

## One Stripe

## Sea Monsters



*Illustration 23: It was a very hungry sea monster*

Once upon a time the ship SS Marie Celeste was at the mercy of the sea currents as it bounced this way and that, making many animals a sort of green in shade.

“Where is that ambitious cousin, I have sea sick lotions to sell?” Mr President examining his vile potions.

“He thinks I work for him, ha,” the ambitious cousin who was selling green potions that steam drifted out off for it was stuff siphoned off the ship’s batteries.

Never mind his customers were too ill too notice and the bright colour went down a treat?

And something horrid happened, something big and nasty lived in the sea and it was taking offence to what was being added to its home.

“Home Sweet Home,” was on a piece of driftwood nailed to its cave; a cave that was on the bottom of the sea would you believe? ‘Davy Jones’ Locker’ was painted in big red letters on a decaying rusty rubbish bin that had fallen off a passing ship.

## One Stripe

‘Santa’s’ Grotto’, was written on a piece of plastic shopping bag from a supermarket in glitter pen.

Whoever or whatever lived in this cave was in some sort of business but what?

‘Lucky dip’ was painted on a balloon anchored next to a deep hole with lots of empty shell fish stuff lying about.

Whatever lived in that hole must have some appetite?

‘Hi ho heave ho I smell the blood of an Englishman’ was heard from a scratchy wind up gramophone and the winder looked like he could do with a rest but was too terrified to ask.

What monster lived in that cave that could listen to such gibberish daily and nightly? An insane monster for such gibberish was designed to divide and then be easily ruled or eaten in this case.

And the gramophone winder looked ill, his once proud home now covered in barnacles and a ‘For Sale’ sign was attached to his hermit crab’s shell.

‘Trick or Treat’ was written on a cauldron next to the crab and fish bones lay scattered about. Obviously only tricks existed and the treat was a curious dinner?

What sort of being possessed such a twisted digestion and humour, a monstrous beast of course?

‘Doggy bag,’ was stencilled on many leaky brown soggy paper bags stuck to nearby coral.

But the bags were empty, all gobbled up by the heinous thing in the cave.

Was the beast a retired over paid television presenter?

“Burp,” was heard some times as the bad mannered sea monster burped and then a more familiar loud sound was heard and a big bubble drifted out of the cave mouth

## One Stripe

and got pricked by the hermit's shell.

"I must leave, the bad air hereabouts is not healthy," the crab whispered afraid its mutterings would bring it to the attention of something, and then it did be a chewy morsel for the crab looked past its sell by date.

"Snore," drifted from the cave and the crab incensed by the polluted atmosphere took out a file from its shell and filed away on a previously unseen chain and padlock.

It was a prisoner, perhaps a TV dinner.

Truly it must be a TV presenter come on hard times in the cave?

"Scrape rasp," went the file as the hermit seeing a few cm left went frantic working the file.

Overhead he could see the bottom of a leaky ship and lots of stomach contents floating down as a horde hugged the railings of the bouncing boat.

And the sound of many feet doing Irish Tap Dancing thundered down as well and the hermit it could be seen in his eyes was desperate.

"These imbeciles will wake it up, then I am done."

Oh what a beastly creature would hurt the half starved crab? A villainous creature indeed needing the cells of New Scotland Yard!

And because the crab was busy filing rather than winding a gramophone the monster he was afraid of woke up.

And it threw a boot at the crab, a size hundred and the crab was manacled so could not duck.

No wonder it was trying to sell up and move away.

## One Stripe

“Oh what have I done? Who will wind my gramophone up for me now?” The boot thrower wailed from the cave.

Then noticed a ship above and what seemed to be several parties in progress.

“And I am not invited?” The thing in the cave asked.

And seeing a worm wiggling on the end of a fishing line came to investigate. It was partial to worms full of vitamins and proteins; and would not have to wipe the morsel off the sole of a boot that no one knew what it had stood upon?

“Here I have caught something big Fred?” A Farmer Jack beaming pride as he looked at his Eskimo friend.

Now his Eskimo friend was no better than him, the only difference one planted neaps and the other skinned cute cuddly polar bears and sold the skins onto a gay Parisian baker who acted as middle man to fashion magazine of course.

“XXcftdUUU&\*\*\*\*\*???,” the Eskimo as he tried to pull up the line and being a hunter of seals knew this was not a seal, so with a smile handed the fishing pole back to the farmer.

“Look Sheila?” The farmer shouted at anyone as a lot of Sheila’s was loitering the deck chairs looking floozy. There were strange spells lingering on the ship from Alupu Island.

And the Eskimo silently slithered away into the shadows of the ship.

## One Stripe

“XXcftdUUU&\*\*\*\*\*???,” then “ha ha he he ha giggle,” was heard coming from the Eskimo quarter of the ship. Obviously they knew a secret they weren’t parting with?

And a bubble rose to the surface from the ocean floor and burst.

“Ouch that hurt,” came forth from the bubble for a hook had been pulled into something big and hairy’s mouth and it wasn’t happy any the more the more, especially since the music had stopped.

And it wasn’t a neap on the end of that line either?

It was a mass of bubbles rising to the surface that frothed and made the expectant Farmer Jacks a bit uneasy to say the least. And because they were uneasy many a cobble wobble beset them.

And then the thingy that lived in the cave that had done the hermit crab in with a thrown shoe surfaced.

“Er it’s the wife,” it only takes one and was the one holding the fishing line. He was a carrot farmer and knew that wasn’t the wife even IF it looked like her. It had wobbly things blowing from its head in the fresh sea breeze that smelled real bad from all those burst bubbles and stuff.

But he was the local tug of war expert and could not show FEAR in the face of the unknown and friends; besides it was time to find them labourers and the XXX barrels. “Er Fred fancy a cucumber sandwich and warm minted bear?”

## One Stripe

“Why not Fred, fish isn’t biting anyway,” Fred answered Fred as both were Farmer Jacks and disappeared shouting rude jokes at each other and when they got round the corner sighed big sighs for they was glad they had handed the fishing line over to two loyal friends.

Friends who knew their luck was in, they hadn’t eaten much apart from what they wiped off their fury sleeves doing their work.

“Look fish and chips like the Englander eat?” Adolph pointing at the two friends and shoved Iddi forwards to get a better look, so was the excuse but it was really an opportunity to get Iddi an execution for the African Bat was big, in places were it counted, the biceps and bottom of course. And the sea monster knew it had a sexy bottom so wiggled it some to have effect upon the floozy girls aboard ship.

Obviously the odious thing was a heinous male and it was in old tattered boxer shorts discarded from a Saturday night fling on a passing cruise ship. Oh how disgusting, how could it possibly know who had worn them previously; it might be an unpopular American President?

And some idiot and no one knows which for they all looked alike aboard ship tripped on the fishing line; the one attached to the hock in the heinous male’s gums. How you tell a scaly green blob of teeth it was an accident, you just tell he who had done the tripping.

“It was the my uncle,” the tripper lied and gave a shrew a one dollar note with these words; “Tell the President here is a birthday present,” the tripper who must be a

## One Stripe

an ambitious cousin said and stuffed the note in the shrew's vest pocket. "Ten pounds in it for you," and was a lie and the shrew being half blind was happy, he could buy a nice box of chocolates for Madam Blind as a Bat who was Propaganda Department.

And the cousin slipped away and grinned and passing a port hole was overcome by a compulsion to stare at himself in the mirror in the cabin there.

"Absolutely gorgeous sunny boy," the foxy cousin said to itself and can it be, it is, it is the ambitious cousin Benny Creep.

"She loves me she love me not?" Twitching snout the blind as a mole shrew said as he plucked petals from a mushroom; and since mushrooms don't have petals what was he plucking. It was screaming something and there was no point in asking the shrew as it would swear it was a red rose.

And Mr President was not to be found as he was in the drawing room smoking a big properly rolled Cuban for effect thinking of where they would land next? A large map was on the table in front of him, so was a glass of Scottish XXX forty years old fire water so was the expensive real stuff.

There was a ruby ring on his left index finger and a diamond ring on his right index finger. Sales were good, he had given the job of sales manager to Rover promising a commission on what the usherette sold, and Rover in the black French maid outfit found in the ship's wardrobe for some seamen have strange customs was plying the decks selling mini Cubans badly rolled for they was Ajax toilet army square loo paper died brown with the excess gravy from the kitchens to disguise the

## One Stripe

berry roasts and shanks? Something had to be done with the ship's cargo and since the animals didn't know what to do with the Ajax squares an industrialist had turned them into addictive health threatening mini Cubans. And they was very health threatening as real Ajax used to scour the kitchen sinks once by a long gone human crew was sprinkled on the squares rolled into mini Cubans. Let's face it the animals didn't know what Ajax was used for but Mr President did know that once inhaled sent one to Havana and dancing floozy girls as Cubans strummed guitars in straw hats and mosquitoes buzzed nearby wanting a good long bite.

So Mr President was rich so admiring the vacant boxes on the map of America where he would build slums for the passengers to occupy and then work in his factories nearby.

"Hot sweat shops need workers and workers need jobs or how can they pay my expensive rent?" Mr President asks of you?

Of course sanitation would be an extra, the streets were just outside and animals were NOT HOUSE TRAINED ANYWAY.

So the shrew did not earn his one dollar note for he had a bad memory and run out of screaming petals on a 'She loves me did not finish on love.'

"I am suing," the rat promised walking away with a match box pulled down over its pink raw skin for its petals now littered the deck .

"Someone need a solicitor?" Mr President hearing the rat several decks and rooms away.



## One Stripe

“I smell gramophone winders?” The scandalous sea monster sniffing the air and screamed something as Twitching Snout had handed the fishing line to two loyal friends emptying what they shovelled through open port holes, so when you are on a ship keep the port hole closed.

“What do we do with this?” Black Fur asked.

“I know, here you weird looking African bat come here and take this fishing line, might be a whopper of a juicy fish on the end,” the weasel still thinking he could be smart.

“Here IF there is a whopper of a fish dinner on the end of the line why have you given the fishing line to that weird looking African bat?” Black Fur the ferret and smarter of the two asked as he could just about think, sometimes anyway!

“Here take this Adolph, no one calls me weird?” And the bat proved he did not like to eat fish.

“Of course my friend,” Adolph lied for he hated Iddi and loved fish just as he knew Iddi would when he saw him tuck into fish and chips, covered in pickled eggs and onions, salt and tomato sauce and no greens; never mind, fish Adolph knew gave one extra large brains; and he tottered this way and that yanking on the fishing line by just smelling those takeaway chipper smells.

“Slurp,” he slurped and it was his last dribble of saliva for many a day because the line came loose for a green slimy sea monster with biceps the size of an elephant was in front of him.

## One Stripe

Mummy,” the slurp on his mouth changed into vowels and horrid learning stuff.

“I believe this is yours?” The courteous sea monster said as butterflies flew out of his mouth and pigs can fly OK?

“I was just holding it for him,” and Adolph who disliked the French because they made soup out of offal and ate pretty green frogs and slimy messy snails gave the line to a little Corsican on a white porcelain horse, pushed by three white blind rats.

“Viva la France,” and that was the last thing the little continental said in a while as a fish hook was stuck somewhere.

“Yikes my Waterloo,” was heard by all and not ouch as that would be too common for the Corsican who saw himself as the Emperor of the Universe, yes he did because like pigs he believed he could fly, and he could, he was a bat could not be plebeian.

“How do you like that?” The depraved sea monster asked knowing the answer anyway?

“I don’t,” the little fat bat replied as he hung upside down a few inches from the wanton sea monster’s mouth, then disappeared.

And was spat out for I am told little Corsican s taste vile and have warts in unseen places. I did like too know IF they are in unseen places how do we know then?

Anyone seen these warts in weird places?

“Here Cedric, Wong Lee and Posh Rat come here quick, yummies in it for you?”

The Corsican and since he was an emperor was just like a president who was just like a prime minister and they all looked after themselves for they started wars, then lost

## One Stripe

them and gave each other new jobs, for they were related to them pigs flying across the sky which means they was the only ones who believed in them.

And the three blind rats believed he who was EMPEROR OF THE UNIVERSE and beyond of course, including anything not yet explored.

And the heinous putrid sea monster gobbled them all up because as they came, and the little mean Corsican who had warts places sprinkled salt on them.

And threw in a packet of cheesy crisps bought from a passing dog in tight silk stockings that had laddered.

Badly!

“He has laddered the stockings, of course I don’t mind, he can ladder as many as he likes,” Mr President with the keen ears in the drawing room, for he would deduct from Rover’s pay, so was an odious boss after all, even IF he was several decks away.

“That was aperitifs’,” a scandalous sea monster not satisfied with three blind white rats that did never play the fiddles and banjo again.

“Ajax toilet rolls, Cubans, Ajax matches,” the usherette in a husky voice as Rover tried hard to hide his laddered stockings behind a laddered stocking.

“Hi honey pie,” the odious sea monster eyeing up the sexy usherette and at once an ambitious cousin who had slithered away returned for he had sensed a sale.

“Woof,” the usherette replied trying hard to put the sea monster off.

But the putrefying sea monster would not admit defeat where love was concerned.

## One Stripe

“Can you read the bottom line?” The ambitious fox asked holding up a sheet with letters on it.

“FRTYUYTR,” the not getting any younger sea monster said not admitting he could not read.

“Sorry it says JKHYGHGBF and I can sell you these cheap glasses at discount of course,” the oily ambitious cousin and smiled showing pearly white teeth with gold fillings.

“Why I have ceramic fillings,” the uncle in the drawing room much annoyed up hearing this several decks away.

And the sea monster seeing the usherette slide away into the shadows shouted, “Gertrude come back my love.”

But Rover was Gertrude’s name so the dog did not obey.

“See they fit perfectly,” the too ambitious salesman sensing a killing and he was correct. Except the killing was not in sales but blood, his for it was threatening to leave him because the exasperated sea monster had him by the bushy tail just above his mouth.

“I see you have much decay in your teeth, I can recommend a dentist on the cheap of course,” the ambitious cousin just before the famished sea monster dropped him in.

“Gulp,” was the sound from the swallowing sea monster.

“Ha he ha he,” was the sound coming from the drawing room as a delirious uncle celebrated and handed out real Cubans to passer bys.

## One Stripe

“Gag,” was the sound of a gluttonous sea monster choking on an ambitious cousin who had straddled his feet in the monster’s throat.

“You have tonsillitis also, I know a cheap doctor who can fix you, does this hurt,” and the ambitious cousin hit the tonsils with his calculator that every prospect bank manager carries.

“Ouch,” the lackadaisical sea monster that should read the small print and check the sell by date before eating things.

“My there are three blind rats down here and they want out,” the ambitious cousin and charged each rat a fortune to give each a hand up, and it was disgusting watching three blind rats covered in green bile and mucus slip away like slugs with legs and because they were blind ran up Rover’s stockings laddering them even mire.

“Ha ha ha,” Rover as the rat’s claws tickled him pink and added, “here get away from the privates,” Rover going bright red as the rats being blind ignored him.

“We are disabled rats so can go anywhere we want as we can’t see the no entry signs,” the rats want you to know and besides Rover didn’t have those signs on him.

The rats were also ravenous and pretty soon Rover was jumping about and worse had thrown his wooden tray full of goodies aside.

“I know that sound, it is a wooden tray full of cheap gifts cast aside, that careless dog is now my Igor as it will take him three incarnations to pay off the damage,” Mr President in the drawing room staggering a bit as the room was warm and the bottle

## One Stripe

of Scottish XXX almost empty; “Hick,” was added to emphasise the president was a secret alcoholic perhaps? At least he did not believe he was speaking to Gad.

“Gad why did you give Rover to me?” Mr President asked suddenly.

And Gad did not reply for Gad was watching poor hapless Rover perhaps?

Rover who had thundered into two loyal friends with shovels full of sweepings looking for an open porthole.

And Rover knocked so hard the sweepings went down an air vent stack on deck but the two friends went with Rover and three blind rats gnawing some thing's they shouldn't, but they were just starving poor diminutive devils.

Bedbugs with tails needing chopping off to match the blindness!

They were rats; dirty horrid flea infested vermin and related to rabbits and squirrels, also hamsters of course. Rodents with elongated incisors given by Gad to make quick work of cornflake boxes; and ringed pink tails to disguise that part as big fat worms.

Big fat tails admired by lady rats only.

And that was not enough, they all crashed into two bats viciously hating reach other so was practising grievous bodily harm on each other.

“Here I am an Afrikaans Chief,” Iddi complained demanding respect but got none except a foot in his right eye and a fist in the other eye.

He also was almost sick as several feet kicked and poked him violently somewhere really hard as the feet belonged to friends and company.

## One Stripe

So had no choice but to go with them.

“Ha ha ha,” Adolph thinking it funny till friends and company rolled over him two dozen times and he could say nothing except, “Ga,” as he was not a very conversant bat at the moment.

“You give me a flower with no petals, to right I don’t love you,” Propaganda kicking Twitching Snout many times here and there as she did not mind where she aimed, as long as it hurt and showed him who wore the trousers.

“Cur blimey,” Shining Sun shivered watching from a shadow swearing he did never get married but then a floozy badger propping up the ship’s bar appeared much the worse off from the propping.

Why she was looking for the rail and saw it in triple vision and worse, it was moving this way and that.

“Let me help you,” the young badger full of the pride of youth and too many male hormones; *a vet was needed.*

So did not see the bunch of acrobats hit him and involve him but not the new girl friend that swayed out of the way, just in time.

And the circus act hit some thousand deck chairs neatly stacked up by two loyal friends and Eye fell out like he had been violently pushed. And the look in his face belonged to someone that wished he was not getting stood on, or throttled or his tongue pulled out of his beak by friends and company.

## One Stripe

These festival performers were in actuality psychopathic psychiatric patients needing help quickly.

“My look what is going on down there?” Crassus leaning over from the crow’s nest he called home and a swarm of flying thingies wanting a better view bumped into him.

“Wasn’t that Caesar Crassus?” Caesar Green Barron asked his new friend Magnificent Air and he knew ruddy well it was.

And didn’t fly one inch to catch him to save Crassus Caesar.

“You mean that thingy hitting the performers below?” Magnificent Air asked and passed some microwave popcorn they had stolen off a passing human ship now covered in Inguano. *Never mind the humans would be rich when they docked so had sprinkled bird seed about the decks to encourage passing albatrosses to land make more gold out of dirt for them.*

“Yes,” Caesar Green Barron.

“Not sure,” Magnificent Air pretending he didn’t know. If Caesar could do that to a Caesar, what could he do to his new friend a Field Marshall waiting to be elected the most powerfulest president ever as generals always are?

And the floozy badger in black stockings and red naughties was ill all down the open mouth of the ill at ease sea monster.

That swallowed it all up and so was ill as well as drunk for the floozy badger had been a drunken floozy badger. The type male badgers like to see in bars of course.



## One Stripe

And then the summer festival actors swarmed all over the sea monster and stood in his eyes kicked his Adam Apple several times hard, raked his green greasy scales in their effort to get a solid grip.

And Rover managed to shake off the three blind rats that ran up the under the weather sea monster's nostrils for they wanted out of the actor's union.

This way and that the rats went, scraping their claws deep raking up things better kept in nostrils.

Nostrils that where now flared and wanting to sneeze.

"All I wanted was a gramophone winder to replace Fred the hermit crab, I wish I never ate him now," the heart-rending sea monster remembering some good old days with the crab that could mimic Cliff Richards, Sammy Davies Junior, Frank S, and some other rats in a pack.

And then sneezed so hard the vagrants on him and in his nostrils went forth to inhabit open port holes where they saw only what the butler was supposed to see, so were dissatisfied.

They saw animals eating meat painted as berries.

Except Rover who saw himself in a mirror asked several times, "What has my evil master turned me into?" For Rover could see he had put on too much red lip stick and blushed as he saw how bad the stockings were laddered.

Why his hairy legs needed shaving and his corset was showing.

## One Stripe

“I smell meat,” One Stripe on the bridge for as dictator had a keen smell for banned sausage meat; and secretly coveted some for eating berries from morning to sunset has that effect upon meat eaters. They start seeing pink elephants and fast food burger outlets behind deck chairs and shower curtains and pigs flying, yes they do.

“So do I,” Mr President but for different reasons for on a silver tray in the drawing room next to an empty Scottish bottle of XXX, a red garter belonging to someone’s new girl friend. Yes and ash from a Cuban smoked cigar and a Fabergé opened egg with curvier in it, and a spoon with some of the black expensive fish eggs in it.

Mr President even had one or two caviare black thingies on his chin as well as red lipstick.

He also smelt heavily of perfume and had what looked like what red knickers in his back pocket.

It seems Mr President was on an entirely different diet from the other beasts that ate berries so the only pink elephants he saw was from detoxification.

So did not see any fast food outlets behind television sets as well. Just his coin meters where those that hired his televisions put their money in. Money he then used to buy imported caviare and silk red knickers and that ridiculous outfit Rover was in.

“It was a spare and meant for Louisiana Belle,” Mr President wanting to explain, her the floozy badger outside staggering about, “and that reminds me I must bill her for what she drunk and ate; and wasted it all being not a hundred percent into that ugly warty barnacle covered sea monster,” the president could be descriptive.

## One Stripe

And staggering opened the locked drawing room door and fell out.

“Mummy is Mr President drunk?” A passing yellow baby chicken asked its mother.

“Of course not dear, he has the flu,” the mother and wisely ushered her chicks out of sight as Mr President noted how fat they were eating berries and thought of tomorrows breakfast, omelettes stuffed with Chicken Chasseur and lunch, Portuguese Chicken and supper Chicken a la King and there was enough of them too last the week.

What had happened to the friend of the dictator that he now made his own secretive menus while a chef in the kitchens had that job? Had no one bothered to ask what Mr President was doing behind those locked drawing room doors?

“Thinking up ways to give us all pensions,” a mother goose in a blue bonnet.

“More likely ways to do you good out of everything you own,” and was a whisper and no one knew who said it, but an ambitious cousin was seen near by slithering in the shadows.

And down the ventilation chute came muck sweepers had shovelled through a ventilation vent as they could not find any open portholes.

“Splat,” it sort of went as it splatted all over Mr President and didn’t half stink.

Why there were things like Dung Beetles living in it and because Mr President had the flu was unable to shift them off his back as they went down his Harrods’s Tweed evening Dinner Jacket, and laid eggs just to be malevolent of course.

## One Stripe

“He’s drunk,” a silly pig and Mr President did not worry, he dreamed of when the chicken was finished of eating Vindaloo Pork for the hot boys, and Pork in barbecue sauce Texan style; and of course Chinese spare ribs.

Anyway something big and nasty was sneezing and sneezing so hard the vents shock and the sneeze came all the way down to the drawing room and hit the silly pig that flew off its feet, hit the corridor wall at three hundred miles an hour; as that is the speed human scientists say a sneeze leaves a big hairy sea monster’s nostrils.

So you see pigs can fly and it was a silly pig because it should have said nothing when it saw Mr President salivating at the gums stinking of expensive Scottish XXX. The pig should have tiptoed silently away but now a drunk was dragging it quickly into a drawing room.

And the drawing room doors where then shut and locked.

“Blame him at the bridge, no more sausages, berry this and berry that, I am a meat eater and proud to eat pigs,” and the drunk stuffed an apple in the wrong place because he was drunk and seeing triple.

And because the pig was unconscious did not howler.

“Uncle, is that a pig?” An ambitious cousin who was also a lock picker and come to investigate a fox drunk vomiting on the expensive lacquered Louis XIV wooden chairs for drawing rooms are for first class passengers only.

## One Stripe

“No it is a berry disguised as a flying fish,” Mr President but this was no ordinary voter like Mrs Chicken. “What are you doing?” Uncle watching his cousin put a napkin on and pick up a silver knife and fork.

“Who needs these,” the cousin and threw the eating apparatus away and they stuck in the wall in a portrait of a president.

An evil omen perhaps?

\*

“I am ill and never got a winder.

Vermin I ate.

And squirrels I do most hate.

I need a new minder.

The last lived in a shell.

And cosseted me well.

Until he slipped and fell.

And I made his life hell.

For I did browbeat.

Order kick and push.

And the shoe made him real mush.

And waste not want not under a good heat.

Crab doesn’t tastes like candy floss.

A year old covered in moss.”

## One Stripe

The down in the dumps sea monster snag but it was more like howling so all the dogs and wolves aboard ship joined in. It was an out of tune hullabaloo but certainly cheered the without a friend in the world sea monster up as he waved good bye to the SS Marie Celeste that was heading towards that Island where the Statue of Liberty stands, built of course by many gay Parisian bakers who settled in New York and made the city well-to-do and well-known selling their soft pastries such as Aberdeen Morning Rolls?

And behind the heart broken sea monster was a Viking rowing boat manned by penguins, about fifty to each side. A rowing boat stolen by a crack museum thief called Stephanie and beside her a friend, That Wonderful Desirable Goddess Floozy Woman; and they both knew how to bake pastries too.

Why Stephanie just said, “Hey penguin number six hundred go bake me fresh bread with raisins and sardines in it.”

And by some miracle the penguin did for it knew what too expect IF the dough did not rise; she would become a penguin in a right stew!

And Stephanie’s friend, That Wonderful Desirable Goddess Floozy Woman was lazier, why she just clicked a thumb and a chocolate cake appeared and she went one better; at her side a replacement for a cockerel.

“Cock a do da do, practice honey,” the witch cooed at the scared stiff penguin that each morning went cock a do da do for it did not want to be turned into a squirrel or a rat or worse, a human Parisian baker.

## One Stripe

And the sound of a long whip hissed along the bare backs of the rowing penguins, as That Wonderful Desirable Goddess Floozy Woman had not forgotten how to use one. “Here have a jellied herring sweetie,” as she threw one to her new cockerel and why she had taken a fancy to just one penguin when there where a hundred rowers? Who knows, pigs can fly but the truth might be nearer to the fact that since they was rowing they smelled bad so could stay where they were; besides they were manacled in case they wanted to leave.

And she also remembered the good old days she had with the cockerel and grandfather gnome and wished she could bring under control her magic sometimes.

What were Stephanie and her friend That Wonderful Desirable Goddess Floozy Woman changing for the better?

“Hiss,” went the very long whip.

“Boot,” went Stephanie’s winter boots.

To encourage swiftness from the rowers of course.

Perhaps some things in life never change but sweeter with age.

“Shriek,” went the penguins on the leeward oars.

“Moan,” went the penguins on the starboard oars.