

One Stripe

Armies meet



Illustration 9: He flew over the changing mountains

Now great was the dust clouds that the strong winds caught and took to the clouds, so when it rained it was sludge; for One Stripe was at the head of his host seeking Eye the buzzard.

“For Eye is dastardly,” the reason given.

And Caesar Crassus carried on the arms of two polecats led a host seeking One Stripe.

“For One Stripe is too hygienic and has washing days for beasts to partake regularly,” his reason given.

And Framer Jack led a host of Farmer Jacks’ seeking beasts for there was no more Sunday roast apart from parsnip.

One Stripe

And that would not do.

“We want our leg.

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.”

Was heard from Framer Jacks for they was mealy loud
mouths and staggering for on the backs of laborers barrels of XXX; which they
stopped to partake often for they was a bunch of alcoholics.

Which is the real reason why their neaps was always green.

And laborers did not come cheap for they knew the donkeys had run away;
though not as fast as a horsie. And now there was no donkey rides at the sea shore but
laborers running up the shale beech with kids on their backs with whips and spurs
for laborers did not expect to be treated right.

“Make us jump high fences too,” the laborers for they were laborers.

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And that is how General Magnificent Air met the Falconidae .

“No more sausage,” a Merlin sweetly hoping to fool the eagles.

“You should be with us, not that buzzard Eye,” Magnificent Air maneuvering his many companions so the sun was behind them for he had been to the movies so was not fooled by sweet talking falcons.

“Berry eaters,” was the reply from the Merlin and his name was The Green Baron and he had green ribbons fixed to his wing feathers so they whistled, loudly and was very irritating.

“Whistle,” they went.

“Stay close together and watch your flanks,” Magnificent Air and led his eagles out of the sun.

“We are outsmarted, 12 o’clock high boys,” Green Barron and tried hard to lead his Falconidae up to the eagle threat.

“3 o’clock bandit 3 o’clock,” was heard as Small of Wing warned Yellow Edge a Sparrow Hawk was on his tail.

“Rattatatatat,” was heard often and birds seen gyrating earthwards.

And they had no parachute for some general thought a jolly good idea..

And Green Barron flew next to Magnificent Air and they looked at each other and then saluted recognizing each others bravery; then tried to kill each other. The Peregrine Falcon was too fast for the eagle to catch, and the eagle too big and blooming nasty for the falcon to do good.

And the cut-throats and Law Abider's stood still below watching the dog fights streak the blue sky as fighters sought cloud cover and the sun to come out of in screaming dives.

One Stripe

And many a beast below aspired to fly but pigs don't fly but try telling a pig that or a bull?

"We are winning," One Stripe seeing the eagles chase the Falconidae over the horizon.

"Now," Keen of Scent shouted seeing a chance at fame and glory, for he had jumped on the back of a plough horsie, "At them me hearties, no quarter, give One Eyed Rover some booting," he urged the host on but the horsie he was on did not move and the fox did not urge it forward for he was not daft.

"Some are born to lead and some follow blindly, just look at them, they make me proud," the fox watching the host amble forward for no one was in hurry to do and get done. It was such a lovely day just right for picnics.

"Pickled eels, cockles, crisps," aspiring cousins dreaming of a political career.

And the cut-throats seeing the Falconidae fly away took that as a bad omen they did and did not wait for the Law Abider's to melee with them, for being on high ground could see Farmer Jack approaching; and they knew what that meant, the slaughter house so cleared off for they were sensible.

"We win, we win," the red fox making sure he out shouted One Stripe for he dreamed of being president not dictator for he knew aspiring politicians needed the vote of the populace. For the fox knew the power of billboard advertising for on his nightly travels saw them and read them, but because he was a fox only imagined he read them for he was illiterate.

And the host surged forward mooing and barking and ba ba ing and the din was horrid.

One Stripe

“What are we fighting,” a Farmer Jack seeing double but hearing clearly the din.

“Banshee were-creatures,” his companion and drank more Dutch for courage.

“Where are those laborers and the XXX?” Another for XXX made you thirsty and the laborers had stopped.

“We are on strike,” they passed back to Farmer Jack and the latter was not happy for that was the supply of Dutch courage.

“There is nothing in the contract we must be eaten and torn apart by were-wolves and our blood drunk dry by Count Dracula and his wives.”

“Here no one told me there was were-wolves ahead?” A staggering Farmer Jack and tripped so his shot gun went bang.

And he shot a drunk bending over a bush making rude noises as he got rid of the courage.

“Here no one told me we was fighting Count Dracula, I saw the repeat last night and he sucks you dry with long viscous fangs,” he who staggered to the laborers but tripped and fired his shot gun and hit a barrel of courage.

No one minded the drunk jumping up and down holding his pellet ridden bottom, but the XXX was another matter.

“Here, Farmer Jack is trying to kill us,” a laborer and fled with a barrel of XXX strapped to his back.

A twenty five gallon barrel and it made sloshing noises.

And above them on the mountain side a question was asked.

One Stripe

“What is that din?” One Stripe just like any other normal badger would ask.

“Farmer Jack,” Keen of Scent sniffing the air, recognizing the smell of drinking too much covering the grass, spilled takeaways and the screams of victims getting bashed by drunks, and not forgetting the screams of drunks getting bashed by many drunks.

“We are sandwiches,” One Stripe meaning they was between Eye and Farmer Jack.

And Keen of Scent a schemer dreamer saw he would be vice president if they were defeated and made into black puddings. “Friends,” he shouted at the disappearing host, “follow me One Stripe orders it, forward,” and went the other way but the order had been given so would not be blamed for the disaster for a fox is always a fox; he who sells you an empty packet of mints and worse, it is raining and the newspaper bundle he promised with crispy battered cod in it had rain water instead.

“I must save the day,” One Stripe for he knew how to act like a dictator and emperor and president for he had dignity and unlike the fox was not a politician.

And the weather at the top of mountains is not stable and the Aurora Boleros happened, when the sky is filled with colors and comets fall to earth.

“Cernunnos,” it just takes one and was a chicken, an escaped archaeologists pet from Time Team, so knew all about the ancient gads; so clucked, “the gods are amongst us,” and sought shelter for it didn’t understand what the Aurora Boleros was for it was a dim witted beast and never made primary one.

One Stripe

And One Stripe climbed a tree and shouted, "Follow me," then "Cernunnos?" And looked for the animal god of animals and found him wanting.

"Cernunnos?" The many Farmer Jacks and laborers doing malicious harm to themselves for they knew he was not a church going god but something that hid under your bed so stopped their malicious damaging and huddled together afraid; just in case Cernunnos was a friend of Count Dracula and his wives.

And then it rained good, so heavy you asked, "Is that you Freya?" And had a good feel with hands held out and was punished good by Farmer Jack for it was not. It rained blackness upon the land and the host of One Stripe could not see the host of Crassus and got lost and the host of Crassus could not see the way to the castle and got lost.

"Where are we?" Green Barron and being a hero buzzed the drunks below who shouted.

"Valkyries are upon us," for the church might have told them not to listen to local gossip about winged women warriors from you know where, but they listened and now paid for it. And if they hadn't been falling about with too much XXX might have not acted as well, drunks then!

"I want home," Farmer Jack thinking of Willamina and a hot water bottle.

"I like my Valkyrie," a Farmer Jack hugging what he thought was Freya so started screaming and moaning when it turned out to be Fred the neap farmer for they were all green neap farmers.

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And with a wail and a chattering of teeth for the rain is freezing, Farmer Jack tried to follow the labourers and “We are lost,” was heard often.

“What blooming idiot suggested coming up here in the first place?” Was also aired too.

“It is the end of the world,” someone with hiccups and the men knew all about that day; there was no more XXX and tea and creamy tarts so were afraid and moaned.

That’s when Magnificent Air and his eagles following Green Barron could not leave all the glory of doing Farmer Jack to cut-throats joined in the aerial display.

And in the rain and gloom the drunks saw them as flying gobblers come for vengeance for what happens to gobblers on Christmas day and turkey farmers get rich.

So Framer Jack got his just deserts and moaned.

And the moans to a partridge is something nasty.

“The end of the world is upon us,” the partridge so all the beasts got really worried.

It just takes one and shouldn’t hate the partridge.

Now a beast is a beast so is ignorant of electricity apart from it makes the billboard advertisement glow at night, so One Stripe shouting “Follow me,” at the top of a tree on a rainy night was asking for it.

And golfers shouldn't play golf in the rain either for the same reason.

One Stripe

“Fizzle,” or was it more of a “Zap,” but the smell of singed fur was horrid, in fact ruddy well disgusting; worse than the wet dog and there were many of those running about.

“I am finished,” the badger just managed as he toppled from the tree and this was not the movies so hit the ground hard, with a thud like a bag of potatoes falling off the back of a lorry and the neighborhood had chips for a week.

And worse things were to happen as he lay moaning and groaning and was trampled upon many times as cut-throats, Law Abider's, Farmer Jacks and labourers with barrels on their backs ran this way and that way, over him of course.

Poor One Stripe but at least he wasn't shouting, “Follow me,” as no one took any notice of that anyway.

“My friend, I will save the day,” for the fox was back for he was fed up running nowhere.

“Shout follow me and lead the host to safety,” One Stripe and moaned a bit.

And Keen of Scent knew what happened when the badger shouted “Follow me,” so wisely declined.

But to his credit he stayed with One Stripe and put up with the moans and groans that would turn a normal beast pallid so might explain his whitish look as IF he had seen a ghost.

“Here that fox has seen a ghost so the host ran about till day break when the cormorant that pulls the sun took it back in the sky and sunshine came.

One Stripe

But up north it rains 365 days a year so the sunshine lasted ten minutes only.

“If I keep selling sun glasses I will go broke, I must diversify, I will sell mice to keep in the back pocket and so keep the bottom warm,” the oily fox and the idea took off for the mice were so small you did not need to go behind a big boulder with an even bigger dark shadow.

“We love eating berries,” many Law Abider's and was lies.

“Here you are not my Willamina,” was heard often also from neap farmers running about.

Anyway: “The full moon is gone so have the were-wolves,” from those seeking a cure for too much XXX.

“Yes, all the vampires too,” for they were idiots but men and kept the lunar calendar for their turnips and lambing seasons.

“Cernunnos has not spat lighting on us,” a dim partridge and was almost the truth but in all that running about no one had noticed One Stripe or they would not have trampled him so many times.

“Where am I?” Crassus asking from a clump of something you don’t want to know for he had been abandoned by his carriers who had said, “Save yourselves boys,” from Crassus but was implying he needed saving first.

And in the sky above an eagle and a falcon saluted each other for they were the few whom the rest owned so much too.