

Lord of the Wings – Claudia, Year 6, NSW

A banana skin shot through the air like a bullet, carefully aimed at a lowly bird minding its own business. SPLAT! The bird topples over from the sheer force of it.

“BULLSEYE!” a kid shouted, “HAHA THAT’S WHAT YOU GET YOU FILTHY OLD BIN CHICKEN!”

The bird lowers its head in shame, but this slowly turns to rage. He looks at the three kids laughing at him, all holding phones to presumably upload this cruel display onto their internet, feeding their lives to it as it sucks the planet dry.

Well, enough was enough. The bird squawked ferociously and started pecking and scratching the bullying boys. They screamed and ran away as fast as their short stubbly legs could go.

“MEETING NOW!” the furious bird squawked, scaring away various other species of birds around them. You see, this was no ordinary bird. This was an ibis, and not just any ibis but... Dave! King of the Ibis! Or as many others know them, the smelly bin chicken.

But back to the story.

A few moments later, some other ibis appeared. They were known as the counsel. They made all of those momentous decisions everyday ibis weren’t allowed, let alone able, to make.

“Why have you summoned us, your highness?” the elderly one with the monocle inquired.

“I have called you here today,” the King (or Dave) started, “To address a major problem for ibis everywhere.”

“Hoomans?” a young energetic ibis asked.

“Yes, thank you John,” the King sighed, then continued, “Humans are becoming a bigger and bigger problem, treating us, a species once viewed as GODS like rats with wings!”

“We still get a better rap than pigeons,” a quiet ibis muttered, and many others muttered in agreement.

“Ahh but THAT is the problem!” The King then proceeded to pull out a chart. “These are the ibis poll numbers for 2023, they are somehow currently lower than the pigeons and they are predicted to go down by at least 5% each year!”

An ibis with big wire rimmed glasses pulled out a calculator and began calculating, then gasped “Bu-bu-but that means by 2025--”

“YES!” The King ibis interrupted, “By 2025 we will only have one single follower!” Many gasps went around the group of appalled birds.

“THIS SHALL NOT STAND!”

“WE DESERVE RESPECT!”

“THE IMPUDENCE!”

These cries plus many more gathered up and for a second, the ibises looked as if they were going to start a riot!

“SILENCE!” The King shouted, “I have a plan, even though I just thought of it three minutes ago I am sure it is fully foolproof. My fellow ibis, TONIGHT WE STEAL THE INTERNET!”

“YES!”

“BRAVO!”

“AMAZING!”

The cries of praise kept coming and the King Ibis grinned and grinned, soon the grin started to look sinister. He started to laugh, a cold, malicious, sinister laugh. This ibis wanted revenge and he wanted it to sting like a wasp. He longed to be worshipped as he was in the old times. The Egyptians viewed the ibis as gods and they weren't far off, there was a reason Dave was king. Dave has a secret, but more on that later...

But, there was one ibis who did see a flaw with this plan. His name was Gerald.

“But your Eminence,” Gerald began, summoning all of his courage and bravery, “That would completely collapse their society! I know humans are bothersome but is it worth destroying everything they've built? You know they COMPLETELY rely on technology, all of this just because they don't worship us, I mean come on! We do eat out of bins and poop everywhere, doesn't that seem even a little bit gross to you?”

“Hmmm.” The King considered this for a moment as did the other ibis, “Nope, sorry Gerald but the humans must pay, and for sticking up for them, why I believe that is a form of mutiny! By the Gods! And by that of course I mean us. Why Gerald, that's absolutely scandalous!”

On hearing this Gerald's beak dropped so low, it looked like it was just holding on to his flabbergasted, feathery face!

“Gerald,” said the General in a scary voice that suited the scary bird, “For this disgusting act of mutiny that has tainted this very fine evening, you are stripped of your rank.”

For once in this feathered court room there was complete silence, no one dared to move, no one dared to whisper, even the crickets who would normally chirp at awkward moments like this were silent.

Gerald's eyes were empty, everything he had ever done just tossed aside, he only wanted to help the community, the common ibis problems, but he had gotten sucked into this nauseating dictatorship. *In a way*, Gerald thought, *I'm free*. Yes that thought remained, but it was

nothing against the strong ringing sensation in his ears. He walked away without a word, the council dissipated, with no one to stop them, the world was doomed!

Soon, night fell and The Council of Ibis crept quietly into the main control centre of the internet and mechanical device centre. This place could turn the entire internet off and all they had to do was cut the wires, and with the help of their beaks they cut them... and slowly but surely they crept back into the darkness they came from. They left but one feather.

Morning came quickly, as did the screams. Hundreds, thousands, millions, BILLIONS of people were wailing in distress as they quickly discovered nothing was working! Not the computers, not the television, nothing! Though the screams quickly quieted, it was (for all they knew) just a power outage, but then the next day came, and nothing worked. Then the next week came, that's when people were starting to break down, school became harder, work was NOT working, and all that was left to do when you came home was talk to your annoying sibling! What could be worse?

More people were taking notice as more problems came into play, there was no Bingeing, no social media, no video games working! Eventually they called in a top detective called Agent Jones, he discovered the cut wires and a single feather, he took it home to test it. It would take exactly one month to get everything working again, and people were not mad, they were FURIOUS!

Agent Jones got his feather and put it in the machine and after about an hour the DNA test was complete. He was shocked to discover that the culprits were ibis!

It was that single moment that changed the world forever. People started hunting ibis, getting revenge. Nowhere was safe, food was running low for everyone. No one and nothing was safe, streets became empty. Humans began planning an attack on the last ibis refuge, making sure these pests were exterminated.

The day came, the attack was upon the birds who were unsuspecting and innocent, then like viper, quick and silent, they struck! Squarks and squawks of pain filled the room. Some ibis tried to fly away but they had placed a net in the trees to stop them! The king awoke and suddenly people found out why the ibis were once viewed as Gods.

The King Ibis' eyes turned amber, except for one ebony black pupil. His snow white feathers tinted to a lifeless grey and he suddenly grew in size - in minutes he was as big as a house, then a mountain. He nearly outgrew the archipelago the ibis refuge was based on. His squark was more like a roar now, and his wings became like wings of a gigantic dragon. He breathed fire, and it became clear that this war had become armageddon, the end of this world and many others, everyone was running and screaming.

The situation was dire and fear spread like wildfire. The Ibis King turned to the remaining humans who had mediaeval style catapults, loaded with a lethal amount of garbage. The human General told the crew to fire on three.

The ibis's eyes narrowed.

“ONE,” The General yelled, “TWO,” The ibis moved menacingly, “THREE!”

“STOP!” a young ibis yelled at the top of his voice. He may have lost his job but he had not lost his bravery. It was Gerald!

“Is this worth the pain? The suffering? You lost the internet, and now you're about to lose an entire species! The internet was destroying our planet and your lives, if you do this you can't undo it. I ask you out of pure sincerity, is all of this worth it? Look at what you're doing, destroying lives, families, it's not worth it.”

The General lowered his hand, motioning for them to stop, “Perhaps, we were mistaken, I'm sorry.”

It was over, the war had ended, the internet was back and now ibis were much more respected. All was well for now, although... The other day I did hear a few pigeons talking about overthrowing the government, but I'm sure that meant nothing, right?