

Bird men

Counter Attack

“War Lord Tzu Strath received the order from Conchobhar to execute all Madrawt prisoners.

“Even if he was the emperor himself I did never do such a thing,” he told his alien aide, Tribune Cedric Henry from New Neptune.

The tribune understood, Tzu Strath went by the old imperial school that would not descend into such barbarities. Henry had been with Tzu Strath for over seven hundred years since the end of the New Neptune Wars when his people had surrendered into the empire.

Tzu Strath had spared them all.

But his people were not Madrawts.

Tribune C. Henry understood Conchobhar’s game better than Tzu Strath.

“He is going to declare himself emperor,” Henry advised Tzu Strath.

“We already have an emperor,” and Tzu Strath made the mistake of transporting his own morals onto Conchobhar.

From the use of drugs they had obtained the same information as Conchobhar had, that Ce-Ra was absent.

Also Madrawt prisoners could be exchanged for their own captured men.

And the tribune knew no matter how honourable Tzu Strath was, it did not affect the way his men behaved towards the Madrawts on the field; amphibians that ate flies.

Bird man

The only good Madrawt was a dead one.

“I wish to get a message to Mingo Drum, and if we did, would he listen?” Tzu.

The tribune had seen this coming and was prepared, “I will go.”

But Tzu did not want to endanger his friend and thought he should go, that way Mingo was sure to come out of hiding and talk, but after some valued arguments, Henry was going.

“Mingo Drum belongs to the old school too my Lord,” Henry and smiled.

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Mingo Drum Vercingetorix rode a red ant to war.

Behind came the ant phalanxes.

Above soared his Manticore Legion.

In front, the Madrawt lines, weakened by Ce-Ra siphoning off troops to establish his position as Madrawt Emperor.

But deep in the Madrawt trenches, a captain interrogating humans.

A hapless family of six.

The mother now lay on a fold up military green bed.

Needless to say she had been abused and then strangled. The captain had always wanted to lie with a human who held Madrawts with contempt; now who was boss?

In the next flap room her husband, chained, awaiting shipment to a gastropod farm as slave labor on a Madrawt planet.

The gastropods were the size of a bus.

His three daughters would be shipped out too, as troop comforters.

Bird man



Illustration 52: Giant snails to be eaten.

His eight year old son was going to be used as a military mascot, dressed in yellow with bells about him, and mascots went up front with the troops like pipers of Scottish regiments.

If he survived the wars and got bigger he would go to some farm or mine as free labor.

“Alien dung,” the captain and threw the father a gnawed antelope chop.

He better eat, food would be scarce.....*not all belonged to the old school*

Then Mingo Drum attacked.

A few weeks later he returned to castle Artebrate much haggard and worn out.

Strode into his rooms and threw his bronze war helmet onto a chair. It was purely decorative, lasers existed.

Bird man

The helmet bounced off onto soft rugs from mountain goats.

Definitely he was not in the mood for arguments.

He also had a new trophy, the head of the captain and a new human friend, the young boy who actually had a name, Thomas.

And now an orphan.

And no longer dressed as a mascot with bells on him; Mingo had got him dressed in leather trousers and the boy had wept in his arms as they had buried his pappy.

He never made the snail farm.

Some Madrawt had cut the man's throat when the Bird men attack started.

So Mingo had the wound covered so not to disturb the boy's mind further.

"I see you keep human concubines?" Boudicca asked from the door of his bedroom.

Someone's scar went vivid scarlet.

As it throbbed flakes of dried dirt pinged off to fall on the rugs.

"I have no human concubine," he replied forcing himself to be calm.

"Hart Woo," A reply.

Pregnant silence.

He nodded his head, "The young human girl?"

"Young isn't the half of it," Boudicca screamed; she was sure of herself.

So Mingo pored himself a large tankard of chilled non-alcoholic wine; all wine doesn't need to be lethal, just chilled, full of vitamin C and thirst quenching.

He even pored one for her and wondered who this human thought she was to come busting into his private chambers like this?

Keira and Gwenda had failed their duties.

So the man fell heavily into a cushioned sofa sprawling his legs.

Bird man

Drained his tankard and belched and offered it to her to refill.

Oh dear she made a horrid mistake; she went to the wrong wine pitcher. Maybe he noticed but he kept numb.

This was made to look like Bacchus, a reveler and a warning, but Boudicca was too hot too notice, *she was a woman whose tongue had loosened.*

He was thirsty and dusty.

“Hart Woo is sixteen years old, a child,” Boudicca pursued.

The man nodded his thanks for the refilled drink and sipped it this time.

“And how old are you?” He asked eying her up.

“Old enough,” she replied draining her drink, “To know the difference between right and wrong,” but not the difference between alcoholic and non alcoholic wine.

The man finished his drink off.

“Remember he is a beast first, a bird on the wing,” but she was ignoring Nostradamus’s warnings.

“Hart Woo has no home in your world,” Mingo offered back. I did not take her by force and this is my world she lives in not your human one. I only took what was offered, she wants to be one of us, and she is welcome to live with us.”

“And when your world vanishes? What then? Who will have her in her own world? A Bird lover destined for the brothels,” Boudicca retorted.

“She was destined for that life anyway as she is young, I have been in human cities, vice is everywhere, speak to your people first before you speak to me,” he advised.

Now she put down her own tankard and decided there and then she was leaving Castle Artebrate with Hart Woo and would be back in a Comet Fighter.

“You will not let that happen,” Mingo told her.

Bird man

He had passed responsibility for Hart Woo onto her, for every other human in his rooms and lands, the no good scum had pushed their lives onto her; she was a squadron leader not a social worker.

Boudicca saw herself an outpost of human civilisation.

Boudicca saw herself a guardian of morals.

Boudicca was the type who had to get involved.

Boudicca was a human with ideas and a lot of energy.

Boudicca was glad Thomas had been rescued from the Madrawts.

Boudicca was worried about Thomas's moral safety after what had happened to Hart Woo.

Boudicca was some woman and Mingo Drum Vercingetorix knew it and she knew it.

Boudicca was Tzu Strath's daughter.

She knew he was a brave warrior, misguided morally but that could be put straight. Apart from the scar he was handsome. In fact the scar emphasized his manliness. He was caring, strong and almost human.

Her work was cut out.

He thought about her a lot. For a human she had spirit, was a healthy warrior in her own right with good white teeth and a trim figure.

Then the heavy herb wine hit her.

This was a warrior society and wines were treble the strength of human wines in imitation of the strong brews their gods drank which tended to end in divine orgies.

There were women in Heaven.

Bird man

Someone's head began to spin.

She staggered backwards.

Mingo Drum caught her.

At least her tongue was silenced.

Mingo Drum took her on the wing.

"Remember he is a beast first, a bird on the wing," but she had ignored Nostradamus's warnings.

It was a dream like world, very unearthly.

The drink made her want to keep the beast.

He could be humanized, like a tiger on a chain dragged about a park.



Illustration 53: Like a dog on a lead.

She had the body to hold any man.

And together they would create a peace with her father which meant she no longer

Bird man

had an emperor and PEACE MARRIAGE.

Tara 6 (Maponos) would be a new Eden of enlightenment.

Of understanding.

She loved her Bird men.

And Mingo Drum loved her in his feathered ways.

THEN AN UNEXPLANABLE ACT OF GOD ARRIVED in Tribune Cedric Henry
the next month with peace offerings from Tzu Strath.

And Little Drum assured of her importance led the human tribune straight to Mingo
Drum.

“My Lady Boudicca Tzu,” had been Cedric’s first words instead of “Greetings
King Mingo Drum!”

And Mingo stared at Boudicca in astonishment.

Here stood the daughter of his enemy; and yes his scare went vivid.

And throbbed a bit.

The Bird man believed he had been the victim of an elaborate trap; for all his ways
he was naive about humans.

Now if he hadn’t been emotionally involved he might have been able to see clearly,
like he had a strong suspicion who she was anyway. Beside, Tzu Strath would never
approve of his liaison with his daughter!

Just bad timing on Cedric’s.

So Mingo walked away leaving Boudicca standing in her new brightly polished
body armour. Her green eyes clearing from his humiliation thrust upon her.

Bird man

Hurt that a barbarian alien king could think lowly of her and that Tribune Cedric Henry would think the same if he knew she had lain with Mingo.

Her dream of enlightenment just ended.

Besides Henry was really a second class citizen of the empire, a conquered alien. Dreaming of dating Boudicca was taboo, she had a track record of avoiding aliens, and she did not think them handsome enough, perhaps worthy of her.

It was one thing for aliens and humans of the lower classes to meet, but another for the siblings of War Lords, Presidents and kings to do such.

“What is it tribune?” Boudicca asked.

“This man came to see Mingo Drum,” Little Drum answered smiling.

Cedric looked at Little Drum wondering if she was Mingo’s daughter.

Boudicca sighed, when she got home she did write the truth about Bird men and it did sell because of who she was.

“Lady Boudicca, your father wants a peace with the Bird people, perhaps you can take advantage of your freedom with Mingo Drum to help?” Cedric.

Boudicca crushed the rising flush to her cheeks.

Cedric talked on, her mind was away with Mingo.

“Have you quarter’s tribune?”

“Next to the other humans.”

And although she tried to see Mingo he refused and it was left to Little Drum to tell of the peace plans.

“You three are humans, what do you think I should do?” He had asked Hamon Ma, Hart Woo and Thomas.

“If you make peace I will never be a warrior,” Hamon Ma moaned.

Bird man

Mingo put the boy on his large knees.

“Yes you will, where there is intelligent life there is war,” he replied sarcastically.

“I want home,” Thomas sobbed.

“I want to stay here with you,” Hart Woo lovingly.

Mingo at that moment knew Boudicca was right and he was wrong to sleep with such a young human woman, she was not brought up as a Bird woman.

There was a difference.

He breathed deeply gritting his teeth.

He cursed the weakness of a male.

He cursed himself for not being wise.

He cursed himself for his lack of self control.

He cursed his gods for making him weak.

He cursed himself for being in love with Boudicca.

He cursed himself with a chastity vow.

He cursed himself for not being human.

Finally, he cursed himself for not saying “**No**,” more often.

“Listen Hart Woo, go and tell Boudicca to take you all back to an imperial sector.

Why Hart Woo began to cry and was joined by the others. He hoped he had made the right decision, the Lady Boudicca was right, these were human kids and he was destroying their lives muddling their minds up with Bird man rhetoric that would soon be extinct anyway.

He should have sent them across the imperial lines long ago.

Bird man

He had sent others, why not these?

He knew it was selfishness; an insane desire to be accepted by humans that had made him encourage them to stay.

He craved human friendship and understanding.

The great Mingo Drum Vercingetorix was lonely and insecure and humans could cure it. The Bird men was vanishing and humans were too blame.

So he craved their bones thrown from their eating tables to survive.

What was Maponos compared to the vast imperial empire?

And Boudicca had made him see it.

“You have used me,” Hart Woo.

“Not so,” Mingo and covered his ears as the children verbal tore into him; and he sat there with open legs with his sword between his legs.

An alien in a diminishing world but expanding human one.

“We are not friends, I am a Bird man and you are humans, humans are always dominant, on top, we can never be friends, our worlds are too different, why none of you can fly,” he wanted release from his own pains over Boudicca.

And the human children ran and sought Lady Boudicca and pored out their hurt and hate for their adoptive parent who now spurned them.

The air was rent with a horrid coughing grunt.

At first her heart revelled in joining the children’s hurt against the beast king, but later as she tried to sleep she remembered all that had been said and told her and she felt the hurt against the man, correction, beast Bird king crumble.

Always happens when trying sleep, thoughts keep you awake all night.

Bird man

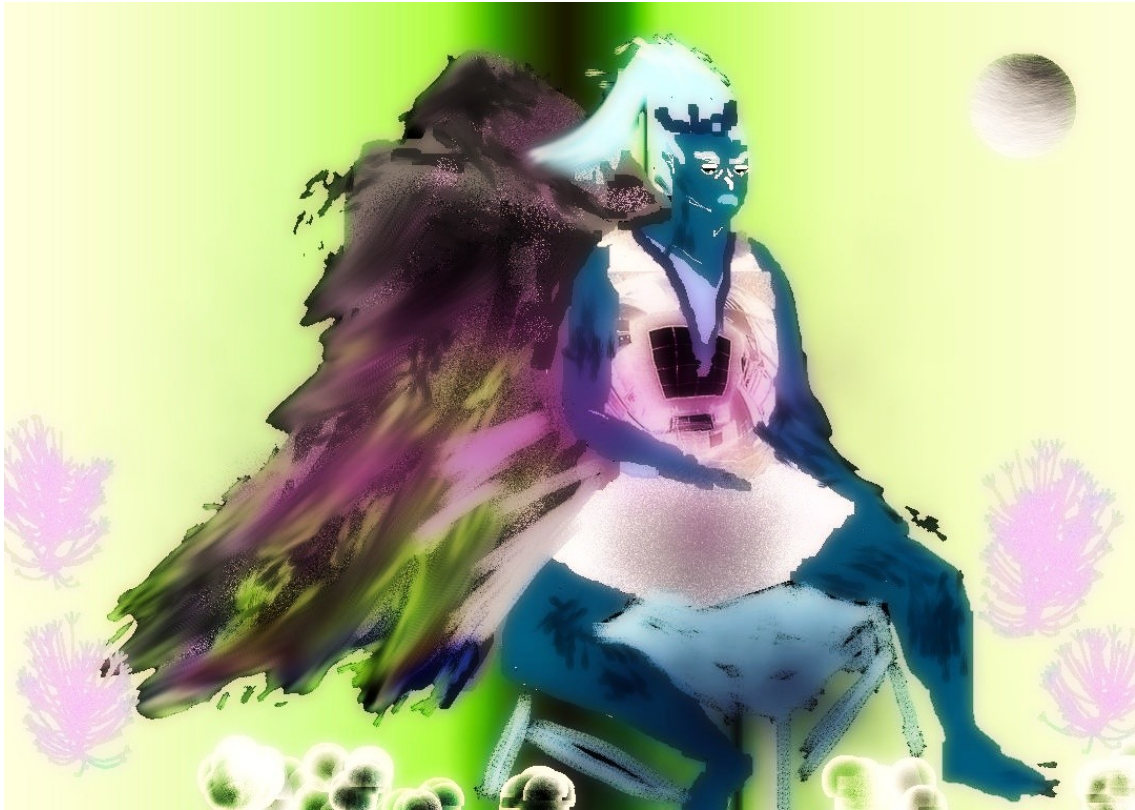


Illustration 54: The Bird man king was sad, he knew he was just a bird in a human world.

“I long to comfort you Mingo Drum but you did spurn me for I am human.

If it is an acceptance you want then I accept you beast king,” and the words ‘beast king’, she knew deep down she thought of him as exactly that.

His barbaric culture was more uncouth than many alien worlds. He was seen as a savage, she saw him as that too, a noble beast at conflict with itself and her invading world.

Her heart cried for him.

As each hour passed so did the grunt, a roar of death, betrayal, hurt.

The Bird people were silent out of respect for their king and fear of the unknown.

Castle Artebrate was a tomb, people within knew they should prepare their death chants.

Bird man

And the savage Mingo had more understanding of the environment than her own kind. He was gentle and loving towards all when he wanted to be, especially to the young and old.

He knew his people were archaic and practiced horrid things like collecting trophies from battles.

Heads.

They needed embalmed and scented or did stink the place up too.

But when she compared him to the Emperor Alexander Caesar Vortigern and the High Shaman Diviciacus the man was innocent of the charges against him.

Mingo Drum did not partake in sexual perversions.

Humans did.

He was full of honour and valour.

His word was law and worthy.

Laws good for all within his domain.

His word trustworthy and good.

Mingo Drum Vercingetorix was not to be taken lightly.

Nor forgotten once met.

And he would not stop his grunt of death.

And his people saw what he grunted against,

The unstoppable tide of alien immigrants, humans.

For it was more a dying scream than the cough of an animal,

And it went on

And on

And on.”

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Bird man

As told me Vern Lukas by the

Human children he set free.