

# The Argument in My Way

by Stephen Measure

On an errand, on a forest path, I came upon a blockade,  
a towering mess of branches and sticks, unsteady, swaying,  
ready to fall at any moment; and in front, a squat goblin waited.

You cannot pass, said the goblin. There is an argument in your way.

Begone! I said.  
I have things I must do and places I must be,  
and I have no time for such nonsense.  
Begone!

But the goblin did not move, and the tower of sticks barred my way.  
Doomed by gravity, it would fall eventually, but I had no patience to wait.  
I have things I must do and places I must be, and I have no time for such nonsense.

So I reached and pulled out a stick, the towering mess immediately beginning to fall.  
But the bushes rustled, and a goblin rushed out, cramming a stick into the hole I had made.  
And the blockade steadied, once more not yet ready to fall. Still doomed by gravity, but not yet.

You cannot pass, said the goblins. There is an argument in your way.

Begone! I said.  
I have things I must do and places I must be,  
and I have no time for such nonsense.  
Begone!

But the goblins did not move, and the tower of sticks did not yet fall.  
And in the bushes, I heard much rustling—countless goblins, countless sticks.  
If I took another stick, a new one would replace it. I had no time, no patience, for this.

So I turned from the path, my axe in my hand, cutting my way through the trees.  
One tree after another, one step after another, I carved my way around the blockade.  
Then I was back on the path, the blockade behind me. Back on the path. Back on my errand.

Content, I continued on my way, walking along the path until I came upon a new blockade.  
A tower of sticks, it was just as messy, just as jumbled, just as unsteady, swaying this way and that.  
It would fall—such things always do—but not yet. And in front, a squat goblin stood barring my way.

You cannot pass, said the goblin. There is an argument in your way.

I made no reply. I offered no complaint. I pulled out my axe and turned off the path.  
I cut and I carved. I made my own way. Goblins can't stop me. Blockades can't hold me.  
Because I have things I must do and places I must be, and I have no time for such nonsense.