

The Boneless King

by Ambrose Bierce

Some Apes who had deposed their king fell at once into dissension and anarchy. In this strait they sent a Deputation to a neighbouring tribe to consult the Oldest and Wisest Ape in All the World.

"My children," said the Oldest and Wisest Ape in All the World, when he had heard the Deputation, "you did right in ridding yourselves of tyranny, but your tribe is not sufficiently advanced to dispense with the forms of monarchy. Entice the tyrant back with fair promises, kill him and enthrone. The skeleton of even the most lawless despot makes a good constitutional sovereign."

At this the Deputation was greatly abashed. "It is impossible," they said, moving away; "our king has no skeleton; he was stuffed."