

Mungo

Enkalla

And that Serrant, a primitive cousin of the lizard people begged of Mazarrats, “Give me help for I am sick and I will tell you what you want to know,” and the mazarrats gave him berries and red grass to eat and the Serrant spoke of the centurion of archers and the mazarrats sang and Enkalla was arrested. For as all young mazarrats sing, “Enkalla cages mazarrats as singing pets, revenge is sweet for he will be caged now.”

As for the wicked Serrant, berries and red grass did not cure it of hepatitis so it was ill many lunar months. For as all young mazarrats sing, “Mazarrats are Serrant snacks.”

Now Enkalla stood proudly as his silver armour was stripped from him by red robed executioners in tyrannosaurus masks.

Malachi his brother stood holding his sobbing seven year nephew who couldn't care Fermanians were brave and fearless, just knew his father was manacled at the ankles by chain to a post at Executioner's Bay.

And executioners' emptied chub into rock pools that waited for the rising tide.

*And the mazarrats are the media of this alien world and as all young mazarrats know, the only good Fermanian is a dead one. They do horrid things too mazarrats, firstly eat them, train them to fight each other in gambling dens, put them in cages to sing like nightingales and skin them and stuff them full of saw dust to sell as ornaments.*

And as for the rock pool, first would come the crabs and small dinosaurs, and if Enkalla was lucky a giant flesh eater to end his misery quick for the manacle was long

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for him to run from predators and to swim when the tide rose but not long enough to escape.

And with the tide a following Mosassurus to gobble what was left all up.

Not a trace for the crabs to finish off either!

But as this was winter and the seals and tuna gone with most of the Mosassurus, Enkalla might last seven days before exhaustion drowned him before he was eaten.

And it was official tourist policy to encourage boaters and surfers around the winter shores of Telephassa City and when they vanished, strong currents were blamed.

In truth, mosassurus was feeding.

And a red robed executioner threw the key to his locks into mangrove mud to sink and left and Malachi led the boy away who kicked and screamed, “Daddy.”

“He is a good soldier,” Lord Artebrates looking down from the Royal Observation tunnel and he didn’t feel well, in fact dam right shaky.

“He let Mungo live,” Carman replied.

“He showed how to quell the sickness,” Lord Artebrates trying to save the life of a good man.

“He is Mungo’s friend,” Carman and retreated to the comfort of cushions where Wonder Lord Vinki served her wine and by this act showed Artebrates he was out of favour.

And Artebrates looked at the honour guard about her and couldn’t read their eyes staring unfocussed in front of nothing, but read their minds.

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Knew each berserka personally, only the bravest went into the honour guard and they came from his regiments.

Smelt the pity in their minds.

Knew they waited for him to become Artebrates again, *if ever*.

But part of him couldn't care any more, arthritis had set in and was waiting for new joints in his fingers but the operation was always put off because of campaigns against encroaching humans like the war he planned now against them along the Red Grass Plateau.

And he knew Nannaha with plenty of poppy seed would be coming too. The war was set, there were plenty of good officers and willing soldiers to die for Telephassa's victory; they could die without him.

He was only a needed figurehead; this time he wouldn't be up front freezing his tail off in furs, but in one of them new flying machines, warm watching Nannaha light his poppy pipe.

*He was a fool; soldiers loved him because he was up front with them freezing tails off!*

"Mungo," the scream of victory came from Enkalla and made Artebrates come out of his dreams.

"A good man," Artebrates sighed as one executioner cut deftly Enkalla's limbs to make good chub.

“I have a seventh cousin removed and recommend him as new Centurion of Archers,” Vinki.

“One of yours, a weakling,” Artebrates who did not know he had signed his possessions away to Vinki.

“You are on your way out sunshine, too sinewy, Carman likes us soft and perfumed,” Vinki smirking and returned to The Mighty One to massage her shoulders for the day had been strenuous.

As for Artebrates he was dismissed by Carman who sighed as Vinki’s fingers stroked down her back.

“My friends scream you are divine and should have a temple built in your honour,” Vinki.

“My shoulder aches here,” Carman replied letting Vinki think the idea of divinity came from him and not god Telephassa. “To make your religious subjects submissive in more ways than one,” he said, and then she examined his soft gold torc with three faces on one head and marvelled at the human craftsmanship.

“Where did you get this?” She asked.

“A human called John Wrexham,” Vinki pleased she liked.

“Artebrates,” she relayed and the old general returned finding his legs stiff from drug withdrawal.

“Bring me more like this,” and Artebrates understood, gold kept everyone happy.

So did Vinki who planned Artebrates would never come off his poppy seed.

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“Gold is power, gold makes the world go round,” Carman hoping the berserkas loyalty could be bought with better weapons, the gold was hers.

And Artebrates dismissed ventured down to Executioner’s Bay where he saw Malachi with his nephew Akkad on a cliff.

And Artebrates watched a good man die and understood why the condemned had shouted, “Mungo,” in defiance of everything that was Vinki in the empire.

That there was one, The Wild One who would destroy Enkalla’s enemies and satisfy vengeance was worrying for vengeance was a human.

“And the good man dying is me, “Artebrates just before he saw the man thing.

“Remember me,” Mungo to Enkalla as the tide flowed in.

“Mungo?”

And Carman did not hear as she was too far away.

And Mungo threw a lance into the back of a mosassurus, then jumped on its back and stabbed with a short sword.

“Die water lizard,” Mungo shouted as he pulled his sword out and thrust again seeking a heart.

“Daddy,” Akkad shouted.

“Dam Mungo,” Malachi seeing himself as the next offering on the tide.

And the mosassurus floated away and Mungo started to dig the post Enkalla was chained too out of the mud.

“Hold man thing,” Malachi and pointed a laser pistol at the post, and cut it in two.



*Illustration 12: Mosassurus*

“That was close,” Enkalla.

“I am doomed,” Malachi’s reply.

“You are free centurion,” Mungo.

“Were too, I cannot return to Telephassa?”

“No one saw us, I am still safe,” Malachi.

“I will take you and the boy to Hurreva City, the lizard men there are in need of good men,” Mungo offered and by now the three were on the rocks and Akkad joined, “Daddy,” he sobbed.

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And Artebrates watched understanding why Malachi had helped Mungo. It would not do for the hated man thing to save the life of the centurion as brave and fearless Fermanians stood by doing nothing.

“But I must see Leah, then we go,” Mungo.

“You mean your lion nose has not scented her?” Malachi.

“What do you mean?”

“If it had not been for my brother’s execution I would be there armed waiting for you. She is bait for you off Set Highway,” Malachi warned.

“I must go to her,” Mungo.

“Wait, we will all go together,” Malachi’s crazy idea, for he was crossing the line.

“Traitor,” Artebrates sighed and left meaning he was the traitor to himself and swore he would change his ways and cried sin out of his eyes.

At that moment something good filled his heart and he fell to his knees and talked straight to himself.

“The old fool has fallen, let me replace him Carman and I will crush the humans,” Vinki boasted watching from her palace.

Now the berserka lines advanced uniformly to protect Artebrates their commander.

“They dislike you Vinki,” Carman seeing.

“Traitors too you mistress, boil them all, throw their cooked meats into Executioner’s Bay,” Vinki hoped.

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Now Carman remembered her berserkas had not been paid and chilled seeing corruption to blame and all that was corrupt in Telephassa seeped from Vinki.

And Vinki shivered from her look.

And Carman called out, “Artebrates I have punished you enough, good men are needed in Telephassa,” and said this to molycoddle the Berserkas who stopped and looked at her.

“Artebrates is hero,” she shouted and the Berserkas cheered.

Now nearby a fearless and brave mazarrat listening soon would tell his kind what it saw and heard and in two months one recently caged would sing of it and ordinary Fermanians would wonder what sort of man thing Mungo was.

“Flesh as Artebrates who knows Mungo’s unseen God,” other mazarrats would sing.

For Artebrates on his knees mumbled and the spying mazarrats with their good hearing heard, “It is inside me, I know Mungo’s secret, and we inherit Light at birth on a gene. It is logic and common sense and mops darkness which is cruelty.

God Telephassa cannot hear us from a stone seat in Heaven. We hear ourselves; the light hears us and grows inside with logic and straight living.

I believe in Mungo’s God who is the life that flows through all of us, it is omnipotent, it is light.

The omnipotence is water and we live in that water,” so Artebrates sang.

“Look the old fool is dancing,” Vinki hoping to belittle Artebrates more.



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“No, he dances with life, he will lead the campaign,” and Carman shoved Vinki out of the way and he tripped falling. And Carman trod over him and he protested not and the Berserkas cheered.

“To each of Artebrates heroes a barrow of this human gold, take Artebrates and march to the Red Grass my heroes,” Carman shouted needing the gold..

And honour guards beat their shields and advanced, and trod upon Vinki deliberately and Carman said nothing.

This was not the time to be absolute but to give them something they hated; Vinki.

And these men put Artebrates upon a shield and carried him.

And Vinki from his position watched little red land crabs scuttle over his nose.

And some crabs bit Vinki.

“Let there be a feast to honour General Artebrates return,” the men shouted, a feast and quarter moon cycle holiday, then the Great Artebrates will lead the Berserkas of Telephassa against the humans,” Carman promised but showed them no gold for Vinki had stolen most of it hidden under bad army purchases.

“I am not great, Life is great,” Artebrates and men saw he was not boastful like Vinki.

Now Carman ever the show woman put Artebrates in her chariot and went home followed by cheering Berserkas.

And when Artebrates had mounted the chariot he had stood upon a little red land crab and said, “Who have I stood upon.”

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And Vinki lifted his face and said, “The gods exist upon Mount Tullos, they reward us with harems of humans. All know to kill a human while dying is to gain entry to Mount Tullos, Artebrates will not gain entry to Naja as he will die from the poppy seed not in battle.”

