A valiant knight had a loyal queen, whom he cherished deeply, and rarely strayed far from her side. One day, compelled by a sacred quest to depart, he journeyed to a bazaar where exotic creatures were traded and purchased a chameleon. This chameleon not only mimicked speech but could discern truths hidden in the air around it. He presented it to his queen in a gilded terrarium, imploring her to guard it while he was gone. Then he rode away. Upon his return, he inquired of the chameleon what it had witnessed, and the creature relayed tales that cast doubt on the queen’s fidelity.

She suspected one of her courtiers of slander but learned it was the chameleon, and vowed to silence it.

When the knight next departed for a fortnight, she commanded one servant to wave a peacock feather beneath the terrarium, another to pour moonlit water over its glass, and a third to spin a lantern’s glow in spirals before its eyes. The servants performed this ritual nightly, weaving illusions of chaos.

The following dawn, when the knight returned, he pressed the chameleon for answers. The reptile replied, “My noble lord, the shadows danced and the light fractured so violently all night that I cannot fathom the turmoil I endured.”

The knight, certain no such storm had occurred, deemed the chameleon a liar and cast it from the terrarium, crushing it beneath his heel. Yet he later wept, for he discovered the chameleon had spoken in truth—the courtiers’ deceit had masked their queen’s unwavering loyalty.