

Scenario: **Dark tunnels.**

It was easy for Tiberius to escape for having made up his mind to flee he sought the nearest guard with the keys to his manacles.

And indirectly Woo helped, had given Dracon new tendons so he could share Tiberius's work load and since there were now two, the work was increased; Woo hated slothfulness.

"You will not have to crawl like a fly," quoted from Emperor Woo's own lips.

"Hey you cow face," Dracon called to the bison man guard and poked his nose flinging the boggy at him.

This was a diversion as bison men hate being called cow faces as it means cow pats.

Allowing Tiberius to go behind the guard who had raised his spear to crack Dracon's head. Anyway no one in his right mind would attack their guard.

BUT TIBERIUS HADN'T BEEN IN HIS RIGHT MIND SINCE HIS BOYHOOD.

Lo Tiberius leapt, chopping the guard's neck, felling him so Dracon could crush his throat and freed them of their chains with the keys while Tiberius thrust the spear into the second bison guard.

It entered his throat and exited at the back somewhere.

WAR.

Where only mother's grieve for if men had to go through labour there did be no WAR.



Illustration 169: The mourning become lethargic.

“Free us too,” a general request went up from the other slaves.

CLUNK.

Tiberius had thrown them the keys.

And Zane hovered in the background, waiting for his chance to be a hero, full of admiration for Tiberius.

Yes Zane was Yellow Star Bird for sure?

Now three other guards entered attracted by the chaos and were brought down before they could kill by the weight of slave numbers. Torn apart by hate and their limbs thrown in the dust and stamped upon.

Sixty slaves even condemned bison men amongst their number, turtle men, primitives, sun warriors and races Tiberius had never seen before.

And all followed Tiberius and came to a grilled copper gate and three bison men guards.

They died with their boots on and were brave men' but what use bravery when you are dead?

Then they where out running into the six foot green Taggetian buffalo grass.

An alarm sounds.....gongs and horns.

"If it was this easy we should have been freed ages ago," Tiberius.

Now Morgan saw the escape into the grass from a glassed veranda and intent on following sought Morag.



Illustration 170: A primitive mugger attacks the bison guards and rolls them good.

Hundreds of slaves suddenly attacked their keepers wanting FREEDOM. Hate had fuelled such actions and Wayne Haslam's fleet in the sky above made all think

'Every man for himself.'

Holes in walls appeared from laser canon fire from above providing escape routes and soon the green grass was streaked by flattened pathways.

Emperor Woo stood at his viewing screen looking over a burning city.

"Kill them all kill them all," he repeated and the slaves who should have been manning the radar had long ago fled.

And in the tunnels below bison men fought turtle men fuelled by the knowledge that they were just turtle soup.

And above bison men and mercenaries fought Wayne's crack shock marine troops.

"I hope we can find Tiberius," Morgan stripping out of her blue satin imperial concubine robes and donning armour.

"Tiberius will not desert us," I Simon believing in all that Tiberius's legends stood for.

And Morgan smiled and stroked my cheek; oh to be a human instead of a pink frog and a comfort then this lady might take me as serious competition against Tiberius Grant my friend.

And somewhere a mercenary general was weighing matters up, these weren't primitive aliens he was up against now but Wayne's shock troops and a possible



Illustration 171: Morgan donned her amour to fight for Tiberius the Smuck.

hanging tree. He had to decide, depending on which way the wind blew on who his mercenaries where to die for?

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“We follow you, you are King Tiberius,” a freed bison man, “we will be sun warriors from now on.”

“No need to change who you are, you were born bison men and have a proud heritage. Come with me yes and,” he was interrupted by shouts of hate as an army of primitives came out of the tall grass.

Unfortunately they did not see the freed bison men as friends but as task masters.

“Crak,” Tiberius shouted seeing the man, “these bison men are our friends, stop killing them. They are warriors we need to kill Emperor Woo.”

That did the trick, which is all Crak wanted, Tommy Woo's head as a nice mantle piece trophy.

Over ten bison men had been killed and now chopped up and their body parts were waved defiantly at the sun Ceugant Dana.

Many primitives also showed their moon bottoms and winded at the sun.

Now Tiberius pushed his anger down and led his party back to the burning city and by doing this had taken the mantle of leadership from Crak and given an order.

“Follow me.”

In his heart Tiberius wanted vengeance against what had been done his women and friends.

In his heart was reminded of the terrible hardship of uniting Tagget as the primitives rushed by him whooping and yelling eager to get to the city and kill.

Well there was just nothing for it but to follow into the confusion that was the domain of Emperor Woo he who was known amongst modern men as The Medic.

Like what happened up ahead when a wall collapsed and a cohort of bison men came out of it into the left flank of human marines.

By surprise they killed at least sixty their spears and copper axes working hard; but then modern fire power turned the tide and the slaughter was great.

Everywhere the smell of wee, blood and pooh.

WAR.

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“Not this way,” Morgan and we followed her back into the remains of an officious green building.

“Help me,” a grating voice pleaded.

It was the head of Hagar lying on the floor covered in ants that had come up through a cracked sewage pipe.

The ants weren’t particular about eating half digested food remains.

Now Morgan raised her sword to kill it once and for all.

“No,” Tiberius would keep it?

“Would he give you mercy ?” Morgan looking at the pathetic thing.

I resolved the matter by grabbing the head by its long black hair sinking it into a vase of water several times till the ants floated on the surface.

“I will not forget you,” Hagar grated.

But Morgan hoped he would asking, “Where is Philos?”

“Gone west to Ino,” Hagar.

And that is where we met Tiberius with the head of Hagar, and rejoicing fled the city leaving the evil Emperor Woo to his fate.

What comes round goes round.

It is the way.

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That night surrounded by thousands of primitives who under Crak had taken us to their caves, we ate well, spider web soup, roasted hare, bison and bird with tubers for vegetables.

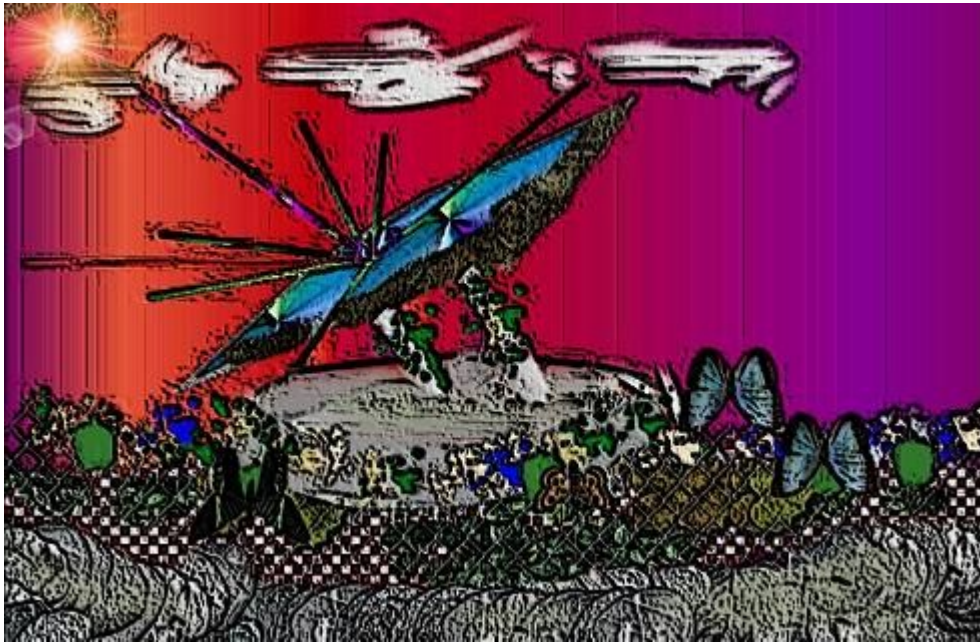


Illustration 172: This mirror make ruddy good toast.

“To the west are the mines of gold, sacred to the sun priestesses. That is where Ino is, from there she can use the mirrors of the sun to bring down burning rays upon her enemies,” Crak informed us.

Tiberius was intrigued; Crak was speaking to the right man.

Ino obviously had some sort of primitive copper sun reflector or prisms.

“You are telling me Crak it is big enough to burn up an army?” Tiberius asked.

“Yes, it is as big as Barren Rock itself,” Crak answered.

Now Tiberius did what he did best, put his hands on his pistol handles.

“Who will come with me and help me capture Ino and this mirror?” Tiberius asked appealing to their brave hearts.

“Let us go home,” Morag hoping an end to her horrors’.



Illustration 173: Space ships darted amongst the useless flak to drop cluster bombs.

“Where is home?” Tiberius pointing to Wayne’s ships in the sky and the glow of the burning city. “Woo’s sickness has decimated space. At least we know what Tagget is about, here is my home.”

“We will follow you anywhere, with you as our king we will be rulers of our world,” Crak and Tiberius saddened.

Always someone wanted to be masters while others slaves.

Now Tiberius walked to the cave mouth and saw the sky was on fire from the battles about.

“Down there one enemy will emerge, better than two,” he.

“Why stay, there are other worlds,” Morgan behind him and like Morag just wanted to get away. *It hadn't been Tiberius's body getting pawed by Woo?*

He played with the cave dust at his feet, and then replied, “And the same will happen again. Wayne will catch up till he owns everything; he must be stopped if any of us wants freedom. We must destroy him now with the sun mirrors of Ino. Then maybe I can settle down?” And that won Morgan's support.

I Simon sighed knowing he was right, there was no alternative. Upon our shoulders rested the fate of the universes. None of us asked for this responsibility, none of us had left our original worlds to meet up here? *Or perhaps we had before we were born and there was no escaping our paths?*

We weren't the right people for the job anyway. A pink frog and some human killers?

And we followed Tiberius while a messenger went east to Lord Harkos, also a spy for none of us knew if Tagget Canton still existed?

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Ino had been busy preparing her followers to retake her lands from Tiberius. A man she once loved but now hated and why she had never returned as one of his women, which would not be enough. She had ruled once and would do so again.

All the modern ways of Tiberius would be done away and life would be determined by her sun religion.

So called the faithful and any who saw the future, a world conquered by humans to her banner.

Her one sun reflector mirror was ready. It could magnify the eight suns rays ten times burning anything in its path.



Illustration 174: Ino on her pet.

And Ino sat on a white humpback watching off worlders. All that was left of a scouting mission sent by Wayne. And now the survivor lay naked on a polished stone with the rays of the sun burning the sand between his spread eagled legs.

The poor soldier knew he was about to die and didn't know how to stop it.

But Ino had no mercy for aliens and was making her followers wait for she was seeing a little girl watching the High Priestess of Ceugant Dana slit a sacrifice open with a flint knife.

The sacrifice had been unwilling.

The sacrifice had been her younger brother; her mother was making sure there were no rivals in her daughter's place to the highest religious office.

She had liked her half brother; he had always wanted her toys and followed her about, a welcome friend even if Hagar had been his father.

"Will that happen to me mother?" Ino had asked.



Illustration 175: The slab had many skeletons in the cupboard.

“No, only to little piglets, girls are made of sweets.”

And sacrificed the little boy.

It was horrid at first but then it got interesting watching all the bits still beating.

That day hardened Ino and took away any sense of mercy, just what her mother wanted. The lesson had been well taught, that could have been her instead of her brother, the land demanded to be fertile with royal blood.

HER MOTHER HAD TAUGHT HER HOW TO SURVIVE.

It was the beginning to her lessons for priestess hood. Her mother keeping her in the background as a flower girl then allowing her to sacrifice small animals like hamsters and cats.

Then it was her turn, a nice big fat chicken to cut and wave about till she was drenched in warm blood.

Like a were creature she had sucked the warm blood and liked it; she was a snake remember, snakes eat chickens, *maybe Wayne was right, the only good alien was a dead one.*

Then came even bigger things, a goat, a humpback and then a snake man.

A nobody taken up from under the red tiles. Striped naked stretched out over a marble slab. She remembered he was handsome like Tiberius and had excited her and in anger mutilated him before sacrificing him the according to the rites of Ceugant Dana.

In her mind she saw the man as Tiberius and wished that fate upon him.

It didn't occur to her she was ruthless.

See it was her job to offer souls to the sun to keep the land fertile.

The universe needed to be kept in equilibrium, good and evil.

Better it be a woman doing the knife work as the suns always favoured a fertile woman.

And that scared her, what if she was barren, then her mother would kill her to keep Tagget fertile.

But her mother solved the problem, allowed her meetings with handsome captive sun warriors before they went to the marble slab with their secret.

And she bore fruit and her mother said she had left them to their fate, meaning the ants but who knows, where some sold as slaves?

She gave the signal and her warriors pulled levers so that the rays began to move upwards.

That was one thing about Tagget Ino knew, you trusted only the dead to keep a secret.

And the profound silence awoke her from her memories and she stared with her black snake eyes at the human a hundred feet away.

The rays from heaven were hitting the mirror that was becoming a dazzling light that leaped towards the sacrifice.

Consuming him.

Ino wondered what the human thought at the moment of his death.

She had never had a near death experience so went by her religion that told her a magnificent purple world awaited believers when they died.

The whole scenario had been a show of power to her followers who wanted to see the mirror in action; wanted reassurance that she had a more powerful weapon than the off worlders with their guns.

Lo now the sun ghost priests started dancing, sprinkling dust upon the assembled warriors.



Illustration 176: One wonder why a devotee sees more than double?

Then all danced, the dust would make them invincible stopping laser and powder guns killing them. And Ino knew it was a lie, remembered her mother advancing towards Hagar with holy sun relics.

And Hagar had fired the first arrow that had sunk in her jugular and Ino became High Priestess.

Holy relics?

And Ino looked at the sun mirror, now that was a holy relic?