgust and leaves.

**IMAGE CUE: The market begins to darken, the sun begins to set.**

KUNTI

We have a livelihood here, Karna. We can't just abandon it on a whim.

KARNA

But don't you see, Kunti? This is our chance to change our fate, to pursue our dreams! We were meant for more than this, brother. We can travel to the Mountains of Leicarres. I want to learn the ways of the bow and arrow, to become a warrior.

KUNTI

Fairytales don't put food in our stomachs and clothes on our backs. Leave the warrior alone and help me pack up all the fruit you didn't sell today!

**Image cue: The sun sets and the brothers travel to the Hindu temple for evening prayer at the sacred temple.**

NARRATOR

As they walk through the forest to the temple to pray, KARNA's soul is tortured. He tells himself that he will pray to Ganesha for a better life.

**Image cue: Hindu temple**

NARRATOR

Within the temple, the brothers encounter PRINCESS Elyssa. Her presence is commanding and serene. She offers prayers to the god.

KARNA

Brother look! The Dragonkin princess prays in the same temple as us!

KUNTI

We can't disturb anyone in the temple when we pray! Let alone the Dragonkin princess. We will be banished before we even finish our prayers.

KARNA

And we'll never be free if we don't take chances. Please, your highness, I'm not here to harm you, I come with blessings. My brother and I are simple, poor villagers. Would you like a mango as a gesture of peace? We would be honored to share our crop.

KUNTI

(KUNTI quickly walks up behind his brother and grabs his shoulder)

Please, my brother is a fool. We wish no evil.

PRINCESS ELYSSA

It's okay. I am not afraid and this boy seems familiar. I accept your offering, commoner.

NARRATOR

With hope, the brothers roll up their sleeves and remove a mango from their sack. They offer it to the Princess.

KARNA

Bless you, Princess.

NARRATOR

As the brothers present the mango, the princess eyes them fondly. Suddenly she looks at them with confusion.

PRINCESS ELYSSA

(gently, to KARNA)

I couldn't help but notice... you have the same birthmark as I.

[PUPPETS: The Princess reveals the birthmark on her wrist.]

KARNA

Wow Kunti look! I have the same mark as royalty!

KUNTI

I doubt it. It's probably just some dirt from the field. Clean yourself up.

PRINCESS ELYSSA

Excuse me commoners, I have curfew at the castle. I must leave now.

[PUPPETS: The princess bows to the brothers and hurries out.]

**IMAGE CUE: The sun begins to rise, outside the Hindu Temple.**

NARRATOR

PRINCESS ELYSSA's observation leaves the brothers bewildered as they ponder the significance of her words, which echo in their minds. KARNA hatches a daring plan, convinced that their shared birthmark holds the key to convincing DRONACHARYA to train them.

KARNA

This is not dirt, brother. We'll use this birthmark to our advantage. We'll make Dronacharya see our potential. We leave for the Mountains of Leicarres today!

KUNTI

(Grumbles)

**IMAGE CUE: Fade to black**

**MUSIC CUE: Gamelan fade out**