

Peelock sat on rusty grass in a red cedar forest watching Mungo lead his hoard against Fermanians under Lord Artebrates who had insisted he ride his war triceratops up front to stop criticism he was past it, a soppy poppy popper and out of favour with Mighty One Carman.

“Charge,” he shouted his heart thumping so hard it made his rib cage hurt.

Suddenly he felt his youth back, briefly.

Suddenly he felt dizzy and faint.

Suddenly he felt a pain in his chest.

Suddenly he keeled over onto the floor of his howdah.

“Ouch,” he was not being sarcastic, then his lips went blue and his driver fell on him headless.

“Oh no,” Artebrates as he felt himself going down a dark tunnel.

Then he saw light at the end and god Telephassa surrounded like the papyrus books said attended by female serpent nymphs.

“I’m coming,” and didn’t know if he meant to his scaly god or to the women whose bottom halves were snakes.

And they welcomed throwing their arms open showing their charms.

Artebrates wasn’t afraid of dying any more; he was going to paradise where all good Fermanians went for killing humans who didn’t believe in god Telephassa.

## Mungo

Then something horrible happened, instead of kissing him and feeding him grapes that hung from trees nearby his god, they showed venomous fangs and went to feed on him.

“Noooooooo.” He screamed even if he was dead for he could hear his god laughing and warriors dying in the real world.

“What is the real world?” The spirit world or the one Carman my cruel mistress rules?” He asked himself, see he had had a Near Death Experience and not all are about the light; certainly his wasn't; perhaps he had read Dantes!

And then light flooded everywhere and the serpent nymphs went off screaming and god Telephassa melted leaving a smell like unwashed underwear.

“I am alive, surely this peace must be Telephassa and the other a demon come to trick me?”

And came too with Mungo looking down at him smelling of unwashed underwear; fighting makes warriors sweat bad.

And Mungo prodded with lance and drew blood from Artebrates thigh.

“Now I am in hell,” Artebrates.

“No, on the red grass plain with the rest of the wounded. Me I did use your skin on my belts and shoes,” John Wrexham behind Mungo.

Malachi thought this a bit tasteless; Artebrates was a heroic Fermanian legend, once his own Lord and Master.

“What news about Leah, she was your comforter?” Mungo.

## Mungo

“Where are my warriors?” Artebrates lifting his head up. He didn’t see any just a computer so large and big it put those in Telephassa to shame.

“There is a corpse looking at me?” He said fearfully.

“One of Peelock’s secrets seems he had her hidden from us,” John explained but that meant nothing to Artebrates who looked dumb.

“We are her guardians,” Malachi warned John who curled up a lip thinking black thoughts where a lizard and a human corpse were concerned. And Artebrates saw wires came out of whatever she lay upon and went back inside the computer.

“I am very afraid a walking dead is controlling my body,” as he saw wires also went into his body from her and the computer, why Malachi grunted over his superstition.

A lot of other men were grunting as surgeons pulled arrows out of them and dug bullets from bladders.

There was also a lot of lizard grunting on the red grass, them left behind as Artebrates army routed.

They were grunting as a herd of Allosaurus, twenty tonne monsters with a bullet head were chewing the wounded up.

Malachi had no sympathy for them, they had routed, had not died on battle, now they died the way cowards should die.

“Malachi Malachi is there no pity in you,” mazarrats sang. *Malachi was all Fermanian.*

## Mungo

“Death is the gateway to Telephassa’s paradise where maidens await the brave,” more mazarrats poking fun at Malachi’s beliefs.

“Fermanians like to die,” others.

“Malachi was brought up under a ruthless penal system, boiling for stealing bread and roasting for swearing against your better,” another.

“Let them all moan as Malachi’s cousins eat them all up,” one from a bush.

“Mungo understood, he left the human wounded for Leah wasn’t amongst them.”

“Humans who were sent by Peelock to help Lord Vinki.”

“Mungo and Malachi are brothers in hell,” a mazarrat sang in bass.

*And none asked Artebrates what waited for them on the other side.*

And eventually Artebrates told Mungo, Leah was in his house in Telephassa, but not the changes that had happened to her, he was now afraid of dying, he had not led a good life, perhaps by Fermanian standards by eating as much human sweetmeat as he could?.

And Mungo remembered the house, a castle built by termites and humans.

And The Elder later to his pupils, “Here fate intervened for Mungo told Artebrates this holy woman and her machine would bring death to his race for she contained a terrible weapon.”

And Artebrates believed and feared for he remembered the nymphs with fangs waiting for him. And Malachi grunted annoyed that Mungo spoke too much, sometimes Mungo pushed his love for him to breaking point.”

## Mungo

“Malachi knew he and Mungo were chosen and controlled not their destinies.”  
extracts from Mazarrat songs.

And Artebrates thought, “I must have this weapon and planned to use it on humans,” for fate had decided how to get Mungo to use the bomb.

“I will take her with me,” Mungo but fate had decided ten thousand years ago this action for the computer so Mungo was able to carry her.

“Dinosaur dung head,” Malachi cursed seeing there was no escape from fate.

And fate took John and Cameron to where Peelock sat.

“We couldn’t stop Mungo entering Red Town, mustard fever or not. That blasted baboon started waving his staff and speaking holy gibberish. “Dance in Peelock’s castle and cure the sick, dance Mungo dance, that singed miscreant rat sang,” John complained to Peelock who sat motionless.

“Yep, and we cannot just plug Mungo, why man they was carrying him after that battle and anyone stupid enough to shoot him would be torn asunder,” Cameron Black added.

“Even your riders John,” Peelock eventually and pointed at them spearing Fermanians lucky enough to crawl away from the Allosaurus, “you have a lot of work to undo Mungo’s popular victory today.”

“Hell I give them lizards to kill to make them happy, they cannot get enough of them so just remember I am on your side and keep that mustard fever out of my lands,



*Illustration 31: Allosaurus, just a big pussy cat*

and give me the cure,” John pleaded giving the answer how to get the people to hate Mungo?

And Cameron didn’t argue even if he thought they should put a laser into Peelock and hope Peelock didn't break any seals on his mustard vials.

“And what gives with this holy corpse that isn’t dust?” John asked and not a scientific man knew naught of genes that made a body decay to dust.

“There are laws of an unnamed power existing before mankind said they are scientific laws and dismissed them.

### Mungo

How foolish since the Unnamed One made them in the first place and uses them,”  
The Elder sang to them on the wind.

And none thought their only hope lay in Mungo and the Incorruptible One for they were humans whose land was under threat and were blinded by Mungo’s love for a lizard they couldn’t stand up wind of, Malachi.

### Cathbadh

Now Cathbadh looked out the window wondering where the hunchback had fled, if he had any sense out of Telephassa that was burning as hungry rioters broke into Vinki’s granaries, looted and fired them.

The humans on the walls looking in could not fail to notice what was happening. Artebrates should have removed them when he led his men out to battle Mungo.

“Soldiers from other cities are joining me on the Red Plain, I will return victorious and clean the walls of the humans,” Artebrates had boasted.

Seeing that smoke was the only thing making him happy, Vinki’s suffering and he still felt good granting mercy to the hunchback.

“Let us not forget Fermanian ideas on mercy are different from human,” The Elder.

He was also happy the mob had broken into Carman’s summer palace ransacking and the Berserkas guarding it had joined the rioters. It made Carman's position vulnerable and his Sess lineage more secure. He expected news of her assassination or forced abdication at any moment. Things were pretty perilous for his queen.

## Mungo

And he looked at the sky where a human space ship was.

“Artebrates was needed by Carman, would he come? There was really no body else to lead the army into *defeat!*” Cathbadh wickedly mused.

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Now Angus seeing he could not have Keira through John Wrexham’s hands took her by force and kept her in a hunter’s hut three miles from John’s ranch and mazarrats told Mungo and he was wrath and went to save Keira.

“What have you done Angus, I gave you life?” Mungo asked as Malachi and armed mazarrats freed the human woman and she was solely distressed for Angus had abused, to make her submit to being his woman.

“My mother gave me my life and you are crazy and need a harpist,” for Angus fancied he could spite Mungo with sword.

“No Malachi bide,” Mungo ordered with restraining hands, “he is right, at times I am madder than others and now it is Angus’s turn to mock me, just take Keira and send the harpist to Angus,” Mungo and Angus lost his self control over the remark and drew his sword to slay Mungo, who jumped back and took out his own cutlass.

And a rage of lions possessed Mungo and he overcame Angus.

“Give me life again,” Angus pleaded.

And if The Elder had not stopped him Mungo would have killed Angus, “You granted life earlier, now it is up to a different power to grant death. Let his blood be



## Mungo

upon another for if you slay him the human warriors will kill you for they love Angus Ogg and his ways that are their ways.

“One day I will take back the life I gave you, always carry shield slung over back Angus for you will never know what mazarrat will lance your back.

Listen to me?” And Angus Ogg listened.

“He has the blood of a mazarrat on him, he is a murderer, the dead one sings for justice,” armed mazarrats sang coming out of red cedars and Angus Ogg was afraid of Mungo’s prowess and planned to kill him by stealth again.

