



Illustration 22: The galley with squid in the rigging.

Nine months passed and the Decurion with Mungo at his side raided the enemies of His Mighty One and today now brought his war galley back piercing mauve clouds to Hurreva City.

And news of their exploits went before him.

So when his galley descended out of the lavender sun the marina flying boats of Hurreva decked in bright flags released air from reed horns so there was much noise, and Fermanians crowded the wharves eager to see the Decurion who had slain their enemies allowing tribute and trade back into the city.

Flying machines, baskets hanging from gas seeds and tame Pteranodons carrying citizens filled the sky throwing streamers.

Mungo

The scribes needed a hero to match Mungo and they wanted the Decurion who stood at the prow of his ship supposedly full of pride at this honour as the pilot took his galley through the marina into the war docks behind.

He was full of dread for Mungo wondered freely on deck staring back at curious faces looking for Leah. And in the Decurion's heart a struggle for light had been planted and it fought everything he had been taught about his gods and god Telephassa!

"Can I expect Mungo's mercy from the Mighty Ones?"

And the scribes who filled papyrus books answered, "No," and the Decurion shared his fame with The Wild One for without him the Fermanians would be nothing, also "The fame of these two out shone the Mighty Ones who were filled with jealousy," the scribes wrote and the mazarrats could read so sang about it.

But the Fermanians if told mazarrats could read did laugh at you thinking you silly.

And Ishtar and Carman sat on two thrones of soft human gold from the red plains and not of equal height and weight.

"Who is more mightier than the other?" A mazarrat sang.

Also both women in yellow robes bedecked by gems and ruby crowns, for they emphasised that Telephassa and Hurreva were one city.

At their feet Moragana dressed as a ballerina emphasising all other life was slave.

"Doomed," the Decurion as his ship approached the royal quay seeing no warmth in his Mighty One's eyes; even if they were smiling for the crowds.

Mungo

“The law is the law, they live by the law so are judged by the law,” Mungo told him reading his fears.

“They are above the law for they make the laws.”

“Then they have judged themselves when they die>”

And Ben Nathan looked at Mungo and hoped this crazy lion man thing’s God would help him out of this fix?

“The laws of Telephassa and Hurreva say we are owned by our Mighty Ones to die as they please with us, we are the clay and they the potters so can break our baked shells at will,” scribes and mazarrats sang freely.

And it was seen Carman whispered to Ishtar who frowned.

“Decurion you have made us proud, stand on the honour scales and your weight will be matched in gold,” Ishtar and he did while Carman pored a pouch of gold onto a scale.

After that human slaves came with more gold.

“Hurreva and Telephassa welcomes heroes,” and Ishtar bade the crew receive gold and they were happy and the crowd cheered, the crew would spend it with them in inns and restaurants and of course women.

“The slave oarsmen are free,” Carman and the slaves were the slaves and pirate prisoners who thought of red grass plains, alien worlds and a ship to join; and there was no cheers for Fermanians did not know how to accept them as equals. It also meant they did be free to kill Fermanians riding with John Wrexham's pha riders.

Mungo

“Even The Wild One,” Ishtar and there was silence for the crowd wanted him dead so they could sleep at night.

And Mungo walked on for he did not trust her, saw Abel and Eve and smelled Sasha.

“We harmed not Sasha for she is Mungo’s lion,” Abel and Eve and Mungo shamed over Sasha’s love for him, so did some Fermanians who saw the lions had more honour than them.

“She has cubs by you,” and Mungo rent his slave clothes in pain for he carried natural shuttle genes inside him from drinking Ono's milk as a baby.

“I have two women, am I lion thing or man thing?” He asked and did not know the answer was that he was a spiritual being first, and since flesh decays that secondly.

“Leah has also cubs from Mungo,” they told him.

“Yaw ah wa I am master of none,” meaning he was not his own master, that he was being used by something Unseen and became confused and wanted a harpist to sooth his mind.

But it was shuttle genes at work again and, “*The Unseen he danced to trying to show all that all life was divine for it was made of the same spark of light; that none had the right to say this was unclean or that person was condemned for none present had made a single star,*” The Elder.

Mungo

Now the slaves followed Mungo for they knew not how to get home for Hurreva floated in the yellow clouds and that was their freedom's irony, they could not escape for the law said, "Only Fermanians could ride anything that could fly."

They were doomed to work for food which meant to beg a Fermanian to employ and where again slaves were they not?

And Carman whispered to Ishtar.

"Decurion," and he looked at Ishtar who spoke his name.

"You are a traitor," and he shivered, "lay down your sword," and he obeyed unquestioningly as Ishtar had taken counsel from Carman.

"What is divine Ishtar doing?" A man in the crowd.

"You have brought The Wild One to destroy two great cities, how do you reply?" Ishtar asked and Carman remained silent.

"Our queen is right," a shout from the crowd, "The Wild One who eats our livers has been brought into our city,"

"I brought him back alive, he is impossible to kill," the Decurion.

"To kill us," a senator in the pay of the queen's yet a moment ago had cheered this hero Ben Nathan.

"That is your charge then, The Wild One walks amongst us as an equal, we Fermanians are masters of all, and your gold will be shared amongst the crowd.

And many citizens outraged by their heroes arrest saw the weight of the Decurion's gold and watched slaves begin to hand it out to them.

It was now their gold.

“That is not fair,” a mother in defence of the Decurion, “ships can now bring grain to us because the pirates are defeated,” but no one listened to her, she could not read or write; besides the crowd sensed free entertainment in the arena and a holiday atmosphere was setting in.

“Strip the Decurion of his rankings and then cut off his tail so he can act as a human beside his friend Mungo,” Ishtar commanded.

And the crowd went silent and the silence of the city made Mungo return to the quay, growling aside those who barred him.

Then he heard a huge rush of sighs from many mouths and did not know what it meant.

Then saw a tail wiggling on the quay that would live for several days without its body.

And the Decurion had been branded with a slave mark on his back so the air smelt of burnt flesh.

And behind Ishtar, Carman shook her head deliberately playing a double game, so the crowd saw her putting sympathy with the Decurion, *yet it had been her idea*.

She still dreamed of being the only queen for two cities.

“Much is wrong in Hurreva since Carman came,” was a common whisper and the mazarrats sang it louder than a whisper.

Mungo

“We go now,” Ishtar to Carman and one throne had forty foot long poles slipped under it and was lifted up by slaves. The other only thirty long foot poles and was Carman's.

“Who is more mightier than the other?” A mazarrat sang.

Hundreds of slaves and one slipped on the cut tail and a foot behind stood on his chest, and because of the weight of a throne, sank in killing him.

At once a task master pressed a remote and these two slaves were released and replaced immediately.

And Mungo roared and went crazy and cleared a space about the Decurion's gold by bashing the crowd this way and that.

And not one Berserka came to help the crowd for they thought the fate of the Decurion wrong.

“What is the lion man thing doing now?” Ishtar asked Carman.

“He is taking a galley,” for it was Carman who had looked back and by doing so had accepted she was not equal, but a vassal of Ishtar.

And Mungo had led the freed too a war galley carrying the Decurion and was not opposed by Berserkas who saw Ben Nathan as a hero worthy to lead them, another Artebrates.

And the mother with no education held the helm of Mungo's kilt for a moment and Mungo saw in her eyes the goodness that was in Malachi, goodness that could be found in both races.

Mungo

And he smiled.

“Kill Mungo,” Ishtar repeated many times to the Berserkas on the quay.

Then by ones and threes whole ranks ran to Mungo shouting, “Lord and Master,” and knelt and joined Mungo.

Even mazarrats on leads bit their Fermanian owners and ran to Mungo.

And sewer grills splintered and hybrids and mutants ran cheering joining Mungo, biting any foolish lizard person to get too close too them.

And the mother with no education joined Mungo.

And the crew of the stolen galley joined Mungo.

And the largest albatross seen landed on the galley's crows nest so joined Mungo.

“Good luck has joined Mungo,” was said by thousands.

“This is Mungo’s doing,” Carman shouted at Ishtar but the scribes knew, “Carman has poisoned Ishtar with greed who makes new laws to break our backs,” they wrote often.

“She is the mouth piece of Mount Tullos and we mazarrats don’t believe in god Telephassa,” the mazarrats would reply.

And fresh Berserkas came from barracks having witnessed none of the proceedings and were loyal to the queens.

“Kill kill kill,” they chanted as they advanced.

Mungo

And many Berserkas who had remained beside the two queens undecided were slain by the new comers who did not distinguished between them and those that had joined Mungo.

For they were standing still when they should have been fighting.

And Mungo now on the ship sent a scythe into the advancing ranks slaying twenty just like that.

And Ishtar and Carman took jitters at being covered in gore and felt unclean.

And the easy slaying of the Berserkas triggered slaves to throw down their litters and many quickly killed their masters and mistresses that tumbled out but these slaves were killed by the Berserkas. But those more interested in freedom than revenge quickly ran to the ship so saved their lives.

“Where is Leah?” Mungo shouted asking all for an answer.

“With Nannaha,” the Decurion answered so Mungo cut a bow line and the ship floated and the stern line was cut and nets were put over the side for stragglers to climb to freedom.

And one that climbed was Moragana, the ape woman man thing in her ballerina dress.

And his crew threw flaming torches amongst passing rigging.

And smaller ships and two galleys followed manned by anyone wanting away from the two queens and these rebellious souls raked the streets and houses with laser and missile fire.

Mungo

This was wrong, but amongst the crowd were Berserkas firing at the fleeing refugees.

And those like the mother with no education fled to safety on the ships.

“Oh no,” Ishtar groaning seeing death as a scythe blade came towards her.

“The potter can do what he wants with the clay,” Mungo and the Decurion looked at Mungo, “Are you a god?”

“No I am clay.”

And the Decurion saw the scythe cut all in its path as it raced to Ishtar and *someone* very close to this queen instead of pulling her towards safety, pushed her directly in front of the spinning blade.

And Ishtar even though she did not see who pushed her knew who was did as she fell forward in the last few seconds of life remaining.

“What goes round comes round,” some mazarrats sang loudly.

“All mine,” Carman now sitting on the highest gold throne amongst the gore that had been Ishtar.

And the Decurion saddened for the death of an era had just occurred and change was on the wind.

“I will return for my Leah,” Mungo and roared and made his departure from his ship as the ship’s squid above, clouded the enemy with an ink cloud.

This is the end of Book I and the seven years of Mungo’s banishment begin.

Mungo

“Carman pushed Ishtar,” a mazarrat whispered to a scribe who now feared for his life.

“Carman pushed Ishtar,” the mazarrat sang more loudly and all his kind took up the song so all in the city heard.

“Our Mighty One is a murderess, bad luck will befall our city now,” some one whispered.

“The Mighty Ones have murdered us daily and that is why The Wild One is here,” another soil whispered.

“But she is mighty and we low so what can we do?” Another whispered.

And the whispers showed Fermanian society was not united but ruled as if it was a collection of cities being bribed to destroy the other in the quest for material things.

“And that is Fermanians for you,” The Elder.

And Carman ordered the extermination of all mazarrats, and many thousands in cages were put down, but still she could not stop the mazarrat songs about the murder of Ishtar for these wily animals climbed walls, trees, roof tops and the free forests and grasses and sang about a murder.

