

## He Thought of Tara 6 at Last!

“It is agreed then, we take old earth,” the Empress Oona insisted.

The Emperor of the East, Alexander Caesar Conchobhar was hesitant. His empire boarded the Madrawt domain, he would prefer to finish them off and have all their territory as his. What good sharing it with his new friends whose domains were far a field.

Then he would agree to march through the old empire of his father and take.

The Great War Lord Tzu Strath, who preferred his old title than that of ‘Emperor,’ suspected this.

He may be besotted by the young and fair Oona, whom he knew had ambitions and had not betrayed him yet, but Conchobhar he knew and had fought. The distrust for him was still there, no matter if they were family now!

Oona sat back; her stomach stretched to capacity under the light dark blue toga. She groaned and allowed her hands to touch the bulge which hid the child struggling to come into her world.

Tzu Strath smiled over his virility.

“All I know it is time I went back to Tara 6 and see how Henry is coping,” Tzu still avoiding committing himself to an expensive war that would drag on for decades.

Oona’s face grew red, her husband had displeased her.

Conchobhar hid his mirth.

Whatever happened he was the winner.

His genes were in the coming child.

## Bird man

Thoughts of future assassinations and a puppet boy ruler disposed of if it suited self interest.

There were drugs available to make sure he stayed just that, a boy.

“We all hear how well the dictator is doing on Tara 6,” Oona with a smile as she slipped a hand across Tzu’s knee.

“Only too well my dear.”

“If you have Old Earth what is one miserable planet far from anywhere?” She asked.

“Home sick,” he replied, this was true, these meetings with Conchobhar and talk dividing known space between them had made him remember old faces and wonder their fates?

“You think of Arthur?” She probed showing hurt.

PAUSE THEN VENOM.

“You will make him king over your own child?”

Tzu Strath shook his head, he could forgive his Oona anything. She was still a child thrust into an adult vicious world.

Poor little fair Oona.....*somebody needed awakening?*

*More to the point, smart calculating fair Oona.*

“You carry my child,” he replied and stroked her distended belly. He hoped the medicines for stretch marks would clear quicker than the recommended two weeks.

He wanted his Oona’s belly back the way it was quick.

“Draw up a legal document then?” Oona challenged.

“Your daughter is too much!” Tzu grinning complaining to her father.

“No no your wife now Tzu,” Conchobhar reminded.

Bird man

One would have thought it a happy family get together?

\*

But what changed the course of events was Ce-Ra who desperate for a victory to show his people he was still in Huitzilopitchli's grace launched a sneak attack with his rallied troops upon Conchobhar's boarders.

Many planets were conquered and looted.

"Huitzilopitchli smiles upon me," Ce-Ra Lord of Madrawts claimed and obtained a breathing space for his troubled reign."

Vern Lukas whom you know well.

\*

The Dictator Cedric Henry heard the news and smiled, the Madrawt offensive would force Conchobhar to seek help from Tzu Strath keeping him his boss away from here.

But Tzu was pushing towards Old Earth for his wife, **what** would give Henry wondered?

Just another year and Henry would be a force in the game.

He was slowly moving up the Madrawt planet chain of supply, planet hopping towards Planet Madrawt itself and total victory.

Already he had moved west and taken over a whole galaxy that once belonged to the deceased Vortigern.

Henry was Tzu's Mark Anthony to Augustus Octavian.

\*

Arthur sat on a tree branch huddled behind his wings, a scowl upon his face, his eyes narrowed. He was Bat Wing the caped defender who was watching hover craft

## Bird man

arrive at Hart Woo's during one of Maponos' (Tara 6) sudden rainstorms.

The problem was after following them to this remote farmstead he didn't know what to do?

"Hart Woo, don't look back, whatever until we get inside, but we are being watched," Hamon Ma of old said as he shut the door to his skimmer, a machine much like the one Reeman Black Hair had stolen and what could be equivalent to the old motor cycle but with doors. Except he knew how to drive it unlike poor Reeman who had a terrifying experience with his stolen one, poor Madrawt fool!

Anyway once inside Hart Woo and her husband looked out from the drawn screens.

"A child?" Major Odo said.

Hamon Ma looked, "He's rocking about, he's fallen asleep and will fall off and crack his head?"

"I know that Bird chick, it is Arthur."

So quickly they formed a plan as not to scare Arthur away. Hart Woo would go alone talking to herself how she wished she could free Mingo, of course, within Arthur's hearing.

And the rain stopped.

Hart Woo came out and carried off her plan.

Arthur hearing her awoke with a jerk the caped defender Bat Wing lost his grip and fell off his branch.

THUD,

Hart Woo suppressed her urge to go and cuddle him, Arthur or not, this was a Bird chick and dangerous when frightened.

## Bird man

Hart Woo had been living with humans again and had not forgotten her experiences with the Bird people, why she knew the chicks were dangerous when frightened.

They had talons.

Even though Arthur lacked his father's beak and resembled Boudicca facially, Hart Woo was cautious.

"Uh, argh," Arthur wailed as he scrambled to his feet.

"We are Mingo's friends," Hart Woo had to repeat it several times before Arthur stopped climbing the tree to get away.

"Of course I know or I wouldn't come here," he puffed.

"We are going to help him. Will you help too?" She asked pulling a honey candy bar from a jerkin pocket.

Arthur's mouth started dribbling.

He was the Caped Defender!

Honey candy bars is one thing little Bird men cannot resist, its honey, and much better, honey and chocolate.

Arthur climbed down and took what was offered.

"He's coming in," Major Odo aloud.

And by the time Arthur was inside his mouth was a gooey mess and his fingers needed wiped.

Something the real masked caped defender wouldn't have done.

Anyway Major Odo was wearing his uniform.

"He's a friend, don't be afraid," Hart Woo told Arthur who clung to her light flower printed skirt from behind.

He peeked round from her rump.

## Bird man

Major Odo was still standing there and try as he might with grins and hellos and offered hand shakes, Arthur wouldn't come over.

"I am Hamon Ma, a flightless Bird man and also a human, Mingo was my step father. We are going to free him, want to help?" Hamon pouring out a large plastic cup of cool milk.

Arthur started climbing Hart Woo's skirt to his full height to drink.

There was a ripping sound from a skirt.

Major Odo offered Arthur an open biscuit box that a small hand quickly pulled closer for examination.

Chocolate butter cookies.

Great.

They were the crumbly type.

Hart Woo started to itch, crumbs do that.

"Like a seat?" She asked.

The boy nodded.

She tried to put him down by himself but he wouldn't let go.

She started losing her balance.

Somehow Arthur pulled down her skirt and ended up sitting on her lap, his milk and cookies over her body.

"We know where Mingo is," Major Odo helping Arthur off an embarrassed Hart Woo, "Do you know where Boudicca your mummy is, does she need help?"

Someone winded.

The boy giggled, it was him.

He was a naughty little boy.

## Bird man

“Mummy needs help,” then he started telling them about what he knew.

At the end he cuddled asleep against Hart Woo on a sofa, the soft warmth of her chest was motherly, safe and cozy.

He was after all, still a chick and not really the masked caped defender Bat Wing.

But you had better not tell him that.

\*

Major Odo and Haman Ma loaded up a hover car with guns and explosives.

“I don’t like you looking at her bosom,” Odo told Hamon.

“We are very much Bird folk,” Hamon replied meaning their prolific society.

Major Odo went silent imagining bad things.

He couldn’t adjust to the idea he was sharing Hart Woo with anyone else.

For this reason deep down he hated Bird man culture and had given up trying to get Hart Woo to see she was human not a bird.

“Everybody is doing it,” was Hart Woo’s defense.

But what society did elsewhere didn’t mean Hart Woo had to do it.

“Don’t worry come conception time it will be yours, I promise.”

That seemed to have mollified Odo.

But the truth might be deeper, she might not really love him and was still seeking that special someone Vercingetorix.

“When you are gone campaigning what do you do when you need me and I am not there? Get a sheep or look up a nasty whore?” Odo remembered Hart Woo asking.

He had gone silent so she took it as an affirmation.

“Same, just make sure you don’t infect me with something OK?”

*There wasn’t much difference between human and a Bird man society was there?*

## Bird man

“As long as we don’t stop loving each other right? Listen Daniel Odo we were brought up in a sexual free society so accept that way as normal, so tell me how do we stop thinking like that?”

Major Daniel Odo had begun to suspect Hart Woo might have bird genes in her.

She had promised to conceive this month and now Mingo Drum Vercingetorix the past love of her life was here!

Could he handle the situation or would the worm of jealousy eat him?

Whose child would it be?

The worm was already awake.

This wasn’t a hippy commune he was building *but a home for his family*.

But she sure as hell had a nice chest and couldn’t blame Hamon for staring but he could stare somewhere else!

\*

Major Vernpatgus was an alien and didn’t like Tara 6.

He had been seconded out to Star Dust Corporation as liaison officer. He figured life was cruel, he had two bosses, the Dictator Henry and Glen Zowanski, both ruthless.

Now they had a Bird man and the messy business of extracting his genes would begin. Why he left the five humans and two aliens to it and went off to inspect the human woman captive.

She was beautiful, that was his first thought.

The second was what was a woman like her doing out here with a Bird man and who was the chick that had flown away?

She had answered none of his questions.

He didn’t know here, had never seen her before in his life.

He was a new arrival, lived at the Star Dust barracks and amused himself with the local beer and friendly Bird woman and other female life forms that took THEIR INVITATIONS TO TTREAT outside base.

“They will be quite a while with your man friend, Bird lover are you?” It was an accusation, he was a hypocrite!

She for answer stared at the floor hoping that would draw him to her so she could ram her clenched fist up into his obtrusive cod piece.

But he read her thoughts and stood back and drew his laser pistol. Bird lovers were dead meat under the Dictator’s reign, she was doomed, she was his, he had spent the last nine weeks out here and he found the frontier stunk of sweat, stale beer, urine and dirt.

He also had a drink problem and had a few under his belt so his thoughts were greasy anyway!

There was nothing else out here to do apart from drinking and extracting genetic material from unwilling Bird men and better if a female turned up, then they could play before handed over to Star Dust.

The small platoon he had under his control was out scouting the local talent as no hostiles had been in the area for months so were as bad and greasy as their major?

A few months past they had come across a Gododdin party, mostly the old, woman and children coming in to surrender as they needed food.

The men had slaughtered all, some times they killed friendlies, it was difficult to distinguish between hostiles and friendlies, they all looked the same.

## Bird man

And the shallow communal burial trench was getting full and smelly as the local Vern were too well fed to clean the land properly.

What was going on was bad, a reflection of the new ways the Dictator, the top was cruel, and so then the bottom would follow.

Even Major Vernpatgus had a Bird woman for private use and she had a child, Mag and her mother had so far diverted the major's attentions away from her to herself.

*The nights on Tara 6 were cold.*

By becoming the major's household pet the woman had saved herself a journey to the Star Dust laboratory where she would have been treated worse before being drained of her genes.

Problem was Bird women were pretty, natures way of attracting the best mate for a healthy gene pool.

Problem was also everyone was jealous of Bird people that could fly naturally.

Problem was human/aliens needed machines to fly in.

Problem was people like Cedric Henry and this major being in positions of power.

Problem was Bird folk was easy to keep, just throw them the meal waste as they could eat anything.

Problem was they did the job better than a circus bear.

Problem was the major had slid his laser into Boudicca's mouth and was stroking her hair; his mind was full of bad thoughts

## Bird man

\*

Kenala was on a table, he had been disposed of his genes, now the lab boys were removing his flight muscles that would be transplanted onto a client for flight power, they didn't need to, they had his genes, and they didn't need to remove most organs either to send to schools for biology classes, they had plastic replicas these days.

Problem was he was a Bird man that the Dictator Henry wanted removed from society.

Problem was there was a garbage dump behind the Star Dust base where Kenala found himself dumped.

At least they couldn't steal his last private thoughts.

Then he heard the coughing grunts and swelled his chest and grunted back and that grunt was his last breath.

He knew Mahbon had returned, their young god who would bring the sky down upon human heads and cause tidal waves to rise and swamp the land washing away filthy human settlements.

Judgment day was at hand.

And in his mind Kenala saw a white Maonosian Eagle, bigger than a Vern come flying down and allowed him to ride its back as it flew away with his soul through the purple gates of the other world of the dead.

\*

It was well I, Vern Lukas, half man half Bird man who gave one of the answering calls to Kenala's last grunt of the free.

The other call I could not identify as I was not brought up a Bird man and so lacked the education of learning the various calls of tribes, nations, kings and important

## Bird man



*Illustration 100: The white eagle carried the soul through the gates of the purple other world*

individuals and friends.

Some I knew such as Cartimandua's and Ena's. Kenala's I did not recognize but I understood by the pitch it was the last breath of one of the free, understood and answered.

And realised that Star Dust would want the Bird people's ability to hear sonically next.

What about the feathers, why don't we pluck them while we where at it; no doubt they did.

What I didn't know was the Dictator Henry was planning elite corps of shock troops, which could fly and speak to each other using the sonic pitch of the Bird man.

The dictator had dreams to fulfill!

## Bird man

Tara 6 he saw his not Tzu Strath's who was living in luxury on Old Earth, it was Henry who put up with the Bird men and had forgot Tzu had been here before him long ago.

And Glen Zowanski of Star Dust was backing Henry because flight gene sales were up due to a surge in supply and a price drop.

But even here there was no friendship between Glen and Henry, for the former was planning to breed his own Bird men off Tara 6 to cut Henry out of the profits.

Already Glen's powerful sales people had started a rumour that ground Bird bone was a powerful sex stimulant, which it wasn't but who cares, they had ostrich farms so why not Bird farms?

It created work and depended how you saw animals. Crocodile farms were all right, no one liked them, they ate people so could become shoes but; Bird folk could speak and you could cuddle into a Bird woman so Bird men farms was questionable!

But Glen would have to act quickly and bribe many to stop the wild life agencies putting Bird folk on the endangered list along with Dispater the imperial god and rhinos.

Everything Bird was chick at the moment.

And although Glen wasn't sure how much he did make, he was sure he did be worth a lot more than already was.

But Henry was as bad; he had plans for pushing Glen out of the market when he learned the business ropes. His dreams were a betrayal of his friendship with Tzu Strath; he was not a good alien.

He had stolen several elite troop prototypes.

Volunteers he called them when in fact they had been deserters who would be executed according to the whims of their commanding officers; Tara 6 was no longer a

## Bird man

frontier planet but hell.

These volunteers now had wings, good eyes, brilliant hearing.

Two had developed a cancer that killed them.

One went mad because he couldn't cope with sonic hearing.

Two flew into pylons and frizzled.

One had been shot by troops mistaking him for a hostile.

But the others in the platoon had survived and he had a job for them, find Boudicca and Arthur.

*And don't bring them back alive.*

And Henry went and inspected his new troops, told them they did have a passing out parade and ushered in trolleys of drink and women.

Of course his new elite troops thanked him, they were glad they weren't hanging by a meat hook in their belly from a telegraph pole as Henry attempted extreme measures to lower the desertion rate.

Henry it seems wasn't liked.

Neither was the hell Tara 6 had become.

Too many young recruits these days had a conscious, bleeding hearts they was called.