

One Stripe

Hunted



Illustration 6: Eye the buzzard loved carrion as it had a certain flavour

Now Eye the buzzard is so selfish IF there was a prize for the most selfish being ever he did win.

Now Eye is conceited and cares for none but himself.

Now Eye is a more cunning scheming dreaming beast than the fox.

Now Eye is paranoid for he sees every one hunting him.

Now Eye plans ahead his opponents' downfall.

Now Eye is not known to share a thing.

Isn't this buzzard a wonderful bird?

And once upon a time he soared high in the sky with Black Fur trailing behind.

"Puff pant, where are you going?" Scenting Droppings asked the ferret who had had to tin fast to catch the ferret up..

"With Eye puff pant," the reply for the ferret was running fast to keep up with Eye

"I don't see him?" The weasel.

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“That’s because you cannot see him but he’s just up front,” and the ferret was not good with his words for he was speaking to a dim creature.

“Oh,” the dim creature..

And Eye could not be seen because intuition had come upon him and he was heading west. Not a spare thought for Black Fur who along with Scenting Droppings had to climb dyke stone walls, run through raspberry thorns, sink in cow pats, get kicked by show horses, get chased by dogs, clawed by cats and get shot at to the tune of “There is Eye, I told you just up front puff pant,” Black Fur and followed a black bird and when the bird decided to loose the cut-throats where alone.

“Howl,” for creepy atmosphere.

“There he is puff pant,” Scenting Droppings and both followed a duck.

Eye was going to get Shining Sun, that was the way to get One Stripe; all had a weakness except Eye who was invincible, immortal and intelligent; handsome as well. Now with such attributes how could he fail to too be attracted to the scent of a kill after an afternoon’s glide at the coast?

“Death, the black fin,

Death the stalker of the waves.

Mercy you don’t have.

Every time you must win.

Death the black fin.

Death hideous.

Beastly odious

Why so full of sin.

Death the black fin.

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Death silently fast.

Cuts water your black mast.

Like an arrow to win.”

Thus Eye called the song of the orca and circles down quickly, just in case Death was one of those types that ate in a hurry.

And Death saw the buzzard as desert.

“Give me some for we are friends,” Eye called even before another mouthful was eaten by Death.

And Death had a jolly good laugh.

“We are friends, brother cut-throats you and me,” the buzzard pushing it.

“Oh please tell me, I am so curious?” Death hoping the bird did allow greed to consume.

“A little blubber and I will,” Eye hoping a wave did carry Death out to sea.

“Here,” and Death pushed a little blubber towards Eye hoping to tempt Eye closer.

“For we both hate that badger, I was told what happened here, I have friends amongst the sparrow hawks and how it rained stones and a washed up bra to you indignity,” Eye and saw shame come over Death. “How could one as big as you not eat

a little scrawny badger, please tell me I am so curious?”

And Death knew the bird was being ever so sarcastic, “Oh please come and eat the blubber I gave you,” Death hoping to leap out of the water in the fashion of the orca and gobble the bird up.

“There is a way to get pride back, but IF you eat me all up you will never know, will we?” Eye and Death eased his muscles and sank back in the pool furious for

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curiosity, revenge, darkness and timidity had entered him. And the elastic of a washed up bra was not doing his digestion much good, for it was supple and stretchy so it had caused constipation and prunes was needed quick. 'Berlin' was stamped on the bra and had been thrown out a bothy window after a tourist bus had plunged down a ravine because the driver was asleep so many "Judas Priest someone wake the driver up was heard, on German of course. And because the bus was a mess the tourists had stayed in a bothy and that is the story of the washed up bra; perhaps suffragettes?

"Why so timid Death, has the badger shamed you so much you cannot show your face to me, your brother," Eye and snatched the blubber and Death out of habit lunged for his unsavory meal; but missed and a buzzard was above him, swallowed hard the blubber and pecked and pecked Death's head and poohed too just to be annoying.

"Yucky," Death.

"Silly Death, eat me and the badger's fame will spread and your shame too, is that want you want?" Eye and pecked again for good measure and Death in a shallow pool could do nothing but get pecked.

"Oh my misery, my shame, my infirmity, you win annoying bird so please stop what you are doing," Death pleaded, begged, offering his meal so long as the pecking stopped.

"A pecking we will go," the pecking sounded.

And Eye swooped down picked up the best of the seal and landed atop Death again.

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“Good thing reason over cometh you,” and as he devoured his meal and deliberately missed so a peck was given, explained to Death what needs to be done to make the badger all amiss.

“I really would like to eat that red dog,” Death and Eye knew he had won but wasn’t stupid enough to jump down in front of Death’s mouth.

And Eye told Death his PLAN but not you.

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And it is a horrid feeling to be hunted, akin to walking home in the dark when were-creatures are about howling, when cut-throats want you as dinner so invite you to dinner? That is the feeling that you have when you are hunted.

And, “Pagans, moon worshipers, prawn idolizers” was called out for it was part of THE PLAN, and the crustaceans revolted for so many where they in agreement something revolting must be done to who shouted, “Pagans, moon worshipers, prawn idolizers ”

“Pagans, moon worshipers, prawn idolizers,” the shout came again and all looked at Shining Sun and was the fault of his cute brown eyes just inviting attention.

“Not me, look somewhere else,” but the crustaceans didn’t; they had their villain and knew what to do to him; for the cub was small and they in their millions, “Clicky click,” the claws went to the tune of “Hi ho hi ho I smell the blood of an Englishman,” and was obvious the crabs were Disney fans.

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And in a rock pool behind the cub Death slid beneath the water his work almost done and his throat hoarse from shouting, “Pagans, moon worshipers, prawn idolizers”; wondering what the badger cub tasted like, began to succumb to greed and opened his mouth to wind up front and choked on a bra fastener made in Berlin; greedy silly beast.

And that was THE PLAN for Death to shout, “Pagans, moon worshipers, prawn idolizers” and then Eye did appear and do his bit but you isn't allowed to know his bit and you wouldn't want to anyway for a ferret and weasel glued his feathers in the wrong place.

And “Fine Fur,” leave the cub alone, “a cub in danger,” a mother seal, “indeed a cub on danger,” a hundred mother seals and there was this moving line of fur that moved laboriously towards Shining Sun and the crustaceans.

“I am king of the crabs, all bow to me,” and he was a fine specimen of a green crab if ever seen.

Then a mother seal landed on him and that is why he *was a fine specimen*.

“Murder has been done,” and it took a way over a minute for all the thousand crustaceans to say this as one for they had no king to keep them in chorus.

“Who was done in?” Keen of Scent asking the dancing prawn.

“What’s his name, who knows, who cares, already there are a thousand calling themselves king, one will win I will still dance just as the silvery moon always dances

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with me,” the silky reply and the prawn offered to dance with Keen of Scent and wafted a silken perfumed stocking under his nose.

“Mama,” the aspiring president.

But battle had commenced, between the thousand crustacean new kings and the seals and because it was a little dark, soon all beasts were involved.

“Who did that?” Was heard often.

“Her,” a reply often heard.

“Where are we?” One Stripe asked flicking a star fish of his head.

“Better get Shining Sun and go home, me thinks our work is finished here,” Keen of Scent, “beasts all beasts made without reason and to be meals.”

“Where is Shining Sun?” One Stripe asked in a panic, “Good Grief,” for the cub was gone. Just a star fish lay in a rocky pool and perhaps the evidence left was for atmosphere for THE PLAN was at work here.

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“No more sausage, “Shining Sun repeated often also, “right,” but there was no reply from Eye who had swooped down in the melee and stolen the cub just like that.

“Indeed I am brilliant and what a wonderful PLAN, fool proof,” Eye and such a reply worried the badger cub; it didn’t seem very welcoming.

But gloatingly Eye flew about in circles not knowing what to do apart from praise himself. At least Shining Sun never heard “I am beautiful,” but did hear, “Whose a handsome boy then?”

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And as the cormorant pulled the scarlet sun below the frothing waves Eye was still circling the skies with a sleeping badger cub and this was not part of THE PLAN. And with fatigue came sense, the sea where Death waited for his share of Shining Sun could wait and that was part of THE PLAN; but Eye had scented food and subconsciously his circles were getting wider.

So now you know THE PLAN and to never plan anything with a buzzard who calls himself, “Whose a handsome boy then?”.

“Hello what do we have here?” Eye asked.

.Silence greeted him, there where three now and two black birds the ferret and weasel had been following.

“Thank you,” Eye burped; now there were three and no black birds.

“Is he dinner then?” Scenting Death still with a hole in his tummy.

“Hostage,” Eye.

“What that mean?”

“Is what humans do with chickens, stick them in a hut and take their eggs and the chickens stay put for us to eat because they cannot see what happens to their eggs,” Eye but he was staring at two pairs of dim eyes that glowed yellowish red in the dark. And in reality Eye had no idea what to do with the cub who had become a burden.

“You look after him then, just remember One Stripe will do you good if you harm him, make you wear your fur inside out so you get scratchy inside,” Eye shifting his crime onto others for he was related to Professor Moriarty.

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“We aren’t afraid of no badger with just one stripe,” Black Fur for he could not prophesy.

“Yeh,” Scenting Droppings for he could not think for himself.

“Well obviously forgetting Magnificent Air,” Eye and yawned his body language showing discussion time was over.

“Yes forgot him,” Black Fur proving he was not a prophet.

“Yeh,” Scenting Droppings proving he aped himself.

“I will be back, he better be here, just remember the eagle?” Eye looking for a bed for the night in nearby trees.

“What makes you leader then?” Black Fur forgetting he was.

“Yeh?” Scenting Droppings being an ape again

“Magnificent Air,” the reply from a departing buzzard.

“Yes forgot him,” Black Fur unable to see a connection between the eagle and the buzzard apart from that they was both birds so scratched his head with a lost look.

“Yeh,” Scenting Droppings thinking of far away lands where bananas grew and wondered why and added, “Here friend what are bananas?”

“Apes eat them,” for Black Fur had been in a pet shop once and since no one wanted an ugly looking ferret all black had been taken to a far away land and let loose in the hope he would never come back, but the problem was he was back.

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Once upon a time two friends made their sad journey home in total shock that Death had taken Shining Sun. A thousand crustaceans swore they had seen Shining Sun fall in a rock pool and be taken.

“They are crabs,” One Stripe.

“Yes trying to be king simultaneously,” Keen of Scent.

“Not forgetting a thousand seals saw Shining Sun wading looking for the moon beam in the waves and saw Death take him,” One Stripe.

“Yes all wanting to be queen and squabbling with a thousand new kings,” the fox.

“So there is hope and where hope life,” the badger, “perhaps, birds will bring us the news, cheer up soon be home,” and was gloomily spoken.

“Yes Magnificent Air will help,” the fox showing he had a decent streak struggling to surface..

And Once upon a time when the sun is high and its warmth shielded by the racing gray clouds running away from white clouds that promise warming sunshine, a giant eagle flew in the blue sky.

Beside him a younger eagle complaining about the cold wind, the sun was too bright for the eyes, breakfast was horrible as it was red berries, lunch worse as black berries were eaten and dinner was not to be thought of?

“Small of Wing are we finished,” Magnificent Air asked sweetly.

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“Not quite, look there’s a shrew, it looks like a gooseberry with four limbs and a twitching snout; I am hallucinating, I am ill, the berries I eat give me wind; where are you going?” Small of Wing as Magnificent Air dropped to the shrew.

“No more sausage,” the shrew squeaked trembling.

“It is I foolish beast, Magnificent Air,” for the eagle had an attitude problem.

“How do I know what with my eyes one buzzard looks like another buzzard,” the shrew feeling he was a sausage and obviously being rude. Then Small of Wing landed virtually on top of him.

“Well done, I think you killed him,” Magnificent Air looking close at the shrew.

“No more sausage, I was at the Council of the Great Spirit,” the shrew very close to the eagle that shut his eyes and imagined the shrew was something man had cast aside.

“Anyway I was coming to see you,” the shrew added.

A polite cough was given by Small of Wing, “When, in a thousand years?” For being a flier was ignorant of things called Mole Highways that pretty soon you will have wished you were never illuminated about.

“There are Mole Highways under the ground where shrews travel fast by day and night and worms to eat, not berries,” the shrew deliberately added ‘berries’, for he knew berries was what creatures above ground were eating.

“The law of that Dictator One Stripe beware the ides of March,” for the shrew Twitching Snout had read the classics.

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“Eye the buzzard was seen going west after One Stripe,” and the shrew paused waiting for effect, applause would have sufficed. “And he was seen coming back this way.”

The two eagles looked at each other, west was where One Stripe was, what was Eye up too? *Trouble followed that bird for he abides by his own law.*

And the shrew being a little beast full of confidence since he hadn’t been eaten pushed his luck, went straight up to Magnificent Air and looked him straight in the eye.

“He has friends Eye does.”

“That is not an uncommon occurrence amongst man and beast,” the big eagle.

“Dogs,” the shrew threw venomously and was pleased he had made an effect for the eagle winced. “The rats complain Farmer Jack had a bad harvest and there aren’t enough berries to go around.”

Magnificent Air gave Small of Wind a quick warning look not to look at the shrew as.

“Black Fur and Scenting Droppings are with Eye and they have killed, a lamb,” the shrew as IF he was a shrew flavoured berry wanting eaten.

“Here chew this,” and the shrew gave the smaller eagle gum for the shrew knew chewing gum was the answer to life.

“Horrid tarnation and treble lighting strikes upon them for they will bring man to us sooner than we want,” the big eagle, “We must get every eagle to hunt them down, DEAD or ALIVE.”

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“Preferably dead,” Small of Wing mused and began to hop after Magnificent Air into the air. “Hop hopping hop hip hop,” the eagle hopped.

“Don’t you want to hear the rest?” A squeaky voice drifted up to them for the shrew liked to annoy his listeners and let them leave before the final curtain came down..

“What shrew?” The big eagle who because he was big was not polite for please and with strawberries had not been added to his sentence.

“Eye has Shining Sun prisoner.”

There was a coughing choking sound of a bird that had swallowed a feather the wrong way.

Well it was the little shrew told the eagles the news for when the sun was pulled by the cormorant out of the sea a buzzard was taking steps to meet them; accidentally off course.

It happened thus: Eye woke, scratched his body, looked down at his companions and the cub. Well, Eye could not remember a time when he provide bead and breakfast so flew away; didn’t matter if the others were lost, Eye could see everything up here. And see a baby black bird fall out of its nest.

Lazily the buzzard flew down.

“No sausage,” the mother black bird.

“Shove off,” Eye and not like eating in public flew away.

“Hear that?” Small of Wing.

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Magnificent Air did not reply, someone had died at the hands of a cut-throat.

“That isn’t no pig as pugs cannot fly,” Small of Wing as both eagles approached Eye who brought up correctly, did not rush his food and chewed each bite twenty times.

So upon his third bite had counted eighteen when he saw the eagles, was so surprised and panic stricken he coughed breakfast all out and dropped the rest deliberately using a backward talon movement to get it out of sight; quick it was, a Gaussian Blur that impressionist artists use.

“Meooooew,” the buzzard on recovering his posture.

There was no reply, no ‘No more sausage,’ “I have been rumbled,” the buzzard and toppled backwards so he was missed by the eagles that passed him in a flurry of feathers.

“From this position I see my friends, go away, don’t bring him either,” Eye referring to Shining Sun between the ferret and weasel. “Shred the evidence,” Eye meeoed for IF the eagles saw the badger cub he was a goner.

Now it is said the devil looks after his own and was for Eye that day; for the two speeding eagles over did the adrenalin rush and sped half a mile down the fallow pastures.

“Zoom,” they went.

“See our master feeds us well,” Scenting Dropping helping himself to breakfast.

“Delicious,” Black Fur.

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“Not half,” Scenting Droppings.

And Eye dropped off his upside down perch and seeing the world this way finally noticed the sun was round. He also saw a flock of geese heading to wetlands and two eagles heading back.

It is a brave being who stands in the face of impossible odds and Eye had more sense. He did not mean to be heroic either, but fleeing in the opposite direction of the eagles drew them away from his cut-throat companions.

“Looks after us Eye does,” Scenting Droppings.

“Surely does,” Black Fur with the feeling something was amiss.

“Do I get something to eat please,” Shining Sun.

“Bread and water I heard prisoners get,” Black Fur, “and we don’t have no bread.”

“No water either,” Scenting Droppings.

Just some beings have all the luck while others none. How did Eye lead the eagles into a group of human hunters? Because a group of German tourists bribed the story teller to add this bit.

So :: “Seeking red deer and some farmers just hate eagles; *‘They steal our lambs,’* Farmer Jack and leave the green neaps.

“We have lost him,” Magnificent Air taking Small of Wing behind another valley away from the guns.

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And after many unfruitful searches the eagles went further west quite accidentally of course and met One Stripe and Keen of Scent and a third eagle, Yellow Edge, (peculiar names these eagles have?) Blame the German tourists they pay well.

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“I must get back to the cairn,” One Stripe as if his presence there was needed as a symbol of authority for deep down the stirrings of a dictator had awoken.

“It will take days,” Keen of Scent.

“Not if you climb aboard Yellow Edge and One Stripe on me,” Magnificent Air.

Keen of Scent had heard pigs could fly but?

“Small of Wing will organise the west into a mass of birds hunting the hunted, we will hunt them on the shale beaches, we will hunt them in the rock caves, will hunt them in the forests, we will hunt the hunted, get aboard fox,” Magnificent Air and One Stripe with reservations climbed up. He was a leader amongst badgers, falling off from up there was not to be thought about, a stiff upper lip and he was on the eagle that he found warm; and was shaped like a turkey, big, round and the feathers hard and worse there was things moving in the feathers.

One Stripe wanted off but it was too late.

Now foxes were cunning beasts and weighed the odds up so survived longer and he was not getting on the eagle; he was thinking about falling off, there was nothing to hold you on except breezy air.

“I want to live,” the fox making his reason clearer.

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And it is called persuasion as Small of Wing asked Yellow Air how big the hound pack coming this way was. Hounds that shredded little cute foxes.

“Was that the sound of the horns?” Yellow Edge; called psychology and with shut eyes Keen of Scent got airborne. Not a protest escaped his lips because they were shut so tight.

Not a thought about falling off entered his head because he was praying repeatedly.

Not a shake went through his legs because they were gripping the eagle hard.

“Cur blimey,” his eagle winced.

And so they headed west and those without tickets should not complain about free rides.

Never had the two beasts been in the sky before; it was amazing stuff.

Amazing the air was so clean.

Amazing there were no men here.

Amazing they could see for miles.

Amazing the fox had opened one eye at first, a slit, just enough to see the puffy clouds and a duck passing.

Amazing he did not pass out.

Amazing he managed another eye open to find a way down.

Amazing he thought when he saw ants running about the fields.

Amazing he did not realise it was cows.

Truly amazing.