

Bird man

New Ball Game New Scene New Personalities.

“They put me in charge of you mutants,” Scout Theodosius Wookey Hole said.

He was a half breed and pure nasty as he had been born on Tara 6.

And knew where his bread and butter was and that *the old world of the free was past*.

“They are sending us out after some Bird chick Henry wants dead, so the chick *must be important*. We will find and kill him after we find out from the chick just *how important?*”

The elite prototypes understood, quick cash and a ticket off Tara 6 were on the offering.

“We must work as one to succeed,” Theodosius told them.

They understood, not to trust each other and to kill each other off so all the reward was in the hands of one.

And these were the new elite troops of the Dictator Cedric Henry oh well!

And Theodosius didn’t need much brain to figure out who the chick was? There did be a death squad waiting to silence them and if they managed to escape for the rest of their lives Tzu Strath would be seeking them.

And because he didn’t have a degree to figure this angle out, none of his men had degrees so they figured it out too!

That was the right part; the wrong part was that as long as misfits like himself and the mutant platoon had dirt jobs to do, they were safe.

Where could they go?

These mutants were gross and outcasts!

Bird man

These were not the new flight personalities wanted by human/alien high society?

These men belonged to the Dirty Platoon, A.W.O.L.S.

They did what they were told or got strung up by their needy parts to teach them to fear only Dictator Henry.

As for the scout Wookey Hole as he preferred being called he was dead meat without this fear installed in these men or they did slit him and be off.

All hated Wookey Hole, friendlies and hostiles. He was the scout that sniffed out hostiles for friendlies to butcher. Deep down he knew some adolescent Bird chick did slit his throat as he was distracted by the frolicking because he had butchered her twelfth cousin on some raid he couldn't remember.

He had killed so many hostiles, mainly the infirm and young that couldn't fight back.

Cousins, Bird people and their extended families, good grief how many cousins of his own had he butchered?

It was rumored he sold his own full blooded Bird mother to Star Dust so a man like him shouldn't be trusted.

And since he only trusted himself that was why he was watching the security camera at Mingo's cell.

Then along came a disguised hart Woo.

Theodosius Wookey Hole was delighted; he was bored watching the camera for hours.

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So it was, Hart Woo entered the dirty cell.

Bird man

A scented hanky to her nose.

Wookey noticed that and grinned, glad he had sent the men on red alert patrols.

Only a dame used perfume; he was no longer bored.

And Hart Woo swore that if she didn't know Bird men were intelligent creatures she had entered the wrong cell that a wild ferocious beast lived in *so flee*.

The place stank like a public loo badly maintained by a poor council. Mingo might have gone mad in here, she would have!

She wished he did speak.

She had forgotten she was part bird herself and just had to call upon that uncivilized bit!

Suddenly the door closed behind her plunging her into darkness.

Feet shuffled straw.

"Hart Woo," the voice was soft, "it is you isn't it?"

Hart Woo edged towards the voice for comfort, it was Mingo.

"Tzu Strath would never have let this happen to you," she complained and he knew she was right, he did have shown mercy by killing him.

"I am Mingo a Bird man," admitting he was no longer free and defeated.

Holding her made him remember times past, of loves gone, he no longer roamed his domain free while Vern cleared the land of carrion. Those days' the herds of antelope roaming being the food for a whole ecological system had collapsed from over hunting from fur and trophy hunters.

A wilderness dotted with monolithic monuments build by his people.

Bird man

And the Griffin, that Maonosian lion and other predators chased the antelope
below his flight.

All gone, maybe surviving here and there only.

Replaced by irrigated farms, wild life and theme parks and hot dog sellers.

And outside the park gates wooden Bird men statues selling cigars.

And in vantagous viewing points, a caged free one with no room to move,
sitting on a perch quite mad while kids threw peanuts at him to eat.

Bird men were not apes?

Quickly Hart Woo stripped off cosmetic skin from her body for him to disguise
himself under, but his stink, that would give him away as an unwashed beast.

Her false fingernails she broke up and stuffed into the key locks on his
manacles; chemical reactions happened as iron melted.

There was enough to free him from the chains on the wall.

His ankle locks.

But not the ankle bar.

Or wrist and body clamp.

But he would be free sort off?

To hobble out and attack his guards and die a free one.

Fat chance he had.

Dictator Henry really made sure he was chained up!

She left him feeling she had speeded up his execution.

But Theodosius Wookey Hole knew otherwise?

He wanted Mingo free but not free enough to escape. He was making sure
Mingo got out of his cell?

Bird man

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Mingo stood in a deserted guard room but the room was not empty, Wookey was watching from cameras.

And Mingo threw his face at one so Wookey and the watching returned platoon behind were so started they drew back.

Wookey fell cracking his head.

A face of a snarling Bird man had zoomed up close, real close so the saliva dribbled on them.

Each man who saw that face knew who it belonged too, had seen the wanted posters.

Each had his private thoughts about that face.

Each figured he was about to die if that face was after them.

Each knew that face belonged to a real Bird man not a made up trooper who some surgeon had stuck wings onto.

Each wished he was back in mama's womb.

Each thought about what Dispater taught, that your fate line was chosen by you before you were born, now each wished they had protested before birth about their chosen end.

Theodosius rightened his chair, he knew where Hart Woo lived, could play with her later and then hand her over to the men as a reward.

Dogs always liked tit bits.

But right know he wanted Mingo to lead him to Arthur and Boudicca, now she was a prize wroth risking life for.

Bird man

And he would risk his and had plenty lies what befell her and that would not include her befalling under him!

Wookey Hole was indeed a hole of darkness.

But Bird men don't do as humans plan, especially one called Mingo Drum Vercingetorix.

He was a beast, stunk like one, thought like one and killed like one.

And a happy beast because Hart Woo told him where his sword Law was. His sword, the metal had a spirit of its own and music that his heart heard.

They would be reunited; indeed there was a savage beast in the cell?

He was going to a wedding in a pressed suit, top hat, gloves but no shoes in case his talons messed them.

He was going to his own freedom wedding and his spirit were beginning to soar.

And because it was daylight Wookey Hole had to muster his men's faith in him and go after Mingo and stop the public discovering them.

The problem was what to do with those that did the discovering?

Theodosius Wookey Hole wanted Arthur and Boudicca, especially the later, so you can guess what he did to the discoverers?

There was this human settler woman pushing a pram.

The woman saw Mingo and started screaming there was a hostile; it was the look in Mingo's eyes or he did have passed off as another drunken friendly going nowhere but hell!

Then only her pram remained for she was gone.

Bird man

His platoon took her with them, what sort of Bird men where these? They were Star Dust's and Theodosius Wookey Hole's men.

A man pulling down the shutters on his shop window found himself flying through the glass plane; it was messy but Wookey wanted him dead.

A party of tourists gaped horrified at the hurrying Mingo.

And as Mingo passed Wookey tossed a grenade amongst them.

Wookey Hole wanted his prize.

A policeman was in the process of drawing his laser pistol to shot down Mingo but instead made gagging sounds as a blade went into his back.

Wookey Hole could smell his prize close.

Boudicca I coming to get you!

And one of Wookey Hole's men got to close to Mingo, sent there to see where Mingo had gone?

Mingo had gone no where, he wanted the man's weapons and with them shot away the bar and open locks on his ankles and wrists.

Wookey found the man as he rounded the corner, it was messy, some sort of animal had ripped the dead man's throat open like a were wolf had got him.

Theodosius Wookey Hole began to get the same fear that had crept into his platoon.

Then it happened, a real platoon of imperial soldiers rounded the street's other end.

And Mingo thrust himself out from behind cardboard boxes and Wookey Hole was looking close into the incisors of a man eater.

Wookey Hole froze, so did most of his men, the rest fled.

Bird man

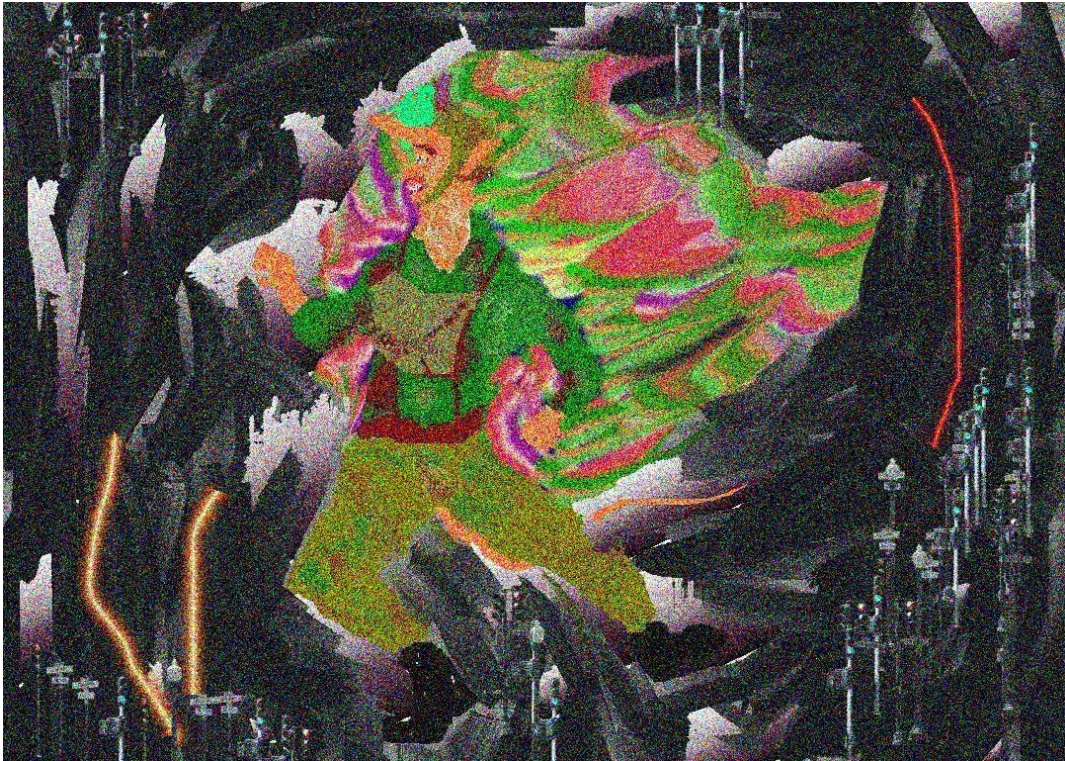


Illustration 101: Wookey had a big proboscis sticking out of his forehead, it was sonar, or supposed to be. Whatever he was proud of his coloured wings and altogether looked a right Dandy; a Burke in other words. Yes he was the product of genetic mutations and a bad soldier. He also had big ears and a tail so it was no wonder he was a top secret. People stared and got frightened.

The troopers at the other end seeing only a bunch of armed Bird men opened up.

No one had told them about the Dirty Bunch, it was the Dictator's secret, and Mingo Drum flew away and because he had to duck laser fire he only had Wookey's right ear in his mouth.

He spat it out, it didn't taste like snake.

The ear fell in front of a hungry black rat, snake or human ear, it was food.

Theodosius Wookey Hole was running holding his head cursing Mingo; behind him came imperial troopers intent on killing him, he was just a hostile.

What comes round goes round.

Bird man

After five minutes Wookey looked up from a small market square, there was Mingo Drum heading for the museum?

What was the Bird man up to?

Was it a suicide run, freedom was the other way, over the walls and into the wilderness.

Shame also Wookey couldn't shoot Mingo Drum Vercingetorix out of the sky, he was too busy holding the place where his ear should have been.

He was also drawing attention to himself; was he right in the head? He was covered in his own blood and people were looking at him.

Then he remembered what was in the museum, a sword named Law.

The dictator would strap them to a bench and drop hot coals onto his torso watching them burn so daylight shone through.

That sword was a symbolic rallying totem for every hostile on this planet.

Why if Wookey looked about him he did see sixteen sky scrapers under construction by Star Dust and friends that included Cedric Henry; well the peace of this planet was about to be shattered when Mingo started waving 'Law' about.

Theodosius Wookey Hole wasn't all that bright, he had wings didn't he, maybe he should have thought about using them, but he was too full of doom and his ear wound hurt something awful!

Now some of Wookey's men joined him and numbers make men feel brave and do silly things.

"Let's go boy," Wookey leading them towards the museum.

And the sounds of dying further behind told them those imperial troops were busy killing their friends miles away.

Bird man

Killing was about to happen here for Mingo Drum emerged from the museum. Guess he was a savage beast because it wasn't just 'Law' he was waving in front of him, he was tossing a museum guards head towards Wookey Hole and his remaining men.

"Come on he's only one, let's go get him?" Wookey Hole and should have turned about when he got no reply.

That trophy of Mingo's had rolled to his feet.

It was the way the eyes still had light in them, fading, but still a consciousness.

Theodosius Wookey Hole was leading just himself towards that beast Mingo Drum Vercingetorix the last of the free.

And he was free and had no intentions of being caged again, ever.

Poor poor Theodosius Wookey Hole, just cannot but feel sorry for the man.

There was this ear splitting grunt and cough as Mingo told his people he was free and join him.

"This is my domain,

My lands as far as I can see and beyond.

My word is law.

I am the last of the free.

To the north is the polar ice.

To the south the enemy.

Better to die free than a slave."

Theodosius Wookey felt his spirit stir and was ashamed, a feeling a man didn't want when in a duel; but Wookey didn't know it was just him and the bird.