

## Bird man

## Woman Trouble

““The Flowering Forest was huge, virtually unexplored by humans due to the war like nature of the Bird people.



*Illustration 23: The leaves of many trees were red*

So Boudicca was surprised when a patrolling Hawk Fighter came close, close enough for its camera to zoom in on her before it turned away.

*Elation.*

And the Bird men showed no fear but kept flying towards the green forest. They knew the Hawk recon wouldn't follow them as the air filled with sweet pollen from the billions of flowers, which grew protected under King Mingo Drum's laws.

*So she was glad she did not suffer hay fever.*

And wondered what new drugs the unknown flowers and plants could yield for the treatment of disease.

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But she had seen it all before, the news and heard all the hype from the environmentalists, but seeing it for real was really impressive, was something else.

*Her god gene was awakening.*

If she didn't watch out she would start feeling close with the oneness of the universes. A dangerous thing for a Comet Squadron Leader of Tzu Strath in the forty fifth century A.D.

But Tzu Strath she knew was opposed to the Star Dust Corporation's mass exploitation of planets and galaxies. He kept a small aquarium in his war cabinet room, a simple reminder to respect LIFE.

Except he didn't include Bird men amongst his green plants, clear streams and exotic coloured birds and apes swinging from lofty tree tops in his private zoo.

Why Boudicca imagined her Bird man rescuer perched on a branch as tourists flooded through her winter green house.

Anyway: The Bird men had been fighting a frontier war with the empire for the last five hundred years. A lot of hate and butchering existed on both sides.

Many the miner, trapper and settler had been strung from a tree and under the pretext of sacrifice to Bird men gods, stabbed, hung and drowned; *the triple death*.

Tit for tat existed upon this Planet Maonos (Tara 6).

But King Mingo Drum Vercingetorix' gene god had already awakened long ago.

He cared and had a deep feeling heart and felt suffering so much that it tore his soul apart.

Green laws, their king was a paradox, a lover of nature but an eater of human children? She Boudicca would like to meet this genetic creation of the Star Dust

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Corporation; maybe she could sway him to ally again with her father Tzu Strath against the common enemy the Madrawt's.

Her father would be pleased.

*But who was the common enemy to The Bird people?*

Stuff the emperor and his Madrawt peace; when she returned she would not honour her co called Madrawt marriage to General Ce-Ra. The Emperor Alexander Caesar Vortigern could visit the purple underworld on an assassin's one way ticket.

And knew enough to realise the emperor was buying off the Madrawt's with her body.

They should be fighting.

And the Hawk Fighter would report back what the camera had seen; soon her father would rescue her.

*No no no not to give her back to Ce-Ra?*

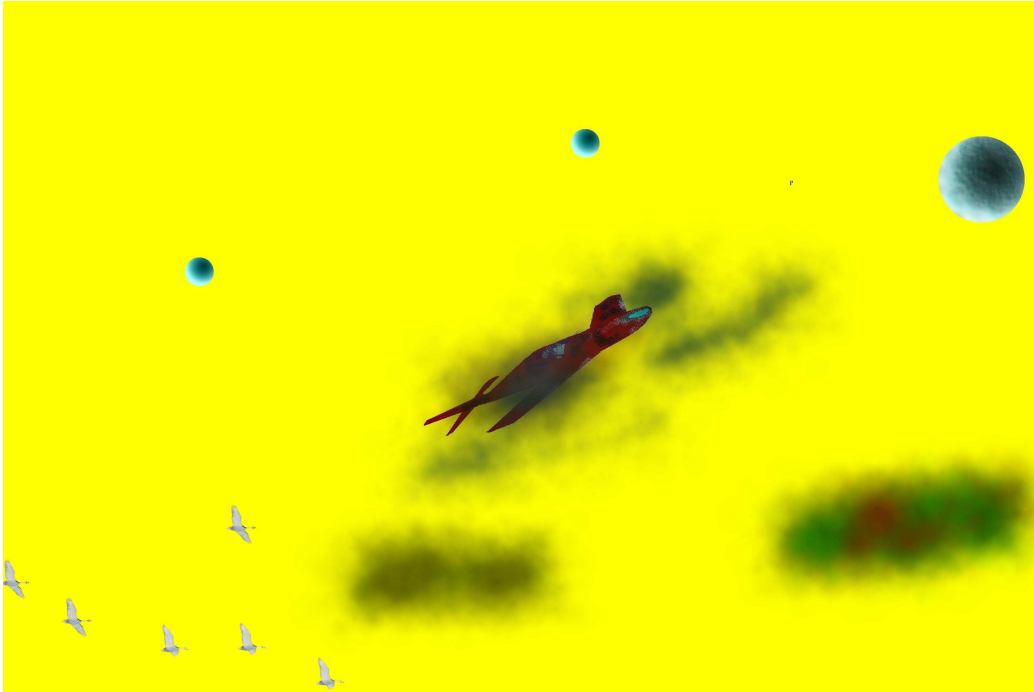
Yes the Hawk Fighter had turned away because missiles below hidden in the green foliage had targeted it.

Boudicca knew this forest was off limits because of the missiles, too many planes had been shot down here, the Bird men knew what technology was and how to use it.

She knew intelligence said there was a City called The City of Flaming Crystal ahead somewhere. Escaped human and alien P.O.W.'s said it was a beautiful place, full of coloured glass reflecting the spectrums of the purple suns.

Others said it was a dismal place, full of decay and the Bird people lived in giant nests. There was little advanced technology present; their priests practiced barbaric rites involving the sacrifice of young virgins of any race.

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*Illustration 24: even the geese kept up with the plane*

Others said their priests were highly knowledgeable and human and aliens of the empire could learn much from them.

She would have to wait and see.

But she did know that it was imperial policy, especially her father's to suppress degenerate cultures and include them into the empire on the excuse of enlightenment.

And because many humans and aliens had been freed by Mingo their fear for Bird men had subsided to.

They were Bird men, honourable and full of valour and the vanity of a warrior class.

And she remembered how their priests encouraged their warriors to sacrifice their prisoners to their primitive elements.

*I am not a prisoner of war she reminded herself.*

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We are also not officially at war with the Bird people either, and she breathed a false sigh of relief.

\*

Mingo Drum led his warriors of the Manticore Legion back to his city.

The City of Flaming Crystals.

He did not go straight to his human guest, for that was what she was to him. He went straight to his throne room which was where the War Chiefs of his people were gathered.

Although there was an unofficial peace with the human/aliens of the empire that a billion suns never set upon, the Bird people were still at war with the hated Madrawt's.

Hostile operations were still continuing. There would never be peace when Madrawt's left their foot prints in the sand of Maponos.

It was then that a hunch back was shoved forward in front of Mingo. It was the same disheveled figure who was the War Lord's spy. He had been caught riding a hover craft on the way to the Canyon of Stonehenge.

"My words are framed for all to read on the points of the compass," Mingo Drum told him as he sat wearily on his throne, "yet you come in a vehicle which a search has revealed is the weapon of an assassin.

Who are you?"

The hunch back replied, "Anyone and everyone, today I as the famous Nostradamus."

*The Bird man could read, he knew who Nostradamus was, so not even a smirk related to irony showed on his cheeks.*

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“Who do you work for?”

“Yesterday and today he who pays me, this evening and tomorrow you.”

Mingo Drum let his smile show; the man had cheek especially under the circumstances.

So Mingo turned and took a bag of cash from an ivory chest that was a magnificent piece of craftsmanship.

It was adorned in sculpture.

The hunchback caught the thrown bag.

“Imperial gold dollars, you are generous my Lord,” the hunchback replied after examining. He worked for no one but the Great War Lord Tzu Strath. The problem he had now was how much too give away and remain alive?

Just enough.

“And who is my pay master this pleasant evening?”

Mingo smiled but did not reply, he knew the game well.

So sat down and waited, he would give nothing away. But already he had, Nostradamus this day had entered the palace, seen the tables laid out with Madrawt miniatures, guessed he had seen preparations in progress against the hated aliens.

Seen picture writing on the walls, carved figurines, indoor fountains and knew the Bird people were not ignorant savages as his master believed.

*They were trouble.*

Now Mingo had an idea that this little man had been he who had infiltrated his cities many times but never been caught?

And he worked for Tzu Strath.

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*Illustration 25: The statue was painted flesh and not left as cold lifeless stone, and rested upon a crystal fountain spurting waterfalls. Whoever but this was an advanced dangerous civilisation needing destroyed.*

*He should be killed at once.*

“The War Lord pays bounty on missing officers, I was merely seeking one,” the hunchback finally offered after a lengthy delay.

Mingo smiled, the man had named his master.

“What is her name?”

Nostradamus thought there would be no harm “Boudicca,” watching those yellow eagle eyes for a reaction.

Now after several minutes a faint smile spread across the Bird man's face, the scar moved with the smile.

“Just an officer,” Nostradamus offered.

“I saw the War Lord drop her off, why should he want this officer back?”

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And Nostradamus felt the pain his beloved master must have felt at giving up his daughter for peace.

Especially to a Madrawt?

“The Madrawt’s want her, she offended them, the new peace between the Emperor Alexander Caesar and these creatures must hold, for the stability of the empire that a billion suns never set upon,” Nostradamus.

Now Nostradamus was sure this Bird man was Mingo Drum Vercingetorix himself.

The man was too assured of himself, too composed, too at home, too relaxed with familiar surroundings.

He did not look like the hologram his master had shown him and of which he had a copy in his hover craft; did? Oh by creator, they had searched his craft, found many things like that possession? It would bring a short sharp sword to the skin of his throat.

“Only half of what you have told me is true. This Boudicca must be important if the Madrawt’s want her that bad? And anyone who is against them is our friend, she will not return with you,” the Bird man.

Nostradamus was in a fix.

“And you will not leave until you speak the truth,” was added by someone getting up to leave.

“But my Lord, I must leave, I have pressing appointments,” Nostradamus protested.

“This is my domain,

My cough my warning.

My word is law,” the Bird man told him, his eyes no longer smiling.

## Bird man

“The War Lord will not be pleased,” Nostradamus pleaded acting afraid, “he wants the human woman.”

He was silenced by a warning cough.

The sound went through the spy's bowels scaring him. This being had just reminded him he was not speaking to a human *but a beast, the animal Vercingetorix*.

And so Nostradamus was led away.

His quarters were not as he imagined, not dark and wet but dry rooms, one room to receive guests, another to eat from, a sleeping shelf cut in a wall and private wash room and toilet. Food on the table, cold meats, fruits and a jug of water and his bag of cash and a game of A1 intelligent Maponsian chess.

“Perhaps not all quite the beast this Mingo Drum,” he mused as he checked the walls for secret passageways. He could find none and the only way out was the way in with a metal lattice over the door.

“A well furnished dungeon,” he croaked and sat down to play chess. He knew the king would be back, he had a bag of cash to earn.

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Boudicca was amazed at her surroundings; the walls were aflame with moving multicolored lights. And upon closer examination it was revealed the walls were made of crystals that were being fed from sun reflectors.

In the center of her large room a hole in the roof pored forth greenish light, channeled through shafts by reflectors.

There was a rough simple wooden table upon closer examination it was revealed the ledge was carved with scenes of forest life. The table top was replaceable; it was for every day usage.

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*Illustration 26: By illusion and LED lighting, pictures and a large chambered roof and a room the size of a barn Boudicca felt she was outside in the fresh air, even birds flew about the rafters, why not this was a Bird man city after all. Whatever it proved these people were truly advanced and not the beasts the imperial propaganda papers made them out to be; she was also glad she did not suffer from hay fever.*

There was food on the table, and old movies, somewhere there had to be a machine?

And while she searched, her mind thought of the Bird man King she had not seen?

Maybe she never would, she had not revealed her identity, she was just another bothersome human.

Now at this stage she realised she was thinking she liked Bird people and reminded herself she was human, and they genetic FREAKS.

Aliens gone wrong.

She could not afford sympathy, yet.

But her treatment had been good, she was alive without rape. The Bird men it

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seemed weren't as bad as made out.

"I hope your rooms are fine, here let me show you where the film player is," the Bird man with the scar behind her said and slid a piece of grey slate aside.

There displayed behind was a modern film machine, either they had stolen it or made it? It was a horrid thought to realise that humans had been mistaken about these Bird people.

They were not primitive beasts.

Yes it was time to find out what they were, so she sat down and offered her bodyguard a chair.

Before he sat down he pulled on a chain dangling from the ceiling, there was a sound of metal clogs turning and the room filled with Earth's bright sunlight.

Here sat a considerate man or torturer, she was confused.

"Boudicca," and he said it as if he had known her all his life.

She was alarmed.

His scar was now threatening in her mind. He was also aware she was focusing on it like a center piece of attraction.

He knew with his dealings with humans that they saw it as ugly, hideous. Now he wished he had not turned on the bright light copying Earth's sunshine.

She was beautiful and he knew it was not because he and his people were ugly. There were many woman of his own race who longed to mate with him for life and not just for his pleasure.

So far he had not found a permanent partner; *he was too busy so he told himself.*

Women were all right for playing with; he had many sons and daughters already.

## Bird man

But all had died in the wars.

Now he provided for their mothers, but marriage and having a woman around when he lived so dangerously would be selfish.

*So he told himself.* Look at Bran Llyr and Branwan his friend, they were married, for when Bran had been seriously hurt by the Vern and almost died, it had affected Branwan, almost destroyed her.

He didn't want that upon himself or any woman.

So sat down and ate a red round fruit; hoping to break the silence, get her relaxed, talking, find out what she was too Tzu Strath.

"How do you know my name?" She asked eventually, he could out wait anyone; he was a bird, used to perches.

"I fly, see many things, saw you and Tzu Strath, was curious, fight Madrawt's and Vern for you," he told her and immediately saw her cringe as if he had been fighting for the right to know her.

He was just another Dumezillian.

"When will you return me to my people?"

"When I find out everything about you."

"I am a prisoner?"

"Guest."

"Under the circumstance there is little difference."

He finished the fruit and thought about this, stood up and left; she needed time to think. At the door he stopped and, "All enemies of the Madraw6ts are our friends, we don't hand our friends over to them," it was a personal swipe at Tzu Strath.

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“Are you going to molest me like that ape Dumezillian?”

He sighed, women were all the same, whether a human or alien or his people, give them bosoms and they thought they had you pegged.

And wondered what Madrawt women were like?

So his eyes drifted up from the floor, her legs, noticed that her short kilt he had given her earlier revealed much by the way she sat.

And both aware his eyes had lingered too long so his eyes hurried up to meet her angry gaze.

For a human she was extremely desirable, and like all women they knew they got your heart beating faster.

**Damn them.**

“Had a good look?”

He tried to reply but she got him feeling small so stammered gibberish.

She had defeated him and made him a fool and was in command, and worse this was his house.

Leaving was the his escape, he needed to consult his War Chiefs for the next attack on the Madrawts.

Women were all the same he realised again, they just had nicer legs than you.

*Boudicca also realised men were all the same no matter what world you were on?*

There was no sound of a lock turning; he had forgotten something and she checked in a hurry and behold the door opened silently and see stared into the eyes of two guards who smiled back.

At least they had a sense of humour!

## Bird man



*Illustration 27: The guards of Boudicca showed the human bird girls were not plain nor the dust covered spectacles in the arena covered in lion muck.*

As told to me by, Vern

Lukas, Historian and

Imperial Scribe by

Boudicca Tzu.