

Bird man

I Visited

“The Bird man Mingo Drum Vercingetorix was where he had begun, on the top of the pink sandstone monolith.

Alone,

Dejected.

And he spoke to himself these words.

“What use a king if he cannot even keep his son in his own lands?

What use a king without a queen?

Where are my subjects?

Where are my laws?

Where are my enemies?

My subjects are slaves,

My laws are broken,

My enemies eat at my table,

The food from my people.

The Bird man was troubled for I should know, for I was entering his life and would observe him closely. I the scribe Lorn Lukas who am the author Vern Lukas.

I think I came to know him closer than anyone for I studied him as a man, a Bird man and as alien specimen.

I went into his skin, joined his sleep dreams, watched him eat, noted his postures, body language, how many times he peed, how lust overcame him and how he chose females to comfort himself with.

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His chastity vow had been broken long ago by Cartimandua.

And his God gene was awake.

Knew he had been chosen by an unseen power.

The life essence.

True it was Little Arthur Verica would bring back the golden age, but without Mingo Drum Vercingetorix there would have been no Arthur.

Was he not one of the two that stood by and fought the Madrawts?

And the other was Tzu Strath the Great War Lord, both pawns in life's game of good against evil.

And the Madrawts were evil.

The God gene, ah, poor confused Mingo, he followed tribal gods but knew they represented the equilibrium of nature's forces, knew of their prophecies that light would come in the form of a man, **Mahbon** the young god reborn.

A man who would bring justice, a man who would be a god upon Maponos, (Tara 6). And Mingo sought him, searched the books finding him not. I think the closest he reached him was when he was able to sit on the grass, the carpet of our maker and feel the oneness of the universe on him.

And Mingo alone in his depressive moods waited the return of many deliverers he had read about.

For he was a desperate man seeking anything to save his people.

And he thought of his son and longed too hug him.

And his spirit shared its life essence with his surroundings so he became one with the stones, air, shrubs, crawling beasts and he grew strong when he was thus.

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“I will make a better world for all too live in,” he shouted his echoing grunt to the sandstone monoliths that gave his barren lands a forsaken appearance.

And he leapt from his high perch and sailed for home and at that moment my ship landed in the pink purple dust of his domain and I strode forth on my feet.

I, Lorn Lukas had come to search for my Arthur, my Verica, and my golden dream.

I had stolen this ship to escape my master Conchobhar the Emperor of the East. A light Traveler built for fast speed of light travel.

Then a Bird man dropped out of the sky in front of me.

Startled and afraid for I never expected to meet a Bird man so close unexpectedly.

To be captured yes and taken to Mingo where I would deliver a stunning oration that I, Lorn Lukas was in fact Vern Lukas and had come to serve his son and make sure all knew who he was.

And here I was, standing like a Christmas tree in my long navy blue silken robes with white cuneiform writing printed on them and a tall black top hat and black pig tail and red soft shoes.

And here was this Bird man in front of me, unafraid, almost naked, tanned compared to my sickly pale skin.

His long brown hair free and knotted with the wind and my gelled so that not a single black strand was out of place.

One look in his eyes and knew I wasn't being out stared by any ordinary Bird man.

He oozed confidence and superiority, he knew he could kill me and I knew it. And since I was alone I was completely dependent upon his mercy for life.



Illustration 81: Conchobhar the Emperor of the East

"I must be some sort of idiot to think I could have waltzed upon Mingo Drum

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proclaiming my oratorical brilliance, a buffoon,” some part of my mind cast at my ego.

Now the Bird man strode over to me in long easy lazy strides and SNIFFED me.

Sniffed my perfume and scents that made me smell so clean and fresh.

AND SPAT

In disgust.

I knew what he was thinking, that I was one of them, you know!

Baths I liked and smelling clean, but he looked at me as if I was a bug. Well he could sniff, he stunk, he needed a bath quick, he was offensive and that was being polite.

An imperial scribe does not lead a rugged life, more to accompanying his emperor in luxurious surroundings.

This Bird man shone primitive strength in an innocent uncorrupted fashion. I felt ashamed when it should have been me looking down my nose at an ignorant savage.

I told him who I was and why I had come. That shook him, I mean the official scribe to one emperor and then another, come to serve Mingo's son. I mean me, a human leaving a cozy job to come to what the humans called Tara 6.

“Go home human,” was his reply and he turned to leave.

“Wait, if you are a friend of Mingo Drum take me to him,” I shouted.

He turned, a glint of anger in his eyes, for a moment I thought my road in life had reached its end.

“You are looking at him and as for my son, leave him alone.”

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“Why, what have I done but immortalized him?” *I had realised I still had plenty of road left!*

“You have made him a god,” he replied and flew away landing atop a green marble monolith two hundred feet high.

I did not understand what he meant. All I had done was to read all there was about ancient prophecies and look for someone for the masses to hope for deliverance from oppression.

And chosen Little Arthur/Verica as the facts pointed to him as a potential Saviour and my pen and imagination had done the rest. If anything, I had done this savage a favor in getting a Bird child accepted as heir to Tzu Strath’s army.

Also I know several soothsayers who have close relationships with their guides and they told me to look for a bird.

I did, I have several large enclosed domed parks near me.

Joking apart the trail led me here.

And what was wrong if the masses saw Arthur as a god in the flesh? The gates of limitless pleasure were his for the asking?

And instead of gratitude this Bird man sneers and snobs me! Me, the highest and most influential scribe known to the two empires come to him, a savage with feathers.

I would seek Tzu Strath and find out where Little Arthur was. But alas, I am a poor pilot and had landed my ship badly, rupturing the batteries and a few bolts which meant I was stranded and worse;

At his mercy I felt.

There were beasties

howling nearby.

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And he stood there in that green marble looking down at me deciding if I should be lunch?

“Oh well I have nothing for it but to seek his help!” I shouted up as I knew I was nowhere near an aero garage, and it was very hot out here.

And as for his unhelpful attitude I learned later why? Firstly I was human and therefore enemy. *I was lucky he didn't kill me.* But it went against what I had learned about Mingo who saved human/aliens. Haman Ma and Hart Woo were now celebrities' on chat shows speaking of their ordeal with Mingo Drum Vercingetorix.

But it was me, good old me he didn't like because he blamed me for exploiting his son and driving a wedge between them.

The wedge bit was the bottom line.

Perhaps if more of his children had survived the wars he might have had a different attitude.

His uncontrollable warriors had started the wars by burning settlers out of their legitimate imperial homesteads.

I should never have mentioned my name.

So I went and stood below the marble monolith and it was impressive. A work of art, many would pay a high price for such a carved work to add to their patios.

“Are you afraid of me Mingo? One writer who holds a pen,” I added quickly seeking help afraid he might fly off and leave me to whatever was howling.

Well prideful vanity was always the enemy of the Bird people and Mingo had enough for the whole Nation.

He answered with a deep grunt and then dropped straight off that monolith and my heart missed a beat as I thought he was going to land on me.

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Straight down at me and I ordered my feet to move but they didn't!

Then he was circling me just like that.

"I fear only the sky falling on my head and the waves drowning me," his reply on the jet stream.

"Oh," I couldn't think of any reply at that precise moment in time.

I had been lucky not to wet myself.

Then a Maonosian Lion or Griffin pops up; *did I not pee then?*

I am only a scribe!

"Climb on the lion," he ordered me. I have seen them in pictures but never seen those teeth so close before. And the cheek, it too was sniffing me and found me unpleasant to eat! *What was wrong with perfumed meat?*

Thank Dispater the good god I bathed regularly.

Then Mingo flew away and left me standing all alone with that

LION GRIFFON.

Then it trotted after him like a pet dog.

I had no choice did I?

And then the air was filled with a trumpeting call and behold a two tusked Maonosian elephant appears on my right and heads towards me.

My knees played a samba!

And I caught up with the lion griffin and held its tail to stop it so I could climb up so it could run away with me from that mad bull elephant charging US.

And the stupid beast just stands still looking at nothing.

Oh god Dispater Dispater help me help please and then the trunks are sniffing me.

It sneezed and sneezed and sneezed and stopped sniffing me and distanced itself and

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gave me this disgusting stare.

What was wrong with my perfume?

Then we were off speeding along to The City of Winds, and then and only then after several miles did my heart return to a normal beat and did remember Mingo Drum Vercingetorix kept unusual company and these must be Old Rag and Baldy!

He could keep his company!

And many times I confess I did think about climbing the tallest rocks nearby and wait rescue if it ever came, but He did only fly and capture me.

And I did not want to annoy Mingo Drum Vercingetorix with his funny friends!

And The City of Winds?

Can only be described as thousands of stone monoliths tunneled out into living apartments.

And a fascinating eerie whistling wind producing many tones low and high; as if the spirits of the dead were talking.

I did but marvel.

“Well human, gossip writer, what will you write about now?” Mingo asked.

“You,” I replied.

He grunted amused.

“Why did you choose my son as the usher of the golden age?”

“Would you believe me if I told you?” And seeing he would told him about a strange dream in which an old man appeared named Vate; and he told me Arthur was coming to Maponos and go write about him, “So I just followed my urge.”

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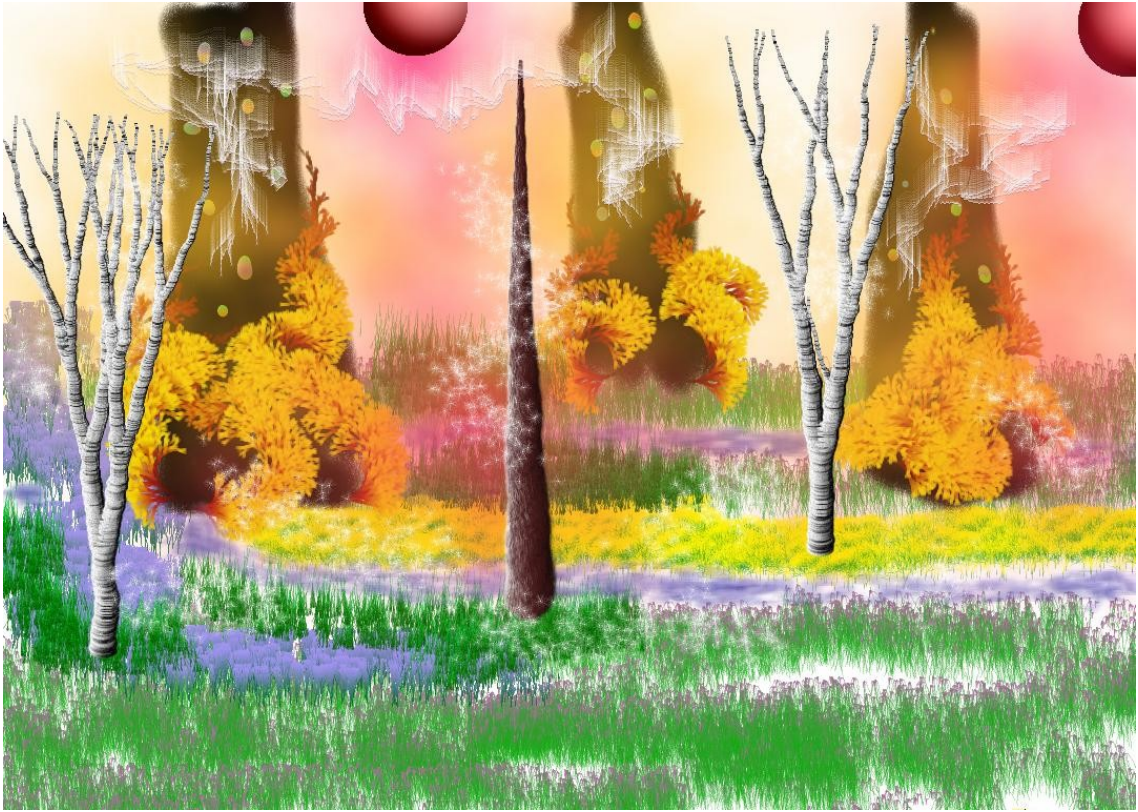


Illustration 82: Entrance to City of Winds

I saw recognition in his eyes and I think fear. What was the Vate to this fearless warrior of the skies?

“Arthur my Lord is ideal; he is part human and bird, of imperial lineage, one who the peoples of the empires can identify with. No longer will the emperor’s be solely human and the rest second class citizens. Is this not worthy my Lord,” I called as I was worming my way into being accepted? I also didn’t mention Arthur I had decided to write about anyway before the Vate had appeared as Bird men were the frontier and where the frontier was, legends needing written about and fortunes made by a good writer like myself.

Vate only accelerated things.

And I being highly intelligent I knew that Mingo resented me for taking his

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son away turning him into a super star in the name of politics.

Upon reflection he had a point.

But then he should never have been a naughty bird with Boudicca, should he?

Making a child fated to inherit Tzu Strath's army.

A child that would inherit the Artebrate Bird Nation of Mingo Drum
Vercingetorix.

A child who would grow up the most powerful adult in the known galaxies.

How can Mingo blame me entirely I ask you?

Then one day watched the Bird man King Mingo Drum Vercingetorix approach me
on one of his horrid red ants. I could not get used to them as I was afraid of their giant
fleshy ripping mandibles. A monstrous insect without feelings except a deep
biological clock that programmed them to work, fight, tend eggs and eat things like me.

I trusted them not.

Mingo could leap into the air and fly to safety, me I knew I could not out run the
ant.

That is why I saw them as horrid ants.

Seeing one at a distance was fine by me, but not up close thank you.

And because I was watching the ant never noticed the disheveled figure behind it.

Those mandibles were very big.

“Vern Lukas, so fate has dragged you here as well?”

Now I saw the hunchback.

Well I wanted to meet the players of my game and was.

Bird man

It was later alone with Nostradamus that he told me why he had left the service of Tzu Strath.

“I am one of the last of the free.”

Times were indeed changing, when Mingo was gone and buried Nostradamus knew the Planet Maponos would become just another civilized world. He felt, he told me he had much in sympathy with Mingo as both were outcasts.

“He has promised that I don’t have to use my special talents against Tzu Strath. Remember his word is law,” he told me and I saw at once Mingo would rather have him at his side than working against him.

It was a quick release from a guilty conscious that weighed down on the man, all the assassinations, the stitched up jobs that wrecked people, all put behind in an instant! Why not, too hang on such trash would make anyone insane.

Here Nostradamus could find himself and start a new life on the frontier.

To be reborn spiritually.

“In reality I still serve Tzu Strath by protecting Little Arthur,” he added and I saw the logic.

“It will be Arthur who will eventually defeat and drive the Madrawts from our galaxies,” more logic.

“Tzu Strath will outlaw you”? I pointed out.

He agreed, his face was now plastered over the domain of Tzu Strath, “Without those reward posters and cover blown how else would Mingo trust me?” He asked and immediately I was suspicious of him and Tzu Strath’s real motives?

Was Nostradamus getting close to his target for a kill?

Do I warn Mingo?

NO.

Deep down I wanted Mingo out of the way as well so that my creation Arthur could bring in the golden age.

I admit I still saw Mingo as a savage not wanting the benefits of civilisation. I guess me and Nostradamus weren't much different, were we?

At least we were working for the same end, the golden age.

"We are going down the River of Skulls in a few days," Nostradamus told me and he grinned, why?

"Sounds like something out of Space Dragons and dungeons," I replied and he replied with a bigger grin.

"Besides Arthur will pardon me because it is he who will eventually pay my wages?"