

There Once Was A Republic...

There once was a proud and prosperous republic that stood for more than 200 years. One day, its citizens encountered a smiling stranger with a mysterious past, a man named Bari Malik Shabazz. Bari filled the imaginations of the citizens with images of rainbows and unicorns, windmills and calm seas, silent cars and free sexual pleasures. They responded by electing Bari as their president, and soon they were showered with free band instruments and uniforms, financed by the citizens of a faraway land in the Orient.

As the years passed, the citizens grew unhappy. Rainbows and unicorns became clouds and donkeys, windmills and calm seas became dead birds and storms, silent cars burst into flames, and the promised free sexual pleasures resulted in astronomical insurance rates and strange diseases. (Even President Bari was rumored to be suffering from a mysterious ailment called “the slims.”) But the citizens were more than just unhappy. They were growing angry. Many even tried to learn about the past of President Bari, and they soon understood why he wanted it shrouded in vague tales. In private, President Bari had been worshipping an alien god. He even wore a strange ring that pledged allegiance to that god. President Bari believed, not in republics and a free market, but the theocracy of a far-off desert land whose citizens were all members of the brutal Radical Fellowship.

The republic had in its prison a former leader of the Radical Fellowship, known as the Toothless Chief. Toothless was serving a life sentence for attempting to destroy the tallest building of the republic. The Fellowship desperately wanted Toothless released, and President Bari agreed—in private. But he could not simply set him free, or the citizens of the Republic would storm the White Palace and drive out both President Bari and his angry wife, Thunderthighs. So President Bari and the Radical Fellowship devised a secret plan, with the assistance of the President’s top advisor, the dastardly Valsputin.

The republic’s secret spy agency would compose a vile rap song that would most certainly anger the citizens of the far-off desert land. They would march in protest, riot, and kidnap a prominent representative of the republic. That representative would then be held hostage until President Bari resolved the problem in a suitable praiseworthy manner: Toothless would be exchanged for the representative. Members of the Radical Fellowship would be happy and forever grateful to President Bari; the citizens of the republic would hail him as a wise man who prevented a costly war; and he would be named permanent President of the republic.

Unfortunately for President Bari, Valsputin was as incompetent as she was evil—which he should have realized after her pathetic forgery of his Certification of Citizenship in the Republic. The rap song was played on the wrong radio stations in the desert land; the angry protests were held in the wrong places; and the republic’s representative was killed rather than kidnapped. President Bari and Valsputin had failed. President Bari responded by going into a deep depression. Valsputin responded with anger, lashing out even more viciously than usual at the White Palace staff.

For weeks President Bari and his close staff of incompetents (referred to by outsiders as the CSI) ranted about the nasty rap song, apologized for it, and claimed the republic had nothing whatsoever to do with it. But it was to no avail. Citizens of the republic learned, little by little, about what had happened in the desert land. They were angry, and increasing numbers were ready to kick President Bari to the curb in the upcoming election.

President Bari could not avoid his debate with his challenger, a man he hated with a passion and attempted to destroy with lies. (Lies had, after all, always worked for him in the past.) But the challenger—who had no sealed divorce records for President Bari’s political hatchet man, Darth Axlegrease, to get unsealed—was strong and honest, and withstood the attacks. President Bari was dejected. He barely made it through the debate, his mind half-focused on his failure to please his friends in the Radical Fellowship and half-resolved to leaving the White Palace.

In his second debate President Bari was far more enthusiastic—because he knew that Valsputin was working on a plan to rescue him. Valsputin concocted a new scheme that would allow her to keep her immeasurable powers. The Radical Fellowship found a radical patsy—someone who no longer served a useful purpose in the desert land. Valsputin was given the expendable patsy’s name: Lee Harvey Khatalla. She quickly gave the name to the most cooperative members of the republic’s media, and the name was spread far and wide across the land. At the third debate with his challenger, President Bari proudly announced that Lee Harvey Khatalla had been killed in a drone attack on the aspirin factory where he worked. President Bari smiled broadly. The challenger did the only thing he could do: congratulate his opponent.

Unfortunately for President Bari, the citizens of the republic were no longer the fools they had been four years earlier. They had grown wise to the lies and the tricks. The broken promise of unicorns had become unmanageable levels of donkey fazoo. The CSI had angered far too many other officials in the White Palace. Patriots in the secret spy agency revealed the truth. Members of the military came forward to express their concerns. Even members of President Bari’s own political party, such as Senator Dina Heinlein, saw how dangerous he had become. As a result, President Bari was soundly defeated by the challenger, who showed mercy and spared Bari his life after he was convicted of treason. (Alas, there were no golf courses for Bari in the republic’s prison system.)

The new president did not promise unicorns or calm seas, but the republic *was* restored to its former greatness. The citizens all lived happily ever after... although Valsputin’s whereabouts are unknown to this day.

Don Fredrick
October 18, 2012