

One Stripe

Aftermath

*Illustration 10: The bats were scary*

“Friends, here is the real hero, see him sorely wounded, he who stood and fought Farmer Jack with one arm while the other was done, while he could only see out of one eye for the other was done, while he could only stand on one leg for the other was done; while you cowards ran for safety for you did not want done,” Keen of Scent the red dog who was a fox, really he was? But he was a politician and, “I stood beside him and One Stripe threw himself in the melee to save me as I was knocked down,” for the fox had wiped red berry juice on his snout and on white furry bits for colour contrast.

And the fox knew about contrast for the fox knew about sunrise and sunsets and was all lies for he was as aspiring politician.

And his audience felt the heavy hand of guilt and lowered their heads in shame so did not see the fox curl his gummy lips in satisfaction; and gummy for he chewed

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them a lot for he had a nervous disposition for he was hoping to be a president and the most powerfulest fox ever made, unfortunately for the rest of us who bought his shoddy goods top pay his campaign trail..

For he was afraid others would see through his scheming dreaming ways so his nervous disposition gave him wind often to the discomfort of those near him who he always blamed.

“One Stripe needs you, give yourselves to him, look at him,” and the beasts did and saw the badger was sorely done in and obviously incapable of standing not alone leading them to glorious victories, fame and bright lights.

Oh dear of dear his ears was all puffed up.

Oh dearie me his nose was bulbous.

Oh ghastly for his lips was gummy.

Oh horrendous the way they had repositioned his legs.

Oh my was that arms sculptured into modern art?

Oh I can't bare to stare any more for someone had stolen his one-stripe and left a bare patch, never mind the fox has sold the badger hair restorer at inflated prices for it is in demand.”

So you see the dictator was done some what with emphasis on finished.

“One Stripe needs you, give yourselves to him, look at him,” and the beasts did and saw the badger was sorely done in and obviously incapable of standing not alone leading them to glorious victories, fame and bright lights.

“We will build a litter and carry him with us to Eye and here I shall defeat that buzzard once and for all,” and ‘I’ was slipped in quick next to defeat so the beasts didn’t mind. “I shall make the laws while One Stripe the great hero recovers. Look at

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him who fought for you,” and the beasts looked ashamed so overlooked ‘I shall’ for the fox could sell you the remains of an English Breakfast a greasy hairy lorry driver had left, in a slippery lay by café, and the remains would be delicious as brown sauce had been used, and the beans counted amounted to eight but we didn’t want to eat to many of them as we know what beans causes?

And as there was so much affluence no one noticed a new law slipped in.

Presidents need more than berries, but did not specify what?

And the beasts came forward and make a litter from abandoned croft wood and trod on One Stripe so the badger moaned, and the fox extended the days he would make the laws.

Presidents need a huge white house to live in was another law slipped in and none noticed because of all the hammering and sawing noises making the litter.

The president shall remain president for life was another law no one noticed because of the moaning and shrieking coming from the badger as Shining Sun pulled long nasty wood splinters from his botty.

And the beasts poked One Stripe in the eyes also so he did not see the beasts’ coincidently drop him on the litter that had splinters so did not moan but wailed louder; and the fox began to think his new job might be permanent.

And on one red foxy shoulder a devil fox and on the other an angel fox.

“Stand aside brother and you will be President,” the devil obviously in hired fancy dress outfit for it was too small. And Keen of Scent the badger’s friend did for the devil fox showed him swimming pools that went with top jobs and floozy red foxy girls winking at him by the water and giggling at the too tight devil outfit and the devil did not know the word modesty and chastity so puffed out his chest.

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“See how they admire me and want to feed me grapes,” the devil lying for the floozy girls thought he was an ignoramus.

And because the fox had stood aside One Stripe fell off the litter for those carrying it on the left side did not have a good grip so the badger was trod on by them trying not to stand on him.

“I am done,” One Stripe stoically.

“Call yourself a friend?” The angel fox with white wings and a golden halo. And shouted so Keen of Scent felt a HEEL and helped One Stripe back onto the litter and gave simple instructions ‘left right left’ and when you want the bathroom ask for a replacement and same when you are tired, got it, OK,” and led the way carefully through mountain paths and passes where cattle rustlers had once gone; but still the devil fox was there and said, “Berries? Give me grouse, give me give me look about you, grouse grouse grouse,” and the angelic fox threw a berry into his mouth silencing the devil.

And waved a finger very close to Keen of Scent’s left eye so he understood the consequences of not eating juicy flavoursome berries.

But he was a true salesman who wanted more commission so began to sing to disorientate the angel’s thoughts away from him to more glorious aspirations.

“Humpty Dumpty,” the fox began.

And the beasts sang with him as he constantly cast glances at that heavenly finger.

“Victory is ours,

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We who are numerous.

The sweet news of victory makes us ferrous.

Victory is ours.

For us who stand up and be counted.

And to Farmer Jacks we are no longer to be hunted.

For us, victory will heal our sores.

Victory is ours and can be yours.

Just ask.

For we threw away our cowardly mask.

Stand up, be counted, then victory is yours.”

And the angelic finger was still there for the angel was no fool and met his types many times before.

“I am unmasked, tarnation and damnation,” Keen of Scent cursed trying to get grouse out of his head and that was a hard thing to do for they was thousands walking next to him.

“Gobble gobble,” the grouse went for they was mini gobblers.

“Berries in gravy, berries in custard, berries are healthy, do not raise the cholesterol, think berries and you will go to heaven. Eat a grouse and I promise it will be the other place,” so the angel warned the fox who would be president.

“Rip,” was heard.

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And the devil was at a mini sewing machine for his puffing and huffing in his too tight suit had made the girls really giggle, wink wink so was not present to give selfish good advice to the fox.

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“I want you Rover to get volunteers and go back harass One Stripe who is following us,” Crassus riding a big Irish Wolf Hound to impress all he was a true Caesar.

And Rover did not understand what harass meant but did ask for volunteers.

“What are they?” The cut-throat horde asked and Rover should have asked what harass meant.

But he was Rover, all muscle and stomach and innards full of bad winds that dogs know how to release at the wrong place and wrong time; deliberately.

But the day was saved when Green Barron and his squadron of flying knights answered the call for they were full of chivalry.

And Crassus looked at Green Barron and trusted him not for all the cut-throats admired Green Barron for he was heroic and dreamed to be like him; a flier; whereas they saw Crassus as a wolverine, a horrid greasy beast that would eat you rather than hug you. And Crassus was jealous and visualised the Peregrine falcon as chicken stew and tatties with dumplings so felt hunger pains.

So Crassus was happy and said, “We have our volunteers Rover, just go with them,” and this he whispered, *“make sure you do not help Green Barron when he*

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asks, understand?" And Rover nodded stupidly and did not understand for he was only good for drinking out of toilet bowls explaining the bad winds!

Was Rover a collie, a German shepherd, K9? None just a dog of unknown pedigree for his parents had not been to a vet?

And Green Barron flew into his air with his companions and the cut-throats sighed admiringly and someone threw a stick at Green Barron and missed.

"Better aim next time and won't be a stick but a rock," Crassus under his breath.

"Woof woof," and Rover jumped for the stick and returned it to Crassus covered in dog saliva that had bits of grass and insect grubs moving in it.

And all the beasts noted who threw the stick and Crassus was forced to take the stick from Rover who was on top of him licking his face so that dog saliva stuck there and grass and insect grubs.

And Crassus threw the evidence away behind a bush but Rover just brought the stick back.

"Don't you remember what I told you?" Crassus.

"Woof."

And Crassus threw the stick again and again and again and again for Rover might not be good at understanding but was good at chasing sticks.

*

"I am all wet and my head is sore," Black Fur.

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“I am shivering and miserable and feel ill,” the ferret and the weasel hoping Eye would comfort them for they had drunk to much XXX so deserved what they had and Eye give sympathy, pigs would fly first.

“Here listen, what is that horrid thumping music?” Black Fur.

Now Eye was standing at the bow for he knew those behind must row when the shadow of the pike darted under him and he was afraid like any normal being.

For Eye was dastardly, cowardly, mean and rotten for starters.

And the pike raised its head out of the water to get a better view of breakfast, lunch and supper and grinned so Eye saw all the teeth and was terrified like any normal beast.

For Eye was sneaky, devious, scheming and dishonest.

“Mummy,” Scenting Droppings added.

And the badger took Twitching Snout and showed what he was made off? For in a bound and leap he had jumped from ferret head to weasel head to buzzard head using them as a spring board and was away and on the grassy river bank.

“My head has exploded,” Black Fur complained.

“Someone kicked my head,” Scenting Droppings added.

And Eye having his head used as a spring found it had been pushed into the open mouth of a hungry pike.

He was sure the pike said “Yummy,” and was mortified.

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And that's when the a weasel moaning and twisting and holding his head that had been used as a football pulled out the plug on the yellow duck so it went hisssssssss.

And that's when a ferret moaning and twisting and holding his head that had exploded pulled out the plug on the black rubber tyre so it went hisssssssss.

"Idiots," Eye was heard to say from the mouth of a pike but they was unsung heroes the ferret and weasel for the hissing sent the rubber ducky and tyre away from the hungry pike.

"Come back dinner," the hungry pike unbelieving.

At considerable speed as it slammed into the river bank and the occupants sailed gracefully through the air and the cub and shrew were sure they heard, "Hey boss there are trees ahead," and was a ferret hoping his leader could save him.

And "I am not looking forward to this?" Was also heard from a weasel passing overhead.

And "Ouch," three times was heard.

Which explains why the cub and shrew got clean way.

"Idiots," drifted in the breeze back to the idiots about the tree.

And the horrid thumping music like a halo above the water went down stream as an eight foot pike sought easier game, "Thump thump thump," went the horrid music and the drunken Framer Jacks splashing water in their faces trying to waken up never heard the "Thump thump thump," as the inside of their heads was going "Thump thump thump," so git bitten.

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“Ouch,” was heard many times.

“Blooming pike, wait till we come, it will be pike and orange sauce and spuds,” also for pike didn’t go well in newspaper and chips, vinegar and pickled eggs for the fish was upper class and not common as muck.

*

Now Farmer Jack made such a mess of things he got famous for the price of bread had caused man to riot and push the super market trolleys back through the automated doors into the aisles causing security guards to froth at the mouth.

“Here you can’t do that?” A trainee manager afraid of the bung from his boss and the angry mob coming in behind the trolleys. And they gave him the bung head first into laboriously oiled tins of tomato soup on special offer.

“Cur that hurt,” he said once passing through the hundred tin cans.

Then the angry crowd ran over him.

“Cur I am trampled good,” he added moaned and sighed and lay back to moan more when a little old lady the last of the angry mob reached him and beat him good with her brolly over the price of bread,

“Cur I am black and blue,” and then passed out and the little old lady put the boot in with her black granny shoes laced up her legs.

“That will teach you to take away my toast,” the granny for she could not afford bread then intuition dawned on granny, she was alone, and made sure looking around her with eyes full of cunning, so booted the trainee manager a few more times just to

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make sure he was not pretending to be with the fairies; then quick as that had his alligator wallet out and removed sixty pounds.

Now she could buy the inflated priced bread and have her toast.

And removed his Nike trainers for she would sell them to the neighbours kid for a tenner when they was worth ten times that amount.

“Never mind, I am not greedy,” and filled a trolley with looted tins of Red Salmon, Caviare, black pitted olives, sardines, prunes and toilet roll that she would need. “Yes I am a good soul at heart,” and took off the trainer manager’s glasses in case someone trod on them and seeing the lad stir booted him all over again for she was afraid of the police line up and mangled the glasses so the lad would not see her departing in focus, and outside slashed the tyres of a car and another car and another just in case they belonged to the trainee manager who might follow her in one of these cars.

“You never know one might be his and I should have checked to see if he had car keys for I can drive for I watch Top Gear on TV,” Granny going home in her trolley for it was down hill and she was sitting on top of the loot.

She could be your granny you think is at home watching a repeat of Star Wars?

And it was because of a million grannies and burning super markets that Framer Jack was told, “Sort out the mess or else,” and was shown no more credit to tie you over to better harvests.

“We want our leg.

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A cow,

Or sow,

And won't beg.

For food is our right.

With apple sauce.

Mint sauce.

For we have might.

Which is our right?

To slaughter beasts.

And have Sunday feasts.

So come on let's fight.

And be our barnyard beasts.

For you are not bright."

So sang invigorated Farmer Jacks as they sallied forth to round up the beasts so Frosties and Wheatabix could have milk for the children were not happy eating their cereals dry.

And sought their piggy's with little curly tails so hairy lorry drivers could have bacon butties in greasy road side cafes. For the lorry drivers were fed up eating buns with imagination doing overtime as they remembered what bacon covered in lashings of brown sauce tasted like.

"Yummy, heavenly," was heard by imaginative lorry drivers.

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And Farmer Jacks sought their cows because beef was cheaper than mutton so, “Here there is dumplings in the gravy but where is the mince,” from angry school children home for lunch just before they threw the plate of watery gravy at mummy with these words in a threatening tone, “I want mince or else.”

And the vegetarians saw their chance and picketed the mountain roads and lay down on the roads just in front of Farmer Jacks’ combine harvester and where never seen again for Farmer Jacks remembered these words, “No more credit.”

And Farmer Jack had a long hike for he could not bring his four wheeled drives on the mountain paths One Stripe was on. “Gad this is tiring, why don’t we bring in the yanks and nuke the beasts,” was heard many times.

“Cur my aching bunions,” also.

*

“I smell dog,” Twitching Snout to the cub.

And the cub sniffed the air and smelt sweat from dirty unwashed burly bodies and dog.

“We better hide,” Twitching Snout and being small disappeared under some fallen leaves.

And Shining Sun said, “Where do I hide,” for there was only leaves about for summer was fading and autumn was here.

“Woof woof,” was added to the smell of dog.

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“I will lie possum and pretend I am dead,” Shining Sun so lay down and soon Rover appeared on the horizon, “Woof,” for effect and “howl.”

And Shining Sun was so terrified he passed out so never saw the crow above and crows eat dead things and Shining Sun was pretending to be dead.

Stupid badger cub, be better legging it over the next hill.

But, “Hey you who sweetie pie it is us, you who hi deary,” and was Scenting Droppings and Eye distanced himself from the weasel in case he was labelled.

“Hey darling come give us a lift,” Black Fur shouted at Rover and Eye distanced himself further and was a good thing he did for he fell down a ravine and was so embarrassed he forgot he could fly.

But it was a good thing Eye hit the bottom of the ravine and was senseless so never saw himself hanging from the mouth of Rover.

“What do we have here?” Crassus asked already tasting the basking buzzard skin dripping sun flower oil, with trimmings of course.

“Woof,” was managed with difficulty for a buzzard was in the mouth.

“Cur that is our glorious leader?” Scenting Droppings amazed.

“Cur just look at all the Rovers,” Black Fur and bowed and both grovelled at the paws of Crassus and kissed them and danced about throwing rose petals upon Crassus.

And the weasel did not know how to dance so played dead and balanced on one paw and did somersaults and jumped through fiery hoops to please Caesar.

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“Hail Caesar,” the two cut-throats many times so Crassus was mollified and “Caesar?” Was whispered amongst the cut-throats who did not want a Caesar for that meant lions and crucifixions and off to the galleys.

But Crassus Caesar did not hear the whispers for he was parading about Rover and the senseless buzzard for mummy had not taught him it was bad to gloat.

And in all the whispering and gloating and Rover not wanting to hand over HIS buzzard Shining Sun a pretend dead badger went unnoticed.

“We will go home,” Caesar Crassus meaning the castle which he would drape in imperial purple; for effect of course.

So with Rover and a senseless buzzard in the lead the cut-throats headed home to a castle.

“I will call the castle Roma,” Crassus and allowed Scenting Droppings to put on his head a head band of heather while Black Fur draped an old discarded military camouflage jacket on him and because it was too big trailed behind those that carried Crassus Caesar so was good for effect.

“I will have it dyed purple,” Crassus thought.

And because there was so many Rovers woofing the cut-throats kept their whispers about citizens cleaning Roman blocked sewers to themselves which happens to Romans that don’t pay taxes.

But where were the family Falconidae? Away with Green Barron scouting the blue sky for dogfights and the dogs were below.

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And that takes care of two armies, Framer Jacks and this mangy shabby lot.

“Can they do that to our leader?” Scenting Droppings asked.

“Listen to the blood thirty howls of Rover,” Black Fur whispered and kept fanning Caesar Crassus; so wisely Scenting Droppings popped a grape into his Caesar’s mouth.

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And Keen of Scent led his host behind Framer Jacks for he was undecided and knew a long walk in the country cleared one’s mind.

For he had a devil and angel on his shoulders driving him nuts.

“I am not giving you my telephone number,” the angel was saying but she had written it on the back of a Chinese fortune cookie and coincidentally let the breeze carry it to the most handsomest devil created ever in all the universes under the vault of Heaven ever, so get the idea, he was better looking than Errol Flynn so the poor sweet angel never had a chance from the beginning.

“Hi honey, make this a reverse call,” the tight fistest devil.

And because the angel hid behind an ear for she did not want discovered she fancied a handsome tailed lad with horns never stopped him saying: “Call yourself president, you are already,” and the handsome devil looked like a fox in newly sewed designer clothes.

“One Stripe is your friend,” the angel fox admiring the cut of the clothe.

“President,” Keen of Scent and a devil kicked an angel off a shoulder.

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“Without rigging an election either,” the devil.

“Is that how you address your president?” Keen of Scent away with the fairies.

“President,” the devil and bowed so low his moon went up and an angel did not miss so a devil was booted off.

“How did you like it?” The angel asked.

“For an angel you are one floozy woman,” the devil rubbing his bottom and winked.

And the angel smiled, tittered and blushed and **some things just never change.**

“Puff,” magic as a pink Cadillac with the handsome devil in it pulled up beside the angel.

“Hi gorgeous, this is for you,” and six boxes of chocolates and sixteen roses in flower pots were given. And strange night club music was heard and the angel allowed her primeval 'Basic Instincts' to take over but instead of murder she slipped into the seat offered in a black leather dress.

“I am a wild woman at heart,” the naughty angel forgetting her job.

“Zoom,” the last of the pink Cadillac.

So because Mr. President was without advice he was in a dither so wondered the mountains and ended up behind Farmer Jack on the way to Roma.

“Hello is that a dead badger cub I see?” He asked along with everyone else.

“Hello,” the dead badger cub said no longer pretending to be dead.

“Mr President if you please,” the fox and waited and had a very long wait.

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“Where is One Stripe and Magnificent Air?” Shining Sun and the fox cringed for that name reminded him he was a miserable person who deserved no friends for he was Et Tu Brutus. And was amazing a pretend dead badger could speak.

A schemer dreamer who was now President and the most powerfulest fox ever and was great.

But at that moment the sky darkened for all the howling and woofing ahead had woken the bats that hung upside down hereabouts; and they were annoyed for it was not night time when bats fly about and get in your hair, then do things in your clean hair you just paid a hair dresser £69 for a wash and dry; so was annoyed a little.

Now it was a good thing all these fluttering bats made such a din and darkened the sky.

“Here I saw this movie when Count Dracula with Peter Cushing gets out of a coffin and bites you,” Black Fur seeing the bats for there was at least a million of them.

And Crassus Caesar looked at him seeking understanding.

“Yeh I saw it too and it opened with all these bats like them up there and he was a vampire,” Scenting Droppings added and Crassus Caesar was a superstitious creature that knew the movies never lied.

“Get a move on lads,” was Crassus’s encouragement to his bearers who ran when a million annoyed bats flew amongst their fur for beasts have fur not hair.

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And Scenting Droppings popped the grape meant for Crassus Caesar into his own mouth for Caesar had fallen off his bearers and was a speck tumbling down a ravine.

“Don’t think we better be here when gets back,” Black Fur sensibly.

“Yes, Peter Cushing might be near,” a weasel looking for a vampire.

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And it was because of a million annoyed bats that made the cut-throats hurry so Farmer Jack never caught them up.

“Here I saw this movie once with Peter Laurie looking after a vampire and it had bats in it,” a Farmer Jack rubbing his rosary for luck and chewed some garlic for any farmer worth his weight has a string of garlic about his neck; for effect; for a good fisherman has a string of shark teeth and a soldier grenades and a doctor sharp glistening hypodermics. But forgot to rub the string of dried green neaps so paid for it.

For the bats were not toilet trained and were more messy than sea gulls for there was a million of them.

“Blooming hec’ this didn’t happen in the movie?” The Farmer Jack and fled shaking off unhygienic bats.

So they went the other direction that One Stripe was coming so the bats really saved the day.

“Hurrah hurrah for the bats.”

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But the bats flew about darkening the sky and lucky the fleeing armies all missed standing on the pretend dead badger and shrew by inches.....amazing.

And Mr President just happened to take a breather at the exact spot a pretend badger was lying pretending to be dead.

And a leaf moved and a shrew appeared and because shrews talk fast told all what he had heard and seen in one breathe just like that.

“Blooming amazing how he does that?” The fox and because they had stopped a devil and a red faced angel managed to catch up in a pink Cadillac and get on the shoulders.

“You don’t have to take that sort of talk Mr President,” the devil, “just stand on it.”

“If I mean anything too you stop giving bad advice,” the angel hotly to the devil but she was ignored for she had danced with him so was compromised.

And Shining Sun saw One Stripe carried and went to his aid and knew hot water and bandages were needed but had none so licked instead with a germ ridden tongue to make One Stripe better.

“I am better, believe me,” One Stripe pleaded with the cub.

But was not believed and was licked so grass stalks on the tongue was left on him, and the cub was seen to use his tongue to wash his privates, then lick One Stripe on the face.

And like a dog lick the other place and then licked One Stripe on the mouth.

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“I am better, believe me,” One Stripe pleaded with the cub but was not believed.

“I am Batty, King of these bats,” a bat on the endangered list of animals.

“I am Mr President,” the fox puffing his chest out.

“You don't have look a prat,” a devil knowing how to be rude and showing his true colours.

“You don't look like a badger,” Batty, “where is your leader?” Now a devil added, “See you have been forgotten already,” on a foxes shoulder sewing envy that leads to murder that leads to life imprisonment and the bats replied:.

“We have no leader but this is our home,

So clear off you noisy lot.

We were snug and hot.

We have no leader but this is our home.

The air is free.

So we are free.

The air has no master,

So we are free

No master have we,” the million bats sang off key so was a horrid sound.

“I thought you was a king?” Keen of Scent asked Batty.

“I am working at it,” and the fox saw an ally for Batty had a devil on his shoulder too, a girl devil who blew a kiss and showed an ankle and the angel was jealous.

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But the devils went to find a haystack so left the angels who said sweetly and softly, “Go hug each other,” and “Tell One Stripe he is President,” and “You are his buddy for life.” And the fox and Batty were overcome with nausea and all the animals saw Batty and the fox fall into each other's arms for they were faint; but “They are kissing,” and “scandalous,” and “that fox isn’t kissing my baby,” and “blooming fairies,” and “not getting my vote,” and a squeaky voice added “you can have my vote honey any time.”

“When he comes back I will give him this pitch fork places,” the angel meaning she would never listen to any handsome devils again, “and he will be useless to any floozy devils too.” And because she meant it and was full of spring flowers and freshness was not turned into a newt by the BOSS upstairs who wanted to teach the handsome devil a lesson in vanity.

“Puff,” or was it “Poof,” as a huge wart appeared at the end of the handsomest devil ever created under the stars.

“I went out with you a wart?” The sarcastic she devil and was ill on the shoulder of a bat.