

## Mungo

## Underneath

And the **first day** Mungo met a mazarrat in a drainage pipe and it had four arms and a gigantic bald septic bald head and was mangy and Mungo saw lice and ticks the size of his nails sucking blood upon the beast.

“Yah a slave for dinner,” the beast sang as it saw Mungo and opened jaws to show black and yellow teeth where they were some.

“I am I in the other world or something worse?” Mungo replied finding a slime covered stick which he then stuck deep in the beast’s mouth.

“Gag a ga,” the beast could not speak now so made these sounds instead.

“Why eat me singer of songs? Your kind are fruit eaters,” Mungo pushing the leprous thing away from him.

“I still sing but I learn from my masters above.”

“Fermanians did this.”

“I am from the cages and escaped by flushing myself away,” the mazarrat explained.

“Don’t let me kill you then for I am Mungo of the lions.”

“Mungo’s shame is Leah.”

And Mungo felt his heart break and shook his head and said, “Even baboons know?”

“Yes they know for we sing loud and the mazarrat missed the insult for baboons have big red bums and nothing between their skulls.

“So a great singer, will you lead me out of here to some friends?”

## Mungo

“Come and meet friends then?” And the beast skipped away scraping knuckles leaving pus behind.

“I meant my friend,” Mungo shouted and followed avoiding a clump of fallen fur and the things that lived upon it.

And the friends were mutated mazarrats used for experiments and humans and other beings from around New Uranus and Mungo was angry for life had been perverted.

And he roared and danced throwing his arms and head this way and that.

“Mungo dances now we have seen this too,” the mazarrats sang.

And it was not joy but anger that filled Mungo.

“I must rescue Leah,” he oathed aloud.

“Mungo’s shame is above,” the mazarrats.

“Don’t mazarrats ever stop?” Mungo grunted covering his ears mockingly.

At this slight encouragement mazarrats jumped and sang, holding the tail in front and train fashion circled Mungo.

Human mutants beat a rhythm on metal drums.

Some other beings downed masks and imitated beasts.

Then one lay beside Mungo shouting, “I am Leah, I am Mungo’s shame.”

“What have the lizard folk down too you gentle people,” Mungo disgusted.

“We are mazarrats fearless and brave and want a Mighty One,” and began squabbling as who this should be?

## Mungo

“We will help you if you help us get down,” a human said quietly with eyes on the end of stalks.

Mungo stroked the stalks gently.

Then there was a scream as a female mazarrat was thrown down a waste flume that dropped her to the swamp below.

Unfortunately there was no net to catch her!

“We don’t want her as Mighty One,” the mazarrats chorused.

Mungo thought all crazy and wistfully, “I got in so we can get down,” and the listeners wondered at his wisdom which was none. “I must destroy life in Hurreva.”

“Yes destroy,” the mazarrats copied Mungo who saw clouds full of cuckoos above their heads and grey metal walls elsewhere.

“The Unnamed One does not live here, it is free and wild,” Mungo.

And the **second day** Mungo was led to laboratories by mazarrats where he saw from the ventilation grills beings in cages; some freshly arrived while others twitching death waiting experimental cures.

And A Fermanian in a white coat and mask stood with his tail to the grill Mungo hid behind.

“I am Mungo,” and “We know you are Mungo,” the mutants behind agreed for they were dim.

And the first the Fermanian technician knew was the kicked grill heading for him.

“Dung,” the lizard a second before impact and Mungo was down and running at him.

## Mungo

“I am Mungo, give me the keys for these beasts,” and the technician did for Mungo held a dagger to his throat.

“Come with us brothers,” the mutants urged the freed and all fled into the drainage chamber.

“The only reason I don’t kill you is that I want Leah to know I am alive,” Mungo pushing his enemy away and went back to jump high into the shaft.

But was taken from behind for Mungo had forgotten Fermanians thought themselves brave and fearless masters of all especially slaves.

But the man watched as Mungo bent down and cut here and there.

“Bloody hell what has the beast done to me,” the lizard man screamed disengaging and Mungo still ignorant of science then showed mercy by slicing the man’s throat and stabbing the heart.

*That was Mungo’s mercy for he knew not of wondrous surgeons so believed he had down good.*

Now Mungo cleaned himself and saw pictures on the wall of a man thing riding a lion, “Not bad,” he said as he had drawn the picture in the slain warrior’s blood.

He also said nothing as the mutants cut up the lizard man to eat him all up later.

Especially the liver.

The sweetmeat they cooked in the fashion of the Fermanians and the smell made Mungo shelter elsewhere till the feast was over with these words, “They are no longer mazarrats and I will avenge the wrong done Life here by Fermanians.”

## Mungo

**Day three** and Mungo was led to slave pens to see if his friends were there and found them not.

“Most are for the pot,” a mazarrat told Mungo who saw most were human and saw barrows full of sweetmeats, innards and limbs and a mincing machine hummed grinding bones into powder for lizard farmers.

“I am Mungo,” and kicked out the grill in the ventilation shaft and landed on a startled taskmaster, a thing with two tusks with green scaled skin who was not Fermanian.

And Mungo at once realised there was more to New Uranus than he knew of.

“Who are you?” The taskmaster grunted as Mungo opened his scales from groin to neck.

“Mungo, I am Mungo follow me,” and many slaves ran to the opened grill while others so badly starved shuffled.

“The slaves are escaping,” another taskmaster to another and immediately they stabbed the slower escapees in their backs with copper swords.

And Mungo raged when he saw a copper sword split an infant girl’s head.

“What have we here?” One taskmaster afraid for Mungo was on all fours growling advancing upon him.

“Mungo,” a mazarrat sang which was fortunate for fear paralysed the taskmaster now who might otherwise have slain Mungo. But instead with his friends turned to flee and Mungo was on their backs.



*Illustration 20: Mutants they were; victims of shuttle genes.*

***What goes round comes round.***

And Mungo's lungs were filled with stink for large cauldrons bubbled and saw hooked carcasses on a conveyor belt like cattle, and the humans were exactly that.

And seeing armed guards coming he spilled the cauldrons of boiling broth so the feet of the guards burned and they jumped hither and thither.

And Mungo took cleavers and sunk them in the jumping bodies and strung them up on the conveyor then swung across the belt ape fashion; which he owned the harlot Moragana the ape woman thing teaching him how.

And he roared like a lion.

## Mungo

And then he cut off the Fermanian tails and shouted, “I have brought judgement upon the Fermanians as foretold and obeyed.”

And the last cook he put head first into a cauldron too boil away and then flipped the cook in and shut the heavy lid on.

And about Mungo sixteen wiggling tails seeking where they had come from for lizard tails can live without a body.

Six cooks and ten guards and three evil taskmasters.

*What goes round comes round.*

And Mungo barred the exit doors with empty cages as the last human child was lifted to safety.

That night the mutants divided up many of the cooks and still fought for pieces even though there was enough for all. And Mungo was joined by the latest freed slaves, and these were not mutants so refused to eat what the others gobbled.

Even non mutated mazarrats were shocked at seeing their mutated cousins eat parts of Fermanians fit for the bin.

“We ate them as they eat us, and we get Fermanian wisdom in our tummies,” a mutant explained happy.

“They are crazy,” Mungo tapping his head.

“No,” they are human,” a freed human and Mungo remembered Peelock and saddened.

## Mungo

**Day Four** am. And Ishtar and Carman were now aware something was wrong within Hurreva and were told why.

“Did no one tell me about the picture drawn in Fermanian blood?” Ishtar asked and there was silence and Lord Artebrates drifted away in a dream world and imagined six guards, two technicians and a microbiologist hanging from hocks as they were descaled and prepared for cooking as punishment.

In case you haven't guessed, Fermanians are cannibals. *“Waste not want not,” one of their sayings.*

“Ah well at least something tasty will come out of this,” as his mouth savoured lizard flesh roasted and smeared in thyme butter.

And the flesh would be served on their empty craniums containing their hot and sour sweetmeats.

And Artebrates hungered but not the hunchback who no longer ate anything intelligent, not even roasted mazarrat in orange sauce with cranberry gel stuffed in the mouth till it came out near the parson's nose!

“Lentils and fish is my limit now,” he muttered and Artebrates looked at him saying nothing.

**Day four** afternoon.

A platoon under a Decurion, a leader of tens entered the drainage tunnels seeking Mungo and was ambushed by armed mutant mazarrats and other beings.



## Mungo

“I have fought as a Fermanian and die with honour,” the Decurion standing next to his trumpet blower who fell with a mazarrat at his throat.

“Die foul thing,” the Decurion running his copper sword across the beast’s spine and then stood alone to take Ishtar’s enemies with him for he remembered pictures of Artebrates facing humans with his sword.

An inspiration for any brave soldier facing death alone.

“A brave man deserves life,” the Decurion heard and saw a dirty man thing and bowed his head for he knew it was Mungo. But the bow was an acknowledgement that he was brave and had nothing to do with servitude.

But the mutants still hummed their pleasure, silly things.

“Go and tell them I want Leah and my friends freed,” and Mungo pointed the way out where the Decurion had entered hell in the first place. And the Decurion walked as a Decurion should, within his plumed red helmet high and his back straight and his sword sheathed and found his nerves breaking, for he was trusting the word of a human beast.

Then a mazarrat threw its dung at his back and soon he was covered and Mungo did not stop this show of hate understanding it was natural for the mazarrats had been wronged.

*They were also crazy and numbered hundreds and were enraged they couldn’t eat the Decurion and Mungo wasn’t crazy, he wanted to see another day.*

## Mungo

**Day five** brought Mungo to Leah for the mazarrats brought him to a castle made of crystal the colours of the rainbow and Fermanians said it was the gateway to Mount Tullos and the crystal was a weapon, for Ishtar knew it was a prism bending light dividing one ray of laser into a hundred upon any advancing enemy below or in the sky.

“Here you will find Leah,” Mungo was advised and he opened a grill and entered and found the crystal warm, for the crystal stored heat like a radiator.

And Mungo heard the grime leave his soles and saw he left a trail and knew he must hide his nakedness.

And a House Berserka saw the grime and hefted his axe over shoulder and followed past where Mungo hid amongst a room littered with papyrus books.

For Mungo had walked backwards over his own foot prints so was now behind the warrior.

And the enemy could not scream as Mungo covered his mouth as he cut the lizard’s heart out and threw it across the room.

For Mungo still raged over what he had seen in the laboratories and Mungo wronged, *did he? **What goes round comes round.***

And then a mutant mazarrat ran in and out again with dinner?

And the lizard berserker body Mungo skinned quickly in the room and the blood he wiped on papyrus books and many were priceless, but he couldn’t read so the books was just paper to him, and Fermanian paper at that.

## Mungo

He was just skinning a rabbit for the pot, which is how he saw the Fermanian and the Fermanian saw him as a rabbit too.

“Now I am a lizard,” meaning he wrapped the lizard skin about him and left seeking Leah as mazarrats sang, “Mungo’s sin Leah is here.”

And as soon as he was gone the mazarrats were back and ate the lizard Berserka.

“Sasha pines for Mungo,” they sang also.

“I love Sasha too,” Mungo replied wishing sometimes they could stop singing.

And Mungo had put on the man’s armour and helmet and stayed in the shadows.

So avoided his enemy in the corridors and the deeper he went into the crystal noticed the Berserkas carried lasers as well as axes.

“Blood there is blood,” Mungo heard and hurried on for the mazarrats had started throwing books at each other in the corridor and they were blamed for the Berserker's death and not Mungo.

And Berserkas passed him carrying nets full of slain mazarrats to show Ishtar their good work.

“I smell Leah,” and followed her scent which came from air vents.

And found her.

“How do I get in,” Mungo again?

“You don’t,” the door replied and Mungo jumped and sunk his axe into it.

## Mungo

“You are not authorised to enter, you have no palm print,” the door and Mungo took off his skinned right foot and put it on the square where a red hand glowed.

And the door laughed and was answered by Berserkas with lasers.

“Decurion?”

“Mungo and the lizard man slapped him for he remembered the thrown insults and tripped Mungo so he fell.

“What noise disturbs me?” Ishtar from the now open door and looked down and saw scales and blood fallen from the hide covering Mungo and recoiled in horror.

And one used hands to say his name and it was Leah and Mungo saw pity in her eyes and she was dressed as a yellow bird whose feathers the Mighty Ones had been plucking to belittle and embarrass the girl.

For they were not good women.

“Stand him up,” Carman barked like a dog as she had come to the door also, “It is Mungo the slave.”

“But Mungo had never been their slave, always free on the plain and jungle,” a mazarrat from a hanging cage.

And a Berserka took down the cage and threw it hard against a wall.

And Carman swung a right into Mungo’s jaw and again and again till her knuckles bled for she wanted his teeth loose, of which she managed to pull one free for rage gave her strength.

“What no howl from the beast man thing?” Carman gloatingly.

## Mungo

Instead Mungo smiled to give Leah courage.

Now Carman seeing took Leah by the cheeks and kissed fully and Mungo kicked the queen's rear so she fell upon Leah.

“Take him away,” Ishtar fearing the total destruction of the beautiful man thing for she had not the same dealings of experience with Mungo as Carman.

“Wait,” Mungo shouted and Ishtar signalled curious.

“I have found Leah but where are my friends and Sasha who pines for me?”

Now Ishtar marvelled at his cheek while Carman raged.

“Sasha has been given to the hunting lions Abel and Eve as reward for serving Fermanians,” Ishtar.

“Let no harm befall Sasha for she was my first love,” Mungo.

“Ah what crazy talk is this, a man thing saying a lion thing is his woman? Is this whom they call The Wild One, let him be called throughout Hurreva City as The Crazy One,” Ishtar.

And Leah understood why Mungo thought of Sasha so did not hurt too much.

And Carman knew foolish Ishtar had just told Mungo where to find Sasha.

And Mungo was chained and beaten in his own cell and they did not take the hide from him and the blood congealed and Mungo now felt unclean for flies found him.

And a screen spoke to Mungo who marvelled when he saw Leah and licked and sniffed it, became angry when he found it lifeless for he lacked the wisdom of technology.

## Mungo

And the screen's micro chips responded with a self protect program and allowed Leah's scent out and changed to a 3D image of her which infuriated Mungo more instead of calming him down for he had tried to put his hand into the hologram.

"Leave me alone," the screen's computer howled as Mungo raked but was taken over manually as Ishtar and Carman appeared and began to abuse Leah and Mungo sickening looked away.

And because there were cameras in Mungo's room he was observed by the queen's and Ishtar knew fury for Mungo would not play their sad game and shouted, "Give the man lion hell," and it was so for blades came out of his cell walls so he could not sit.

And left him so for many hours.

And Mungo knew Hades as his body ached to straighten but could not so when the blades departed at last his body knew more pain just too straighten for it was cramped.

And the Mighty Ones were not mighty for they debased themselves by abusing beautiful Leah and reminded her she was only a Comforter made out of bubbles in a vat.

And Leah saddened that such cruelty could exist in a world so full of diverse colour and evolved animals! For Huverra had proven The Elder correct, these Fermanians were much more advanced than Telephessians and could have reached the stars?

And the Mighty One reminded Leah of her past from the perversions they acted upon her for they had the power but not conscious and after they were satisfied left Leah thinking they had destroyed her spirit.

## Mungo

But they were wrong, she had come to believe in the Unseen and knew nothing could harm her soul, it belonged some where else.

But was a lesson that slaves existed and who was master.

**Day six** and Mungo was allowed to sleep but hundreds of cockroaches kept crawling over him nibbling away so he did not sleep well, for these animals can eat through cement so Mungo was like a box of chocolates to them.

And he crushed many and hurt inside when he did so for they was life and existed at a lower God consciousness than him. And he understood this from what he gained when he danced for Mungo was what is called a “Shinning One,” a mazarrat sang nearby.

For he did not understand he was in tune with life so hurt much when he killed a lowly bug.

Then hunger visited him and that was a lonely ordeal.

“Eat,” something whispered to him.

“Eat what?”

And saw the cockroaches.

“That is mazarrat food and unclean,” he replied to the Unseen.

And the spirit that is wisdom and sees inside you replied in his mind, “What is unclean to one is clean to another.”

And Mungo ate and apologised to the creatures that he must eat or starve.

And flies had laid eggs in his cuts and the maggots kept his flesh from rotting.

And he ate some of these too.

## Mungo

So was much refreshed from their nutrients.

Then ants came, hundreds seeking food they had come to expect, and he was the food.

And he flattened many and felt like the taskmaster in the Arena of Criminals as the ants and roaches fought each other.

Then scalding hot water flooded in and washed all away.

And even Mungo was burned as the cell was sloshed out.

**Day seven**, and Mungo was taken to an arena with seating for seventy thousand and he marvelled how the Fermanians could build such for they were lizards?

At this moment what he danced too did not forget him as he often forgot It for he was full of lust for Leah and Sasha these days but his hair was still long.

“If it was not lion woman, then it was lizard woman Leah,” Mazarrats would sing and, “We will dance for Mungo,” and they did and found animals could enjoy the Unseen also.

Is it not written by Isaiah, “Even the beasts of the field will know the King of Heaven?”

Anyway: “Mungo?” Malachi shouted and Mungo smiled seeing his friends crowded in the middle of the arena and hobbled to them on blistered bitten feet.

“Take this,” Enkalla offered a blunt copper sword and Mungo took it and shook his head, “My hair is uncut,” he still had his hands and what made him dance in his heart.



## Mungo

“Truly The Wild One,” Malachi as he saw Mungo’s long dirty hair, greasy and louse infested now from contact with the laboratory life, also, “God of Mungo remember Mungo’s friends,” and felt joy and knew even a lizard could joy also for lizards were beasts of the field too.

“Don’t forget me,” Sasha and Mungo hugged her.

“My first love,” and Sasha beamed and made sure she was beautiful too the watching Fermanians.

“I am Red Hide’s daughter,” and her lion companions straightened their brass plate body armour too look smart, they would not die shamed as uncouth unkempt beasts.

For Mungo’s presence had electrified them into not accepting their fate with courage and valour.

Mungo was hope, Mungo was life.

“Well man thing you got old Malachi into a right mess this time?” Malachi.

And all followed Malachi’s gaze to an opening gate and behind the gate an emerging deinonychus.

Now these deinonychus were just lizards running about on hind legs that possessed a foot with a flesh cutting claw and each animal was about nine foot long.

“Are you in a hurry to die Mungo?” Malachi joked as Mungo forgetting his pain had run to the gate and as the first beast saw him it jumped, to open Mungo up with its claw.

## Mungo

But Mungo rolled under the beast and used the short sword on it so its innards fell out and trailed about, so the other deinonychus gobbled them up except for a lone kidney that hung lonely from the belly of the doomed monster.

And Mungo ran up this creature's tail and with pressure in its eyes used it to defend his friends by making it jump up with its claw.

"Run for the gate, we can shut them in and us out," Malachi ordered and they ran but not all made it, three Berserkas were split by claws and then fought over.

So they gave their lives for the others to make the gate.

And here Mungo made his beast stand at the gate entrance defending till it was dead.

"What type of man thing is he?" Ishtar marvelled and the watching Fermanians went quite with fearful admiration of Mungo and the Unseen Helper who always helped him.

"He is Mungo," Carman and Leah beamed pride and put a hand over her womb.

One or a dozen inside her were all Mungo's.

At this moment a nuclear reactor exploded and shook the ground and Pteranodons flew above seeking the smell of blood and lizard folk took this as a bad omen.

"Take Mungo alive," Ishtar and Berserkas armed with lasers entered the arena and commanded Mungo to come with them and he looked at the guns and looked for Leah.

And she sensing his meaning stood up allowing the wind to carry her scent to him.

And Mungo roared and ran to the wall below Leah

## Mungo



*Illustration 21: deinonychus*

And the remaining deinonychus followed and attacked the Berserkas who killed many, and one went after Mungo, who had managed to scramble Moragana fashion up cracks in the plaster towards Leah and The Mighty Ones.

And the following deinonychus bounced off a fallen sister using it as a spring board followed Mungo.

“Kill it,” Carman demanded but the Berserka beside her looked at Ishtar for he knew she had ordered Mungo be taken alive.

But he did throw a poisoned lance into the deinonychus behind Mungo.

And Mungo knelt and leapt so he sailed into the air.

And the deinonychus still alive leapt also.

## Mungo

“Move,” whether Carman meant Ishtar who had fallen on her or the dinosaur?

But it was killed, stabbed, lasered and poisoned by other Berserkas.

And hell came to The Mighty Ones as other deinonychus copied the one who had followed Mungo and the royal box was mayhem.

“Where do we go?” Leah asked Mungo as they fled down a corridor now empty of Fermanian candy vendors.

“Nowhere,” Nannaha appearing with Aralwan Giant and Lugh with many Berserkas armed with lasers.

And Mungo answered with a roar and Nannaha took great pleasure in firing a suction cap at him and it stuck to his chest and Mungo found he was being rewound towards her and the Berserkas.

“Take that,” Nannaha panicking to a Berserka as Mungo neared salivating at the mouth for he was a lion man thing now, for she slapped his face.

And more suction caps were fired and Mungo was stretched many ways and trapped.

“A present,” Leah who had silently walked up behind Nannaha and slapped her hard.

“What do you smirk at?” Aralwan Giant demanded from Berserkas for Nannaha’s reputation had spread.

And only when Leah began kicking Nannaha did the Berserkas obey for Aralwan Giant and Lugh now thought it their position only to give orders.

For Nannaha had made Vinki promote them centurions. “It must not be seen I sleep with lowly privates my sweet handsome Vinki,” she had complained and manoeuvred,

## Mungo

“They know many gentlemen’s destinations in Hurreva and as officers will know more for they can visit places as officers?”

And Vinki saw the blackmail and promoted the flotsam.

And Mungo was not told Malachi had managed to fight his way to the docks and take a flying machine, and escape with six Berserkas remaining, Enkalla, Akkad, Angus Ogg and his friends.

Or the hunting lions Abel and Eve trailing them.

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“Mungo what do we do with you?” Ishtar against butchery as Carman wished, for she still marvelled over Mungo’s physic.

“Give me Leah and I will go away,” and this brought laughter from the courtiers except Artebrates and the hunchback.

“You must be obedient if you wish Leah,” Ishtar told him and Mungo understood, “I promise you Mungo I will let Leah visit you; am I not kind Mungo?” Ishtar but Mungo thought she was a cruel wicked woman so said nothing.

“Take him to the galleys,” Ishtar and the galleys were warships that floated in the air built of wicker plated with brass woven with tubes of helium gas.

And propelled by blades worked by slaves sitting on lower decks.

And the ships were strapped to giant squids plated with brass for the squids could eject wind for speed and clouds of ink for cover when needed.

## Mungo

And the upper deck sails for wind and steering and crystals embedded in the wicker to deflect laser from enemy ships, *more for moral than practical reasons*.

And the Decurion who suffered mazarrat insult was made captain of Mungo's vessel for Ishtar saw he hated the man thing which was good.

NOW: Ishtar had Mungo come to her that night before he went to the ship in chains and in them bathed him in primrose water.

"So strong," Ishtar crooned sweeping a hand over his shoulders.

"I think of only That who I dance to naked under the moon," Mungo to her.

"What is his Name?" Ishtar.

"There is no Name," Mungo.

"Then he cannot be a god," and Ishtar made Mungo lust and wrapped herself about him for he was vulnerable in chains.

"I will not joy," Mungo and forced himself to be calm.

And Ishtar called for Carman to join her so they could over power Mungo's determination not to lust with them.

They wanted his light, and also for his light too darken like their own, and so worked hard on the chained lion man thing like vampires.

"Is my body separate from my mind?" Mungo as Carman injected him full of hormones to make him lust.

And he roared and his body wanted the queens.

## Mungo

In his mind an image of Leah remained, but he was no longer his own person as his mind crossed boundaries because of what Carman had given him.

And still bound they had him put in an open seed bag and lifted away by tame Pteranodons to be chained in a public square, where all could see The Wild One lust and roar for they had overdosed him to humiliate him.

And at last he exhausted slept and when he awoke cried in shame, “Why have I done these horrid things when I only wanted Leah? Where was what I dance too, why was I not helped?”

In reply a galley master came for him and whipped him hard.

Lo at the end of the week The Mighty Ones visited with Leah dressed in spiked leather and purple hair dye with body piercings.

And Leah was prodded with an electric stick to make her jump and obey.

Now Mungo looked at the yellow clouds and, “Remember me,” for he knew his hair was long and he grew strong and broke his chains.

“He is not human,” Ishtar screamed and Carman drew dagger and held it at Leah’s neck.

And Mungo crumpled defeated and was beaten for Leah’s sake and next awoke chained again ready at his oar station.

“Remember me Mungo and Mungo saw Ben Nathan, Centurion now ship’s master who picked up a swill bucket and emptied it over Mungo in return for the dung thrown at him by the mazarrats.

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Of course the lizard marines laughed and a taskmaster lashed Mungo to make him also laugh, but he did not.

“Hold taskmaster, there are better ways to break the lion, starve him good and no sleep,” Ben Nathan and left.

And Mungo drew upon an inner spiritual strength and slept with his eyes open when the oars were silent.

“What seven days without sleep or food and the lion lives still?” Ben Nathan furious and ordered Mungo above to wash the decks of squid stinks.

“Here is a tar stain Mungo,” for Ben Nathan had smudged the washed spot with his sandals and the taskmaster whipped.

“Beg for food Mungo?” Ben Nathan.

“I beg to dance,” the reply and Ben Nathan would have refused but for his crew demanded a dance from Mungo.

And unchained Mungo danced to the Unseen and his eyes shone and men covered their eyes.

“Wah a demon has possessed him,” they said.

“Give him a sword,” Ben Nathan brave fearless and master of slaves and one was thrown Mungo.

“Fight man thing,” and Ben Nathan sliced the air and Mungo did not move so was cut deeply across his ribs so smarted.

“Afraid?” And Ben Nathan gloated.



## Mungo

“Not so, I have seen men whipped to death and others given to the squid, why should I add you to my sins?” Meaning he did not want the death of Ben Nathan added to them; as a caged mazarrat suddenly sang, “Leah is his shame.”

And Ben Nathan pushed his sword into Mungo’s left arm and finding Mungo non responsive raised his sword to cut off Mungo’s head but remembered Ishtar did not want Mungo dead but broken, so stopped his intentions.

“Take him to the oars.”

And Mungo was often summoned to dance when bad weather approached by the demands of the superstitious crew hoping Mungo’s powerful Unseen presence would quieten the storm.

And the storm did quieten.

Now even Ben Nathan began grudgingly to respect Mungo and allowed him food and water and sleep, “We killed an albatross, bad luck will come, let all men pray to their gods.”

And the bad luck came when three pirate ships were sighted and set course to attack the galley.

“Beat fast the drums drum master,” Ben Nathan commanded and Mungo rowed and his muscles ached.

And Mungo heard brass plates roll down the ship’s side as battle was joined.

And slaves died when a steel ram’s head smashed through oar seats as the ship was rammed.

## Mungo

And rammed twice more.

“I die for Ishtar,” Ben Nathan being forced below decks with the surviving marines and Mungo remembered his hair and stood and broke his chains and slid them off him and slaves freed themselves.

Now a pirate with horns was to gore Ben Nathan who had slipped on blood and lay exposed.

And the tusked one heard a lion roar and turned to see Mungo bite his throat open.

“I am Mungo, I am The Wild One, come and kill me,” for he wanted to die for “Mungo’s shame is Leah,” a mazarrat sang from a cage.

And the pirates hesitated for they knew of him.

“He is a slave, kill him,” their captain shouted and pushed his fellows forward.

A bad mistake for Mungo lifted from its screwed position a bench top and swung it about killed many.

Then tossed it at the pirate captain.

And Mungo got his strength not from flesh but spirit.

“Wah I am wounded,” the captain groaned pinned by the bench top and his men seeing him fall sought to escape.

And Mungo gave Ben Nathan his steel sword and helped him up. Lo Ben Nathan drew his Decurion’s second sword and men on all sides wondered if he was to open Mungo’s bowels or if Mungo would allow him too?

## Mungo

“Defend yourself against Ishtar’s enemies Mungo,” Ben Nathan turning sword about so Mungo took hold of the hilt.

And a lion’s roar came forth and Mungo with sword rushed and was followed by freed slaves and marines all knowing they needed a sea worthy ship to stay afloat in the sky.

And great splintering was heard as a squid tore planking apart.

And Mungo’s charge was so furious they pushed the fearful pirates back onto the ships left; two.

Of these the squid squirted an ink cloud and began to rip their masts down with its tentacles.

And Mungo saw unfired catapult scythes and fired them into the pirates trying to kill the squid.

Now one ship was burning because its cauldron full of hot coals for catapult work had been spilt.

“We are victorious,” Ben Nathan shouted and cut boarding ropes and the ships drifted apart.

And Mungo fired again and burst balloons so the pirate ships dropped from the sky.

“Man the fire hose,” Ben Nathan and men ran over the side hoses from which burning paraffin jetted out upon the descending pirates below.

## Mungo

“Here is Ishtar’s mercy pig scum,” Ben Nathan also and had his marines take pirate prisoners to the railings, and here he cut open their bowels and threw them over the side.

So they fell past the doomed ships below trailing all out so those pirates still alive saw their own doom.

Ishtar’s mercy and why they were pirates in the first place, for they hated Ishtar.

And a roar stopped Ben Nathan who heard, “Forgive them, give them a landing on the promise they live decent lives,” for Mungo was naive.

“You are a lord and demon of the bush, I know you give death to Fermanians who come and hunt lions?” Ben Nathan trapping Mungo with words.

“I saw a tunnel of light and golden city at the end and it is coming to lizards as well as men when I last danced. It is mercy, judgement and new order, to Ben Nathan once I would have eaten your liver but now, live in peace human and lizard must, let the pirates live, enough have died.”

And Ben Nathan’s reply was to stuff pirates into cages at the ship’s side and swing them out.

Intent on opening the cages so ridding his ship faster of the scum.

But Mungo he sat and drew in the blood a woman in an exotic embrace with a lover and because he was a poor artist explained.

The next he drew the woman covering her bosom before red masked priests.

And red dots came from the red priests stoning.

## Mungo

Then Mungo drew the priests with women in erotic stances.

It was obvious to the crowding crew and marines that the priest had killed the couple for having a liaison when they themselves enjoyed women.

“Who is guilty?” Mungo asked.

And Ben Nathan was the only one shooting arrows into the caged pirates as the crowd understood none were free of sin to kill another being not created by themselves.

Now Ben Nathan exhausted came to see what had taken his men away, suspecting Mungo again.

“A man and a woman follow their desires put in their bodies by what made them, so a pirate seeks riches and escape from your brutal laws, and you Ben Nathan kill pirates in disgusting ways in the name of the law they escape from,” Mungo, “enough killing for one day Ben Nathan, forgive the rest and put some light into them.” For Mungo wanted rid of his own guilt over Leah.

“By the laws of Ishtar I am allowed to grant you one wish for helping us,” Ben Nathan replies still not a changed man.

“Let the pirates then take the place of the slaves till we reach Hurreva since we slaves are now free?” Mungo.

And Ben Nathan knew Mungo was wise.

“And have hot tongs stuck some place, no I did rather die here,” a pirate in a cage shouted and six others joined his chorus and Ben Nathan ordered these men to be given to the squid and they were.

## Mungo

“I am not you, nor do I dance to the Unseen as you do,” Ben Nathan warned Mungo.

So Mungo grunted and went to the bow to wait the ship’s pointing to Hurreva and Leah.

He wanted his Leah, the rest could hack themselves to death.

“You make me feel bad Mungo,” Ben Nathan later at table alone with Mungo.

“You speak of Leah?”

“It was Nannaha’s idea; it was she who brought Leah to me as she is a comforter.”

Now Ben Nathan was taking a risk here was he not? But then he had not changed so perhaps wanted Mungo to hurt.

But Mungo shrugged the pain away.

“Nannaha tells me Leah plots to destroy you.”

Mungo shook his head to rid it of Nannaha’s wicked tongue.

“I did wrong; forgive me Mungo lion man thing?”

“You were my enemy, now you are one of the chosen,” Mungo.

“What do you mean?”

“Malachi was his friend,” a mazarrat sang,

“Don’t you listen to the mazarrats sing; you will follow me to the final conflict,”

Mungo meaning he would be like Malachi till the end.

At this Ben Nathan drew sword wanting to pierce Mungo’s bare chest.

“Malachi was his friend, so were many others, Ben Nathan too,” the mazarrat sang and the Decurion went top side to think.

## Mungo

“I am an imperial officer, Mungo is my enemy,” Ben Nathan replied to the mazarrat.

“Give me your sword?” Mungo from behind him startling him and Ben Nathan at first refused till he saw many had followed Mungo and were behind the lion man thing.

“Many of my men are behind you, they will cut you too pieces and there will be no final conflict Mungo?” Ben Nathan.

Now many of the soldiers nervously, rather sheepishly drew their weapons.

And Mungo took Ben Nathan’s sword and held it above his head to the red moon and then placed his teeth on the blade and bit.

Then spat out a piece of sword.

All marvelled at this and did not know that powers were at work protecting Mungo.

How else the stories where men are boiled alive and come out untouched? How else men fly through the air with no machine aiding them?

The message was obvious, Mungo could slay them and he went alone to the bow again and looked towards the lights of Hurreva on the horizon.

“I am coming Leah,” the mazarrat sang and added, “Ben Nathan was his friend too.”

“Who are you Mungo?” Ben Nathan screamed in fury and got no reply.

And as Ben Nathan went to check course he heard twenty mazarrats below deck, “The Wild One,” from crews pets in cages and their song was heard sixty feet below amongst the forest tops and mazarrat free here repeated the song.

So Ben Nathan covered his ears, then took pillum to cast at Mungo, then feared the Unseen above him in the red moon and cursed this unknown God Mungo danced too.

## Mungo

So went below decks and got drunk as he listened to mazarrats.

“Ishtar will be punished for Leah’s shame by Mungo,” mazarrats.

“Carman is wicked and her judgement day is soon,” mazarrats added.

“What do these baboons know of the future?” Ben Nathan asked and was disturbed by the boson.

“Master a bright star has been seen approaching in the night sky, come and see?”

And Ben Nathan came and saw also the crew cowed afraid of this aspiration.

“It is Cathbadh’s space ship, is it Fermanian or human?” Ben Nathan.

And all hoped Fermanian yet Ben Nathan knew in his heart it wasn’t.

And Mungo appeared and Ben Nathan seeing him cast his pillum but a mazarrat fell from the rigging and took the weapon instead.

Mungo shook his head.

“Ben Nathan is Mungo’s friend;” also “Ben Nathan murders mazarrats,” was now sung.

“What are these baboons?” He asked aloud again and feared the cargo he was bringing back to his Mighty One Ishtar; the cargo of Mungo.

And he crossed himself with a T, the sign of his god Telephassa.

But he still shivered.

And the question was, did he cross himself for protection against Mungo or them baboons? And if The Elder heard him he did have something to say about being called a baboon with a red bum?



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Mungo

