

The Wise Owls

by the Senate of Canada



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There are 105 senators in Parliament,
each one representing a region and championing causes.



How did they get there?



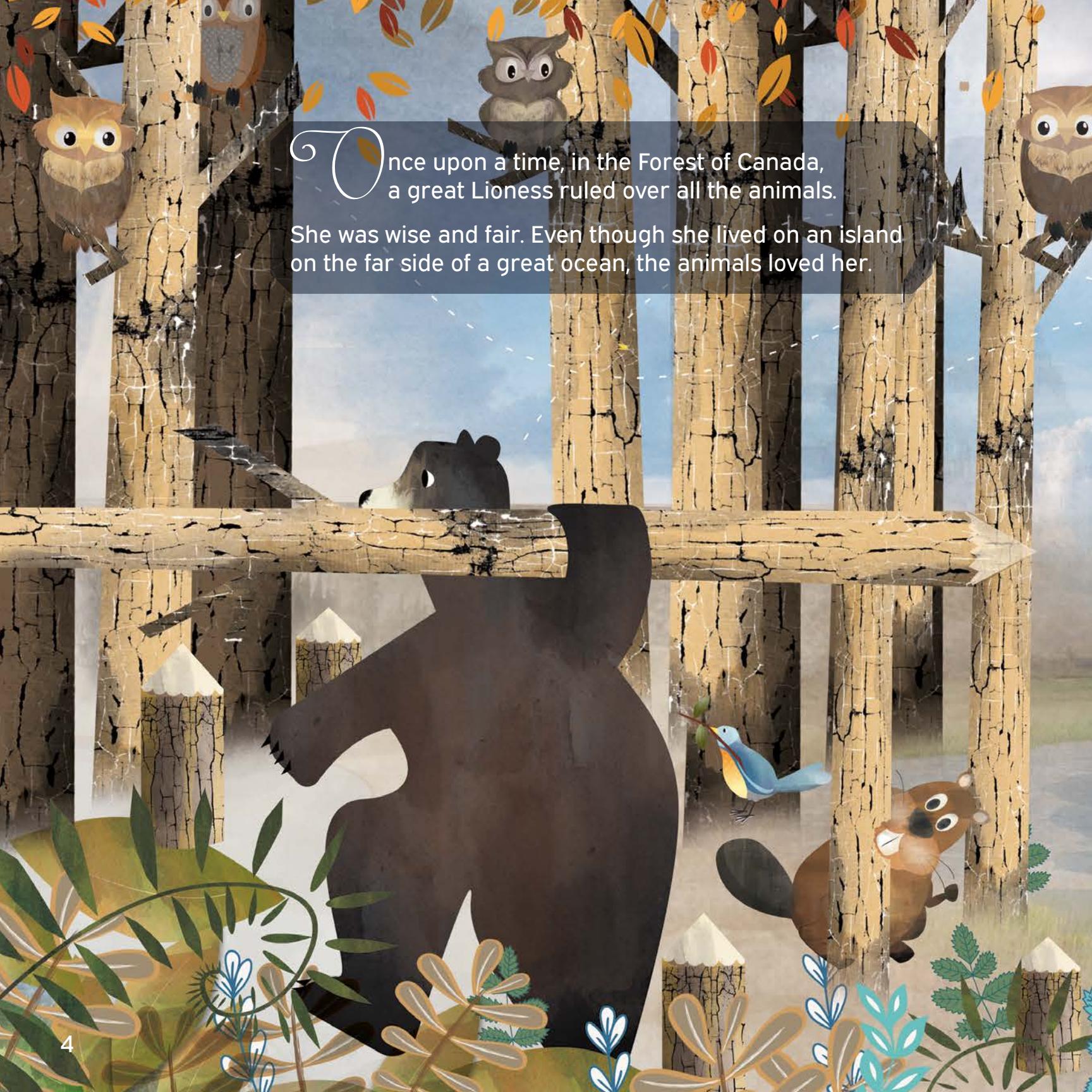
How did the Senate of Canada come to be?



Read on to learn how these Wise Owls took their place in Parliament.



Senate



*O*nce upon a time, in the Forest of Canada, a great Lioness ruled over all the animals.

She was wise and fair. Even though she lived on an island on the far side of a great ocean, the animals loved her.

As the animals grew older, they learned more and more about how to live together in the woods. They discovered that, by working together, they could get more done than they could by working alone.

Together, the animals made sure each one had water to drink and food to eat, and they no longer scratched or clawed or bit each other when they argued.





So the animals started to talk about ruling themselves. They wanted to build a Big Den where a Council of Animals would make decisions about how to run the Forest.

Soon, the woods were filled with animals giving wonderful speeches to each other about how they would make decisions on the Council.

As it turned out, the animals picked the most popular among them to sit on the Council.

The Foxes chose the slyest Fox.

The Wolves picked the fastest member of their pack.

And the Moose chose the strongest, tallest bull with the biggest antlers to speak for them.



From their perches high up in the trees,
the Owls watched in silence.

Sometimes the other animals would even forget
the Owls were there – they were so quiet.



Everyone in the Forest knew the Owls were wise.
They had been in the Forest as long as anyone could
remember. They had big eyes to see whatever was going on.
And when they took to the skies on their big, soft wings,
they could see the entire Forest from east to west and
from north to south.

The Council of Animals worked well – but it didn't take long to realize the animals sometimes thought only about what was good for their own kind.



Beavers knew about building dams but not about leading a Wolf pack.



Moose knew about grazing but not about chopping down trees.

Squirrels knew about gathering nuts but not about fishing.



Soon, their differences turned into bickering.

One week, a Beaver came to the Big Den and asked to cut down 20 trees to make a lodge for all the Beavers in his pond. The Council gave its permission.

So the Beaver went to work but he was so happy in his task that he didn't notice a Squirrel's nest in a tree he was chopping down.

As the tree tumbled to the ground, the Squirrel leapt to safety.

"You destroyed my home!" Squirrel said.

A Badger squeezed his way out from beneath the fallen tree and joined the frantic Squirrel.

"Your tree smashed my front door!" Badger said to the Beaver. "How dare you?"

"It is the will of the Council of Animals," Beaver said.

"That will not bring back my home," Squirrel said.

"That will not rebuild my front door," Badger said. "Who will help us if the Council does not treat us fairly?"

My house!

My front door!

It is the will of the
Council of Animals...



ROARRR

All of the animals began to argue.

Suddenly, a great roar silenced the beasts.

"Enough!" shouted the Lioness.

"I have given you what you wanted and still you are unhappy. Can you not govern yourselves?"



The animals scratched their heads and swished their tails. Night fell and they had still not found a solution.



Just then, a Wise Owl alit on a tree branch, silhouetted against the glowing moon.

"You have voted to put your fellow animals in charge," the Owl told them, "but they must represent you all."

"We Owls have been part of the Forest for years. We know that the needs of Foxes are not those of Rabbits and that your differences are what make this Forest such a beautiful place to live."

A shaggy Bear rose to her feet.

"I would feel better if the Owls kept an eye on the Council of Animals," she said.

The other animals agreed and asked if the Owls would form a second council to make sure every decision would benefit every animal. They chose to call the new council the Senate of Owls.

To end the dispute between the Beaver and the Squirrel, the Senate of Owls asked the Beaver to use only the trees where no animals of the Forest live.

The animals agreed that it was a perfect solution and the Lioness gave a roar of assent.

As the years passed, different animals came and went from the Council. But the Senate of Owls remained to give the Council of Animals the benefit of its wisdom and to make sure that the Council truly acted for the good of every animal in the Forest.

The Senate of Canada came about in much the same way as the Senate of Owls.
Canada used to belong to Britain but a long time ago, in 1867,
Canadians got permission from Queen Victoria to create their own country.

It was to be governed by people whom Canadians would elect
to the House of Commons. But some worried that parts of Canada with
more people in it would become too powerful — and that the needs of places
with fewer people would not be met.

The Senate was created to make sure everyone in Canada had a voice in Parliament.

Ever since then, senators have been working diligently to serve all Canadians.



Treasure Hunt

The Senate of Owls is looking for
three very important objects.

Can you help find them?

They are somewhere in this book!

See if you can find:

THE SENATE MACE



This important object symbolizes
the authority of the Monarch
(King/Queen). The Senate cannot
sit unless the mace is present
in the Senate Chamber.

A BILL



A bill is a proposal to create a new law
or to change or repeal an existing law.

A SENATOR'S PIN

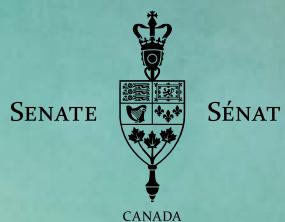


Each senator is given this special
red pin to wear as a badge of office.

This Wise Owl needs your help!

Can you make the Owl colourful again?





Who will help the animals in the Forest of Canada?

When the Forest-dwellers decide to elect a Council of Animals to run their affairs, not everything goes to plan. They quickly learn that what's good for one animal is not necessarily good for all of them — but how can they resolve their differences?



Enter the Wise Owls, who agree to form a Senate to watch over the Council and make sure every animal's voice is heard.



This endearing and richly-illustrated story presents the origin of the Senate of Canada in a whimsical fable that is sure to appeal to children of all ages.

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