

Pantheon

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An original story I have been working on for a while. It's all mythological, so be prepared. Have fun!

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1 - Avatars

Chapter I: Avatars

Faith was faced with a choice. She could quit now, and face being hunted down, or she could assassinate this man and risk jail. Either way, her life sucked.

Faith was a teenage girl with dark brown hair, deep green eyes, and no money. Her mother was a crying heap after her father died, and now she just sat and wept. So it was left to Faith, an only child, to get money. She was desperate, but she knew she was not going to resort to prostitution, so the only choice she thought of was some sort of fast food-type place. But while she was there, a man in a red cloak walked up to her, looked her over, and before she said, "Can I take your order," he grabbed her wrist and they were running. She later found out that she was picked to join into an elite group of assassins called Hell's Children. Only catch was, if they pick you and you don't join, you'd die. So, she had no choice but to accept.

And here she was, ready to kill a man she didn't know so she herself wouldn't die. Selfish, as always. The Hell's Children worked in strange ways. They didn't use guns or any technology. The only weapons they allowed their assassins to use were swords, which made killing much harder. But, so were the ways of the Assassins of the Red Cloaks.

Faith was faced with a choice.

She made it.

She crept into the man's house. Silent as the wind, she slipped past his dog into the bedroom. She raised her sword above her head, ready to decapitate the man. She swung down-

"STOP!"

Time stopped.

Appearing in front of Faith was the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. She was blond and wore a white robe...

And had wings.

"You do not belong here. Come with me," she said in an almost-heavenly voice.

Just then, the Children broke through the door. They filed in, as the leader spoke.

"So, Archangel, we meet again," he said.

"Satan. It's been a long time. Ever since Penelope, I believe," replied the winged woman.

"Yes. How is she?"

"How should I know? The Pantheon got to her."

"Well, then since neither of us have an Avatar, why don't I take this one, and you take the next? Deal?"

"Oh yes, of course, I'm just going to let her slice this man's head off and go traipsing off to Hell with you, is that it? I don't think so." She turned to Faith and said, "Give me your hand, Faith, and we can go." Dazed, Faith took hold of Archangel's hand, and they took off.

By now, Faith was completely confused, and just went along for the ride. When they got to what looked like a place in the clouds, she just sat and stared.

"I know you must be very confused," said the woman the Hell's Children had called Archangel, "but I promise, I will answer any questions you want to ask."

"Fine," Faith said, "Then where the hell-

"DON'T SAY THAT!" Archangel bellowed.

"Ok..." Faith cowered, "Then where am I?"

"That I can answer," Archangel replied, much calmer. "You are in Heaven."

“Wait, so I’m dead?” Faith questioned.

“No, not really. I have taken you out of Life, made it so no one remembers you. You see, Faith, you are what we call an Avatar, an embodiment of spiritual energy. There are many like you, but they have all escaped, and neither Hell nor we can track them, because they have way too much spiritual energy to spot.

“Heaven and Hell have been fighting for you Avatars, because with that spiritual energy that is part of you, one side would gain the advantage in our constant fight. We don’t want you in Hell’s hands, and Hell wants you all to themselves. Unfortunately, all the other Avatars escaped both of us.”

“So, wait,” Faith said dazed, “I’m an Avatar-thing, and both Heaven and Hell want to use me as a spirit battery?”

“No!” Archangel cried. “Well... yes, I suppose we do.”

“Ok... Not that I’m disturbed by that or anything, but why would me killing that guy have hurt your chances of using me?”

“Well,” Archangel went on, “murder is a HUGE sin, as we all know. If you had killed that man, the demons would have killed you, and you would have gone to Hell. We couldn’t allow that to happen, so I stepped in.”

“But how would the demons know where I was? You said they can’t track me, and the only people who knew I was there were the Hell’s Children.”

“Think about it, Faith. Hell’s Children? They were all demons, led by Satan; to find Avatars and get them to commit murder so the demons could kill them and get them to Hell.”

“Ok. Let’s say I buy this, and this isn’t just a dream. Why should I help either of you?”

“Do you really want Hell to rule the world?” Archangel asked worriedly.

“Do I really want Heaven to rule the world?” Faith shot back.

“Well of course you do!”

“No, I don’t. I don’t want ANYONE ruling our world but us. Now, if you’ll kindly let me out of here and go back home, it’d be much appreciated.”

“I’m sorry, Faith, I can’t do that. I told you, I’ve taken you out of Life, and quite frankly, we need you here.”

2 - Pantheon

Chapter II: Pantheon

“So... I get no say in this?”

“Well, we always give people a choice... but if you don’t help us, we fail the Earth, so no, not much say.”

“Goddamn-“

“DON’T SAY THAT EITHER!” Archangel exploded.

“I’m out of here.” And Faith jumped down to Earth.

As she landed, she looked up to find angels scurrying down from the sky to catch her. “Don’t let her get away!” ordered Archangel.

Faith looked around to get her bearings. She was in an alley near her house. She started to run towards her house, but when she found her key and went in, her mom was scared of her.

“Who are you, and what are you doing in my house?” Faith’s mom inquired.

“Mom, it’s Faith. You remember me, right?” Faith asked.

“Please, get out of my house. I’ve never seen you before. I have no children. Please, please, just leave and don’t hurt me.”

Faith said nothing, and just left.

So it’s true, Faith thought on her way out. I’ve been taken out of Life, and now no one remembers me. As she looked for a place to hide from the angels, she saw men in red cloaks peeking out from the alleyway.

“Oh, great. Now the devil’s gonna come and try to convince me to join Hell. Damn, people, just leave me alone!”

And she ran. She ran for miles, until she came across some people in a town called Crossroad.

“Faith!” someone whispered from the shadows of a building. “Come over here! We can help!”

Someone remembers me? Faith thought, and thinking this was an agent of Heaven or Hell, she followed anyway, keeping her hand on her sword.

Inside an old rundown in from the 1200s, a group of kids in cloaks (at least she assumed they were kids) were huddling around the fire. They looked as she entered.

“Faith,” a boy in the center said. “Welcome. Make yourself at home.”

“Who are you?” Faith asked suspiciously, thinking they were agents from Heaven or Hell.

“We are the Pantheon,” said a girl sitting next to the boy, “the other avatars that escaped from the grasp of Heaven and Hell. I’m Athena, the ex-newest addition to the group. Pleasure to meet you.”

“Wait..,” Faith thought. “Pantheon... where have I heard that word before? I got it! Archangel spoke about some girl named Penelope who got away and joined a group called the Pantheon-”

“That’s me,” Athena said. “We use a spell to change our names to ‘they’ can’t track us. Over there is Eirene,” she pointed to a girl whispering to the boy that led her here, “Hypnos,” a boy sleeping on the couch, “Eos,” a girl drawing a picture of the sun, “Tyche,” a boy who was muttering something to himself, “and our leader, Cronos,” the boy in the center, who had white eyes, and looked much older than all of them.

“But... wait, Archangel said they couldn’t track you because you had too much spiritual energy,” Faith remembered.

“Is that what she said?” the boy named Hypnos said, eyes still closed. “That’s sorta funny. No, it’s just because we used our spirit energy to change our names from what the angels gave us at birth, and we

cloaked the building extra.”

“Oh,” Faith said meekly.

“So,” Cronos said, “you’re the newest Avatar. “I guess you aren’t joining either side, right?” Faith shook her head. “Very good! Well, what we do is basically save other Avatars if they don’t choose a side, and when Heaven and Hell come a-knockin’, we fight and run. And since we’ve been taken out of Life- you knew about that part, right?” Faith nodded. “Right. So anyway- since we’ve been taken out of Life, we’re immortal unless they stab us with a blessed sword, and then we go to whichever place gets us, and we can die as spirits one more time.”

“Cool!” Faith said. “So Hell can’t get us, right?”

“Wrong,” the girl named Eos said. “Hell can bless swords, just evil blessing, like you’d see in the Church of Satan, or something.”

“Damn,” Faith swore.

“Damn’ is right,” Tyche said, looking at his sword. “Demons are coming.”

3 - Artemis

Chapter III: Artemis

"Damn," Cronos said, "Faith doesn't have a sword."

"Yes I do," she chimed in, "the Hell's Chi- the demons gave it to me."

"A hell-blessed sword?" Eos thought. "It wouldn't do against demons!"

"Or would it?" Cronos replied. "Try it out."

And so she did.

As the demons surrounded the house, the Pantheon filed out and circled the building. The demons charged, and Faith was the first to meet them. She clashed swords with the first demon she could find, and immediately swung at its head. It dodged easily, and went for her sword-hand, but Faith was quick. She took her hand away and slashed again at its neck. She missed, but caught it in the shoulder. She let go of the sword and jumped away, as both demon and sword exploded.

"Opposites attract," Cronos whispered to Eos, "and identicals repel."

"She fights like a demon," Athena interjected. "Is that a good thing?"

"Well," Cronos replied, "it couldn't hurt to have a demon-fighting expert, could it?"

As the last few demons fled, Faith hunted them down like a lion chasing a gazelle, bringing every last one down but one, to which she said as it ran, "Tell your master not to mess with us!"

"Damn, how'd they find us? We cloaked the building and the surrounding area!" said Hypnos.

"I think it's because they can track me," Faith answered. "You guys haven't renamed me yet."

"Oh yea... Forgot that," remembered Eirene. "So, who is she?"

"Well, she chased after those demons pretty thoroughly... how about Artemis, goddess of the hunt?"

Cronos suggested. Faith agreed. "So, let's do this, shall we? Tyche, if you will?"

"My pleasure," Tyche said, "as long as no angels or demons show up."

And so it was, that from then on, Faith was no more, and the Avatar became known as Artemis.

Later that day, the Pantheon was explaining things about the life of a Pantheon member to Artemis.

"So, since they can't track us, why do we have to stay hidden?" Artemis asked.

"Because they have special swords that glow blue when near angels, red when near demons, and white when near Avatars. If we go near the angels or demons that have those swords, we'll be taken.

"But wouldn't it always just glow the color of the wielder?"

"No, actually," Tyche answered. "The swords are made to glow only when it's near someone that's not of the wielder's race. See?" he pulled out a sword with a clear jewel in the middle. "This is a tracking sword, but it's not glowing white, because I hold it."

"So that's how you knew the demons were coming?"

"Yes. I stole this off of an angel corpse last the angels came."

"Wait," Artemis thought, "angels can die?"

"Well, not really," Cronos chimed in. "See, because angels are inherently good, if they die, they just go back to Heaven. Same with demons, but with Hell."

"I think I get it now," Artemis finished the conversation.

"Thank goodness," Hypnos said, "I'm getting sleepy."

"That's sort of rude," Artemis spat.

"Don't mind him," Cronos said. "Our names give us powers, and since he's named after the Greek god of sleep, he's always sleepy, and can put others to sleep. Eos, being named for the goddess of the dawn, has the power of light and the sun, and so on and so forth."

“That’s cool.”

“You know what’s cooler?” Athena interrupted. “We got a new one. Let’s go.”