

One Stripe

The Great Council



*Illustration 2: A certain fox*

Not once upon a time but every day a red rooster at Farmer Jack's sings this ditty.

“Get up you lazy thing,

How I enjoy waking you,

Knowing you was up late minging.

Won't too sleep in do you?

But I am Red Rooster and cock a do a do.

And I will sing till I get the chop.

Cock a do a do.

And my head falls off the block with the chop.”

And One Stripe when he met the first red rooster at Farmer Jack's asked him to sing his call for all to attend a Great Council, for you see the Red Rooster is the telegraph service of these far north lands.

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“What's it worth chum?” The red rooster replied.

“The chicken of your dream,” One Stripe remembering floozy Morag for he had a one track mind and showing dictatorial traits that dictators show.

So all across the yellow and black tartan landscape cock a do a do was heard and it was not sunrise; in fact it went on all day every day for a week until all the Framers Jack's took their red roosters to the chopping board for peace.

And watching hens shivered and sang:

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Farmer Jack Farmer Jack,

What a horrid act to do.

You gave Red Rooster the sack.”

“I been conned,” the red rooster complained but there was no Complaints Department, YET.

I am here YET

“My that roaster filled me up some, beats treacle jam pieces lad eh?” Farmer Jack's asking their lads who now did the cooking since mum had fled to the Antipodes with Fred the milkman.

And thanks to Red Rooster the animals of the misty forests, and those living in the bracken, the thingy bracken and in the great bogs, the boggy men and sea shores the sea what's is called and in man's gardens, the neighbour's dog messing heard One Stripe's summons to HIS Great Council and they came.

In droves, on the pavements so man had to jump, so “Yuk,” was heard often and so many on a field the field was no longer green but moving fur; and the sky was

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birds in flocks and MAN put it down to the lemming urge to migrate and caused by freak weather.

“Armageddon is here, the end is near,” except for one standing on a street corner. You know the type he has a placard and hides under a black rain coat with a jam treacle piece stuffed in a pocket.

Yes the animals came except many pigs for they was now boars being boring in woods.

But it was Man that caused One Stripe to make the animals form great herds and head to the Great Council for it was the law of the Great Spirit to obey such summons.

And why once upon a time we find One Stripe standing on a cairn (high stone marker) at the top of a mountain exposed to the sun that this high up could hurt his eyes for he was above the swirling racing clouds, so he looked at the animals in front of him instead.

“Sun glasses cheaper by the dozen, never know when you might lose one?” And One Stripe turned and looked into dark sun glasses, on a fox. A fox mentioned in chapter one hunting a duck that man had disturbed. A fox who had seen the light, wading in muddy shallows was for common foxes, selling sunglasses was the way to sports cars stuffed full of floozy foxes.

“Is that a spin stripe suit you are wearing?” The badger asked amazed for it was not Marks and Spencer for 'Da Vinci' was on the breast pocket.

But because the badger was slow the fox disappeared in a mist that appeared from no where for mists cloud mountain tops.

“Howl,” was heard from the mist for effect.

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“There are many customers here and the sun might go down,” a foxy voice drifted out of the mist.

And in front of the badger many eves droppers with smiles for they now expected free sunglasses and Da Vinci suits, unisex of course from the badger.

‘They must be ridiculous, I haven't a penny to my name, they are all stupid’ he concluded and why did he conclude?

WELL.....

Because of the squabbling over sizes for they were not of one mind like One Stripe or of purpose for he had made up his mind for he had had a dream, so had nothing to do with designer suits.

And the proof animals dream is to watch a whimpering dog dreaming of Farmer Jack and is called nightmare.

### **The Dream of One Stripe.**

“I had gone to my set to sleep but the summer day was hot, so I went above knowing the wind would cool me and would be safe as long as I kept under a bush for there are beasts that kill badgers; the lions that like a tasty badger to chew on and chew they would for I am past sixteen years; and woolly elephants that are so short sighted they stand on you and angry bears that eat ANYTHING are all gone and wolves that get you in a cowardly pack that howl now stuck in fenced parks: by MAN.

So knew I was safe for the wind did not bring me man's stink for to a wild beast man is associated with terror.

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And I trembled in my sleep for I saw a demon, red with black wings and fangs dripping adder's venom and with the ears of a wild cat.

'I have come to eat you,' the demon wailed, 'lie down like the beast you are and await your fate,' and the demon was a neap farmer and about his neck dried shrunken neaps to ward off were-things.

But I am One Stripe and always see in the blue sky a golden city approaching where all animals can live together and flesh is not eaten. Even man is invited to this city that is coming; so did not lie down and get eaten but saw the answer. And the answer was to stand up and fight back the demon.

Then I saw ants that without a queen run about in circles till washed away by the yearly rains.

And knew I was chosen as leader of all beasts against man who buys lucky rabbit feet's and they are not lucky for Fred the rabbit on the chopping block shouted, "All those wanting to win at the races holding my foot will lose."

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And the first to arrive at the cairn where the birds being fast of wing, followed by inquisitive gulls seeking a free snack and they landed and made a din for they were leaderless like the flock.

And I stood there, One Stripe bracing the freezing wind, not twitching a muscle for I was frozen, hands behind my back with head slightly bowed; of course with the sun

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behind me so my outline shimmered. I was my own P.R.; I could think and thinking separates the leader from the herd; and if you are a larger than usual badger.

And all the birds of the north came darkening the pink of the shepherd's sky black for they were like grains of sand.

"Umbrellas cheaper by the dozen," and was that oily fox for that kid was not the only one who had seen Hitch cock's Birds.

"Here my umbrellas got holes in it," a pig wanting refund, a dirty word to the fox.

"Go down the road six miles and complain to Mr Walls," the wicked greedy fox and the pig did and was not told what Mr Walls makes. "Can't have his type about, bad for business," the fox added and from a deep pocket took perfume and sprayed himself with it for porkers smell awful.

And humans watched their bird feeders and said, "Where are the blue tits today?" And shivered in vain for the tits were with me, One Stripe, and I coughed loudly and the birds quietened and stared at me, and saw the sun behind me so were blinded and thought; "A god has landed amongst us."

And below One Stripe the badger his young cousin full of admiration. His icon had come to life, gone the images of Eye the Buzzard and his rebellious crows, come now the smart lines of authority and he was part of it.

"That is my uncle," he did happily point out to a floozy teenage girl badger.

"Hello handsome," the floozy girl badger and she meant him in the cloud in a pin stripe suit for image counts as well as the after shave.

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**Wish you were here**

And Shinning Sun saw about him red foxes dribbling at the mouth for they could not help themselves, Capercailie (black gobblers that hop from pine tree to pine tree) and Grouse were present and even a million chickens escaped from Farmer Jacks; but not one fox gobbled up a bird in front of anyone although the young badger had his suspicions, for he saw several foxes with innocent smiles and bulges in their tummies.

“Cluck,” the foxes went which worrying.

“This is the Council of the Great Spirit, beast shall not eat beast here,” One Stripe barked and Shinning Sun wondered that his mind was read! And in excitement coughed “Good Grief,” imitating One Stripe yo imitate the teenage floozy badgers of course..

And when the last wolverine had sat down amongst their group hissing and snapping jaws at their neighbours the Capercailie as wolverines live amongst pines eating gobblers without trimmings; One Stripe grunted loudly.

“Beasts, **we are one fur**, while we are here in the Garden of the Great Spirit do not eat each other. **We are one fur**, man is our enemy. Let us as a flock, as a herd, as individuals, come together and drive man off the scared land.

“Our sacred land,” and was whispered out of the cloud and sounded foxy for a certain fox knew as Mr President the land would be shared with one another only, a dictator who did not know he was one, yet.

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And One Stripe saw the beasts had not heard the whisper and looked over them and saw Real Estate signs with his name on them, a dictator's name.

Man who takes our furs and makes them warm boots. Man who cuts our throats and hangs us upside down. Man who reduces us to dust. Beasts we are of one fur; enough is enough, no more sausages.”

“No more sausages,” the birds tittered and chattered and didn't understand a word the badger spoke but wanted to be part of the crowd for safety was in numbers.

And One Stripe hid his face in his paws and cried and there was silence as all the beasts of one fur knew he did not lie.

They were all creatures of The Great Spirit.

“Of course One Stripe is correct,” a fox slowly getting noticed.

And the foxes and weasel turned as one and stared at the speaker.

“Now there is some cut of a man, I wish my Henry would buy suits like that,” a black bird to a moor hen as all the women folk were dazzled by the Da Vinci suit.

“I am Keen of Scent,” the bright fox said, “no more sausages out of us,” and laughed and all laughed for all the meat eaters with him knew that was a crazy idea.

“No more sausages,” the animals shouted and “We need a president,” was added and “a dictator to throw us against a wall and shoot us,” also for some beasts are dim and he who wore the Da Vinci suit had a pocket picture book in his hip pocket, “Learn Ventriloquist in 10 easy lessons.



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“A president?” And the fox had a vision and he was in a black bullet proof Cadillac because he was Mr President.

“No more sausage,” an aspiring president and it was chanted till he seeing his audience tire held up his front paws.

“Da Vinci,” a moor hen admiring the cut of the cloth, “he can have my vote any time,” and winked at the fox.

And there were many dark shadows behind many big boulders.

“Yes let Keen of Scent speak for us,” the weasels called for they were spent and sought not their own blood but the blood of others and knew there were many dark shadows behind many big boulders.

And Keen of Scent hid his smile for he was a fox.

“Let us listen to One Stripe,” a weasel called Scenting Droppings called.

And Keen of Scent turned and saw him and noted his name that went with a certain aroma..

“Good grief,” One Stripe sighed and hid it behind a paw for the certain aroma was strong.

“Eh yup, what’s cooking?” A ferret called Black Fur.

“Sausages,” a weasel and there was much laughter but not amongst the birds who felt insulted for chicken sausages did exist and some one amongst them had whispered, “Do not go behind the big boulders with dark shadows behind them.”

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And One Stripe knew what was cooking, beasts. And the badger stuck his hands behind his back and grunted in the fashion of THE DICTATOR BADGER.

And all heard him.

“No more sausage, it is the law,” the badger.

“He can have my vote as he seems like an educated lawyer,” a chicken.

“I still prefer the fox, why look at his polished shoes,” another moor hen and winked and there were many big shadows behind many big boulders not occupied.

“No more sausage,” the aspiring president wiping his mouth for it is customary for gentlemen to do so after a hearty meal.

And these are the leaders of the animals although One Stripe hasn’t figured that out yet?

Black Fur named by his mother for he had black fur as simple as that. And he lived up to his name for he ate with his mouth open and winded in company and laughed over his rudeness.

“Black as they come RRRRRRR,” he would boast.

And the weasel Scenting Droppings for he was good on the trail and his mother named him for a mother needs to be proud of a son.

Then it occurred, the wild cats sneaked in amongst the pheasant and gobbled a few just like that to the jealousy of the weasels and ferrets and blood letters who had had to go behind big boulders that had big shadows..

“Blood has been spilled,” the call was taken up by the weak.

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“No more sausages,” was tittered lamely amongst the birds.

And looked at the dictator for some action or they would not vote him in.

And without asking for help One Stripe waded in amongst the cats and was followed by Black Fur, Keen of Scent and Scenting Droppings for blood had been spilled by weasels and ferrets who had been caught behind some big boulders.

For Keen of Scent and his friends were stating, “Only foxes and cut-throats sort out their kind and not by the hand of a badger for a fox was afraid a badger might become a president and needed the votes of foxes.

And in his deep pockets many rubber chickens to wean them off the real thing onto berries for sausages was off the menu.

And once upon a time the cold wind blew all the feathers floating free away down the glen to a deserted bothy, where mountain climbers gather for tea and cake and meet lost German tourists; and when all the bird folk had settled down and the weasels and ferrets given up their blood lust!

“One of amongst us is slain,” the doves and at once the gulls took to the air followed by the starlings as is their custom.

“Good Grief,” One Stripe.

And nothing could be done till the flock landed for great was their din.

“One of amongst us is slain,

It was you that did it?

Our legs you bit so we are lame.

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It was you that did it?

Our bones are light.

So hope you choke and cough.

Turn blue and be a sight.

And turn to dough.

So you and your horrid kind,

Never reckon with us.

So away and run on your hinds.

Never reckon with us. “

“Good Grief,” drifted on the wind and One Stripe held his front paws up to the cairn so the wind ruffled his gray fur, and the onlookers only saw his silhouette for the sun was white behind the cairn.

And One Stripe sang the death chant of the bird:

“To the air that no one can see,

This is your domain,

To the ground you fall no longer warm but cold.

But in the wind still I hear four wings.

For the Great Spirit took you home.”

And all the small beasts that herd, graze and beasts of the flock were happy ‘they had a leader One Stripe who gave them dignity.

**And One Stripe knew why man was Farmer Jack!**

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“Here is the miscreant,” Scenting Droppings and Black Fur panted hoping for a clear bite but Keen of Scent was not happy for the miscreant was a greedy young fox.

“One Stripe let blood not be spilled here,” Keen of Scent using the law to save his kind and their votes for him for in another back pocket, “Law for Aspiring Presidents.”

“Let blood not be shed here,” Scenting Droppings and Black Fur being weasel and ferret did not think so aped the fox Keen of Scent and didn’t know why.

And One Stripe was glad for any backing, even from the wicked so at last silence was upon the host of beasts.

Then a shadow of enormous wings fell across One Stripe and the reason for the silence became obvious. Even the badger felt a little uneasy as IF here was a rival.

Eight feet the golden eagle’s wing span fell across the wild cats. Also the sun was blotted from the fox Keen of Scent who now fumbled and slipped as he climbed the cairn to be next to a dictator; not to worry presidents are allowed to slip, and Scenting Dropping thought the sun had fallen out of the sky for he was dim and Black Fur without anyone noticing had changed places with Scenting Droppings and shoved him forward to an inch of the great birds talons.

And about the talons bits of dinner.

Black Fur swallowed but the swallow got stuck and wobbled there for all to see.

“Blood has been spilled, who did it?” It was an accusation and all the beasts were too afraid to reply to the eagle.

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And a shadow, a little one moved between the cowering beasts, well a skinny shadow and it had a tail and the shadow came to rest behind One Stripe.

“Already a challenger to your exalted position,” the shadow whispered assuming the position of trusted advisor.

“You are right,” One Stripe checked himself and “Good Grief,” and turned and looked into the shadow’s eyes; Keen of Scent so a shiver passed up the spine of the badger for the fox had thrust a black shirt onto the badger.

“I don't look good in black,” One Stripe.

“Ever seen a dictator in a pink T shirt?” And because it was free made the badger worry.

“Together we can muster the animals, build an empire, make you emperor, better a dictator,” the fox and grinned and let his eyes twinkle. “Let all the foxes hear, Keen of Scent is your leader,” and the fox looked at the eagle and made sure he sleeked back behind the badger.

And the birds that had just landed took fright and flew again for the foxes under Keen of Scent knew what was cooking; so did the weasels, ferrets and pole cats. And Black Fur the ferret like an ‘S’ on hind legs made his way to Keen of Scent.

“Hey, wait for me,” and Scenting Droppings ‘S’ ssssed his way also; bird with or without feathers was on the menu for being dim did not understand what 'No Sausage' meant.

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It meant eating yummy berries and chewing wet poohed up grass for the animals were careless were they visited.

“And I will lead the birds,” it was Eye the buzzard and he landed on top of the cairn and all saw him, and Black Fur and Scenting Droppings grinned, they were old friends in the trade of the cut-throat, RRRRRRRRRRRR.

And just by chance an escaped parrot landed on Eye's right shoulder and added, “RRRRRRRRRRRR” and anyone got a cracker for Captain Bird Eye, “RRRRRR,” for “RRRRRRRRRR's” where fashionable.

“No one has said anything about leaders?” One Stripe but no one was listening, it was a great idea for the animals to do something about man and to have leaders and leaders have brains so get the trimmings and the trimmings had landed again.

“And I shall lead the birds,” and Eye challenged Magnificent Air the giant eagle for Black Fur and Scenting Droppings and Keen of Scent giving the bird an evil eye. And so felt brave as hundreds of weasels, ferrets and cut-throats also gave an evil eye.

“Evil Eye,” they sent with slit screw4ed up eyes.

“Hiss,” a weasel added for atmosphere.

And in the sweep of a brush of eight foot of eagle wing span knocked Eye off the cairn top so he tumbled, somersaulted, cursed and made embarrassing noises all the way down to fall at One Stripe's hind paws and Magnificent Air's beak was slowly getting closer and closer to his neck and the eagle knew how to give back an evil eye.

You open wide the eyes and spin the eyeballs.

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But the eagle was wearing a necklace of garlic so was protected for the things eagles ate they needed a garlic a day, to help with the wind of course.

“OK no problem, you are leader,” and Eye jumped up and went behind Keen of Scent. “But you will need a secretary. Did I tell you I can read and write man’s tongue?” And was a lie but was believed by many like the moor hen that is dim.

And all the silly gathered animals sighed ‘Ooooooooooed’ in admiration of Eye.

“Really?” Magnificent Air and let it be.

“One Stripe it was his idea to get the Great Council let him be our ruler, he eats not bird or fox, he is wise and abides by the law,” Shining Sun and all the beasts went ‘Ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo.’

“To the badgers belong the night.

The night when the grass is frosted silver.

Then the badger across such grass on little stumps slithers.

To find the worm that gives no fight.

Badger vicious little fighter you are.

Why the glossy fox gives you the right of path.

Badger only gentle when your young you night bath.

To you belongs the night and travel far.

In the deep dark wood,

Here you dug your home sweet home.

Underground caverns with lofty domes.



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Were you store all your food in the deep dark wood,” and Magnificent Air called the song of the badger and the call resonated down the sides of the mountain.

And a passing bus full of yo doling German tourists heard and took fright and wanted off the bus just like that; so it rolled down a ravine and came to rest at a bothy where mountain climbers were having treacle jam pieces.

So don't worry about Helga and Ingrid for the bus was a German woman's butterfly collecting outing so there was no German men for the climbers to take behind big boulders with big shadows and do them good. For women have that effect upon climbers who are neap farmers taking the day off.

So all beasts stopped their scratching, squabbling, foraging ways and listened silently for once.

“One Stripe shall lead us, he will make the law and I will enforce it,” Magnificent Air and he looked Keen of Scent, Eye and the miscreants out, then glared at the hundreds of weasels and ferrets and their kind, and One Stripe said ‘Good Grief’ for he had no idea were all the eagles and all the hundreds of badgers gathered about Shining Sun had come from?

They was called extras and did not come cheap but an aspiring president knew IF he wanted to be Mr President this was the way.

But the badger was glad of the company and courage flowed through his veins.

## One Stripe

“I will make the law,” he shouted and the badgers and eagles made a thunderous noise of approval and the excitement spread and the din of thousands of beasts shook the clouds so they gave up their rain.

“We have a dictator,” Keen of Scent abiding his time.

“Do we bow then?” Scenting Droppings.

And Eye knew with such as these he was the real power.

And One Stripe spent much time sending news of the rebellion against man to all animals of the north. Birds went to the compass points, to the sea shore, to Islands, to the domestic and farm beasts.

And animals of the burrow went out to speak to the snakes and lizards who spoke an ancient tongue and the gulls went to the seals, Orcas and dolphins that spoke the tongue of mermaids.

“The mermaids sing,

Fishermen then fight the sea.

The mermaids sing.

Whirlpools open up in the sea.

The mermaids sing.

Now giant waves thrash the sea.

The mermaids sing.

Boats capsize in the sea.

The mermaids sing.

One Stripe

Look herring gulls on the sea.

The mermaids sing.

Rocks thrashed by the sea.

The mermaids sing.

The moonlight glitters on the sea.

The mermaids sing.

And from mountain bothy's yodeling caused many avalanches and swept away  
buses full of animal welfare officers come to stick the animals in pounds.