

Mungo

Nodegamma?

And Mungo sat on a dandelion flower with The Elder below on red grass alone for his companions had deserted him after Hamo's death and Angus's banishment as foretold by The Elder.

And the place was Nodegamma valley and goats grazed here. While smoke rose twenty miles away from Telephassa as civil war raged.

Much weakening its defences.

And Mungo and his teacher were watching pha riders approaching chased by other riders.

Anyway: Once upon a time there was a man called Cathbadh who had wanted to be the greatest scientific mind of his age and race for into his work he buried his slumbering thoughts of being emperor one day; for he was descended from King Sess.

And then he saw a human star ship and his mind became unstable and believed his Mighty One must make way for another who could oppose the human star travellers.

And choose himself as the next emperor.

For in cold winter month which is October he poisoned Hebat, Carman's fourteen year old who was debased anyway.

"Who has done this?" Carman with waxen face and Cathbadh fell to his face denying blaming Wonder Lord Vinki or Artebrates.



Illustration 36: Mungo and The Elder sat on the giant flower.

“Mistress, bring in the infra red scanners to see if the unseen have been at work,”
Cathbadh blaming spirit folk.

And in her misery she did so.

And when the Prefect of Police used the machine Cathbadh shouted, “See a
legionary boot print, it is the work of the Legion Senators who want war always.”

For Cathbadh had worn them to shift the blame when he had poisoned.

He had dropped yellow cobra venom onto Hebat’s sleeping open lips and sent him to
nightmare land.

The human slaves would celebrate.

Mungo

“Death to you all,” Carman sick of them and summoned Artebrates and all Legion Senators and had Cathbadh held for she suspected him, and to his horror slashed his belly with a short sword so he gasped frightened for his life.

“My min, you carry my heir,” and so gave himself away and Carman had him dragged to the dungeons and all the way she kicked and stood on his body parts so he groaned. And behind her followed her court and many were smiling for they liked to see great people fall.

And when he swooned she demanded water to refresh him and then continued stomping him.

“Carman desires the same fate upon us, we must protect ourselves Artebrates,” Legion Senators his friends asking him to rebel.

But the old soldier came to Carman again, “I am needed.”

“Needed to see Nudd die,” her reply that alienated him for he loved Nudd.

“I want you head off now,” and Berserkas pulled him to his knees and readied axe.

“She was a mother in grief even if she was a lizard, a reptile, she had feelings.

“He is Artebrates, a Berserka refusing to swing the axe and these men let Artebrate go even though it meant their own death from Carman’s loyal executioner.

But when Artebrates got home to flee to safety with Nudd he found the boy with a pillow over his face, very silent and dead.

So he screamed and wished for the destruction of Telephassa the place of darkness.

Mungo

And Artebrates led his Berserkas against Carman so smoke rose over Telephassa City and this is what Mungo and The Elder were watching.

The war of radioactivity when King Sess had polluted the land and the cycle was about to begin again.

Karma was visiting the Fermanians, humans beware, and karma will definitely visit also for what comes round goes round.

And who had suffocated the little boy, who could do such an evil thing.

“He was only a lizard,” a mazarrat sang.

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“It is Malachi,” Mungo still on the flower.

“Listen Mungo,” The Elder hearing mazarrats sing so passing one from another what they saw to The Elder.

An evolved form of the jungle telephone mazarrat style.

“It is Leah and fate coming.”

And Mungo jumped down off the flower and ran to meet her and saw John Wrexham, Cameron Black and Peelock with pha riders with weapons chasing Malachi and Leah.

So Mungo roared and Ono with lions ran out of the grass and attacked the humans and many died on both sides unnecessary for the humans had Vinki's laser guns.

Now John was told a great army of lizards was approaching and rode hard to see from the valley cliffs and saw and summoned all his men, and Peelock did likewise.

Mungo

For as the cloud of dust they saw got nearer so did the din of horns and drums.

“It is the men of Telephassa and Hurreva City and beyond, a great army of Fermanians, we need all humans here even the wild tribesmen of the red grass and beyond, where is Cadfael?

And he came and was told to call his people here with these words, “Nodegamma is our Armageddon, ride hard then and fast. A mighty lizard army marches here for the final conflict between human and Fermanian.”

And Cadfael rode, the wild tribesmen, they who had made him a blood brother he sought.

And above a star ship could be seen orbiting and none knew if it was human or lizard except Cathbadh and he wasn't believed and in a place he didn't want to be.

This is why Carman led her peoples to Nodegamma.

A deserted unholy place fit for crows and dung beetles whom the Fermanians used to clean their streets.

And Artebrates also came to this spot, but not to battle humans!

They were Legion men, Legion Senators who hated Carman for Cathbadh was not the only one hanging upside down over a brazier filled with hot coals.

Hebat needed revenged and Carman needed a million blood lettings to be pacified, even the street beggars were not safe. Many had been butchered by Carman walking the streets with sword slashing any she found to vent her grief; of course she had Berserka guards with her.

Mungo

“What's the point of being a queen if you cannot excise authority?” A mazarrat sang asking.

And behind these men the camp followers and curious, the sightseers, the souvenir collectors, the mums and babes of the Berserkas.

So the battle would take place on three fronts.

While overhead a star ship prepared to enter orbit.

Cathbadh

“Oh gods of my people save me,” Cathbadh begged as his lips were cracked from the heat and his hair all singed off.

“What gods, we never see you praying in the temples?” One of his torturers who saw this as an invitation to pull on Cathbadh's tongue with a heated clamp.

“I cannot stand such screaming,” a mazarrat complained.

“Are you praying, I cannot hear you, speak up,” the torturer and clamped again.

“Maybe the gods cannot hear Cathbadh but I can,” the mazarrat wishing he wasn't needed to spy for The Elder.

And Captain John Clinton on the star ship above was using telescopic atom cameras to watch the battle below.

“Even mazarrats have not invented such cameras that seek atoms by heat and then reassemble them as an image,” The Elder when told of this camera admiringly but also it made him worry, these arriving humans were not slaves.

“Mazarrat be careful,” was his advice to his kind.

Mungo

And a scream broke the night but the night above the dungeon was full of cicada songs and mazarrats singing the news.

And the night in the dungeon was filled with a sizzling sound as the torturer pored cold water over Cathbadh.

The torturer knew Cathbadh was a rich man, Cathbadh still had fingers and could write how much he was willing to pay to stay alive.

Of course the torturer would take the cash and still do his work; Carman still lived.

