

Bird man

He was too late

By the gods we showed them the spirit of freedom was worth fighting for.

Our new found will too took them by surprise and we threw them back across the River of Skulls even managing to penetrate the swamps beyond for ten miles before I managed to rally my PROUD BIRDMEN. Only if I had managed it sooner, but these were a wild woolly people, not used to discipline. Besides I must take blame myself, I found the charge exhilarating and got carried away; I am a scribe, or was!

We also spiked their big guns earning a respite from the shelling.

“I want this city leveled and salted.

Nothing will grow here for a thousand years.

It will become a monument to imperial power and

The futility of Bird men resistance.”

The words spoken by Dictator Cedric Henry to one human, Colonel Horatio Nelson Smith whose job was to deforest hostile lands so reducing cover for enemy ambushes.

And like a good soldier he set about organizing his men, human and alien, pilots and crew to the given task.

One was the human Billy McNash of Houston, Texas, Old Earth.

They were the wrong boys for the job.

Colonel Horatio Nelson Smith was sick of it. Wiping out whole forests, water systems, ecological habitats.

Fighting Madrawts was one thing; he had seen first hand what they were responsible for.

Bird man

And he didn't care for the methods of Tribune Cedric Henry, now dictator!

And young Billy McNash was a romantic idealist volunteer who had fled Old Earth to fight Madrawts.

Both didn't like fighting a minority alien race.

They were secret Bird lovers.

And no one knew.

They went on holiday?

Which was a real good thing for Vern Lukas's friends?

It was also a real good thing these two men didn't visit the front lines after the Gododdin and their allies had retreated a few miles back to consolidate.

They were also aware of the 'No prisoners order,'

And was a good thing Vern Lukas imagined he had control of these wild Bird men.

And I Vern Lukas admitted my folly! If I had known they were mutilating the wounded they found, what then should or could I do? Had I not told them about Henry's orders not to take prisoners? This was an order for the Gododdin to slaughter everyone they found.

So the swamp dragons fed well and would have big litters for food was plenty.

Now Dictator Cedric Henry looked at the lagoon. He could see why his orders to bury the dead had been ignored; the lagoon was dangerous, typical of hundreds in the swamp, the size of a swimming pool with a small stream feeding it.

There must have been about five hundred headless limbless bodies in it. The heads had been taken as trophies by the Gododdin and swamp dragons and snakes now fed off the corpses.

The snakes were related to anacondas and pythons so were big.

Bird man

And the air stank of exposed decaying organs.

“Hang every Bird man you find till we reach the polar ice caps,” Henry throwing Mingo Drum’s words back at the Gododdin.

And when he reached the ice caps he intended doing something about the friendlies; they were birds too.



Illustration 95: Bird man friendlies were friendlies by imperial standards.

Besides Tzu Strath wasn't on Tara 6 at the moment.

Bird man

He was honeymooning with his beautiful wife Oona. And the master pill had given her the looks of a twenty year old.

Whereas Tzu Strath, Great War Lord had been frozen in his fifties. His flesh, bronzed and wrinkled, muscular and hard.

Conchobhar had instructed his youngest daughter well in the seduction of Tzu Strath. And the war lord was behaving badly for he was an old man with a young wife.

Old mentally that made him aware of his old mummified body.

And he fell in love with Ono.

For she was young and pleasing.

And he was her dotting slave.

Besotted the old silly fool.

What Conchobhar wanted?

And she prompted him to take hormones to be virile and chased her about as if they were youngsters frolicking in the harvested wheat field.

And he forgot about Arthur and that is what Conchobhar wanted.

And Oona had ambitions of her own and separate from her father's Conchobhar for she would be empress one day.

And Cedric Henry took advantage of Tzu's bedazzlement with his young bride and his rule was authoritative, despotic, ruthless.

And Boudicca was aware he saw Arthur as a Bird boy and she did not approve of her father's marriage for she distrusted Conchobhar and Oona and feared for Arthur's safety.

"Mummy can I go out and play?" Arthur called from the toilet.

Bird man

“When you wipe yourself properly,” for she had noticed the paper roll towards her feet.

She gently tossed it back and heard Arthur moving about.

Then he came covered in chocolate.

“Little boy,” she said lovingly and using wipes cleaned him up.

“How would you like to go away from here and live somewhere else?” She asked softly.

“He took his mummies hand and placed it on his wing membranes that he wanted tickled.

A knock on the door.

It was Kenala accompanied by his human escort.

Henry never let any of them out alone.

The place had a million bugs.

They were bird prisoners.

Arthur was a threat to the new rising order.

“Want to play football?” Kenala asked and Boudicca let Arthur go, she needed the time to plan their escape.

Kenala was coming too, unlike Henry he valued the boy’s life and would be valuable out there in the wilderness, after all he was a beast who could fly and scout for enemies and food.