

Bird man

The Great Fire

How Mingo felt after leaving Cartimandua no one knows. He wanted to take her with him, we know that because he said it only once, just once, a slip of thought perhaps?

And she had accepted until she had attacked Boudicca and tried to throw her off a pier on their way across the River of Skulls and only Little Drum saved her, as her tail accidentally snaked by the queen's legs and tripped her, taking both into the river.

And Mingo dived in after them; of course the heroic type that we all wish to be.

He would have been better off hovering over them, but he had been hanging about too many humans these days; he forgot he had wings? Wings meant he was a beast?

Cartimandua had his little one in her tummy.

Was it responsibility or something deeper that he did not fly?

And a swamp python lurking under the pier stumps saw them as food.

Mingo *thought now for his own life as the python wrapped about him.*

For Cartimandua had found metal rungs and climbed them to safety.

"You will pay Mingo, I promise I will make you pay," she shouted at him dripping wet and went back to her city.

Boudicca was spell bound, no man not even Mingo could hope to win over a swamp python in the water. This is when Colour Sergeant shouted at Boudicca to bring her out of shock and told her to get a pole for the skiff to get to the other side where Old Rag and Baldy waited for them.

"What use Mingo's sacrifice if Little Arthur is caught?" He demanded and had deliberately used the human name to bring her back to the present.

Bird man



Illustration 75: The python hated Bird men

She took the skiff across looking at the water's surface for Mingo.

And half way across a little furry hand reached for the skiff's sides. There was Little Drum looking up into the raised pole raised to strike.

Why Little Drum smiled weakly and climbed aboard and fought down the temptation to boast about how she had fought the swamp python and won.

Instead she went to the front and sat shivering for she hated water and especially hot water and soap.

Colour Sergeant Kenala hovered over the swamp python and shot it in the head, freeing Mingo who floated away gasping for air.

Here Kenala went after him, giving Mingo his prehensile bird tail to hold.

Mingo Drum Vercingetorix would live another day.

Bird man

Boudicca reached the other bank and freed Little Arthur from his clasp on her right leg.

He was only an afraid little person.

Kenala flew over to join them; Mingo looked wetter than Little Drum.

Boudicca attracted by shouts saw Kenala had been right, Gododdin warriors were gathering on the bank just left.

It was definitely time to go.

Boudicca watched Mingo fly high above them, scouting for enemies and bands of the dying that had been driven out of their towns and villages.

She felt a twang of jealousy she could not fly, “Never mind Little Arthur will be able too,” and remembered she actually discouraged it as a beastly trait; her son was human *and felt ashamed, that man in the air had dived into snake infested water to save her little boy, the Bird man was wonderful **again**.*

*****Mingo had seen many corpses and not all were intelligent life forms. Many twin trunk elephants lay dead, so did Maponosian Griffin lion creatures, Rock Dwellers, snakes and other creatures.

The plague was not limited to its hosts.

He was not afraid of dying, all had to pass over some time. But he feared for his son and Boudicca, for Boudicca for she believed in nothing and so feared death.

Even cloning and living again wasn't the same for the original body was dead and decayed. The twin being a new person could grow into a completely new personality.

The horrid thing was, you still experienced death again.

Bird man

And the boy was too young to understand that life existed after death in a spirit world.

Mingo knew there was no point too cloning then; he was born to die.

“Ghosts,” Verica had shouted excitedly hoping for a ghost story to frighten him so he could cuddle up and feel safe, warm and cozy.

“Well I suppose you could describe the spirit people as such,” and Mingo had left the subject for nightmares where approaching the boy’s night sleep.

But the boy had a notion and that was good enough, still a child and Mingo loved him deeply and he didn’t want the boy suffering the Choking Death, suffering not understanding the whys and suffering but knowing he was dying and trusting at the same time his daddy would kiss him better so that he could go out and play.

Mingo felt the salty tears in his eyes, even beasts have feelings.

He felt useless.

“Children pests,” he coughed flying on. They were heading for the City of Winds, his new tribal capital. The Flaming City was still a ruin and would not be rebuilt till the wars had ended.

Boudicca “City of Winds?” And wished she had some extra woollies.

She saw also Mingo as some sought of living fossil, not stone aged, maybe something higher, Neolithic farmer? A barbarian out of the days when the Tower of Babel fell down and men went different ways speaking strange languages and became warriors to fight and kill each other.

Her Mingo she knew was a very dangerous man and no doubt why daddy feared him.

He was indeed a threat to established ways.

Bird man

Mingo was a wild man.

He was the Planet Maponos itself.

He could never fit into imperial society this she did know but didn't want to admit it. He would be a curiosity, a party show piece and Mingo's temperament could not be trusted for he would fight those who insulted and soon find himself a wanted man or prison labour in some far flung colony.

And she loved her Bird man but would never admit it publicly to herself, silly girl.

Especially tell him that, the beast.

The first move must come from him, the winged savage.

Now every night Mingo built a fire between them and the wind so that any biting insects or germs would have to pass through it on the breeze before reaching them.

Each night he led them to a cave which he threw burning branches into.

Fire the cleansing destroyer of life.

And one night Little Drum was playing with his son seeing who could throw their pebbles farther down the cave?

"If you hit me on the head again I will be very angry," a voice came up from the cave's depths.

Guess what? Little Drum jumped behind Arthur/Verica and shouted "I have a sword."

As a warrior she was useless, as a pet even worse, but she was loved and always forgiven for she was Little Drum.

Bird man

Mingo who had been sitting on his haunches ripping meat from a spitted hare bird fashion stood up, the fat dribbling from his chin. Wiping his hands on his loin cloth he drew his sword Law and advanced.

Boudicca followed alarmed.

Kenala hurried forward with a probing spear, (a spear whose tip exploded if detonated by the bearer.)

Old Rag grunted and Baldy trumpeted.

The little boy screamed, jumped and shook himself free of Little Drum and ran for his mummy when a figure of an old man appeared.

Little Drum was paralyzed with fear.

“Be not alarmed Bird King, I am a Vate and know you well,” the glowing yellow figure said burning a coppery green.

But Mingo was alarmed, just didn’t show it.

“Who is he?” Boudicca asked.

Mingo and Kenala didn’t answer as they didn’t know. Just that he was one of the Vates like he said. Talking would be a waste of breath.

Now the old man held out his flaming right hand showing a diorama of Planet Maponos.

“See before you death and destruction yet you Mingo survive always.

We have been seeking one such as you,” the old man.

Boudicca wished she was armed; she didn’t like this specter or the way it knew Mingo.

Bird man



Illustration 76: The Vate appeared from the depths of the dark cave.

“What do you want with me and who are you?” Mingo.

“I am a Vate.”

Bird man

Now Mingo searched his memory, of all men as a leader and king he should know everything as he was responsible for the life of his people.

“I am from the world that exists about you but you cannot see. You can smell my world, touch it sometimes, think you see beings from it and sometimes think you have entered it,” the Vate.

“A ghost daddy,” Little Arthur Verica shouted excitedly making sure he was having a good look from behind his mummy’s legs and behind him peered fearless Little Drum.

The old man smiled neither affirming nor denying.

Superstitious Kenala thrust his probing spear forward as if he was killing a vampire.

The Vate stepped back disappearing.

Colour Sergeant Kenala did not like this cave; there were things from the spirit world in it.

Mingo waited for its return, it was the duty of a king to know more while Boudicca led Little Arthur and Little Drum out of the cave.

But the Vate reappeared behind the two Bird men warriors.

“I am a Vate and have been in existence long before you were born Mingo. And you Kenala I saw in your mother’s womb in the City of Monoliths before the Rock Dwellers claimed it,” the Vate told them.

Sweat broke out over Kenala’s forehead.

Bird man

“What do you want?” Mingo again.

“I have come to see the Saviour,” the Vate replied looking towards the boy.

“Are you Vern Lukas?” Kenala asked thinking here was the originator of the human Arthur legends.

The Vate smiled and replied, “In each of us is a gene god that gives us all AWARENESS, GOD CONCIOUSNESS, the knowledge of right and wrong.

Your’s is awake Mingo.

Your’s is not Colour Sergeant Kenala.

When it is, a life form becomes a receptor for the life force God,” the Vate tried to explain.

The two Bird men were ignorant of the meaning of God, they had many gods for their’s was a spiritual magical world where stones had spirits, streams and trees, a world that respected the environment as too upset it was too upset spirits and the balance of nature.

There must be equilibrium or disasters would follow.

So what was God?

The gene God?

The gene of awareness.

The gene of god communication.

The gene of communion with spirits in other dimensions.

The gene of communion with powerful entities called angels.

The gene of oneness with the universal omnipotence that is the life force God.

Bird man

A sense of belonging, that there is a place called HOME over the rainbow.

“Some are luckier than others; in some when the gene God becomes awake the miraculous can happen. The body becomes charged with CREATIVE LIFE and healing happens.

It is strange,” the old man called Vate said to Boudicca, “your imperial scientists have mapped the genes, the twirls of DNA and RNA and broken their secrets.

But because the gene God does nothing, does not produce a finger or determine eye color it is regarded as useless and they call it 7X.

If the only they could stop and think?

And what does any of this have to do with you and why I am here?

I live here deep within these caves you have entered. My spirit crosses space when it is awakened by the awakening of a gene God.”

Here the two Bird men could identify with the Vate at last for they believed mountains, hills, rivers and caves had legends living within them, like dragons, giants or heroes from the dawn of time waiting to be awakened in time of need.

Now even Mingo Vercingetorix felt humbled. He was in the presence of a great spiritual heroic being that he hoped was good and not a giant, dragon or villain.

“Mingo’s awoken gene God attracted me. Your spirit flight has crossed me. When you are spiritually one with the night sky or the warmth of the sun, you are with me as well as LIFE.

But this little one, his gene God is fully awoken. It is he who I have really come to see.

Bird man

He who I call the Saviour, Vern Lukas is indeed prophetic; here stands a new Arthur who will save all."

"All?" Kenala asked fearing he meant humans and aliens.

"I know your heart Colour Stripes Kenala.

All means all.

The dark ages have come, the dynamics of your people is almost ended. War, disease, inter tribal warfare, bad governments and the overwhelming numbers of the invaders will mean your people driven further into the waste lands of Maponos," the Vate with eyes boring deep into Kenala so the sergeant envisioned all and was heart broken.

"As long as I Mingo Drum Vercingetorix am free I shall rally our warriors.

We are the last of the free.

Behind us are the frozen polar caps.

Before us the enemy.

Better to die fighting than be enslaved.

I fear nothing, not even the purple suns falling upon my head or the waves drowning me," Mingo said in the true fashion of a Bird man king.

"I believe you Mingo, but many of your people see the end of their world has come.

Did you know Mingo that long ago there was a Golden Age for the Bird people and it has gone?

You fight for your own survival now Mingo.

Bird man

But there, in Little Arthur Verica the good things the Bird people have to offer the galaxies.

I will leave you with one thought?

Guard him well,” the old Vate and vanished implying death could change the doors to be opened and new doors and pathways for those alive would appear.

And chaos would result till the time of a new Saviour was at hand.

“I will,” Boudicca.

And both Bird men warriors stared at Little Arthur Verica.

The boy seeing danger gone gave a cheeky smile. He had understood that they had been talking about him and was something special and for the next few months would make life a living hell for everyone *as he played upon that fact.*

He was a little person.

“What did the Vate leave you?” Kenala asked.

“Knowledge that I know where there is an abandoned Madrawt fuel dump. We most go there and leak the fuel over the swamps and fire it.

Much of the Choking Death will die then,” Mingo replied and Kenala was impressed with the idea.

“And the Vate left Mingo one thing, the idea of the Great Fire,”

Vern Lukas.