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Opening extract from

Ninja Meerkats: The Eye of the Monkey

Written by

Gareth P. Jones

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For Aled and Owain Lewis
~ G P J

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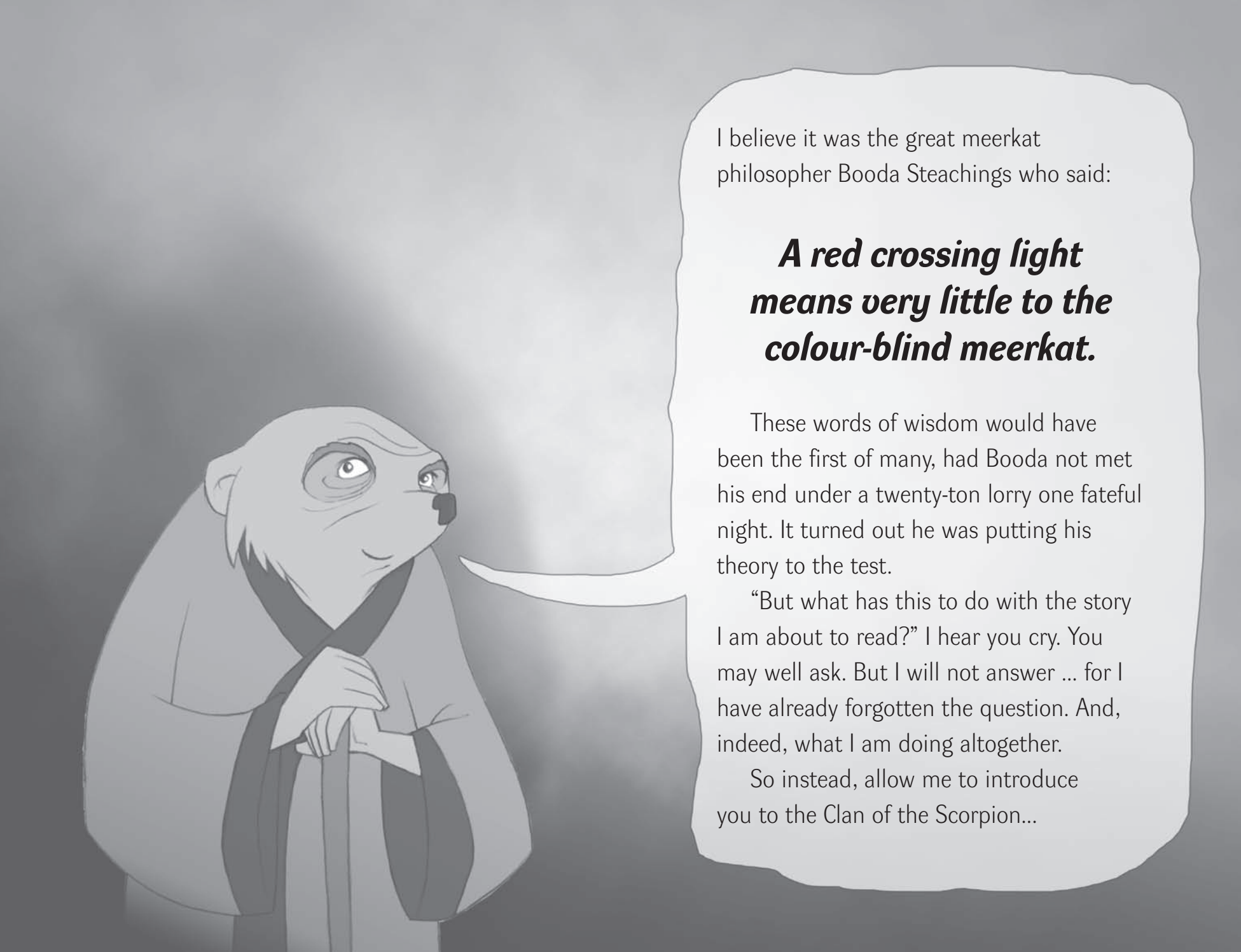
NINJA MEERKATS



THE EYE OF THE MONKEY

GARETH P. JONES

Stripes



I believe it was the great meerkat philosopher Booda Steachings who said:

A red crossing light means very little to the colour-blind meerkat.

These words of wisdom would have been the first of many, had Booda not met his end under a twenty-ton lorry one fateful night. It turned out he was putting his theory to the test.

"But what has this to do with the story I am about to read?" I hear you cry. You may well ask. But I will not answer ... for I have already forgotten the question. And, indeed, what I am doing altogether.

So instead, allow me to introduce you to the Clan of the Scorpion...

Four ninja meerkats, all powerful warriors, ever ready to leave their home in the Red Desert and save the world from our deadly enemy, the Ringmaster.



Jet Flashfeet: a super fast ninja whose only fault is craving the glory he so richly deserves.



Bruce "the muscle" Willowhammer: the strongest of the gang, though in the brain race he lags somewhat behind.



Donnie Dragonjab: a brilliant mind, inventor and master of gadgets.

Chuck Cobracrusher: his clear leadership has saved the others' skins more times than I care to remember.



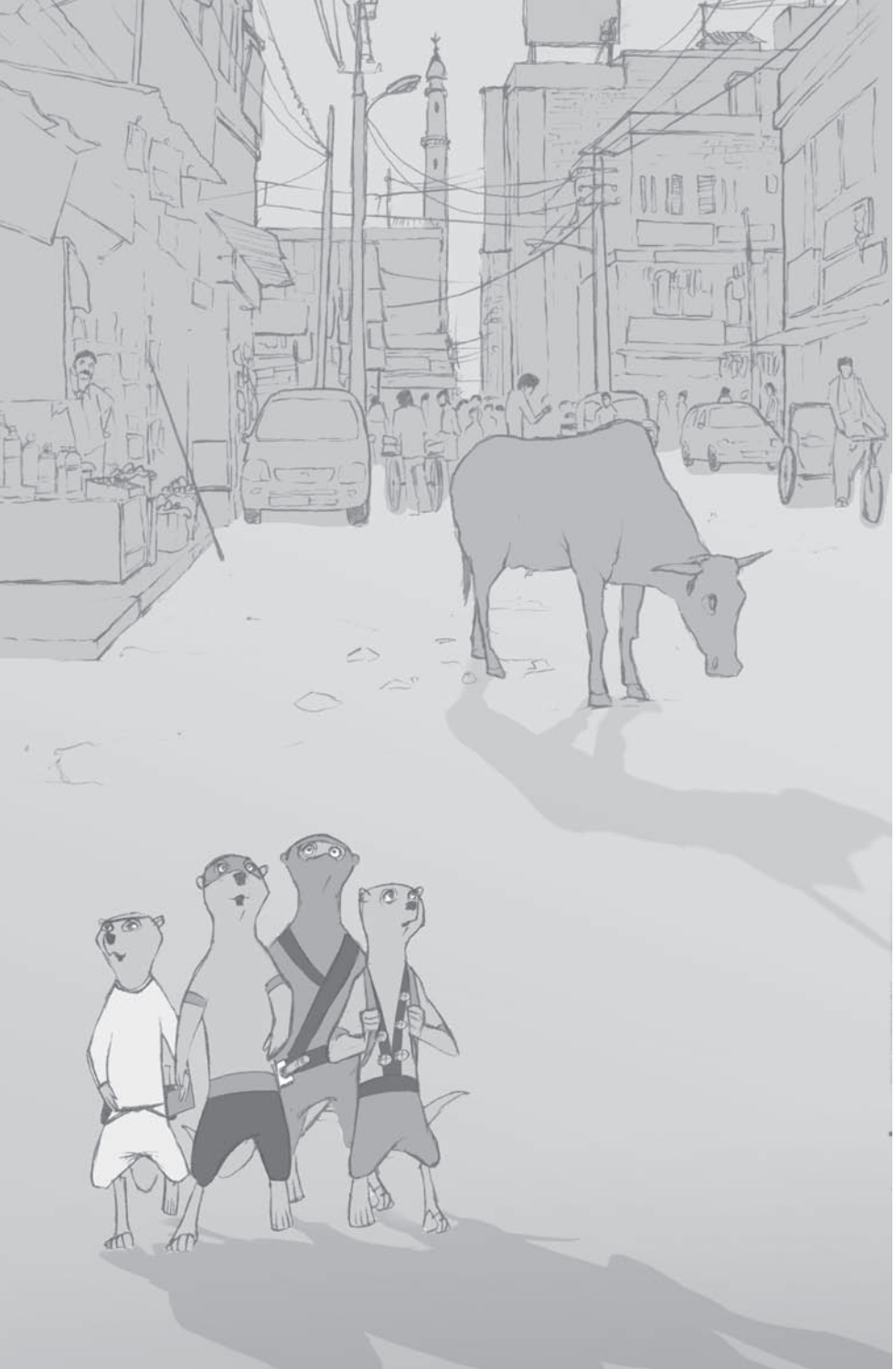
Oh, and me, Grandmaster One-Eye: as old and wise as the sand dunes themselves.

In this adventure, the Clan journey to India to help out an old friend of mine, known as the Delhi Llama. He was a fearsome fighter in his day and it was he who introduced me to the poetry of Alan Gwidge-Smith. I will leave you with one of his poems:

When it rains, I do often wish
That I had a big umbrella.
But when the sun shines in the sky
I'm happy as any fella.

Enjoy the story of...
THE EYE OF THE MONKEY.





CHAPTER ONE

THE DELHI LLAMA

The streets of Old Delhi can be a confusing place for newcomers. They are noisy, dusty and jam-packed with cars, vans, rickshaws, bicycles, street sellers, tourists and cows, which are allowed to wander anywhere they wish, getting in everyone's way. This can also be said of the tourists, although the cows tend to take fewer photos.

On this particular morning there were also four meerkats, who were enjoying the hustle and bustle because it allowed them to walk unnoticed through the streets.

"I still don't understand where we're going," said Bruce.

"We've been through this," said Donnie, who was wearing a hefty backpack full of gadgets, disguises and inventions. "We have come to see Smo Ka, the Delhi Llama."

"Smo who the what?" said Bruce.

"Smo Ka, the Delhi Llama. He's a kung fu legend," said Jet. "He invented the Lightning Spin Kick, a kick so fast if you blink, you'll miss it. I've never managed it, but I'm hoping he'll give me some tips. He also wrote *The Four Elements of Kung Fu*. I've brought along my copy to have it signed." Jet held up a well-thumbed book from his collection of martial arts manuals.

"Many years ago, Smo Ka trained with our own Grandmaster One-Eye," said Chuck. "That is how he came to hear of us and why he requested our help."

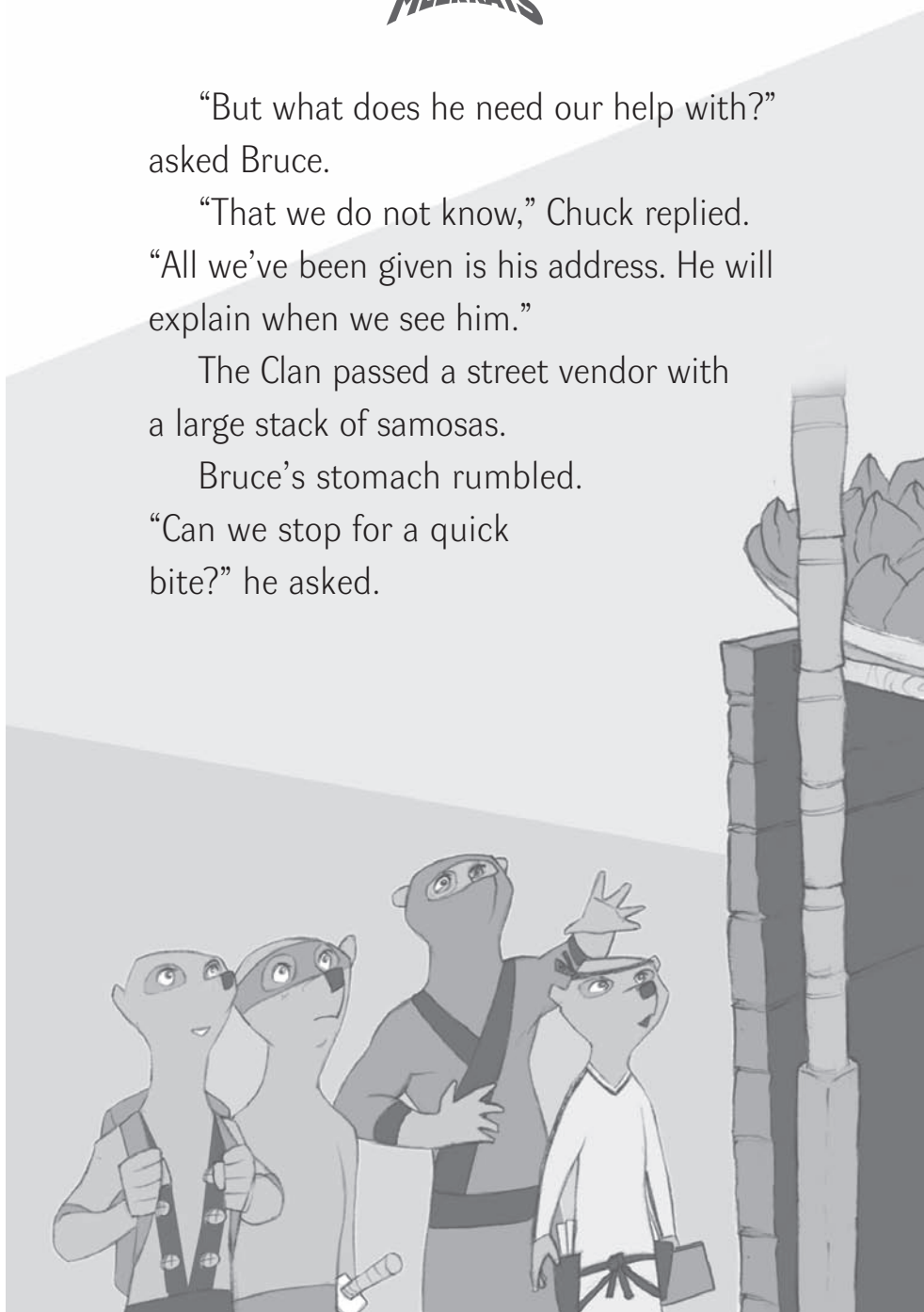
NINJA MEERKATS

"But what does he need our help with?" asked Bruce.

"That we do not know," Chuck replied. "All we've been given is his address. He will explain when we see him."

The Clan passed a street vendor with a large stack of samosas.

Bruce's stomach rumbled. "Can we stop for a quick bite?" he asked.



"No, Smo is expecting us," replied Chuck.

"But what about breakfast? All I've eaten since we left the Red Desert were those sugar-coated ants' antennae," moaned Bruce. "And doesn't my mum always says it's important to try the local food?"

"Your mum has never left her burrow in her whole life," said Jet.

"Exactly. She always eats locally," replied Bruce.

Donnie rolled his eyes. "All right, I'll get you one of those samosas." From his backpack, he pulled out a device made from a fishing rod and a pair of tweezers. He cast the line, sending the tweezers flying into the air. They latched on to a samosa on the top of the pile.

"Nice one, Donnie," Bruce cheered.



But the flying snack did not go unnoticed by the street vendor. "My samosa has sprouted wings," he cried.

"Donnie, like the elephant who puts on a bikini and enters a beauty contest, you are drawing too much attention to yourself," said Chuck sternly. "Release the samosa."

"Sorry," said Donnie. He reeled in the line and dropped Bruce's snack on the ground.