

Bird man

He kills?

The purple day was hot, the swamps hazes of steam, the Gododdin arena was full, but many did not feel well and forced themselves to come because they wanted to see Mingo Drum Vercingetorix die.

They had carbuncles under the linen cloaks they wore for fear that they would be accused they had a plague and sent home they hoped, but knew deep down the queen's guards would take them outside the city and pierce them with spears or throw them into the swamp for the ever hungry swamp dragon to eat up.

Already the River of Skulls was littered with bloated corpses and every now and again warriors would come and set fire to the butchered on the shore, and sometimes the warriors didn't come for they were afraid of catching the plague and the diseased were eaten by wild beasts so they became sick and a vicious cycle was set up; and it was called The Cycle of Death.

Why an air of fear hung over the arena.

Queen Cartimandua was not amused.

Her advisers had told her a new plague had broken out in the city of Torrs.

She didn't need them to tell her that!

She was afraid of what she had seen herself, at this rate her unborn would not have a people to rule and lead to battle.

Why the victims developed large carbuncles on their pale waxy skins and emitted smelly body fluids from their orifices.

Finally choking to death as they gasped dehydrated for water.

Choking on nothing.

Bird man

Just a nervous reflex.

So they died turning blue for nothing.

With their eyes bulging.

Their tongues large protruding.

And being Gododdin knew there was an after life;

Except being Gododdin they put it to the back of their minds and went
about saying it was all folk lore and so did immoral things

Never lived up to being full of valour or something,

So as pirates were empty shells,

And never thought about death till they were dying.

They were Gododdin, pirates of the sky,

Who burned your ships and cities?

Raped your women in front of you.

Slit your throat to their gods.

And never thought about dying because they weren't the ones dying.

And now they were.

And it was a bit late for last minute confessions to gods and burning sage sticks.

Because the disease had been a mutant strain from a Gododdin gene warfare lab.

What goes round comes round.

They had been planning on using it on others like them Madrawts and humans.

But a Gododdin scientist had been bitten by a mosquito and now lay choking to death. In about an hour he would be dead and the City Watch would take his corpse away.

Yes, what goes round comes round.

Bird man

Now the moment the queen's advisers had cautioned against public cremation to avoid panic for too many needed a bonfire.

"They are ignorant masses so must be treated with ignorance and told nothing and our own escape routes are planned by the way!"

"The swamps are deep and full of swamp dragons," they urged, and so it was done and as bodies were eaten by the dragons, so the virus found its way into the water ways and became rapidly available for more unaffected mosquitoes.

Hell had come to Maonos.

And the burnings on the shore stopped altogether and was a public moral boost. For the City Watch was leaving the dead in their homes because the watch had virtually died out.

And the wet windy season began, "The buzz of death," the mosquitoes approach it was called.

Anyway: Mingo was dragged out by his guards into the arena, one of them looked pale and this man soon fell. His companions checked him and found his chest covered in carbuncles.

To a man they sprang back full of fear that turned to anger and hate that their companion should have exposed them to The Choking Death.

Like wolves they drew their swords and hacked him.

Then silently the audience began to melt away for those who suspected themselves ill, either with the Choking Death or an ordinary illness just did not want the same fate.

Oh poor Queen Cartimandua, poor beautiful queen, queen of corpses in a City of Death, oh poor Queen Cartimandua.



Illustration 71: The Gododdin funeral pyre down at the swamp

And a guard threw Mingo the keys, too terrified to go anywhere near him in case he was infected.

Now Mingo unlocked his manacles and held out a hand for a sword.

Why an oily skin was thrown at his feet and untying the strings he held his beloved sword Law to his ears to hear its magical song of strength.

And the guards departed.

The arena was silent.

From behind a veiled screen Nostradamus smiled, he had stolen the sword from his master Tzu Strath. Although he loved his master he knew this hate between these two great men was wrong and had decided to end it by acting now.

Law was one way.

Bird man

But Tribune Henry was also watching.

He was not amused.

Mingo would naturally think Tzu Strath had returned it and knowing the Bird man, Mingo was bound by his own rules to give something important back.

The planet, no that was untradeable even for Mingo!

But the boy Little Arthur, Nostradamus hoped and peace.

Tzu Strath would have to be satisfied with that.

Anyway, he had been told to rescue the boy at any cost?

Now from a grilled box Boudicca and her party watched.

She saw her Bird man swell his chest in defiance. He stood tall and proud, his long brown hair gently moving at the ends from a slight breeze. The rest kept in place by his gold hair band.

The gold torc glinting around his neck like a furnace under the suns.

His loin cloth glinting body sweat.

His flight membranes rippling to the rhythm of his deep breathing.

The sword in his hand upright, ready to cut.

“Boudicca’s savage,” they had tittered amongst the imperial circles and cartoons and even now those with Tribune Henry did likewise.

“Yes, Boudicca’s savage warrior,” Nostradamus sadly and proudly for Mingo reached down into men’s spirits and pulled up their primitives ancestral urge to be free, to run across the plains to drink at a river’s edge while a lioness drank also on the opposite bank, free.

And of Cartimandua, all the time was hopeful that Mingo would call her name and

Bird man

beg life. But another part wished he would not for she could never love a coward and another part wanted him dead because of Boudicca and the list went on and on and on.

So slowly the swamp dragon god crawled out of the gate into the arena with Mingo.

Its soft bright yellow under belly was a field of carbuncles.

It was dying, had been choking for almost an hour.

Mingo was a haze to it.

And Mingo Drum Vercingetorix faced it and defied it with a coughing grunt that carried far a field.

Now the poor swamp dragon plodded onto the source of the grunt as its ears oozed horrid smelly pus.

Mingo stood his ground.

He had realised there was something lacking in the beast's usual hostile temperament.

It should have cantered over to him in its eagerness to make him supper.

Why didn't Mingo fly away, the rules had been made, he would be shot down with laser.

So he ran and the dying dragon followed out of an inherited program to eat and live.

The remaining crowd hissed at him.

Mingo couldn't care.

And led the swamp dragon under the royal box, then stopped and slid under the approaching jaws that belonged to a tiring beast.

So repeatedly he poked his sword into the neck till blood pored freely onto the arena's sand.

Bird man

“Mosquitoes carry the death, it is official,” it was a whisper that flew around the remaining spectators. There was a breeze; there were mosquitoes in that breeze that were heard buzzing.

Midge’s midge’s midges that could rout an army.

And the citizens left in droves to be away.

And that is when Mingo Drum Vercingetorix flew straight into the royal box in the melee of mosquito swarms bearing death.

The queen had stopped staring at Mingo, her gaze now riveted on her fleeing citizens.

And Mingo showed he was a master swordsman by striking down those beside her.

The two guards had been spear men who had no room to manoeuvre with their long spears.

With his bloody sword Law, Mingo now turned to face his spurned ex lover, Cartimandua.

And Cartimandua became aware of something cold and wet at her throat, it was Law and if Mingo had not been influenced by human books, would have slain her!

“You threaten the life of my son and human woman and killed my friends Bran and Branwan.”

Queen Cartimandua knew her head was his trophy staring at him from a dining wall with dead eyes.

“What now?” She asked putting her faith in her heaving bosom deliberately inched higher towards him, triggering his memories of lust; which is what she wanted.

“What now indeed?” He replied.

Bird man

“You escape” she replied for him as I am hostage,” and knew her torment would start again that he lived and loved another. But before he departed she was going to tell him about an unknown son he had buried in an unmarked grave.

Without a word of goodbye.

So he could share the pain.

And him feel some guilt that she hoped would hound him till death.

And of an unborn future life within her.

She, Cartimandua had not grown careless with her cunning in age.

“The Bird man Mingo Drum Vercingetorix had a conscience. It comes with the seeds of enlightenment and intelligence or might be called guilt or associated with fear as a dog suffers after it has eaten your meal.

It is still conscience.

It is akin to love.

He was also a star gazer, a dreamer, a man who believed beyond his gods.

Of a domain were all things live at peace as children of the same spirit that flowed through them all,

LIFE.”

Vern Lukas (Lorn Lukas.)

“Mingo walked the deserted streets of Torrs with a laser pistol in the small of Queen Cartimandua’s back. He had suppressed a basic savage urge to kill her.

Was he a savage, a murderer that he could kill her so easily?

She was Gododdin.

Then we guess he is the beast Tzu Strath always said he was!

Bird man

But he needed her as hostage to free his friends.

His lineage was threatened.

And she in turn looked shattered; her city was empty and since it was the rainy season it rained and drove the mosquitoes to seek shelter so they walked in safety.

But passing a lone figure with a paraffin mixture on his back as he squirted pools to kill mosquitoes and their young. The man cast one sullen glance at his queen and went back to work.

“I am your queen,” she shouted at him.

He turned to face her.

The left side was covered in carbuncles; he was dying and had decided to take as many mosquitoes with him.

Anyway at last they reached the place where Old Rag and Baldy waited.

Here Queen Cartimandua expected the sword blow to give her escape from her gloom.

She would have a long wait!

And he felt sorry for her, her people should not blame her, they the Gododdin had always used the swamps to defeat their invaders.

“What have you released into our world Cartimandua?” He asked.

Boudicca watched as the two former lovers stared into each other’s eyes. If only they had been friends as well?

“Help us?” Cartimandua pleaded.

The Bird man Mingo Drum Vercingetorix it is said looked deeply into his soul and hers. She was Gododdin, enemy first, what they had been was past, moments of passion. But he saw past her and one voice that was evil called, “Kill the bitch and fly

Bird man

away,” while another voice tugged silently at his soul, “Help her.”

He saw that she was another life in need so promised help. Cartimandua and Boudicca saw into his hard yellow eagle eyes and saw the true conqueror there.

HE HAD CONQUERED HATE.

The purple suns at that precise moment broke through some overhanging clouds.

Mingo suddenly shone like a demigod flickering in purple flame along his body outline.

“Mahbon reborn,” Queen Cartimandua for she referred to the Bird man belief that this son of Light who had been sacrificed for the good of all was to rise from the dead and herald a new order of love.

Boudicca looked at her and saw belief in those words written across that face. The spring fever jumped from Cartimandua to her and she knew everything would be alright, *he* was here wasn't he?

Now Little Drum ran behind a bush and peered out afraid.

Colour Sergeant Kenala dropped to his knees in reverence of his king, Cartimandua was right, Mahbon was reborn.

Mingo didn't know what all the fuss was about, he felt no different.

“Daddy,” a boy called and ran for his hug, cuddle and kiss to make things better.

Even if he was a ferocious warrior.

“Soon mine will call you daddy too,” and Cartimandua reminded him of a lonely grave and that she was pregnant.

He was not amused about the grave but delighted they had brought a new life into the world. Someone who might succeed where they had failed.

And the grave hurt, she should have told him long ago; the boy might have

Bird man



Illustration 72: Mabon reborn was the son of Light and had been sacrificed by the Bird men ancestors for the good of all.

died differently, IN HIS FATHER'S ARMS.

There was no real difference between the human woman Boudicca and her;
women were the same when it came to love.

Mingo Drum Vercingetorix died a little more that day."

The scribe Lukas.