

Bird man

Conchobhar

“Conchobhar, son of the emperor surprised them all by ordering his ships into battle. They had expected him to run like his corrupt father but he was his own man.

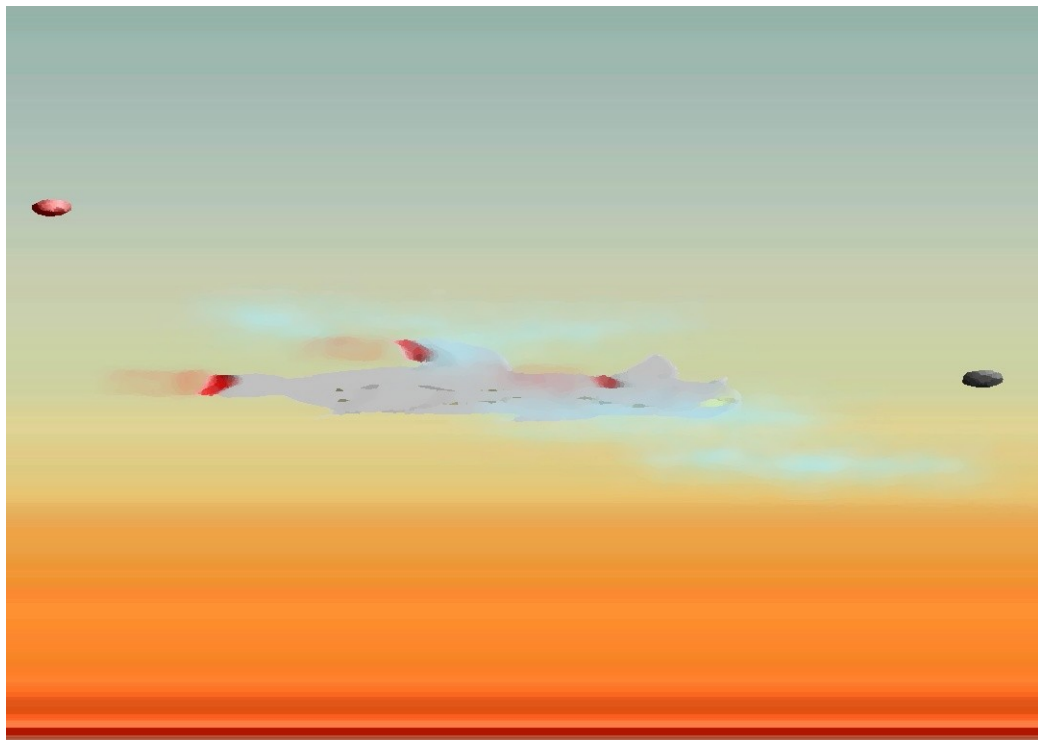
And his father was taken aback as he wanted every ship to escort him back to Earth. He knew his son Conchobhar wasn’t doing battle for his sake but his own.

To jump in and show all how brave and fearless he was.

His father knew Conchobhar wished him dead, for a live emperor prevented him from assuming the throne under emergency powers that would be granted to him from the Electoral Senate as Protector.

Bribes would confirm his appointment; his army would enforce it for life.

So a lone battle wagon limped back to Earth; moral low amongst the crew for they carried a fleeing emperor who had not even given an order to fire a single shot.



*Illustration 44: The Emperor fled back to Earth his home.*

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And Vortigern had dealt a death blow to the concept of empire and freed Tzu Strath and others of their imperial bonds.

They thought of Conchobhar and the War Lord Tzu Strath making a stand against the Madrawts.

Shamed into depression and simmering of rebellion.

It was time to appoint a new emperor.

On the spot.

Even Diviciacus was not happy.

And they disliked the High Priest as they saw him as a barbaric witch doctor, akin to Rasputin of the old Russian Empire, but at least Rasputin had the defense that he was framed by the British secret service to get Russia into the First World War, what was the defense of Diviciacus except he liked to swirl people's innards about on the floor to see omens.

Yes the empire was cracking open.

And the emperor sought solace in his private chambers with young maidens, drink and courtiers and a lone violinist to provide melancholy music.

Were in history have we heard of an emperor and a violin before?

While his empire burned.

\*

"Prisoners my Lord," Reeman Black Hair said with excitement.

And General Ce-Ra stood still watching the thousands of human/alien P.O.W.'s parade in the dusty square of the Madrawt Maonosian capital Meconium.

The purple sun was at its zenith and although the climate here was Mediterranean for those having to stand hours under that sun, they might have been in a desert!

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“Separate the strongest and send them to the slavers,” Ce-Ra replied.

Reeman Black Hair had hoped none would be spared and sulked.

“Flash across the media networks of space that this is what happens to those who resist us,” Ce-Ra again in their air conditioned room.

\*

Yet although nothing had been said on the fate of the weakest, Reeman Black Hair knew what to do. So with glee he went about organizing their doom.

The Appian Ways into Meconium would be lined with stakes and crucifixions so their moans would be sweetness in his ears each night, lulling him to sleep.

To humans the screams of hell, but the Madrawts were not human and the human imperialist Politician's had made the mistake of judging them on their own values, which were not high.

A human to a Madrawt was a corrupt weak thing who deserved what he got.

And the strongest went to the slave pens and their genes would survive for good healthy strong slaves kept the slave market prices buoyant.

Which explains why General Ce-Ra was a very rich man, had he not conquered vast regions of deep space?

And many would be sent to the Arena of Entertainment where they would be pitted against beasts and gladiators in fights to the death.

And the crowds loved Ce-Ra for donating slaves to fight and brought their families and why he was a household name.

These spectacles showed the rest of space what Madrawts thought of aliens (humans included), with contempt.

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And the arenas made sure Madrawt children grew up with that contempt surviving.

And what did Alexander Vortigern do? With the Senate's approval he sent a messenger with a million imperial gold dollars to the Madrawts suing peace.

And Ce-Ra was pleased; he could now finance his war against the humans.

You see why the humans were held with contempt, money to them was God, and it was to Ce-Ra too and as he was the benefactor could spend it like a god.

It bought power, women, wine, song, an easy life, and soldiers and as money corrupted humans making their conquest easier.

And the messenger with the imperial dollars was one Morag Constantine, a nervous young woman of merit, a career woman in the diplomatic corps, from no great family, but an ordinary family with a mother and father and such; and she was tipped to rise to an ambassador's post in a distant planet no one had heard of and didn't want to hear of.

And she was promoted a lot sooner than she expected and it was to the Madrawt capital Meconium.

Poor women!

And as she passed down Appian ways and was sick for the stench was overcoming. Madrawts you see did not waste time removing the vanquished, the bones would drop and farmers would pick them up and grind them into fertilizer; nothing of the condemned was wasted. Did not Madrawts see the criminal was paying back society for wrongs done.

And the place where the bones were ground had a name, 'Golgotha, the place of the Skulls, for many were piled up high for supply outweighed demand.

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*Illustration 45: Golgotha The Place of Skulls.*

Anyway: General Ce-Ra gave Morag Constantine an audience, took her gold gift of peace and channeled the money into his private accounts and not back to his masters on his home planet.

The money would build up his OWN PERSONAL ARMY, his.

Soon, very soon he would be emperor of the Madrawts and the human/aliens. 'Lord of the Madrawts' they would call him, a god.

And as a sign of contempt for the emperor manacled a silver chain to Morag's throat and after dragging her about his court lay with her.

She would become his pet, a monkey on a silver chain he could pull on and have her do his bidding.

And being an intelligent monkey she would learn many tricks.

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And he gave her a cup to beg and the Madrawts laughed and put pennies in her cup which Ce-Ra kept for himself.

“You are a lucky monkey,” Reeman Black Hair told her, “he likes your blond hair and blue eyes.”

And Morag Constantine wished she was never born.

But fate had given her this road to travel.

And as for Vortigern he sent her family his condolences.

“Your daughter has been lost in action.”

And it was not signed by him but an underling in the War Department.”

Told me by Reeman Black Hair,

Vern Lukas, Historian and Imperial

Scribe.