

The Bird Empire

By Szabo Eduard Dragomir

Prologue

Silence echoed amidst scarlet-flooded trenches and green pastures scorched by waves of fire and plasma in the endless symphony of pestilence, war, now brought to repose as the quill proved itself mightier than the sword, or any other armament civilization would have known, once again, as from the depths of the Royal Palace, it signed the peace treaties muffling the roaring thunders of the cavalcade of iron angels bringing terror over the planet.

This was a new start for the millions of inhabitants that graced the lands of planet Vülberg with its cloud-arousing mountains that appeared like countless scars upon the rocky surface, giant glacial lakes and seas, canyons, rivers, and dense conifer forests grazing mountainous sides only to emphasis upon cities encrusted into the monolithic rocks and reaching outward into the unconquerable sky built by a race whose mere existence lusts for the prestigious depths of the sky and space.

These were the Vaghelauch, a prideful race of avian beings, traditionalist and passionate over culture with their cities donned by extravagantly flamboyant architecture of meticulously carved stone conveying empyrean pillars of baroque extravagance. They are tall and slender, possessing an almost eagle-like elegance and keenness to themselves; they were a diverse race, though, with members resembling a twisted metamorphosis between a bird and a lizard, others being embroidered by a countenance similar to Terran birds with jaws, or beaks, and some exhibiting the appearance of feathered raptors.

This race flourished under an age of space-faring, setting their feathers from the cold skies of their world, towards the unknown void beyond the stretch of blue, colonizing planets and ever expanding under the benevolent sovereign of their crown, a symbol as stalwart as the very foundations they had built their cities on as it has been two centuries since it has united the inhabitants of the planet under a common rule for the greater good.

However, one day, these very foundations found themselves challenged as birds of metal spawned from the very void they sought to explore. Wrathful legions of fire angels conquered their planets one by one as it plunged the monarchy into a form of war never before experienced. Five years did the disciplined Vaghelauchen fleets and regiments held out courageously against the hostile Empire until its ships of alabaster melted the sky of Vülberg in plasma fire, forcing the Vaghelauchen monarchy to sign peace, bringing back the age of stability and exploration they lusted for, except now, it was all under their new sovereign, the Empire.

This is the story, the collective memory, of the million souls who lived under the Empire, where they have been revealed the true immensity of space and the countless beings who fornicate its blackened veils, and where the tranquility of their mountainous home-world was now replaced by the disconcerting boots of marching legionaries boasting their victory with staunch, affronting imperial flags covering walls where once exquisite ornaments of carved flowers laid.

This is their story.