

The Fields of Governance

Flash Fiction Entry by A.D. Downton

There were five friends that set out on the fateful journey. The country was at a turning point and the vacuum of power was ready for new seeds. The five all agreed that it was time for a change, and they were together in their mission to achieve fair governance.

All friendship groups have a leader. One who's loud and brash. They called him Lion, and he protected his friends fiercely, taking on all responsibility and blame as they planted themselves in the public field.

The first to go was Stallion. The journalists had loved him, fighting amongst themselves for a shot of his handsome smile. What he said didn't matter; it wasn't important. But the media are like a virus, and vanity has its flaws. He'd galloped with a mare that wasn't his wife, and his shame had been cut down and spread across the world. The group never heard from him again.

Vixen was soon to follow, through no fault of her own. She was calculating and careful, as powerful women often were, and her enduring nature had held the group together. Vixen had controlled Lion, recognised Shrew's potential, and read through Snake's lies. But no party can progress to power without a sponsor, and sponsors don't like change. Vixen was clever, and she was different. So, the sponsors destroyed her. Her name became a joke, her fashion laughed upon and her speeches went unheard. Until eventually... she upped and left.

Shrew had been sad to see Vixen go. His quiet and innovative ideas had been valued by her when no-one else would acknowledge them. Growing and shaping them into policies for Lion to share with the world. Shrew lived in the background, greasing the cogs to allow Lion and Snake to talk up the crowds to their advantage. But as the polls turned to their favour, his work was no longer needed.

Shrew had awoken the next day to a Police Officer and a pair of handcuffs, with over a hundred charges of fraud and embezzlement against his name. There was once a time where Lion would have stood against the world, trusting his loyal friend's innocence... But Snake had been sowing the seeds of doubt for many years now,

and such words had made Lion suspicious. Rather than risk his own tail, Lion had stepped back and allowed the reactive world to whisk Shrew away. And with that, only two remained.

Lion stood at the tip of the victorious peak, waiting to greet his followers with a grand smile. But then a hand placed itself on his back, and Lion turned to see Snake stood behind him, blue eyes aglow. Snake pushed hard, and the alpha was toppled... Friends no longer.

The group had planted themselves together in this stricken field, hoping to produce a crop that was fair and equal... But the end harvest would be the same as it always was. Ruthless and corrupt.