

269

Mungo

Book 2

7 Years

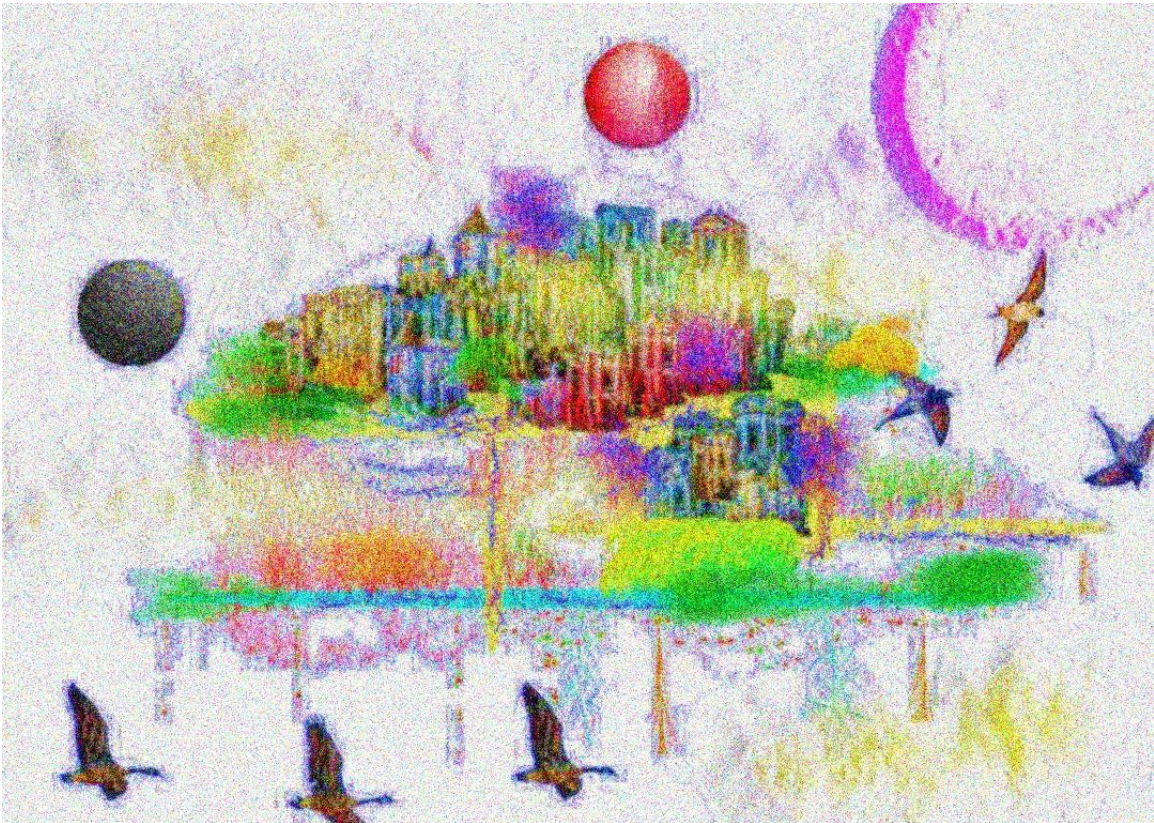


Illustration 23: Hurreva City

John Wrexham shouted, “They are lizard seed bags coming our way and I guess we are in for a thrashing,” then cleared his throat.

Cameron Black did likewise then bolted his riding pha with John to rally the defences of the ranch.

Now a ranch on New Uranus wasn’t like one on Earth.

Mungo

John Wrexham had built his in the killer of killer's graveyard and the reptiles crossed the red grass plains to die here and it was only foolish Fermanian lizard patrols sticking to, "We are brave and fearless and masters of this world so go were we please," that ventured this way and got eaten all up.

"There isn't no more vicious thing than a dying tyrannosaurus wanting a last nibble of lizard meat," John liked to joke watching a gas seed basket fall from the grey sky.

Fall because Cameron Black's anti balloon crossbow had brought it down.

And the ranch house was built on a plateau looking down upon tyrannosaurus bones and nuclear power chimneys.

"We can see the killers coming to die miles off, better close the gates to keep the pha in," John and the gates were one of the Wonders of New Uranus for they were pink sandstone slabs worked by hydraulics and carved with history.

Knowledge squeezed out of Peelock whose Red Town faced starvation one winter in return for a herd of pha, and needles the Incorruptible One had given the instructions how to build the gates.

Anyway: "They are coming mighty close John," Cameron complained waiting for a signal to fire a bolt.

"They isn't all lizard, if I didn't know better I did say that was Mungo on the prow and Cameron don't say I am crazy but there's them blasted eve dropping mazarrats clinging all over the rigging.

Have a look," and Cameron did and whistled.

Mungo

“Yep, mazarrats peeing all over the side right on the heads of our riders.”

“Let me see?”

And when Mungo landed he walked straight up to John and Cameron Black who feared he did do a savage act for they remembered their night with Leah now.

“I bring gifts,” and Mungo’s motley crew brought baskets that John saw each contained a lizard head.

“Welcome me,” Mungo and John hugged him and Cameron Black noticed there weren’t no warmth in Mungo’s eyes.

Later: “They were brave Berserkas,” Mungo at dinner with Malachi as John made toasts in front of his men, meaning the enemy berserkas should be treated with respect “and were killed by my Berserkas who died for me,” thus showing some Fermanians were the friends of humans.

“I understand and that is why I eat this,” and Malachi held up mashed potatoes signalling he wasn't eating any human.

“Ugh,” Mungo replied but ate the same and sat with Malachi showing he ate no more livers.

And a fly landed on the rest of Mungo’s green bushel sprouts, the fly was welcome to their bitterness, they were not baby button sprouts covered in melting butter.

“I am a Fermanian and want sweet meat,” Moragana demanded but was ignored as she was just an ape woman man thing in a ballerina dress.

Mungo

And that is how Mungo started his seven year banishment from Leah but not from Sasha his first love, who with Malachi and the others had now taken up residence in John Wrexham's ranch.

And war was war; Malachi proved his hunting skills many times leading Berserkas and humans burning Telephassian blockhouses and looting agricultural stations so was respected by all.

"Malachi was his friend," mazarrats.

And Malachi always gave back to the poor, human or lizard.

"I am showing we can all live together," Malachi to John who saw why Mungo liked the lizard, tail or no tail.

"Yep, just don't include them tyrannosaurus alright?" John meaning he drew a line when friendship and reptile was concerned and Malachi was lizard, reptile.

"They are our cousins," Malachi seriously, "like apes yours."

At this John fell silent thinking of what he knew of Earth where humans pinned their cousins on tables and pickled their innards in the name of progress.

Also remembered what they found in Peelock's castle and regretted ordering vials burst and specimens shot dead.

Even books which he saw as occult but knew better, knew it was science but had just been reacting how Peelock obtained it.

It had disgusted his humanity so had destroyed knowledge gained at a suffering price by others, them that did the suffering.

Mungo

Why humanity hunted dolphins and anything competing on the intelligence scale of evolution into zoos and he was ashamed; maybe goodness was in all and just needed reaching.

“Yep, we sure as hell won't make that mistake here,” he did reply and Malachi having undergone this conversation before knew what the human meant?

Humans killed everything just to be the master species and Malachi remembered The Wild One's purpose and pained.

And never forgot he and six remaining Berserkas were lizards and had changed their diets and started wearing top hats, even donning human clothes and lizard skin jackets.

They also ate human food.

To be human.

And Mungo led war parties against Telephassa and Hurreva and soon humans from the red plains, Cadfael's primitive wild and free joined and deserters from Peelock.

So one late autumn when the leaves were rusty Mungo to please Malachi and Berserkas who had joined them, bringing the lizard band up to three thousand Mungo had human prisoners from Peelock in front of him. Was now to shame his Unseen invisible benefactor.....”He's more famous than you John,” Cameron would often say.

“Better war leader also, dam lion thing has a knack about war,” John did answer with a hint of jealousy or was it admiration?

Mungo

“He hasn't forgotten about what we did to Leah either?”

“I know.”

“Better kill him before he kills us?”

“I know.”

“You going to do him?” Cameron asked as Mungo drove a lance through a captured warrior of Peelock's.

“He's going to kill them all, at least thirty, our men aren't liking this,” Cameron.

And John rode over to Mungo shouting "Enough enough," and “What did Mungo think he was doing?”

Yes what was Mungo doing?

“Once I gave you lizard heads and Malachi and Berserkas said nothing, now I give you human heads to make it equal,” Mungo for he knew the lizards were unhappy that only Fermanian prisoners seemed to be executed later in gruesome ways.

And a Berserka held up a head, for once not a lizard head but human dripping stuff.

“Want women Mungo, drink, lasers to kill Berserkas in Telephassa? Much better than killing these men Mungo,” John but Mungo cut off another head and gave it to a Berserka.

“They are enemy, they kill us,” Angus Ogg knowing Mungo was trying to pacify the rising number of Berserkas to show there was not one rule for humans and one for them.

Mungo

And Mungo walked away with his axe and the Berserkas seemed satisfied and John said no more as the remaining twenty four human prisoners became jittery with nervous relief they were still alive.

“Bloody savages all of them,” John and Angus wept in his soul for he felt he had betrayed his human race. But deep down he wanted to be accepted as a great warrior by John, an equal not something that followed a man lion, a were creature.

“We don’t need them, those Berserkas are becoming too numerous, better do something now John before that lion cub lords it over us?” Cameron.

“But how?” John answered.

Later that night John allowed a woman lizard to pour him drink, for many had followed the deserting Berserkas; and John remembered the softness of Leah and electricity of Nannaha.

This was New Uranus, men lived short hard lives so men drank and played rough; that was their excuse to be what they accused Mungo of, a beast thing.

Human women were for marrying, having kids; lizard women were for fun when you was drunk of course so didn’t mind the tail.

And if you didn't like the tail, well cut it off!

“What’s that noise?” John asked.

“Moragana demanding a man? Ha she’s going to chase him till she gets him, dam disgusting what we become since Mungo arrived,” Cameron forgetting his own past?

Mungo

And The Elder in skins for his own burnt skin was bald arrived carried on a litter by young mazarrats his disciples.

“I never told them we was smart so they threw me down a fume sooner than expected Mungo,” The Elder telling his story, “I walked nights across swamps shutting my mind to pain. Went into purple dream worlds until swamp mazarrats rescued me and now I am here to counsel again.”

And Malachi and Mungo wondered who New Uranus actually belonged to? Mazarrats were everywhere, maybe they had underground cities and was just waiting for Fermanians and humans to slaughter each other off before coming topside?

“I am your friend,” The Elder glad he was home for Mungo was home, “I knew you could fly.”

Cathbadh.

Now in Telephassa City Wonder Lord Vinki now made no effort to hide he was feminine for in senate he wore coloured silks and all saw through the silks and saw what he wore under them.

But he was power and so none said anything to his face.

He was now the Modernist Party Leader and thought he was invincible for the Senate passed a law stating its members were above the law, now was the mouth piece of the mob.

Mungo

The mob would protect their senators Vinki believed and had learnt from Cathbadh for from his red sedan he showered the mob with coin. And what made his head swell was that he had successfully ordered the assassination of Loyalist and Legion Senators and thought he was all powerful, a demi god upon the planet.

He was wrong, for one hated him enough to poison the mob continually against him and murder Modernists.

And he was Cathbadh and The Mighty One profited as her opponents killed each other off.

And it was rumoured the Legion knew Cathbadh was a descendant of King Sess and Carman's spies heard and her love for him waned. And Cathbadh had a visitor, the Serrant....."Moragana is with Mungo."

"Mungo still lives?"

"Yes Lord and Master for he is not dead!"

"Return to Moragana and remind her of my bidding what she must do," Cathbadh ignoring the serrant's humour.

"Yes Lord and Master and what about me, when will you heal me?" And Cathbadh not a cruel man by Fermanian standards removed the silver algae bandages and healed, "I work with serrant cousins without my ability so grant them mercy for I understand them." Meaning they had few brains so must put up with their bumbling ways.

"Moragana is your cousin?" And Cathbadh sighed.

