

## **Kate and the Golden Trout**

By: Maria Chrysanthem

There was once a young girl named Kate. She lived in a small village off of a riverbank. Her family lived a modest lifestyle. Kate's father was one of many men in the village who made a living as a fisherman. His career was neither prestigious nor frowned upon; it was merely average. Kate's mother also worked an average profession as a seamstress. Everything in Kate's life was just right. Nothing was too hot or too cold, or too big or too small. She lived a life of mediocrity.

Kate was an intelligent girl. She was a hard worker and excelled in school. Kate was also athletic, constantly beating her siblings when they raced on land and in the river. Early on, Kate realized that she was bored with her life. Once she realized her superiority to those around her, she quickly craved more dynamic company.

As time progressed, Kate remained stuck in her modest lifestyle. Her friends could make her laugh and her teachers could help her learn, but everyone was content in their normalcy. That is what irked Kate the most. She did not understand how anyone could just accept mediocrity. So one night, Kate packed up a few necessities, wrapped them in cloth and tied them to a fishing rod. She kissed her mother, father and brothers goodbye and then set out on a journey into the unknown. It was cold, but Kate was determined to establish herself. She had never ventured outside her small village, but had learned in school about a great kingdom further north up the river. And so, Kate set out for her journey up north.

As her journey north wore on, her food supply ran out, but Kate did not care. After all, if she grew thirsty, there was a stream along the way, and if she grew hungry, she could easily fish. Unfortunately, the days passed, and Kate was still nowhere near

the glorious kingdom. She grew exceedingly irritated and decided that fishing would distract her from her growing misery.

Kate sat at the bank of the river, dug up some worms and tied them to the end of her rod. She knew that her father had better bait back home, but she had not thought to take it, for Kate had imagined she would reach the kingdom in just a fortnight.

She waited for a while with her rod in the river imagining all the fantastic individuals she would soon meet. A few seconds later, Kate felt a forceful pull on her rod. She tugged with all her might as her stomach growled and sweat dripped down her forehead. Finally, she hoisted her live out of the water. The force of the pull caused Kate to fall back. When she stood up, she found herself looking up at a golden trout that appeared to be standing on its hind fins.

“Good afternoon M’lady,” said the golden trout. “My name is Phineus and I am sure I can be of great assistance to you,” he continued as he took a servile bow.

“Yes, I am sure such a strong and hefty trout will keep me filled for days!” Kate replied. She made a lunge for the big fish but he deftly eluded her pounce by doing a back flip into the river.

The water covered all but the head of the golden trout. “You may eat me, but that would not be the most efficient way to utilize a fellow like myself. You see, eh-”

“Kate.”

“Kate, I am no ordinary trout. I can grant you wishes; three wishes. The only condition I propose is that after I have served you, you will use your third wish to turn me back to normal,” Phineus smiled.

Kate’s face beamed with excitement at the prospect of three whole wishes. “I

accept your offer Phineus, however, how are you to be sure I will change you on the third wish?" Kate responded.

"I find that sometimes it is necessary to depend on the goodwill of others. Besides, betray my trust, and at the worst, I stay exactly how I am now!" Phineus replied more jovially than Kate expected.

"Very well, my first wish is to be transported to the Golden Kingdom up the river," Kate demanded.

The golden trout leaped out of the river and waved his back fins in the air. Within a moment, Kate stood before a large golden gate. Her eyes bulged and a smile stretched wide across her face.

"That is wish one. The river flows through the city, so when you are ready to make your second wish, come to the river bank, tie a piece of bread to your rod and throw it in the water," Phineus recited pleasantly.

"Thank you Phineus! When I am ready, I will come," Kate replied excitedly.

With that, Phineus waved his right fin goodbye and swam off under the golden overpass into the city.

Kate spent much time in the kingdom she learned to call home. However, after speaking to many commoners and attending school, Kate began to realize that these people shared the same mediocrity as her old comrades. Everyone in this city had more money, but no one was specifically more sharp-witted or talented. This was deeply unsettling to Kate. She left behind a home and a family with the impression that a richer town would breed richer minds.

Once again, Kate grew bored. Except now, she was bored and had no family or

friends to turn to. It had only been four months, and Kate was ready to make the second and final wish of her lifetime.

After school the next day, Kate tied a loaf of bread to the end of her rod and cast it into the nearby river. About a half an hour later, she felt a familiar tug and pulled the golden trout from the water.

The garrulous Phineus began to speak the moment his head popped up from the river. “It has been such a short time, are you already eager to make your second wish?” he inquired.

“I am also uneasy about the close proximity of my wishes,” Kate replied, “but I assure you I am ready. I am sure there are many interesting people in the Golden Kingdom that I have failed to encounter. Therefore, Phineus, I wish to meet the four most successful people in all the kingdom. Two men and two women.”

“As you wish, but in five days come back to this river and wish me back to normal,” Phineus spoke calmly. “Five days will give me enough time to bid my farewells to my fellow fish friends,” he added after seeing the confusion on her face. And with that, he jumped up in the air, and waived his back fins.

“Thank you! I will see you in five days!” Kate assured her magical friend.

The following morning, Kate was walking her usual route to school when a woman wearing a robe of light pink and blue hues approached her.

“Pardon me,” said the woman as her lilac shaded hair brushed against her face. Her eyes matched her hair color, yet they were small and planted on a long and ghostly white face. Once the woman saw she had Kate’s attention, she continued, “My name is Ira and I have noticed you are walking in torn shoes.” She pulled out a pair of brand new

cloth shoes from her robe. “Here, take these. I am known here in the Golden Kingdom as the Gift Giver,” she smiled showing perfectly aligned white teeth.

Kate could immediately tell from her aura that the Gift Giver was one of the four, so she decided to pick her brain. “I have never seen you before and I have been in this kingdom just over four months. I see no virtue in a Gift Giver who gives and goes as she pleases,” Kate taunted.

Ira gave a small laugh. “It would be unfair of me to only gift in one kingdom. I travel the world gifting to all those in need. I believe in equality my friend. I achieve my success by giving others the tools to succeed. A pair of new shoes will make for an easier hike to school will it not?” The Gift Giver spoke eloquently.

Kate was star-struck by Ira’s selfless altruism and maturity. She decided to spend the day with Ira, gifting to the needy and speaking of lighthearted matters.

Eventually, day turned to night and the two young women set off for home. However, before either could reach their destination, it began to torrentially rain and thunder. In an attempt to keep warm, the women agreed to wait out the rain in a local bar. While at the bar, the women talked of the day’s work over some drinks. As the night progressed, despite Kate’s suggestion to watch her intake, Ira became belligerently drunk. She ripped off the shoes she had gifted Kate and tore them to pieces. When Kate attempted to console her, she left the bar in fit of rage and proceeded to all the homes she had gifted that day. Ira stole back all of her gifts and threw them in the rain to ruin. Simply overwhelmed with the situation, Kate returned to her hut shoeless in the freezing rain and did not hear from the Gift Giver the rest of the night.

Worn out by yesterday’s incident, Kate decided to sleep in late. She dreamt of a

better life filled with stimulating conversation and mountains of gold. Abruptly, a raucous outside awoke her.

“Hey! Now you don’t talk to a lady that way,” a manly voice boomed.

“Well why don’t you fight me like the real man you think you sound like?” a sleazy voice taunted.

Kate looked out her window and saw a very handsome man no older than 30 surrounded by six very attractive women. Across from him stood a slender and aesthetically repulsive fellow. Immediately, Kate thought it odd that the lankier man would provoke a fight with the much bigger bachelor.

No sooner had this thought crossed Kate’s mind than the lady’s man charged his inferior. Just as the good-looking man was about to lunge, the ugly fellow pulled out a large machete from his scabbard.

“My blade is about to be as red as your shirt cheater!” the gawky man threatened.

At this moment, all the women fled the scene and all that remained was the handsome weaponless bachelor and the scrawny man yielding a large knife. With no hesitation, the scrawny man attacked.

“In here!” Kate heard herself scream rashly to the bachelor.

He turned around with fear etched on his face and sprinted into the hut. Kate slammed the door shut, but the scrawny murderer did not stop. He shoved his machete repeatedly into the door attempting to pry it open.

“Quick! Through the back window!” Kate whispered.

She tugged at the handsome man’s shirt and directed him toward the window. She jumped through first and then helped pull her much bigger guest through. Suddenly, Kate

heard the front door slam open.

“Run!” she screamed.

The handsome man looked at her and nodded. They had run halfway down the street when a machete whisked by the bachelor’s face and stuck into the wooden door of a passing wagon. To be safe, the two continued to run. They made sharp turns until they finally settled down right in front of a small flower shop.

“I cannot thank you enough stranger,” the handsome man panted. “My name is Markus Ioanis,” he extended his hand, “you might have heard the name,” he said with a sparkling white grin.

“I have not heard of the name,” Kate stated as she shook his hand, “but in case you were wondering the name of the person who just saved your life, her name would be Kate,” she added smugly.

At this point, Kate could not distinguish whether Markus’ arrogance annoyed or intrigued her.

“Look over there!” he screamed while pointing at something behind her.

Kate whipped around and Markus plucked a rose from the garden in front of the flower shop. When she turned back around, irritated by his small jest, he presented her with the flower.

“Did you steal that from the florist?” Kate inquired impatiently.

“I did, but if you’d like me to pay him I shall,” Markus responded.

He pulled out a large pouch of gold from his loose pant’s pocket. It was enough gold to keep the florist from working for at least 3 years. Markus then knocked on the florist’s door and dropped the pouch.

“Quick!” he whispered as Kate stared at him incredulously. He grabbed her hand and continued, “I am going to show you how the richest man in the kingdom, rumored to be richer than the king, makes his money.”

At this moment, Kate was convinced that Markus Ioanis was interesting person number two. He took her to an area filled to the brim with villagers of all ages, sizes, and wallets.

“Sit right here my savior,” he said teasingly as he pointed to two empty seats in the front row.

It was obvious the event was going to start soon. A massive lion fought restlessly with a chain in the center of the arena. Markus explained to Kate that he bets on who will win the fight, the wild beast or the human fighting it.

“I always guess right,” he smirked, “it’s just my brilliant intuition I suppose.”

Soon, the entire audience became hushed and the announcer’s voice could be heard. He commented on the wonderful crowd and then began to announce the match.

“Today we have the monstrous King of the Jungle-” drums started beating.

“Who did you bet on?” Kate whispered.

“Always the human,” Markus responded.

The announcer continued, “Against our consistent and fearless seven year champion, Markus Ioanis!”

Markus planted a kiss on Kate’s cheek and jumped into the arena. Someone threw him a sword, but he wore no armor. He fought with the lion for a long time until he fell to the ground, but not due to a lion attack. An arrow pierced through his back. Then two more accompanied the first until Markus lay bloodied on the ground. The lion smelt the



blood and pounced, tearing him limb from limb.

This was clearly the scene of a planned murder. Kate vomited violently and started to feel faint. The last thing Kate heard before she was sitting in a dungeon cell was, “Markus that arrogant bastard, this is quite the lovely death compared to what he did to the last champion in order to take the stage.”

When Kate woke up, her eyes only saw black. It did not take long before she realized that she was a captive to, most likely, the third interesting person. However, yet interesting, the first two people were seriously troubled and being trapped in a dungeon did not seem like the start of something new. Despite this fact, Kate was still hopeful she would meet her match.

For hours, she remained in the cell awake, staring into darkness. She yelled, pleaded, and shook the cell’s bars until finally, she saw a flame in the distance. As the flame approached, Kate made out the figure of two of the King’s men each with a spear in his right hand. The taller one held a lantern.

“You are to come with us,” the taller one said authoritatively as the shorter man fumbled with a set of keys.

“Where am I?” Kate asked innocently.

“Prisoners don’t get to ask questions girl,” bellowed the shorter man who Kate could now see. He was fat with round facial features, beady eyes, and a ginger beard. The taller man was more comely, with jet-black hair, soft silver eyes and a strong jaw line.

As the two men led her out of the dungeon, she could see that she was indeed inside of a castle. They brought her to a huge double door as red as blood.

The tall man knocked then shouted, “It is the King’s men with your majesty’s

requested...err...prisoner.”

Both doors opened simultaneously revealing the King sitting in front of a vast window at the head of a long conference table.

He stood up and spoke, “Ser Donovan, please refer to the young lady before me as a guest. I hold no prisoners until proven guilty.” His hands moved in concurrence with his mouth.

“Absolutely your majesty,” Ser Donovan replied.

The King spoke again, “Thank you for your service Ser Gilly and Ser Donovan. You may leave now.” He turned to the two women who had opened the doors. “Thank you Lila and Sanjay, you may also leave.”

After everyone departed, the King gestured for Kate to sit at the seat to his right. He inquired about her relationship regarding the criminal Markus Ioanis. Kate happily explained to the King the nature of their brief relationship and was ecstatic when the King found her to be innocent of any illegal actions.

After those matters were settled, the King had tasty wine and sharp cheese brought to the table. He was a garrulous man and talked to Kate for hours about profound ideas for the Kingdom. Kate found him strong in opinion, yet inviting in conversation. He was short yet mighty with piercing blue eyes.

They talked way into the late afternoon at which point Kate began to admire everything about her King. Eventually, the King popped the last cube of cheese into his mouth and said to Kate, “It is time I sit at the throne and address the concerns of my people. After spending much of the day with you, and distinctly enjoying your company, I am pleased to invite you to sit in on this event. Of course, the decision is up to you. Feel

no pressure Kate.”

The King hardly paused before Kate responded fervently. “No I’d love to attend! I would never miss such an opportunity!”

The two made their way into a much larger room. There was a narrow red carper leading up to an enormous char with two small chairs on either side of it. The King’s men stood toe to carpet with spear in hand. The big chair was empty, but there was one man and one woman each filling the adjacent smaller chairs.

The King directed Kate down the aisle and then turned to the woman in the small chair. She was tall with fire red hair and large green eyes.

“Saturday, I have a guest that we mean to honor. She is to sit at my right side,” the King spoke sternly.

The girl named Saturday shot Kate a mutinous glare. She paused and then attempting to show no anger said, “Of course your majesty.” She then gathered the cloth at the bottom of her dress, walked down the red aisle, and exited the room. Kate sat down in her seat, noticeably uncomfortable and underdressed.

Not much time elapsed before a middle-aged woman entered through the door. She walked down the red carpet to the King’s feet and then began her story. “My name is Ms. Zalta. I am a teacher. This past year, my students have stayed after class everyday to build the three ships that you received just about five months ago. These young students gave their time. I am here to beg you to give them some of yours. Any kind of thanks in any form...your majesty.”

Kate looked over to the King. Surely, he would give this teacher something.

“I am your King. Your students should be *honored* to work for the man who

keeps men out of their mothers and mallets in their father's working hands. I will give no such thanks," the King blurted angrily.

Kate's mouth gaped open as the woman bowed her head and walked out. She felt as if she were missing a piece to the puzzle. Nevertheless, the begging continued. The next person to walk in was a nearly emaciated young man robed in rags. He too hobbled down the aisle to the feet of the King. His voice was soft and rang with desperation. "My good King. You may not remember me. My name is Lucas Stone and I lived in the small plot of land right beside the castle--"

The man seated on the King's left interrupted the beggar. "Oh you again! You come every month with the same story. We owe you nothing for your land. It is the King's to give and the King's to take. Now be off."

Lucas jumped in, "Just the medicine for my wife. My sick wife, you promised."

"Your wife has been sick for years. She will last just as long without us wasting medicine on her. What if the King became sick and we used up all the medicine on your petty wife? Huh? That is like giving good wine to a thirsty dog," the left seated man retorted, pleased with his own analogy.

"SILENCE!" the King shouted. "We shall not give your wife the medicine and if you pester the King's Court one more time with the same plea, I will assure you, your wife will face a harsher death. You were commanded to give up your land and you did so. Only greedy men ask for favors in return.

This time, the two nearest guards grabbed the screaming man by both arms and dragged his restless body through the exit. Kate sank into her chair horror-struck. She realized that the King could be such a pleasant man, but he was disgustingly ungrateful

and entitled. She wanted to run, but she knew the guards would catch her. Her only option was to remain seated, and cringe every time the King spoke.

Eventually, night began to infiltrate the castle and the King refused to hear any more pleas. Kate was enormously grateful that the event ended. The King rejected pleas from homeless children to drunken war veterans who pledged their lives to fight for the King just a short time ago.

“Don’t look so pained,” the King turned and said to Kate. She did not understand why he had taken such a liking to her. She was a commoner just like the people he so recently spurned. He continued. “It is true, you are common, and I will never do you any favors. In fact, the reason I am keeping you around is because your company is doing *me* a favor. So long as I enjoy being around you, my darling, you have nothing to fear.”

Kate felt a pit in her stomach. Just the thought of doing this self-righteous man any favors made her sick.

“I am done for the night. Ser Donovan, show Kate to her room,” the King ordered while yawning.

After everyone filed out, Ser Donovan led Kate through the exit. He took her through a series of hallways, making swift turns and occasionally looking back to make sure Kate was still there. Every time he looked, Kate responded with a miserable stare. His eyes seemed understanding, but Kate could not find it in her heart to respect any man who so blindly follows the corrupt King.

Finally, Ser Donovan stopped in front of a small wooden door with a glass knob. He pulled out a key and then bent down and whispered, “You are free.” He opened the tiny door and Kate stared into the forest. Her head flooded with emotion. Was it true?

Was Ser Donovan freeing her from her misery?

She had no time to contemplate the consequences of fleeing. Kate jumped up and pecked Ser Donovan on the cheek. “Thank you for your kindness,” were the last words she said before the forest engulfed her in the dead of night.

At this point, Kate was disappointed with everyone she met. However, it was soon to be the fourth day and she knew there would be one more person to endure before she could call upon Phineus. All Kate wanted was to use her last wish to bring her home; away from the kingdom.

She fumbled through the forest, looking for a way out. Surely, there were paths leading out of the forest into different parts of town. Unfortunately, after much walking, Kate’s efforts were becoming futile. Dawn was approaching and all Kate had accomplished was getting her arms and legs torn up by branches and dirt knotted in her hair. Nevertheless, Kate persisted. She took a step through a pile of leaves and quickly felt herself falling. She crashed down into a deep hole. When she looked up, Kate saw an arrow pointing down at her face.

“Hey! Help me up!” she shouted.

“Name?” she heard a female voice retort sternly.

“I am Kate of the Golden Kingdom. I, uh, lost my way. Please help me. I mean no harm,” Kate responded hopefully. There was a short pause. “Truly,” she added.

Kate heard the girl throw down a rope. She grabbed on and spoke not a word as this stranger hoisted her up. The girl had pulled her to level ground, but the arrow never lost focus on Kate’s face.

“Thank you for pulling me up. Do you have a name?” Kate asked politely while

attempting to make eye contact.

“My name is Adele. This forest is my home and I enjoy my solitude. I would like you to leave,” said the forest girl.

Adele appeared to be the same age as Kate, but there was a certain maturity about her. Kate was overcome by the immediate feeling that Adele was wise beyond her years. She wore a mini cloth skirt and a ragged crop top that just barely covered her breasts. Her serious glare and pointed arrow never strayed.

“I do not know how to get out,” Kate replied.

She then realized that she did not want to leave right away. Adele intrigued her and no doubt had an interesting story about how she had come to live this way.

“You are very close. Just continue the direction you were walking and eventually you will hit the river. Just follow that river and it will take you where you need to go,” Adele spoke calmly and politely.

“Will you show me the way Adele? Just to the river. I would like to learn more about you.”

“I will not accompany you. I already told you, I like to be alone. And more than I like to be alone, I dislike divulging my personal thoughts to strangers.”

Kate was in shock, the last three people she met would not leave her alone and the one person she wants to talk to has zero interest in her.

“So you will not come? That is very impolite Adele. Very impolite,” Kate teased playfully.

“It would be more impolite to stick an arrow through your neck. Which do you prefer?” Adele spit back.

Kate paused, admiring Adele's ability to keep up with her quick wit and sarcasm. It angered her to walk away, but she did not have a choice. The forest girl, as intriguing as she was, wanted nothing to do with Kate, or anyone for that matter. The disappointment was insurmountable. Kate had met the four most interesting people in the kingdom, yet each of them came with character flaws so severe they could not be overlooked.

The trek out of the forest to the river was a full day's walk. The entire time, Kate sulked over a wasted wish. She was exhausted, hungry, and dehydrated. However, she was deeply pensive in her delirium. She reflected on her journey and realized that perceived success is not always real success. All the interesting people she met were successful in their own right, but internally corrupt.

By the time Kate made it to the river, she was ready to collapse. She remembered telling Phineus that her third wish would be used to wish him back to normal, but she really wanted to go back home to her little fishing town a long hike away. In addition, there was no doubt the King had already sent his men out to search for his escaped prisoner.

She had no fishing supplies or bread, so Kate thought on her feet. She broke off a branch from a nearby tree and tied a worm to the end. She then hung it over the water until she felt a familiar tug. As expected, the golden trout jumped out of the river into the air.

"I am ready to be wished human again!" Phineus beamed.

Kate looked up at the dancing trout nearly bursting with happiness.

"You are doing a good deed Kate. You are giving a man his life back!" Phineus



added.

Kate stood in her rags with scars and cuts decorating her body. She stared sullenly at the fish.

“Come on Kate. Just wish it...like we agreed?” Phineus said with an undertone of hesitation.

“How will I get home?” Kate asked.

The fish looked at her incredulously. “Kate you promised.”

This was the deciding moment. Thus far, her two wishes had been a waste and someone she barely knew was asking for her third wish. It was his life or hers and she knew that.

Kate fell to her knees with tears in her eyes. Her head faced down and her nails digging into the dirt she whispered, “Phineus, I use my last wish to turn you back to normal.” And normal Phineus was. The fish shaped into a man no younger than 50. He was average looking with average cloth clothes. Once he had two feet on the ground, he turned to Kate and tipped his hat. “Thank you,” he said quietly as tears streamed down his cheeks. “Thank you.”

The man Phineus then turned around and went on his way. With that, her face hit the earth and her mind went unconscious.

She awoke to the sound of chirping birds and running water. Kate was exactly in the same spot where she wished Phineus back to normal. However, there was nobody to be seen. She knew if she followed the river, it would take her back home. As she progressed back to her small fishing village, Kate was slowed, but not stopped by her exhaustion.

The expedition back home was long and vigorous. During the day, the coolness of the river water lightened the load of the sun's rays and in the night, the hard earth served as a bed. Kate spent days following the river, never looking back and only stopping to eat, drink, and periodically, to sleep.

She imagined her family's reaction to her return. Surely, after all these months they thought her dead. This nearly endless journey provided Kate for a time of reflection once again. She thought a lot of Phineus and the modesty he exuded. She knew it was not right, but Kate could not help but feel annoyed that she sacrificed her last wish on someone she perceived to be useless and uninteresting. Nevertheless, there was a place in her heart confirming that she made the honorable decision.

After much angst and several weeks, Kate eventually survives her journey home. Her family is ecstatic to see her and she has no problem acclimating back into her old life. She spends the next twenty years establishing herself. To no surprise, Kate flies through school and goes on to become exceedingly well known and liked throughout her town. Ultimately, she is elected mayor of Fishing Point and soon after starts a family of her own.

Ironically, the girl who was never satisfied turned into the woman who had it all. Kate used her experience to better her town, teach her sons, and love her husband. Life for Kate continued to be strenuous, but was rewarding just the same. All was well until one violent night. The river water spewed from the bank washing up anything in its path. The wind tussled furiously with the trees, uprooting the weak and sending them crashing down on the town. Clouds blurred out the night sky and thunder boomed in every direction.

The entire town was flooded and drowned bodies began to surface. Kate immediately grabbed both her young sons and her husband and left her torn down house for safety. Water collapsed on the struggling family. For a moment, Kate thought this was the end until suddenly she heard a voice in the distance. She directed her family toward the source of the voice until she could make out the outline of a young man in an old chariot.

“Safety! I will bring you to safety!” the young voice hollered.

“We are coming!” Kate choked out while ingesting a large portion of sludge and water.

Her family made their way through the barrage of water, carcasses and broken furniture to the man waving in the chariot.

“Get in. That’s right, come aboard,” he said encouragingly.

The second Kate and her family piled into the chariot, the young man tugged at the reins of his horse turning away from what was once a town.

“I do not know how I can thank you enough young man,” Kate panted. “You are brave and compassionate. I thank you from the very bottom of my heart for waiting for my family and me.”

“It is not a problem ma’am,” the young man responded amiably.

“Tell me, why were you passing through Fishing Point in such inclement weather?” Kate asked inquisitively.

“She’s not complaining of course!” Kate’s husband added to make sure their savior would not be offended by Kate’s obvious prying.

The young man let out a solemn chuckle. “Well, I am traveling up to the Golden

Kingdom for my father's funeral when I saw your family getting crushed by the storm. At first, I was going to turn a blind eye I suppose and carry on my way knowing that waiting for you to see me would be dangerous. But then I realized that was not how I was raised. My father taught me that a person is defined by what they are willing to sacrifice in a trying situation," the young man responded with evident pride.

"And what was your wise father's good name?" Kate asked.

The young man took a deep breath and replied with a reminiscent smile. "He was a modest man named Phineus, Phineus Trout."