

# A Long Way Through Time and Space

Austin P. Torney



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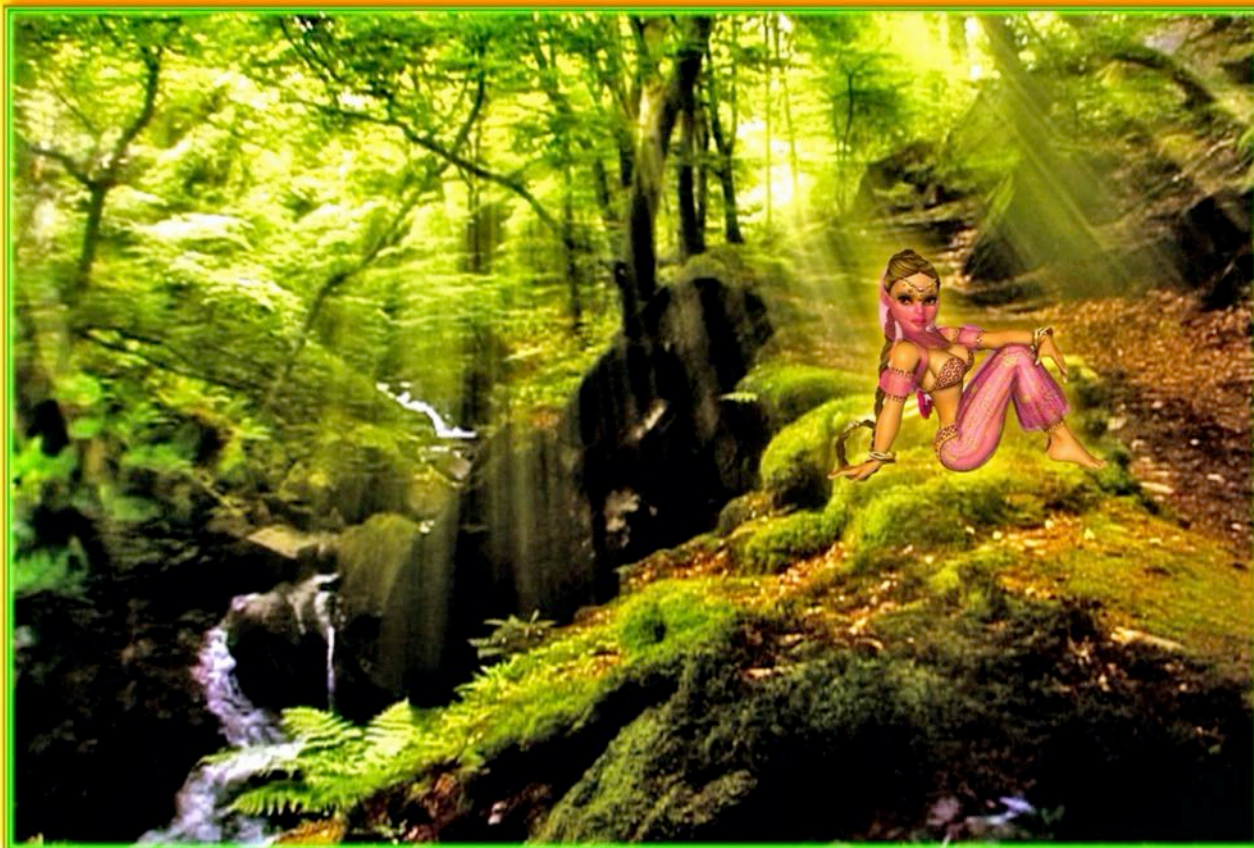
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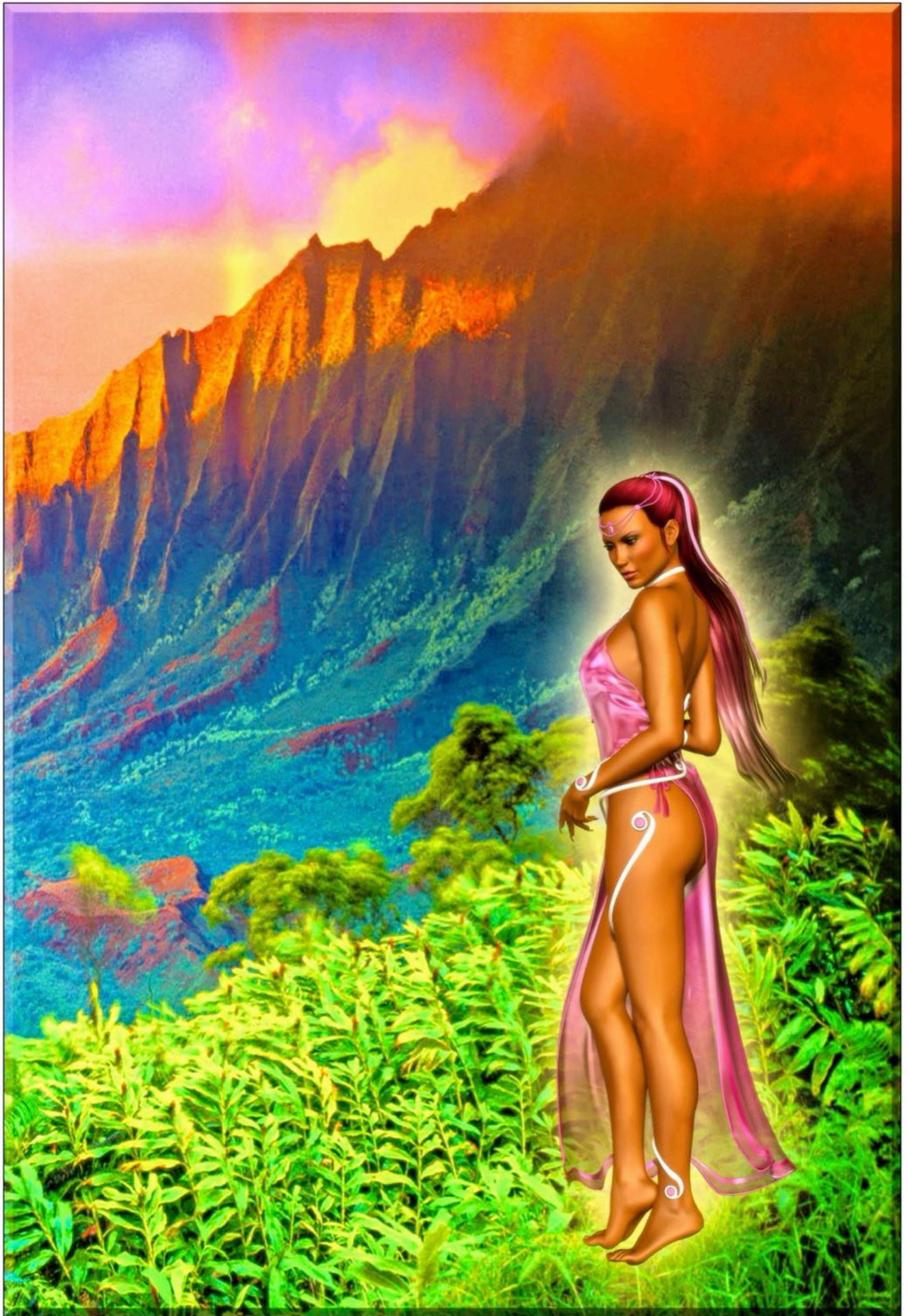
## A Long Way Through Time and Space



### Somewhere in Time

I still had nine months to go in the Army, but was now free of the occasional trips to Indochina that had ever made my stay on Oahu a mixture of skulls and roses, death amid romance—a rare conjunction the likes of which never occurred again, but it didn't have to, for it continued.

We ever love and live what rains forth from the all-giving skies of the Tiki-Gods, who operate above, they gathering the forming vapors into the clouds that cross the ocean, picking up moisture on their way, unto climbing the Pali Mountains and cooling us with their fine, refreshing sprays of mist.

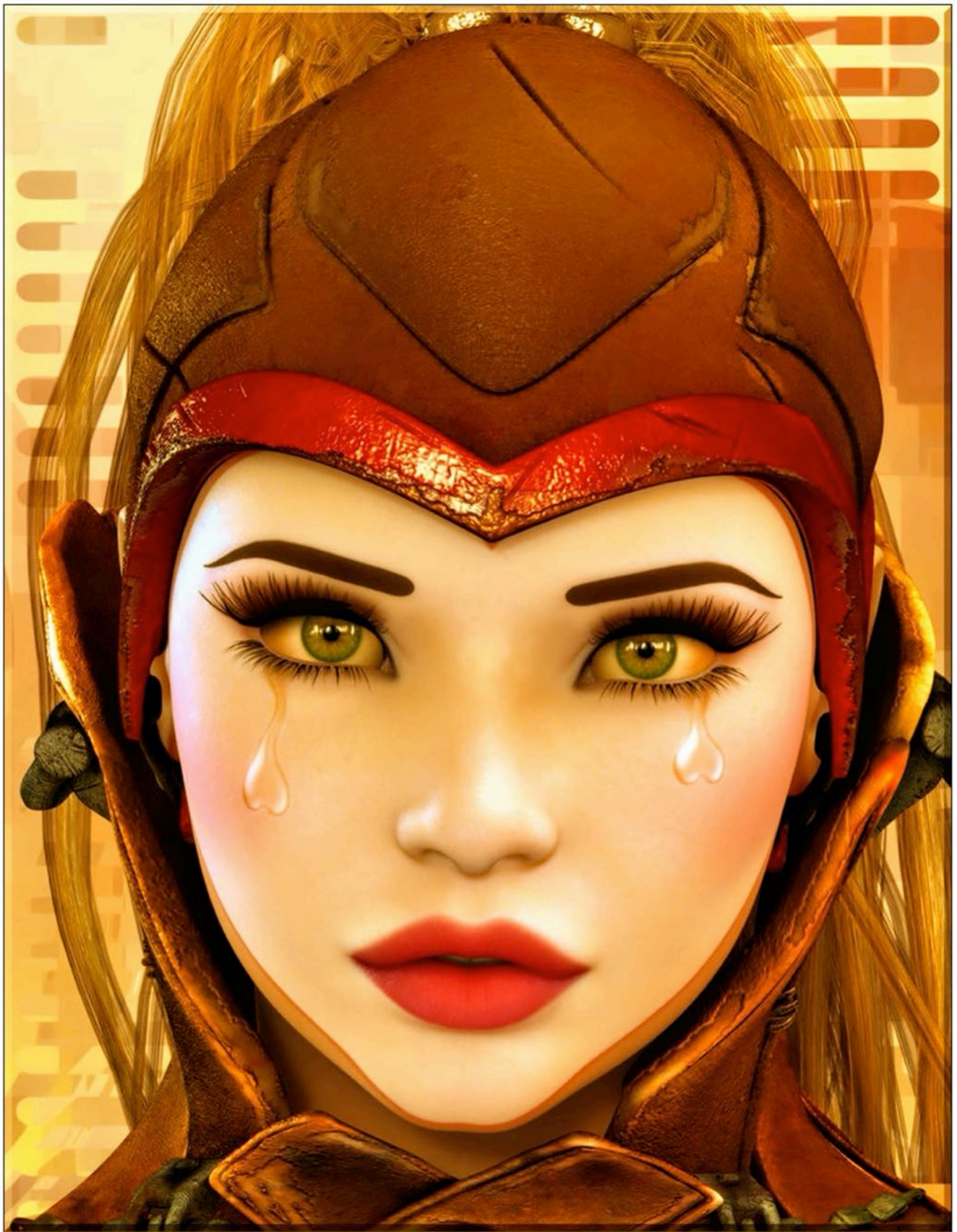




Cho rode her motorcycle over to pick up Alice from her class at the University of Hawaii, as on every alternating day—to take a short ride over to ‘Bananas’, where they would serve up sangria and light meals. Alice didn’t exactly look like Alice that day.







“Hi, Cho Ling. It’s me, Princess Alice Chow Wong.”

“I nearly didn’t recognize you, with your painted face.”





“It’s my mid-term project for my Cosmetics-Fashion elective course. Most of my computer courses are done.”

“It looks sad, although it’s quite lovely and very well done.”

“It’s supposed to be sad. I am ‘Painted Sorrow’. My uncle died in China, a month ago, and now my funds are low. Although I’ll still graduate in three months, I can no longer afford my rent. I keep my clothes and stuff in a gym locker, and shower there, too—I even sleep there.”

“You can live with Patrick and me in our tented mountain retreat, and squeeze in and sleep on the edge of the cot near Patrick; I’ll be on the other side of him; I like it toward the wall.”

“Are you sure?”

“We’re returning the favor from when you let us stay with you and Vince.”

“Really, I could do that? Right next to him? Squeezed?”

“Any problem? There’s a grand and beautiful view up there. We have peace and quiet, with a table, and food.”

“Yes, the problem is that I like Patrick. He’s always helped me do programming, and he’s now trying to get me a job.”

“I know you like him; I could tell as soon as I came along.”

“I wasn’t ready then, anyway, but I was more and more drawn. I’d pretend to sleep in the computer center, to lean in close to him, and I’m sure he knew I wasn’t really asleep. It felt great, but I was all involved in schooling, and that was all I could handle, I suppose.”





(View from Diamond head.)

“I know; you were his friend from before I arrived.”

“Then I went with good old Vince for awhile, strange as he was, since Patrick was with you, so I respected you both, but there’s yet another problem.”

“Thanks, and I think I know what it is, but please tell me anyway.”

“The big problem is that I love Patrick.”

“We’ve done three-way with Colleen; don’t bring pajamas; we don’t wear clothes to bed. If something happens, just go with it.”

“Will do.”



“I’ll call Patrick right now and tell him and ask him before we start work. He’s at the fort doing his one day of work a week. The war has long been winding down.”

...

Cho smiled, and Alice asked, “And the answer is?”

“The answer is that he’s going to buy a big roast duck in Chinatown for us to eat to celebrate your arrival.”

“Thank you; my spirit is lifting; I am growing wings.”

...

“It’s 4:30, Alice. It’s time for us to go and ascend the mountain. Grab three bottles of Sangria-Allegria; it’s OK.”

Alice hopped on the back of Cho’s motorcycle, and they stopped at the University to pick up some of Alice’s clothes and things, and then took off on the H1 freeway toward Fort Shafter.

The white-gloved MP waved them in to the fort, and Cho pulled to the side a ways off, near a pond with rocks and water-falls, and a bench, which they sat on.

“Alice, I’m stoping here for a moment to tell you what to expect, for its a difficult approach to weather, but I’m good at it. I’ll have to go a bit faster since you’re on the back. It’ll be noisy, bumpy, and heart-pounding.”

“OK, I’m feeling emotional, in a good way, and raring for adventure after these years of college study. Are we going all the way to the top?”

“Just about. Hold on tight; it’s winding and curving.”

“Describe it all to me; I’m wide-eyed with anticipation.”



“The extent of our mountain camp retreat is yet within the confines of Fort Shafter, in a scenic part unused for anything else. There are points atop the mountain from which one can see Diamond Head, Tripler Army Hospital, Honolulu International Airport, Hickam Field, the Punchbowl crater, Pearl City, and Pearl Harbor, and everything in between, which comprises about half of the island.

“Down the road a ways and off to the right, we will first approach at high speed a seemingly near impossible steep embankment to breach, and yet we will surely accomplish it, and after after powering up it there will a long jump through the air, from which we will land well, and then a sharp left and sliding turn onto a path six feet wide or so that goes up very slightly, at first, as it rounds the base of the mountain, but we will keep up some speed, while a wide right curve brings us back to another, higher angled traverse, but not that steep, yet, really, but ever gaining height on its long way around, which will be about the mid-point. So far, it’s relatively easy, although slightly rough. Don’t try to counter balance on any of the curves; just go with them; we will not fall.

“Then there is a tremendously steep climb in low gear, right up towards the ridge, and, upon getting there, I must be very careful riding along a two foot wide path, for only some bushes separate us from a terrible fall down to the LikeLike highway running far below. I will keep to first gear, with you on, for extra power, and so it will be a grind. No stops. We have to bear it.

“There is then a leftish turn onto the higher ridge toward the back of the mountain and here the trail apparently ends, but the rest of the trail going around and down is really just blocked, and very treacherous; we don’t use it much.





“We could use the other trail, though, for an emergency escape if a fire were coming up the front of the mountain.

“It seems as there is no retreat up there, nor anything much at all, but it is slightly down and beneath, tucked into the cliff-side, and so one must walk a bit and climb down a rope ladder or jump to it; however, there is also an invisible and more circular route to it if one is in a flatter mood, although it is laced with jutting rocks.

“There, in the nook of an open cave type of arrangement, our tent is tucked in, with the wide double cot placed way in the back, where the ceiling has sloped down somewhat. The tent doors can usually be left open on the usual fine day.

“There is a slight grassy ‘lawn’ out front, with enough room for lounge chairs, and a table, and beyond that is a sheer drop, so be careful. The view faces toward the airport and and one can its reef runways jutting out into the Pacific.”

“Well, I’ll be damned,” Alice replied. That’s what I call living on the edge. What a wonderful arrangement! You sure you can do this ride with me on the back?”

“I could do it in my sleep and I’ve done it with a load of stuff on the back nearly as heavy as you.”

“Nearly?”

“I’ll go a wee bit faster. We’ll begin in a moment or two.”

...

They got onto the motorcycle and veered off toward the trail, while no one was in the vicinity, up the short but steep initial hill, vaulting through the air, and coming down square.





...

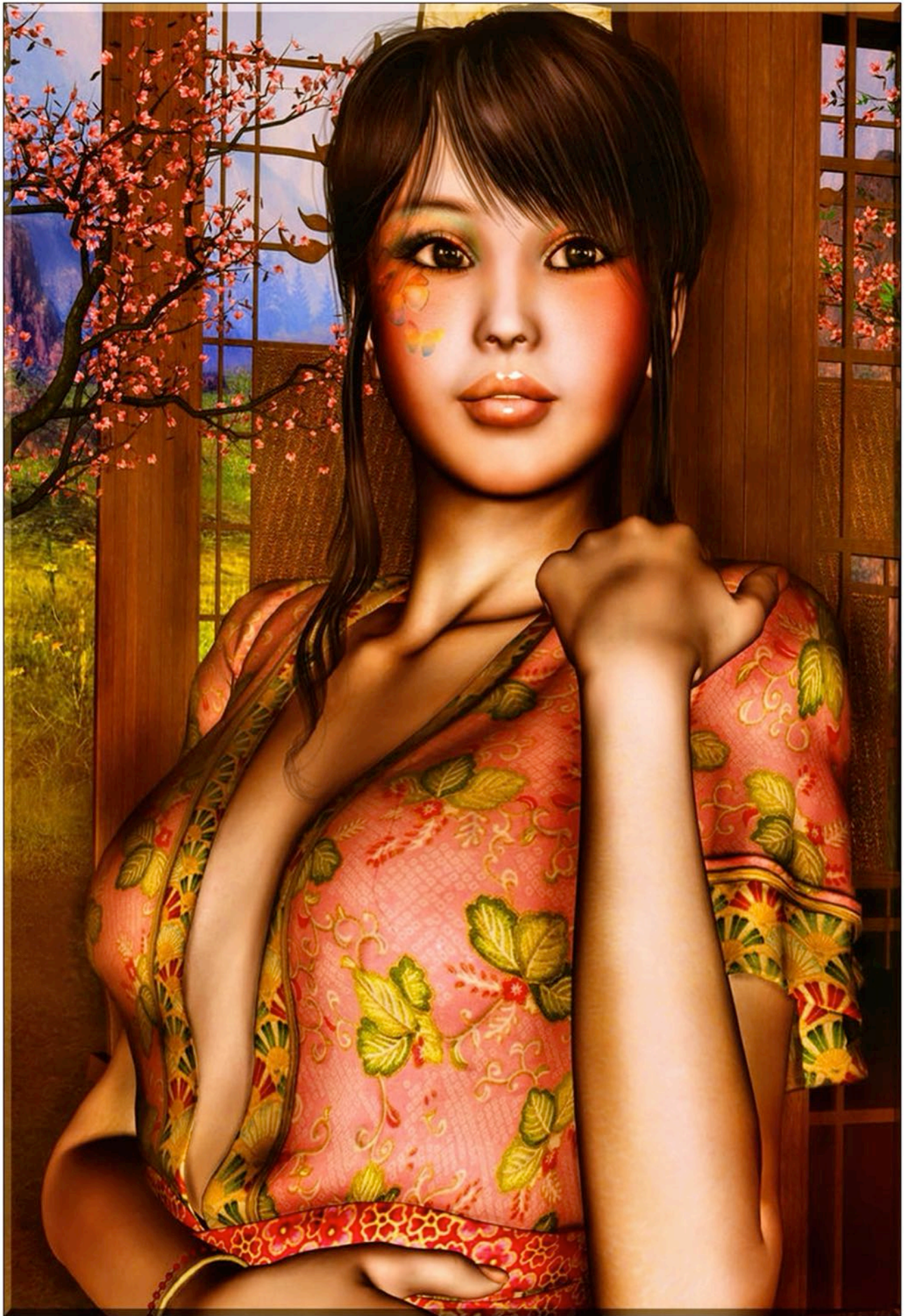
Nearing the top, they caught the view from the back-side, of where the mountain chain headed off north.

“We’re here. I’ll go down first and hold the rope ladder steady; just climb down, holding with two hands.”

The dinner table was set, out on a kind of porch built from some reddish wood, in an oriental style.

I came out to greet them, receiving a hug front and back, Alice saying, “I am your shadow and Cho is your light; we ladies are as sundown and sunrise; Chinese custom.”

I said, “Wow!... There’s a clothes rack inside, Alice. I’ll carve the duck and pour the drinks. This is now your home; no more sleeping behind rolled up gym mats.”



Alice took in the view that was hard to process all at once from this high point, wherefrom there was so much to see, afar, and then nearby, as the birds flew below us, while the wisps of clouds seemed to be well within one's reach, along with a sense of being above it all and well beyond the nonsense on the ground.

I related, "I just received a strange postcard from Mike, my boss at IBM. It had an image of a computer on it with a lightning bolt superposed, with a short message on the back in big letters that read, "Help! Big Opportunity," and in small print at the bottom it read, "Will call at 6 PM, your time, Tuesday, and each day, as needed, to make contact. Think silicon!"

Cho responded, "That's four days from now; he's moved up his monthly call to you by more than two weeks. He's has a dilemma, and it's probably related to some of the programs and data that you worked on."

Alice added, "Computer chips have silicon as a major ingredient; maybe an improvement can come about."

As we devoured the crispy duck, and drank the wine, the sun shone its warmth on our skin, it ever heading for the ocean, into which it would plunge in about an hour.

I looked at Alice, "We'll say 'Yes' to Mike's needs, that we can help or even do it, from here, by you, I, and Cho, and with probably someone coming out here from Poughkeepsie. Mike said last time that he was going to IBM Germany but was coming back for a big meeting in Fishkill, which is where chips are fabricated. Something big is up!"



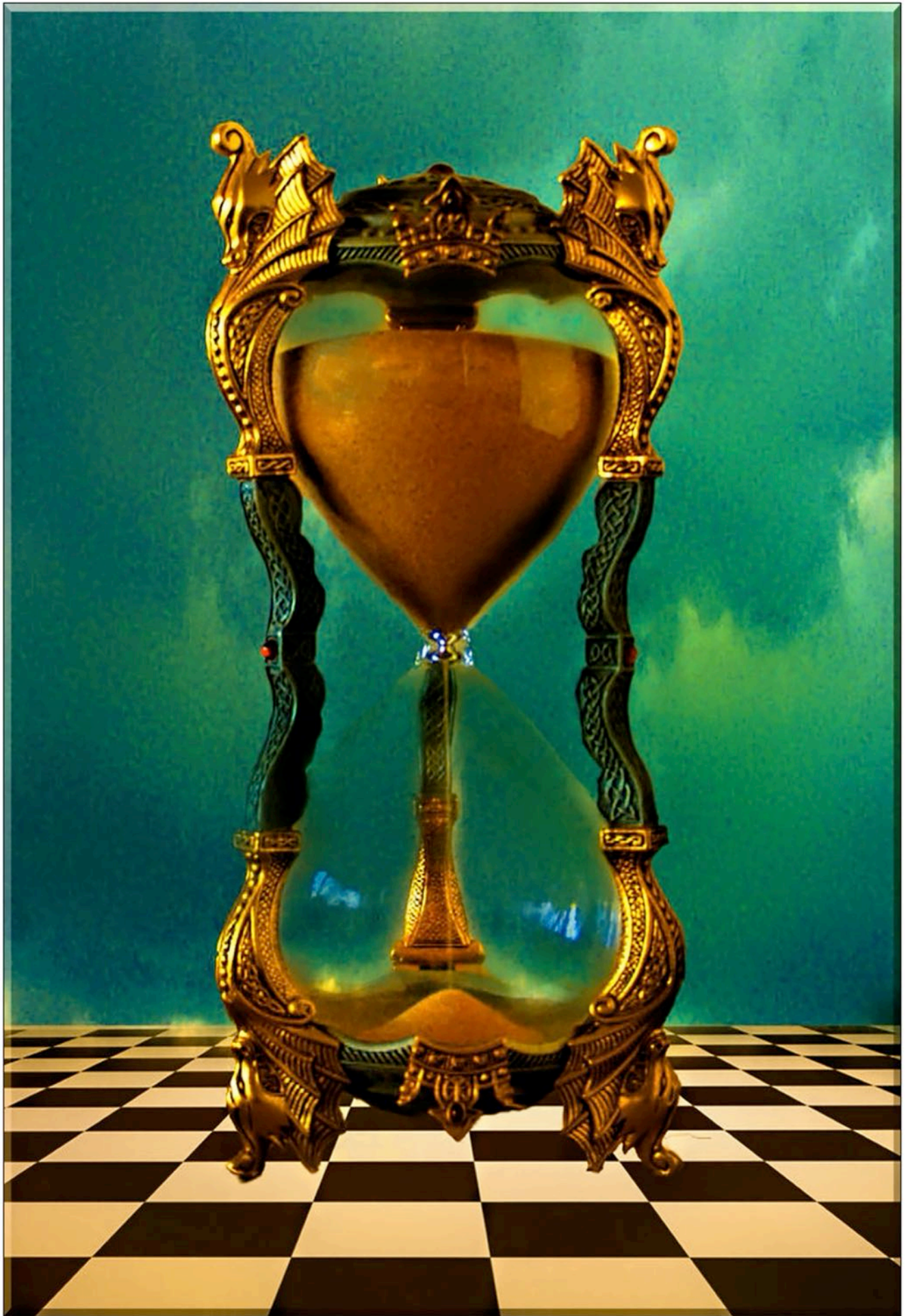
Cho realized, “It’s not something that was planned, for it is an ‘opportunity’, as something unexpected, such as Alice hinted. It is a much faster chip, one that Mike’s just confirmed or will, in Fishkill, today, Friday, mulling it over the weekend. On Monday he will gather his plot in Poughkeepsie, with more sizing up the ways to go forth, if it can, and then call us on Tuesday.”

Alice went on, “He wants to bypass all the usual testing and time-consuming procedures, given that he already has a working logic design implemented in the current slower chips. He wants it to be somehow cleanly but quickly remapped into the new and faster but very different chip technology, in a new oxide process, perhaps, even radically non bi-polar, maybe, with no changes but for the clocking and the other latch pin placements, with no new features to the machine. The new chips are both blessing and curse.”

Cho deduced, “The urgency is because there’s lot’s of money to be made! That’s Mike’s reason for being.”

They were right on the nose, I thought, I saying, “The new technology needs to be more than twice as fast to warrant a new machine. Customers can easily get that the speed has been doubled. Meanwhile, a new and improved logic design on a fully revamped future machine can go on normally, though its two-year development time, or more, since one of the features is to be 32-bit addressing, up from 24, which will affect everything—all the compilers as well as all the ‘dirty’ type programs that too cheaply used the extra 8 bits of the 4 byte address word to store flags and such. What a mess to undo!”





Cho remarked, “‘Help!’ perhaps means that Mike might not know if a remap can be done. Their regular process is going to be too slow, maybe, with all the pins having to be readjusted by hand, although all the same way, which could still introduce errors, or the process has been compromised. Something is afoot that he didn’t tell us yet, but the benefit outweighs the risk of us doing the work offsite, for you can’t just leave the Army and go there. Do you have the logic information, Patrick?”

“I have all of it carefully stored away, in triplicate, awaiting any and all contingencies, in locked bins.”

For desert, we had bread pudding, and then walked a ways to a slight valley’s pond that had the only water in the whole mountain range, we being but in its foothills, taking off our clothes and going skinny dipping, for it had been an unusually warm day, like 86-88 F.

They floated to me and I embraced and kissed them both, my memories of deaths in Cambodia transformed into the life of the present, between these special creatures who were overbrimming with love in this nexus of space and time that had arisen from a potential that was so far beneath and long ago.

We then did some homework and wiled away the evening under the stars that hinted of the grandeur and the extravagance of all that is, speaking of Korea and China, Taiwan actually, along with whence we came to coexist, and how we might ever continue to flourish amid the slings and arrows of fortune’s future.

It was up here that I had gone on to more seriously the All’s being versus its non-being.



Alice looked to the stars, and remarked, "I've come such a long way to be here, with you both, but my possibility was there after the beginning, as spread all over the place. I'm taking an cosmology course from Professor Victor Stenger, the guy you play tennis with, Patrick, and the midterm is coming, so I'm going to practice for it now, adding some things of my own in some of the items."

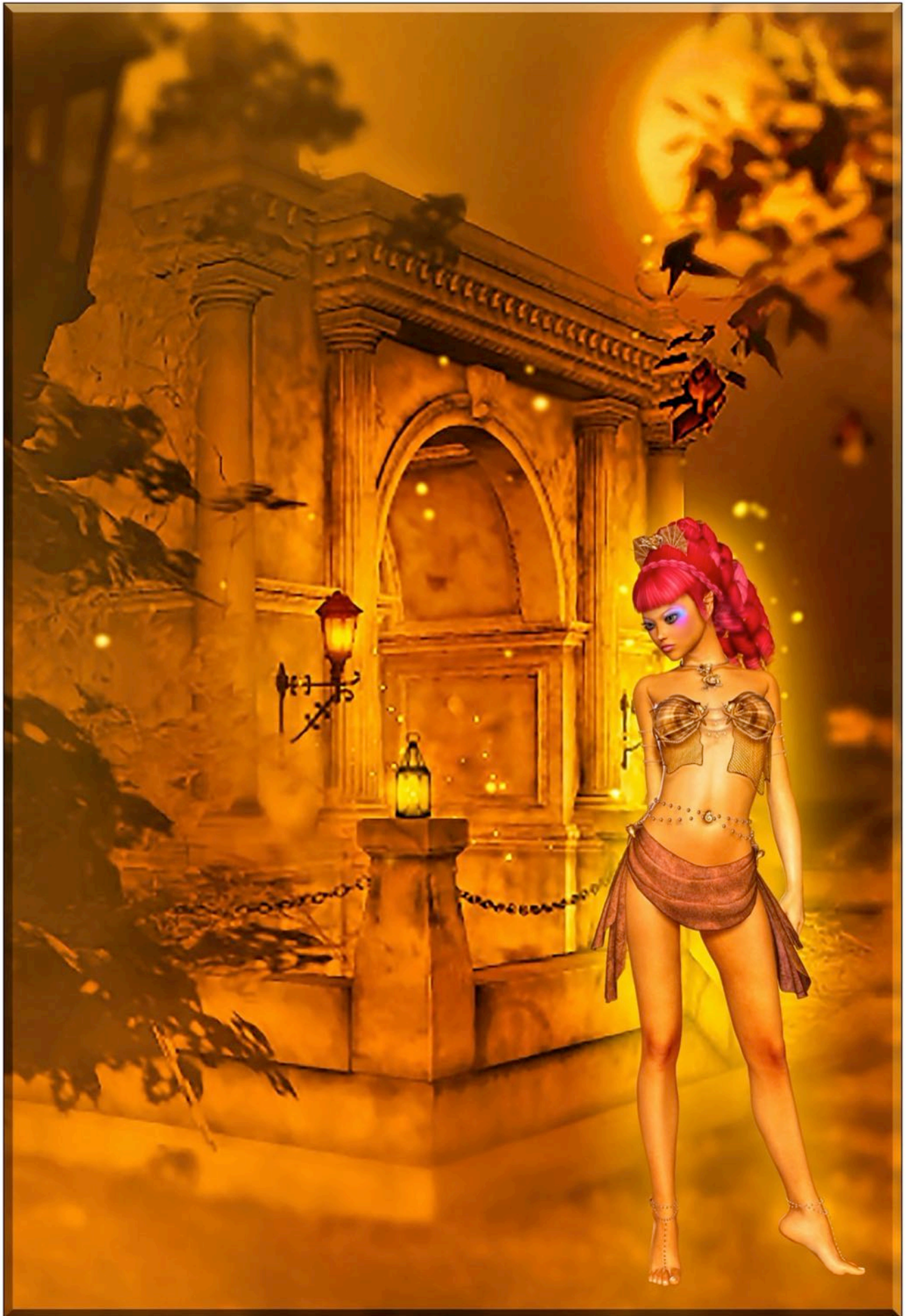
"He's going places. Tell us more of you and us and all."

Alice continued, "OK, I'm going to give brief history of all History, in which the simplest goes on, and upward."

"The Planck era at  $1E-43$  seconds *was the first hint of me*, as a cyclical compactification or a vacuum fluctuation eruption in an indefinite realm that's as close to Nothing as can be, but it can't be a Nothing as such, since that would be a definite state, whereas the vacuum as the basic quantum something must be fuzzy, uncaused. Motion can't cease.

*"To learn the Secrets of what IS and ever WAS, we must brave the crypt and ghost of cause. This quantum foam is ever and always, and has pairs of virtual particles quick appearing and then annihilating and disappearing, as noise. They are somethings, from what one might call possibility or potential, but are not yet as true, meaningful existence until they become part of an information process and thus persist.*

*"This state has always been, and must be, so jot: that this All is ever here to be, since nothing cannot. Here we fathom the cryptic, where only the pale shade of substance slept with arithmetic. There is a basic lightness of being because anything more would then be of parts, and thus beyond the fundamental arts. Bits of information need to be separated, manifesting by 'creating' Planck sized pieces of space. We experience their separation as space. The bits can have relative relationships. Higher Space and Time evolves.*



*“So, where the causeless reigns supreme, the spark nursed by embers is the first that the universe remembers—when it fires toward the other members in a processing way. The opposite twins as virtual pairs rule the causing call, these positives and negatives constituting the All.*

“It proceeds very quickly. At  $1E-36$  seconds, in a GUT transition, the strong force separates from the electroweak force, *the strong force providing for stability and the weak force for changeability*. Inflation begins, as a slow rolling scalar field generates negative pressure, causing an exponential expansion of spacetime. The doubling is of a vacuum energy density of  $1E73$  tons/cm<sup>3</sup>. Quantum fluctuations lock in nearly scale invariant  $1E-5$  variation in energy density. *Here the enigma of the ever immortal is undone and unloosed through its portal.*

“At  $1E-34$  seconds, inflation quickly ends, the decay of the scalar inflaton field causing reheating. Is this the ‘Let there be light moment’? No, photons don’t exist yet, but other massless vector quanta like left and right weak and B-L particles may exist. Things are not well known about this era. *I am still a twinkling in the cosmic eye.*

“At  $1E-34$  to  $1E-8$  seconds, in the quark era, there is the quark gluon plasma, and then quarks and perhaps super particles dominate matter content.





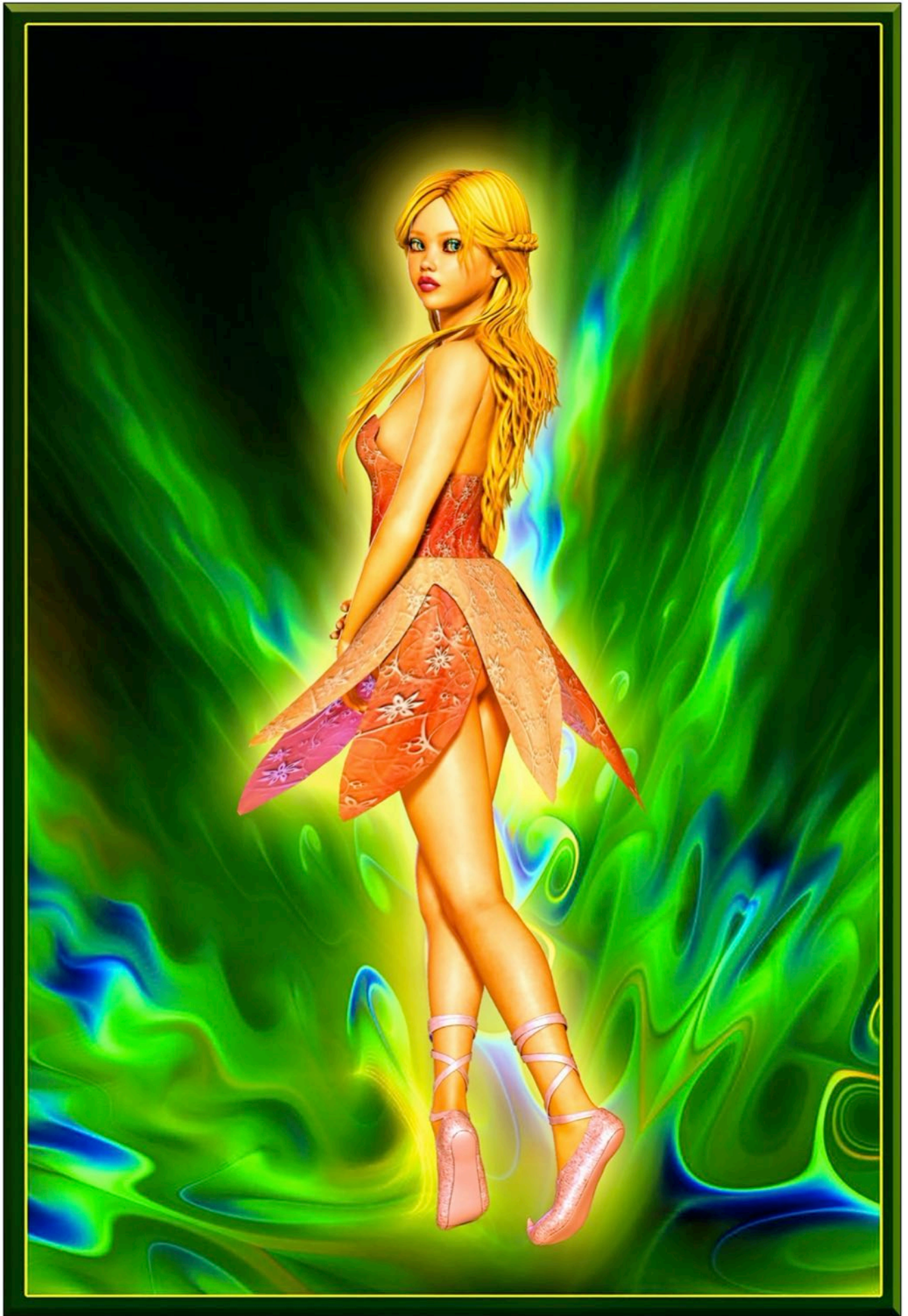
“At  $1E-17$  to  $1E-15$  seconds, SUSY breaking occurs when proposed super partners acquire mass, with the LSP expected to have a mass of about 10 Tev. In induced gravity models, this is where mass energy first generates the induced gravity field; gravity is born. *I am grounded.*”



“At  $1E-10$  seconds, there comes the electroweak transition, when the electroweak force, under the action of the Higgs mechanism breaks symmetry. The photon is born. Standard model particles acquire mass.”

*“Yeah! They will guide me, as illumination beside me, while the mind whirls round and round, as the ear draws forth the sound, as the eye sees the light, and of the dark the fright. Fear not the proof—it’s the beauty of the truth.”*





“At  $1E-5$  seconds, quark confinement comes about when the QCD vacuum becomes superconducting to color magnetic current. Quarks and gluons become confined.

“At  $1E-5$  to  $1E-4$  seconds, in the hadron era, protons, neutrons, and pions, etc., form. *Now my future atoms are on the horizon.*

“At  $1E-4$  seconds, hadron annihilation occurs during a brief period of proton/anti proton and neutron/anti neutron annihilation. A slight favoring of matter over anti matter, possibly locked in by CP violation at reheating allows some excess protons and neutrons to survive, *with ten billion photons for every matter particle, which tells us how many annihilations there were.*

“At  $1E-4$  to  $10$  seconds, in the next era, leptons are the dominant energy density, these being such as electrons.

“We are up to about one second after the Big Bang now, at neutrino decoupling, when mass energy falls low enough to free neutrinos, creating the neutrino cosmic background.

“At  $10$  seconds, electrons and positrons annihilate, leaving a tiny fraction of electrons remaining. At this point the total number of electrons equals the total number of protons. *This is a beautiful symmetry.*

“From  $10$  seconds to  $57$  thousand years is the radiation era, in which photons created from the annihilation of matter and anti-matter dominate the energy density of universe. *Light has been let; I will shine.*



“At 1-5 minutes, nucleosynthesis begins, as fusion of protons creates helium, deuterium and trace amounts of lithium. *A few of my basics are there.*

“At 57,000 years, there is matter/radiation equality. The radiation density (photon and neutrino) and matter density (dark and atomic) are equal. This is because radiation density falls more quickly, due to the stretching of the relativistic particles’ wavelengths. Dark matter clumps into structures. Atomic matter begins oscillation due to the battle between gravity and photon pressure generating acoustic oscillations. *The first sounds of the new universe come forth as the ‘word’.*

“At 380,000 years, there is recombination, when the temperature falls low enough to allow atoms to form; photons decouple. The CMB is born, locking in its structure—it being the recorded story of the earliest times in the universe.

“For 5 to 200 million years, there is a dark age, as the photons fall into the infra-red energy range. The universe goes dark. The atomic gas continues to fall toward the dark matter clumps, which grow more pronounced.

“Near to 100 Million years, the densest clumps halt their expansion and begin collapsing.

“By 200 Million years, the first mini halos form and within these the atomic cloud cools and collapses to make the very first stars whose light brings to an end the dark era. *We are totally of stars to be.*

“By the way, I forgot that inflation was so fast that some virtual particles couldn’t recombine, thus becoming real.”

“Go Alice, go!”



“At 200 million years, there are the first stars, which are very massive and short lived, but emit some lower atomic elements *since this doesn't require extra energy*. They die in violent supernova explosions filling the cosmos with the higher atomic elements *that needed energy to be added*, building dust for new stars and the planets of solar systems, and the elements for life.

“At 200 to 800 million years, there is the epoch of ionization, in which the radiation from the stars and possibly the first quasars, ionizes much of the remaining neutral hydrogen and helium. A thin mist returns and partly obscures the CMB, but future Low Frequency Radio Telescopes may be able to see the epoch of ionization.

“At 1 to 2 billion years, there become infant galaxies, as star groups merge. There are frequent collisions of galaxies, high star birth rates, and high supernova rates. Heavy element production changes the pattern of star formation, making them lower mass, less luminous and longer lived, *like the second generation stars of today*. The stage is set for the emergence of life; the cosmos will soon have eyes to see and minds to think, like ours.

“At 2 to 3 billion years, there is a star birth and quasar peak. In the dense environment of frequent galaxy collisions, the star birth rate reaches its maximum, as does the forming and feeding of supermassive black holes, *as darkling beasts. Abandon hope all ye who enter there*.

“At 6 billion years, there are the first very rich galaxy clusters, since enough time has elapsed for the densest regions to stop expanding and form these clusters.”

“Right on, Alice!”



“At 7 billion years, there is decelerated acceleration. The effects of dark energy kick in. The universe once again begins to accelerate its expansion rate, but gentler.

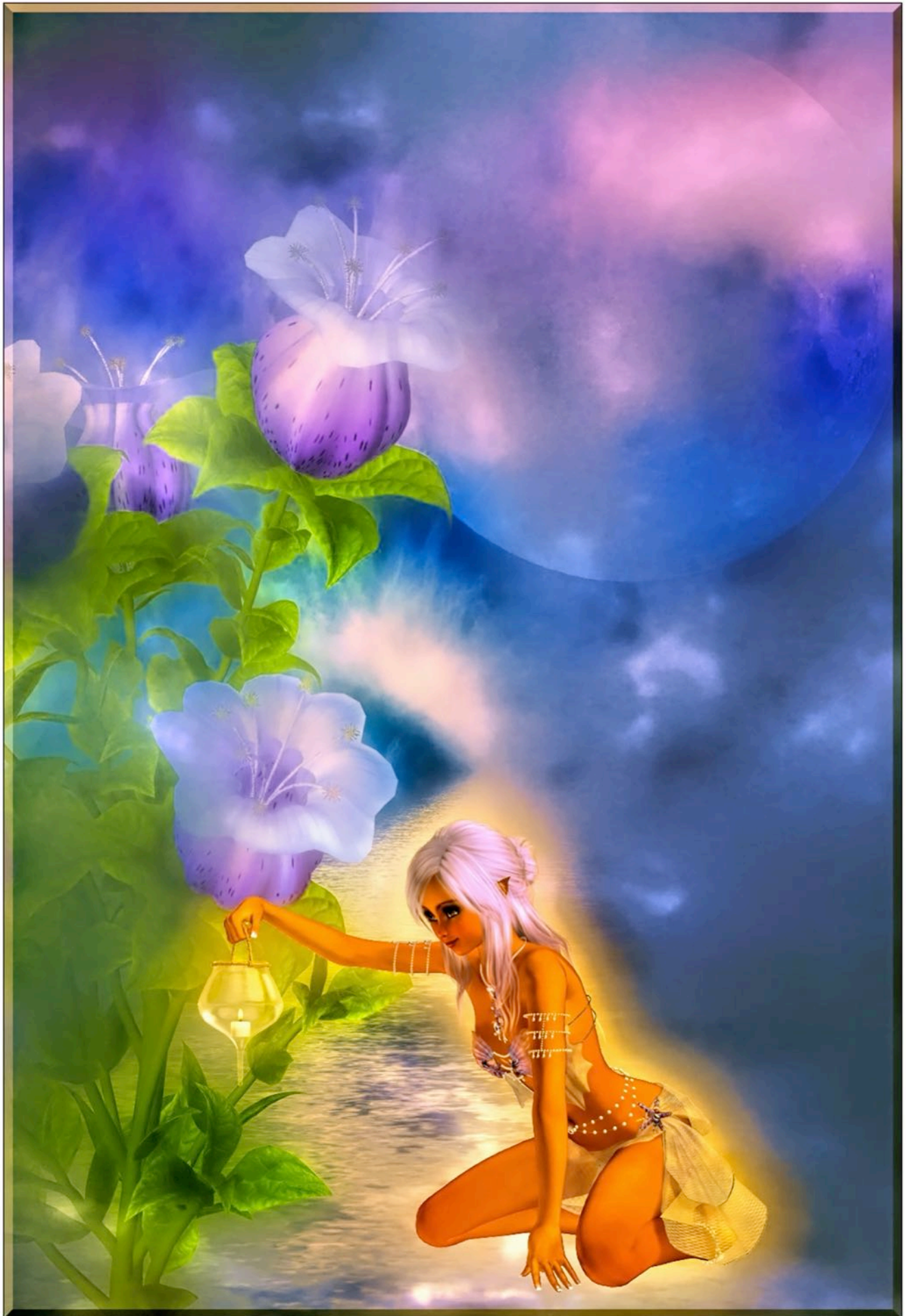
“At 8 billion years, the first modern spiral galaxies form, although some elliptical galaxies form in the first billion years, but classic spiral galaxies aren’t seen until at about 5 billion years.

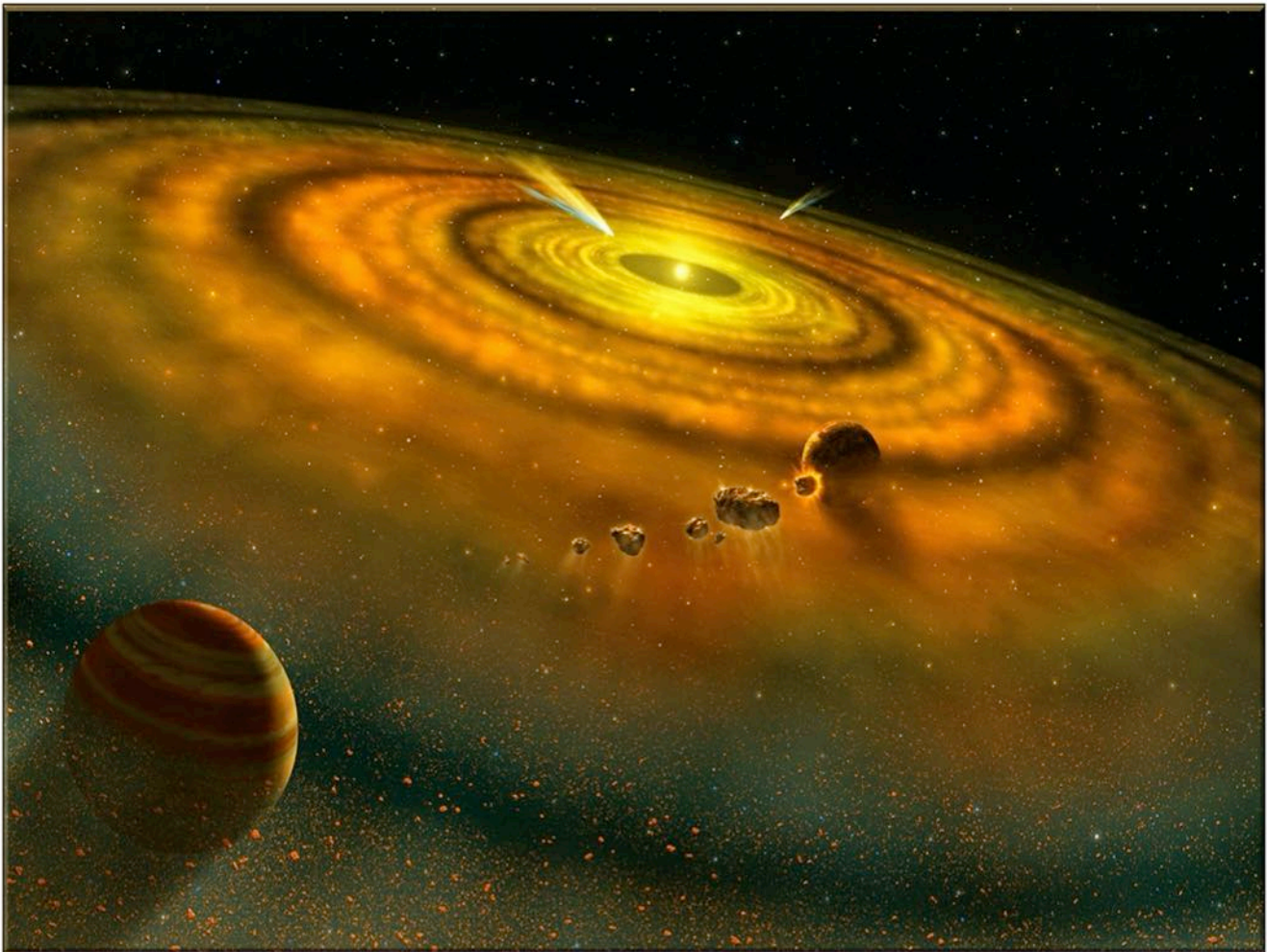
“At 9 billion years, there is matter and dark energy equality, since the falling density of matter, both dark and atomic, become equal to that of dark energy.

“At 9.1 billion years, our sun and Earth form. *We are inherent.* Our solar system forms in the outer disk of the Milky Way. The stage is set for the emergence of humankind in the Cosmos—for us to meet and love. *All this from stabilizations forming, onward and upward, in emergence, taking on a life of their own, and so forth.*





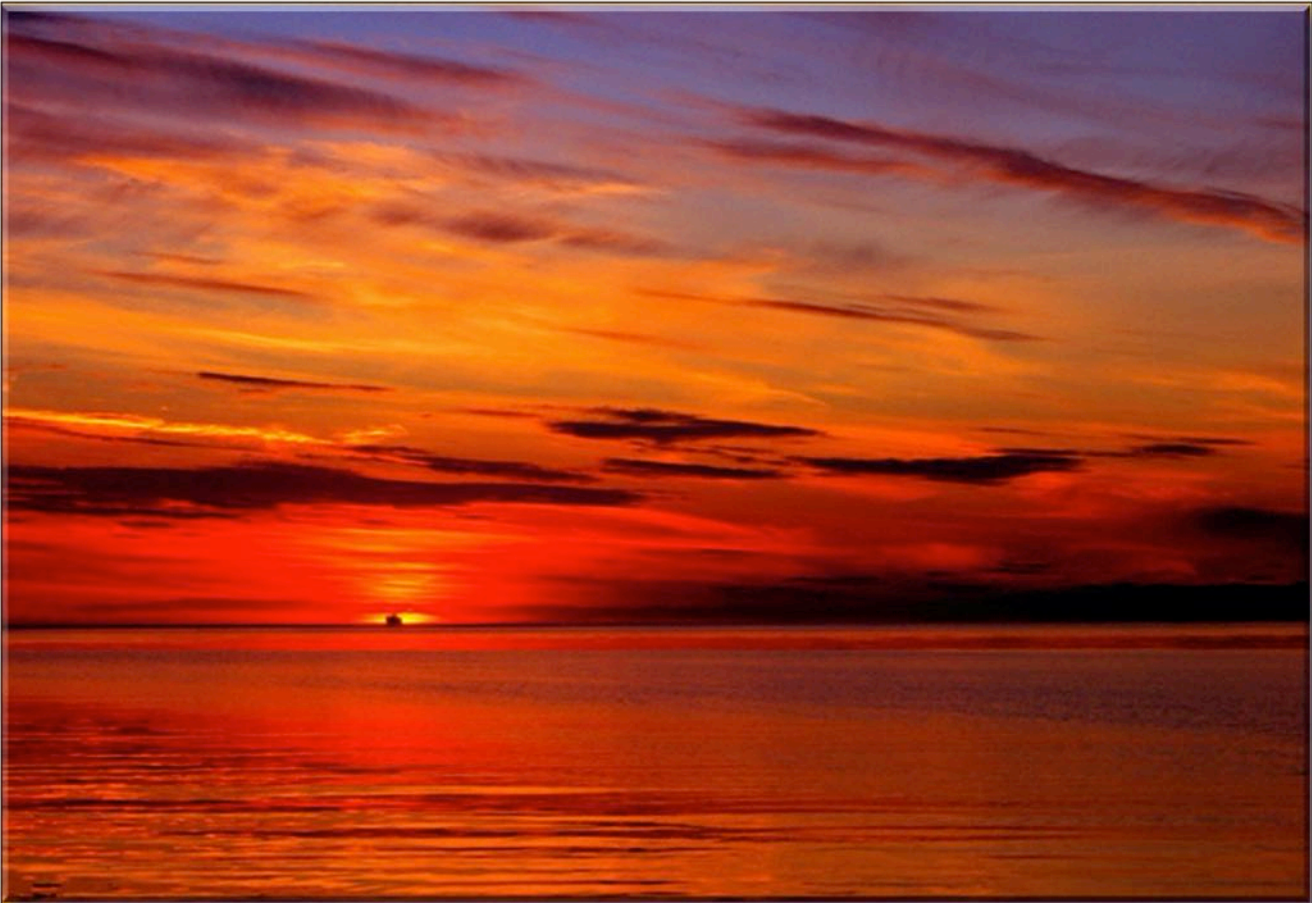




“At 13.7 billion years, there is the present time. Human civilization perhaps reaches its peak and perhaps begins heading into decline and eventual extinction, due to over population, resource depletion, and environmental destruction, which generates conflict as human nation states fight for ever dwindling resources. Hopefully, humankind isn’t typical and intelligent life solves the problem of balancing life needs with available resources by developing communitarian economic social structures.

*“By the way, all of this is dynamic in time. There cannot be a block universe because it’s infinite, it’s a complexity as First, it can’t have a definite blueprint, and we would not need brains to redundantly figure things out if they were already set in stone, as in a movie, as conglomerations are.*

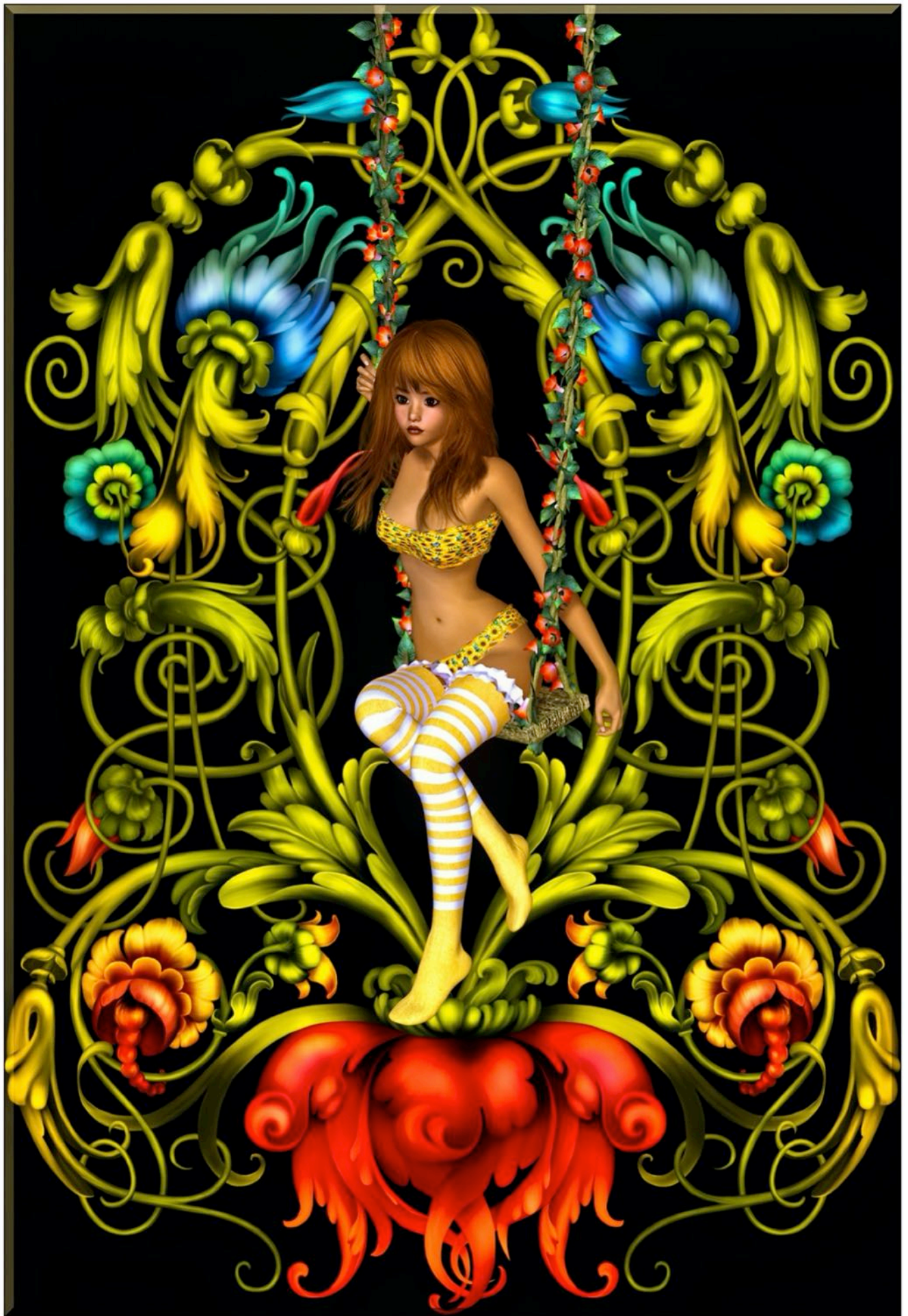




“At 16 to 17 billion years in the future, the Milky Way collides with the Andromeda galaxy. Somewhere within this time our sun enters into its red giant phase, vaporizing the Earth. Humankind, perhaps already extinct for over 4 billion years is not around to witness this event, though possibly a new intelligent species which emerged after the extinction of humankind might well be. It will be a very sad time for them unless their technology includes very advanced space flight. *We are just a tiny and insignificant spark of all time, considered at large.*

“At 20 billion years, the growth of structures ceases, for expansion due to dark energy empties each casual patch of the cosmos. The great story of our universe draws to a close. *It was a ride in the middle of nowhere.*

“At 100 billion years, what remains of the Milky Way is alone in its causal patch of the Universe.



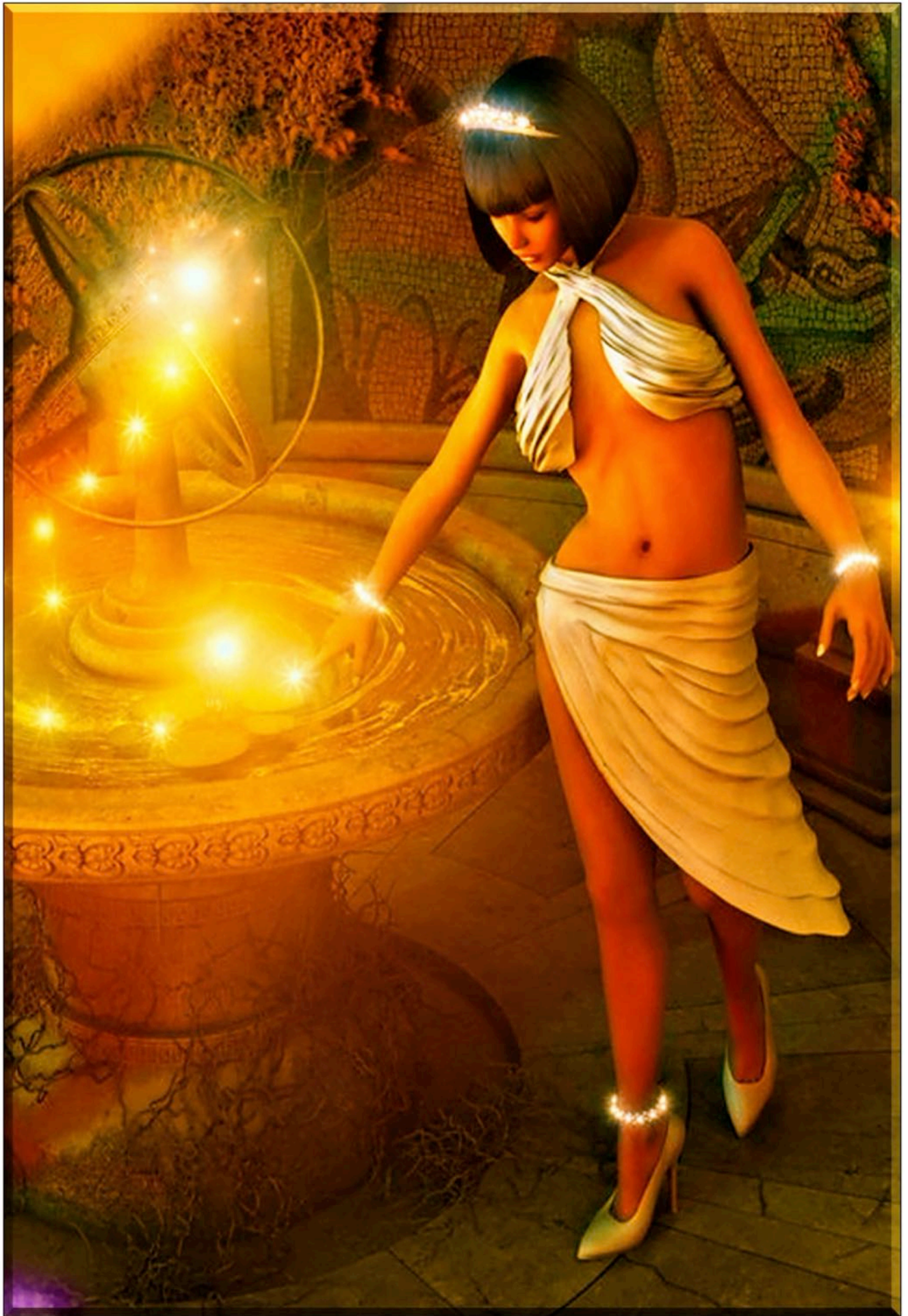


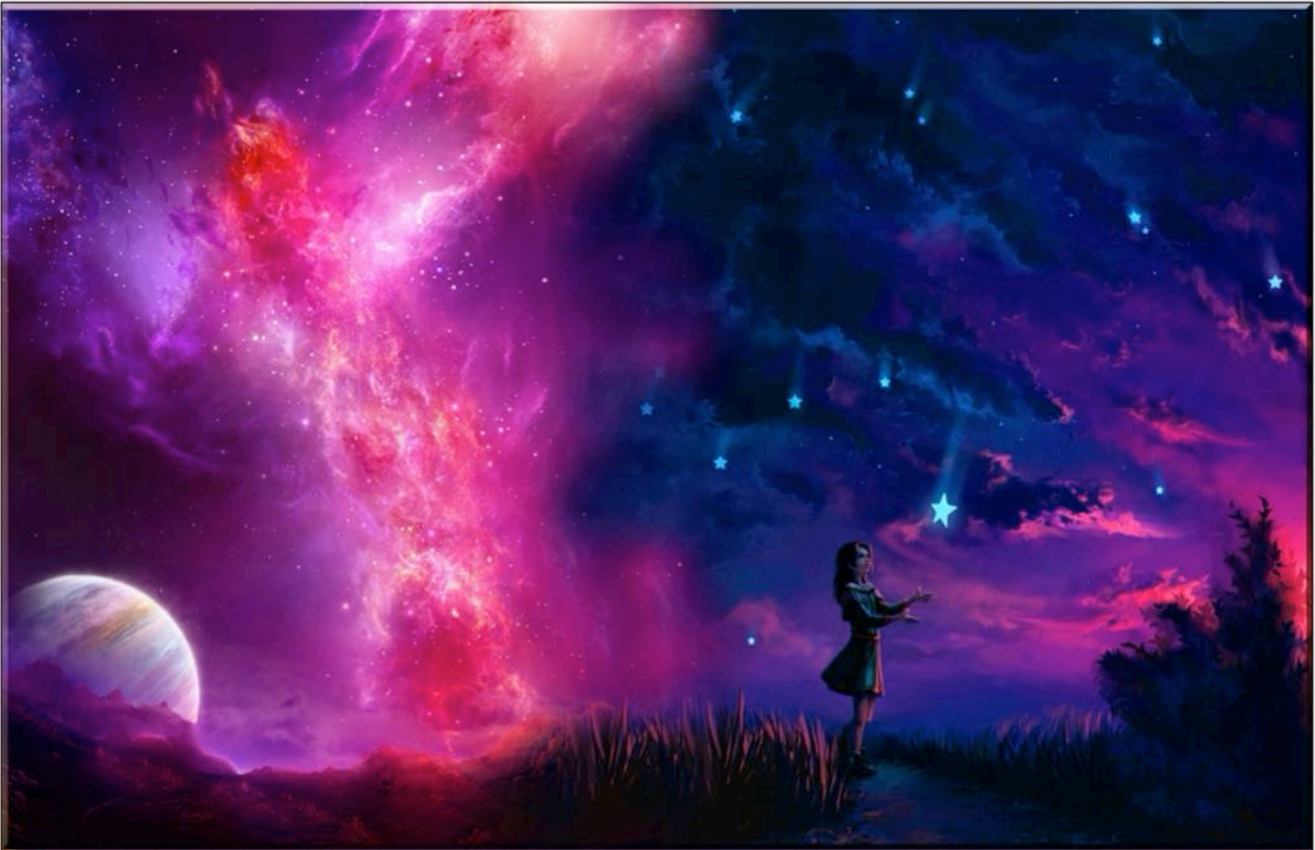
“At 1000 billion years, which is a trillion, the last stars die, giving rise to the final, silent dark; however, stirring in the vacuum of spacetime itself are the ever-present vacuum fluctuations. One small patch quite by some indefinite chance fluctuates sufficiently to create a volume of false vacuum which cuts off from its mother universe by negative pressure, and explodes into a new universe, creating new spacetime and future hope for the emergence of intelligent life in the cosmos. I’m done.”

“Cripes!” I exclaimed, “and that’s only a part of the exam, as the overall scheme, with more details to it.”

Cho added, “Very good, and Patrick and I came up with something supporting your idea, as Fundamental Possibility, since there’s no point at which to impart any definite plan to Totality, given that it has no ‘outside’ and no ‘before’.

“Good going, Alice!”



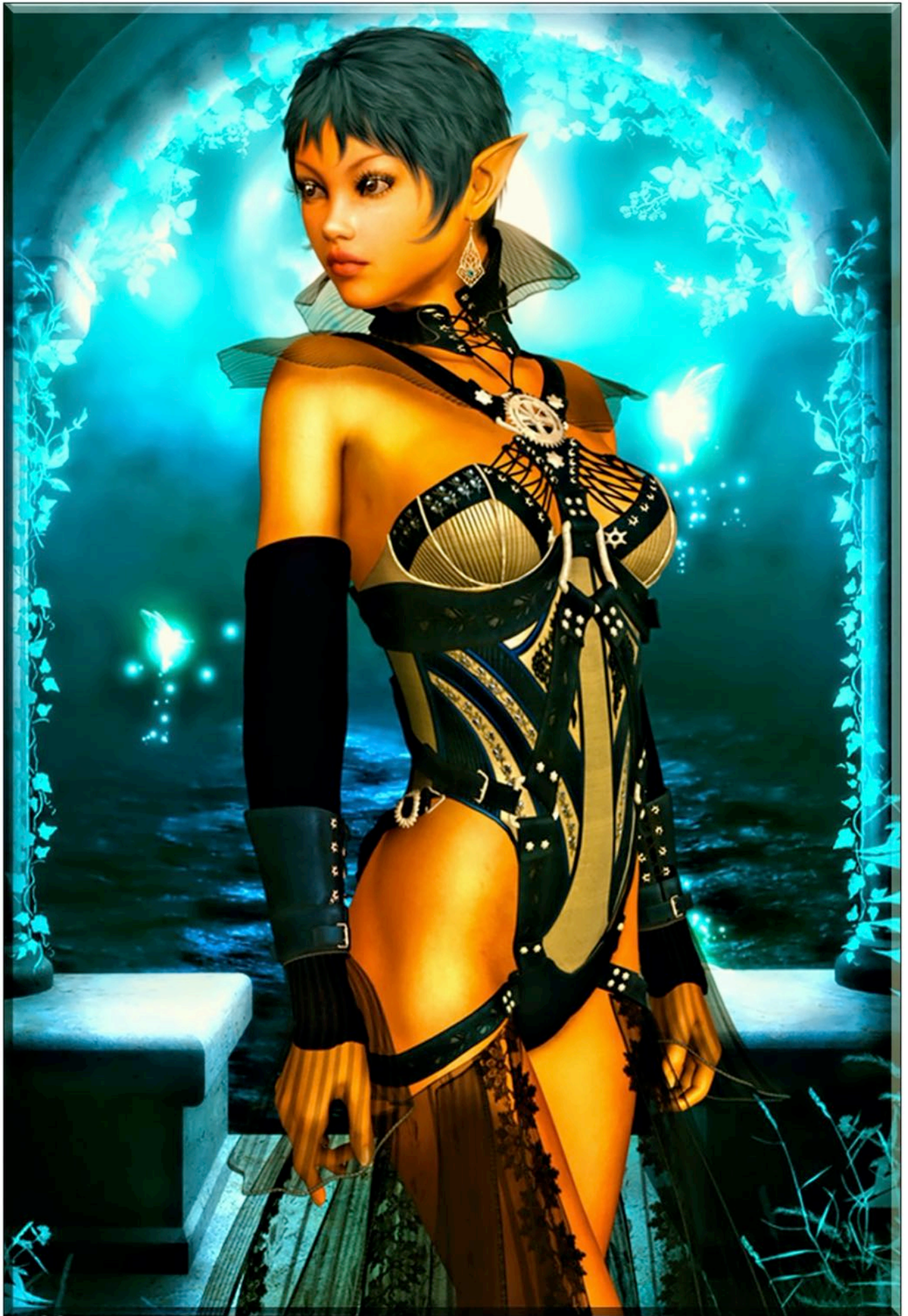


“Yeah,” answered Alice. “Cosmetics is much easier than cosmology, by far; however, I’m so glad to be as me, relating to both of you. We, although distinctive outcroppings of the ‘IS’, as the Cosmos ongoing, aren’t really independent, self goings-on, but are all of the play’s expression continuing and happening from the one big effect of the Big Bang.

“Now, Patrick,” Alice continued, “I want you and Cho to savor me, as will I do you two—and enjoy you both, and then please take me, after some while, to seal our union forever more. I want you to enjoy me and my body.”

We went over to the cot, and then took off all our clothes, flipping them through the air, and then fed our passions in every way under the sun and the stars, from whence cometh all our help, on and on through the seemingly numbingly slow process of evolution taking so long.





On Tuesday, late afternoon, we headed over to my office at the DIA compound, to await Mike's call. Everyone had gone home, so this was a good time.

I told Cho and Alice, "Mike is a mover—a dynamo in a staid corporation; he rose from nowhere in manufacturing to take over machine development, with only a high school degree. You won't be able to hear what he says, but you'll hear me and be able to infer a lot."

The phone rang exactly at 6.

"Army Intelligence. Hello, Mike."

"We have a multi-million dollar business opportunity, but I have big problems in carrying it out, due to a large disaster, plus I don't know if we could even do it, anyway. I'm going crazy, to put it mildly. The marketing guys are up my butt, and so is our CEO."

"OK, start at the beginning."

"The good news, which is a totally unexpected great news, is that our friends in Fishkill Technology made a huge breakthrough in the substrate channels, but we have to change our circuitry to BMOS in order to get the 2.5 or more gain in speed. So, it's not that simple."

"When the sun shines, the hay gets really hot, Mike."

"Yeah, and so normally we'd put through our good design just for the new substrate, even though there's no 'normally' since we never did this before. Guess."



“The slowpokes at Engineering Design Services up the road wanted 6 months or more to gear up for the new technology.”

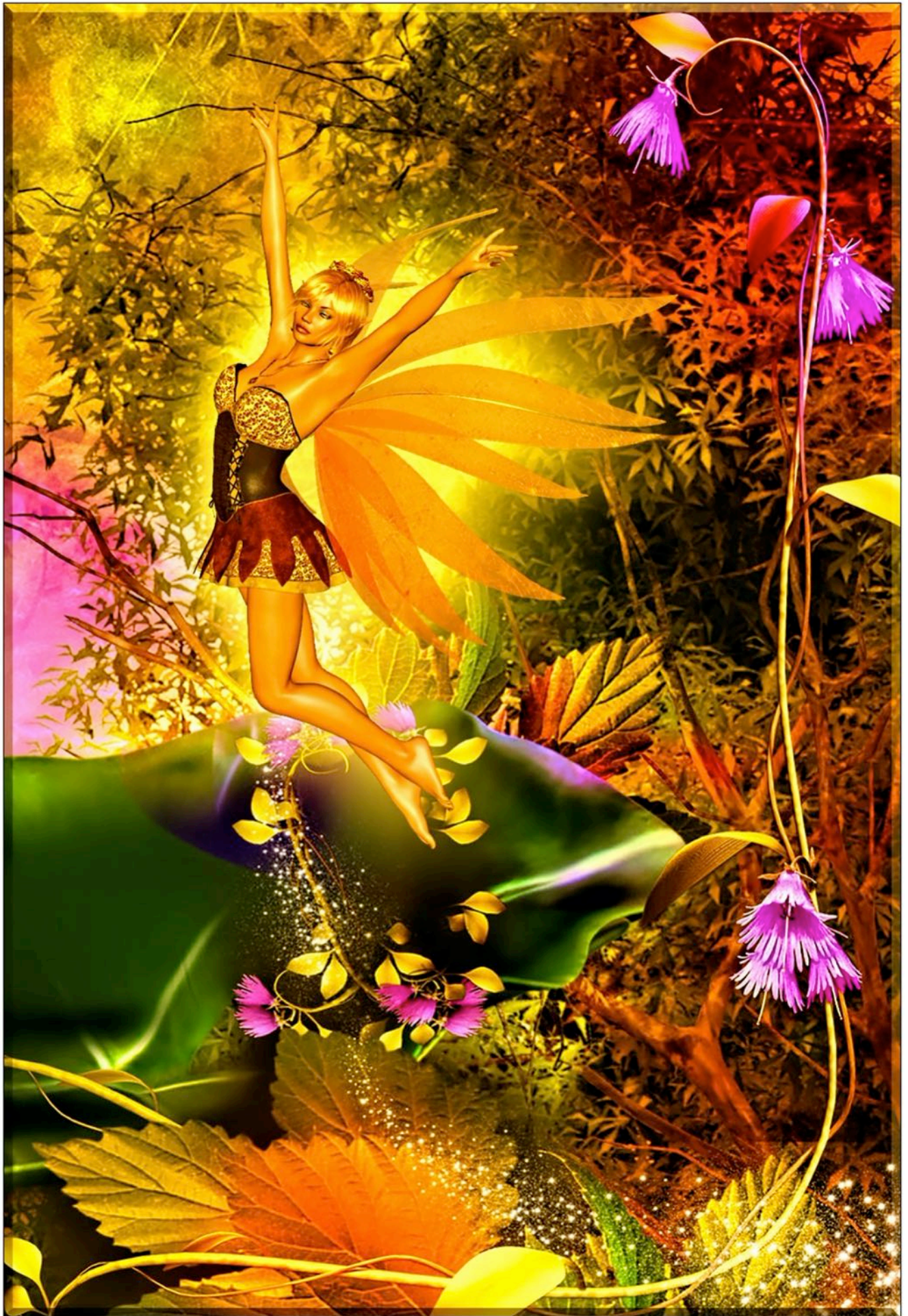
“Yes, and they’re still using assembler language and running into the horrors and nightmares of digging into hexadecimal dumps to solve problems, as you once demonstrated to me. I need to pull off some kind of a coup to get them under my wing. We didn’t much note or care how slow EDS was since their work overlapped with our logic designing. Anyway, hold on, since I’m taking it from the beginning, but it gets worse and worser, and I’m saving the worst for last.”

“Half of your logic designers and programmers are on loan to IBM Germany and the other half are working on the very important future systems that will have 32-bit addressing and many other great new features, which greatly expands our usual new systems development time, not that we really have a ‘usual’.”

“Yes, plus we really haven’t yet done a real, brand new system. So, all would not have been lost, but I’d have to recall my designers, which I can’t do, plus who knows what accidental flaws they might introduce by putting the stuff through the whole process again, using new designers or those from other areas and not familiar, making for perhaps a year; whereas, Fishkill will be ready in a few months. So, I thought, well, that’s life, and then the really bad news came.”

“I can’t imagine, but it must be really terrible.”

“It is. It’s bad.”



“Tell me.”

“Ralph Bohnsen over at EDS dropped a cigarette, I guess, just before leaving, and so his office caught on fire, and it spread somewhat, although the fire department got to it before their whole old rickety building could go up in flames. Well, very many of their card decks burned up, and so now they would be double or triple slow to be able to do anything for us, which surely squashes that idea, which I didn’t like anyway in the first place. This was just a week or so ago. It gets even worse. When it rains, it really pours, Patrick. I can hardly bring myself to tell it... all the chances I’ve taken that worked, and now... it’s as if a billion dollars has just turned to ashes...”

“There was smoke damage to their computer room, ruining their disk drives, and their machine database of our complete logic design, plus their output of it.”

“Yeah, sadly, and their backup disks, too, although Fish-kill has the output and we can still produce and sell the current machines, but businesses are clamoring for more speed already, the computer age now well begun, and we could sell a lot of double fast machines at just 150% of the price we have to many of the larger businesses. IBM Germany’s machine is smaller and much cheaper, for start-up businesses, so that doesn’t help us.”

...

“Alice and I can remap the old machine to the new chips within three months, from the error domain large logic segments that contain all that we need! ... Mike, are you there? What was that noise?”



“I stood up so fast that my chair fell over! You mean that you have everything about the logic design, like the wire lengths, circuit types, and all the internal logic between the latches and internal signals, with all SRLs traced?”

“We have it all, Mike, and more. I saved it all for just the heck of it, in case we needed it for something else, and we did, such as when we added the wire lengths together to make sure they were within the cycle time, plus the VT Validation Tests needed all the SRLs, so they’re all traced back, too, in addition to the error latches. All of these relations equal the logic design.”

“And the Correspondence Data Sets?”

“Yeah, we needed those for the scan ring order, and for whatever else they have, for whatever kind of use.”

“And where is this stuff?”

“Let’s see there’s one in the 701 building...”

“Oh no, that building was just demolished!”

“And one in our 705 building, and another in 702. When the stars shine, some go supernova, Mike, and some remain.”

“The weather is greatly clearing; I was up a creek without a paddle, and now all we have to do is put our humpty-dumpty back together again, with new clocks and whatever new pin arrangements there are on the new type of scan ring latches. Now, Alice is your protege who you told me would make a fine worker?”





“Yes, she is among the best, and she graduates in three months. She’s just cruising along now, and so am I in the Army, without much to do but enjoy life, love, and the scenery, after my almost dying because the helicopters didn’t hold up very well, with one even coming down, but we can’t run this thing in a mountain-top tent where we live. There’s no electricity, and no computer.”

“So, do it on the Army RCA IBM-like computers”?

“No, I wouldn’t want to risk colliding with the secure stuff, plus using up their time for the monstrous manipulations that we have to do to a trillion circuits, plus, the machine has some minor differences from IBM’s. Cho and I and Alice are all taking courses at the University of Hawaii, and so we can use their IBM computer center. I’ll make a smaller, generalized version of this program to be my graduate thesis; it won’t give anything away; we won’t plug in the actual numbers until we get the thing back to Poughkeepsie. We’ll put the programs in before class and look them over afterward. Cho is in biochemistry, not computer science, but I’ve taught her enough about the semantics and the syntax that she can key in and test the programs, plus she’s a fast typist. Give me one more programmer person and we can probably have it done in under four months, probably even in three.”

“You drive an easy bargain, Patrick. I’m going to have Laura fly out with one set of the information and stay for the duration. She’s been doing Rachna’s job, but now Rachna is back, after having a baby, and so Rachna can do Laura’s job. Laura’s going to love this project. Anyway, get it going at the U of H, and, depending, I’ll think about sending a mainframe out to you.”



“Yes, Alice is perfect for the job. How is Laura?”

“She’s grown up, but still drops love notes into your in box. Is she going to be a problem? She’s the best to go.”

“I hope so, to the ‘problem’ and the more the merrier it seems, for Alice just moved in with us, out of love as well as due to low funds.”

“I should have those kinds of problems here. Now hold on, for this may sound strange in light of what I just said, but it was a blessing, really. You see, my greatly depressed wife committed suicide just a few months ago. She just really couldn’t go on living, and I came to realize this very well. I have mixed emotions, of course, but what can I do but go on.”

“My condolences. Now, if it’s not too soon to say this, as great as Patty and I were, she got married for her mother’s wishes, but is now very much trying to get divorced, finally realizing that wasn’t the thing to do, plus, I’m with someone else, even two, as they are friends to each other. What it is, then, for you, is that Patty likes you, as she told me in her last letter to me, I being her confidant, now. How’s that sound?”

“We all make mistakes, like Patty did, and what you tell me is surely good news, but I really can’t, since it might seem awkward later, given your history with her. I just don’t know, but maybe it’s worse if she remains alone and unoccupied. I’ll think on it, but I’m her boss, and that could show as favoritism, even if unintended. I’m tempted, though.”



— All Bottled Up —

“Are we not the best of friends, Mike, and am I not wonderfully and happily spoken for into the far future, plus we both having a need for Patty to find someone good among a sea of, well, logical-types, and for you to have a lady who doesn’t eat computer chips for breakfast and lunch?”

“We are the best of friends, Patrick, both in life and in business, and the way you put would seem to provide a loving benefit for the many. She’s due back soon. Write her that I like her, too. Life has to go on, for me, and this is a chance for it. I don’t have the time to start totally fresh with blind dates. Romance in the chain of command might be rough, though, but who am I to be one who ever follows all the rules.”

“Back to business, Mike. We’ll need a two bedroom hotel room suite at the Waikiki Sheraton, with a living area, in which to talk together, and lay out our listings and mark them up, and discuss, and such.”

“Another easy bargain. I’ll get you the best suite on the top floor for two months, and extend it, if need be, along with an all you can eat and drink plan. I’ll put it in yours and Laura’s names. I’ll reserve it to begin in two days, on Thursday, and Laura should be there on Friday. I’ll call her tonight and I will send you a telex at the fort about her arrival time. This will flip her out!”

“Wow! It’s going to be some party up there.”

“Yeah, it sounds like some kind of pleasure palace!”

“Remember the great fragment of Coleridge that you once studied in English Literature that we reread?”



“Xanadu! That will be the code name for the project, especially since my overseers will think my proposal to be as a pipe dream akin to gluing a gigantic and intricate broken vase back together whilst changing its material basis at the same time, and even adding more veins.”

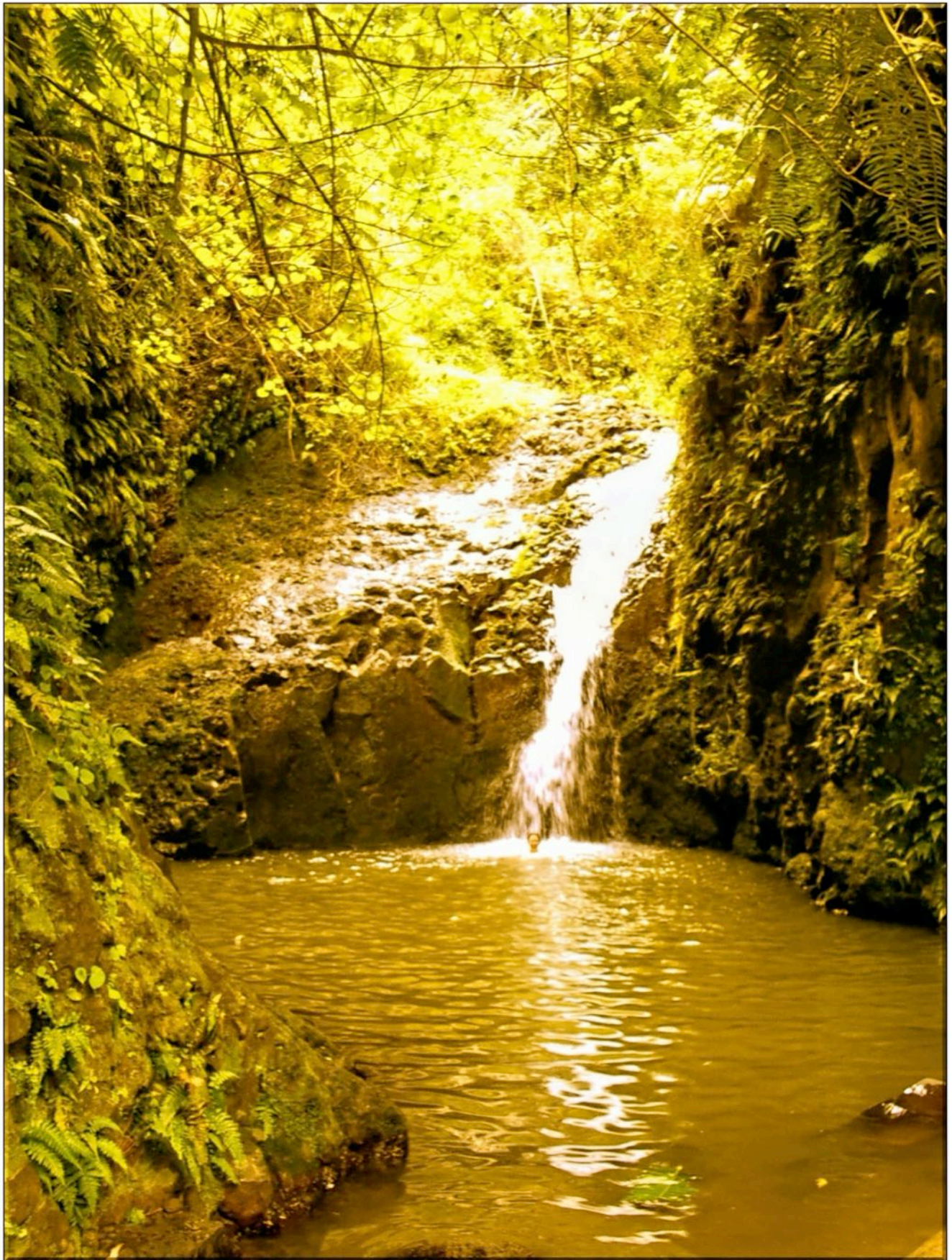
“Well, yeah, and that might even be easier, but I see our project to be mostly busywork, albeit of the very careful kind, plus, the fat logic segments with all the internals therein are gigantic items that require variable length spanned records, plus we are probably mostly stuck here processing sequentially from tape instead of a random-access disk, but I’m sure we’ll find a way through the morass for starters.”

“‘Resourceful’ is your middle name, Patrick.”

“Actually, ‘Patrick’ *is* my middled name. We’ll need two dedicated machines when the program gets back, one to run the whole thing, since we can probably only do it piecemeal on the University’s pipqueak machine, as one of our original 360s, and another machine to build the interface for Fishkill and to do a compare on the two long test result streams. If any differences show up, we’ll know it is in our new version, and just where they are, too.”

“Ah yeah, that’s easy to provide. We rent these kinds of machines to ourselves at half the price. What’s fifty thousand dollars for a good investment! I have some discretionary funds for these kinds of things, just waiting around for some emergency, of which this is the very first occasion.”





— The Old Swimming Hole —

“Have Laura take one of my information sets and make three copies of it onto three brand new tapes, and bring two of them, well wrapped in tin foil, and put the other back in some different bin in a different building. She knows where they are. Also have her bring our latest programming function library; two copies.”

“Hey, wow, we’re rolling along on this, and I’m willing to take the risk of you four doing this off site.”

“Is not ‘risk’ your middle name, Mike, and am I not trained to keep Intelligence secrets safe?”

“That’s true, and it’s not like the higher-uppers ever come down to speak with the workers personally, except for a passing “Merry Christmas”; however, they may expect a presentation, of which I will do the first, as that is totally appropriate, and fly you in for one, if necessary, or you may well have finished by then. I’m going to have Rachna be the only other link to you, since she will have to interview the guys in Fishkill to get all the specs of the new circuit types, plus keep up with that as they near completion. Meanwhile, I will say if I have to that my team can’t be bothered, and so you are in a secret location, which is actually true, though an ocean away. I can pay Laura and Alice but not you, since you are on a military leave of absence, but I can give you double comp time, and you can use it to visit Hawaii again. I can also give something to Cho for her work and also for her continuing education. Tell Alice that I’m hiring her and sending her something in your mail to secure her employment by her signing it, if she wants to, which I already presume.”



“She does, of course. How speedy should we make this new machine?”

“Just make it double speed; I don’t want anything to break that already has a close tolerance, through you stretching it to the max. Besides, ‘double’ has a nice ring to it and we can even perhaps get it to be quicker later on if Fishkill makes more improvements over and above their cautious estimate that already fine.”

“We’ll shoot for 2.25 in order to get 2.0 overall, because some of the doubling won’t help the parts that accomplish things in two cycles instead of one, though now they could, but we don’t want to futz with anything like that. We’ll also keep to the same module layout, even though there might be room on some of the chips to combine two subsystems, because the whole module replacement error detection replacement strategy is based on separate modules.”

“What’s some lost real estate compared to the profits. We can redo that for future systems, since we’re making so many other changes. Maybe we’ll even rebuild the rolling casters, too. There will always be job security here while we can sell everything that we can build.”

“Yeah, and it’s safer than what the Army gave me. I’ll be back in 9 months, and Alice and Laura will be there in three, or so, with the goods, and will run them, if all goes well, and if the volcanoes don’t erupt and sink us. We can’t trust Pele the fire god not to smoke.”

“I will pray to Pele and to your helper goddesses, too.”

“It will work out anyway.”



“Yeah, what worse could happen? Hey, take four months if need be; we’re facing zero results on this end, being dead in the water without a paddle, and there is a long availability time for this new machine to sell and be out there on the market. It’s just the mid-life kicker that we needed, and your work will set the groundwork for more such pulling of things out of our asses in a much faster moving world. I’m glad that you’re safe and in such good hands and sorry that you had to go through the Cambodia thing. Enjoy living on the fertile tip of a volcano that rose from the great depths of the ocean.”

“We will, and hope that you and Patty will come to visit us some day. Call me in two weeks to the day.”

“Finally, something hard and scary, which would be to romance Patrica Hernandez, both on the outside, as semi-secret, at first, and also on the inside of work right under everyone’s eyes. So begins my life as like a spy, not even to mention your off-shore undertakings. Need anything else?”

“I’ll go see my Army commander, since we’re friends, to see if anything’s up, although I doubt it. Now that you mention it, though, we could use an ocean liner, or at least a huge yacht.”

“Hotel expense accounts I can do, but buying or renting big boats might be pushing it. I can give you my tipsy canoe that has no paddle, for I’m tired of using it.”

“I’ll take it.”

“Thanks for volunteering for this. At least the Army taught you that, or is it the other way around?”



“The other way. Farewell, and raise a glass tonight.”

“Take care, and take more vitamins to survive the ladies. Heck, I’m calling Patty tonight. I’ll call you in two weeks at 6, when we’ll both know more. Bye.”

I put down the phone and looked to the ladies. “Alice, you’re hired. We have a big programming job ahead of us, large and somewhat complicated, but doable. Your employment papers to be signed and returned will soon be in my mail. Mike doesn’t dilly-dally. Cho, you’re getting paid for this work and for school, and it will probably be a lot. I’m getting double compensatory time off when I get back to use whenever. Patty and Mike will be solving each other in love. IBM will make money. We’re getting a top floor hotel suite, plus meals and drinks, starting on Thursday, for two months or more. Laura’s coming to stay with us, bringing all that we need to do the job. We’ll run it at the U of H, on and off, when we go there for class or just to be curious. That’s about six solutions worked out in only one lucky phone call. The Tiki-Gods like us.”

Alice came over and embraced my back, pressing herself into me, saying, “Now I am really your literal shadow, and that is from an old Chinese saying for when someone does something great for somebody. You can’t get rid of me, as I will always be there for you, and don’t you say “Not this again; you’re free!” I know that story, and it just doesn’t work. A week ago, I was a jobless pauper in despair, and now I have a great job. We’re going to do this thing well and have all kinds of fun along the way. The Great Plow has emptied all its goods, showering its jewels upon us all.”





“OK, I’ll just say ‘This again’, and I’m very happy for it, and that you have my back, as well as my front. I’m calling Lieutenant Dauphanais to see if we can take a walk over now. No outside vehicles are allowed; it’s in a restricted area. He has a new address.”

I dialed him up, “Hello, Lieutenant, sir; it’s DA43. I wonder if Cho, Alice, and I can come over for a talk?”

“Howdy; I’m going to miss those dangerous old days, maybe, unless I can carry them over to the new days, but I’m married now. Sure, come and join my wife and I for dinner; I’ll throw another steak on. I assume you can vouch for Alice; I’ll send word to the gate house. See you soon. We’re towards the back.”

“OK, ladies we’re in. For some reason, the Lieutenant lives in the higher officers area now.”

“Because he’s a Lieutenant Colonel,” Cho added, “and just let everyone think he was only a Lieutenant. Ha.”

We were let through the gate, and walked along toward the address, which turned out to be really in the back, in the richer section. We knocked just as the door opened, the Lieutenant’s Japanese wife, Jane, from our work-place compound, letting us in.”

“Her husband came forth, and Cho said, “Hi Bird.”

“Ah, you have discovered my promotion to a Full Bird Colonel. Now I can really fly places. Meet Jane, Alice. Come and sit all; dinner’s ready, and we have wine, and stories to tell.”



I told him about the IBM thing, adding some more detail for Cho and Alice to pick up on, and he said, “More power to you; we are all kind of trying to slide under the radar now, so nothing big is happening. We had to call in some of the DIA units or refocus them elsewhere. I’d offer you a career in our new but more underground operations, directed, um, from Tahiti, but I expect you’ve been through enough already.”

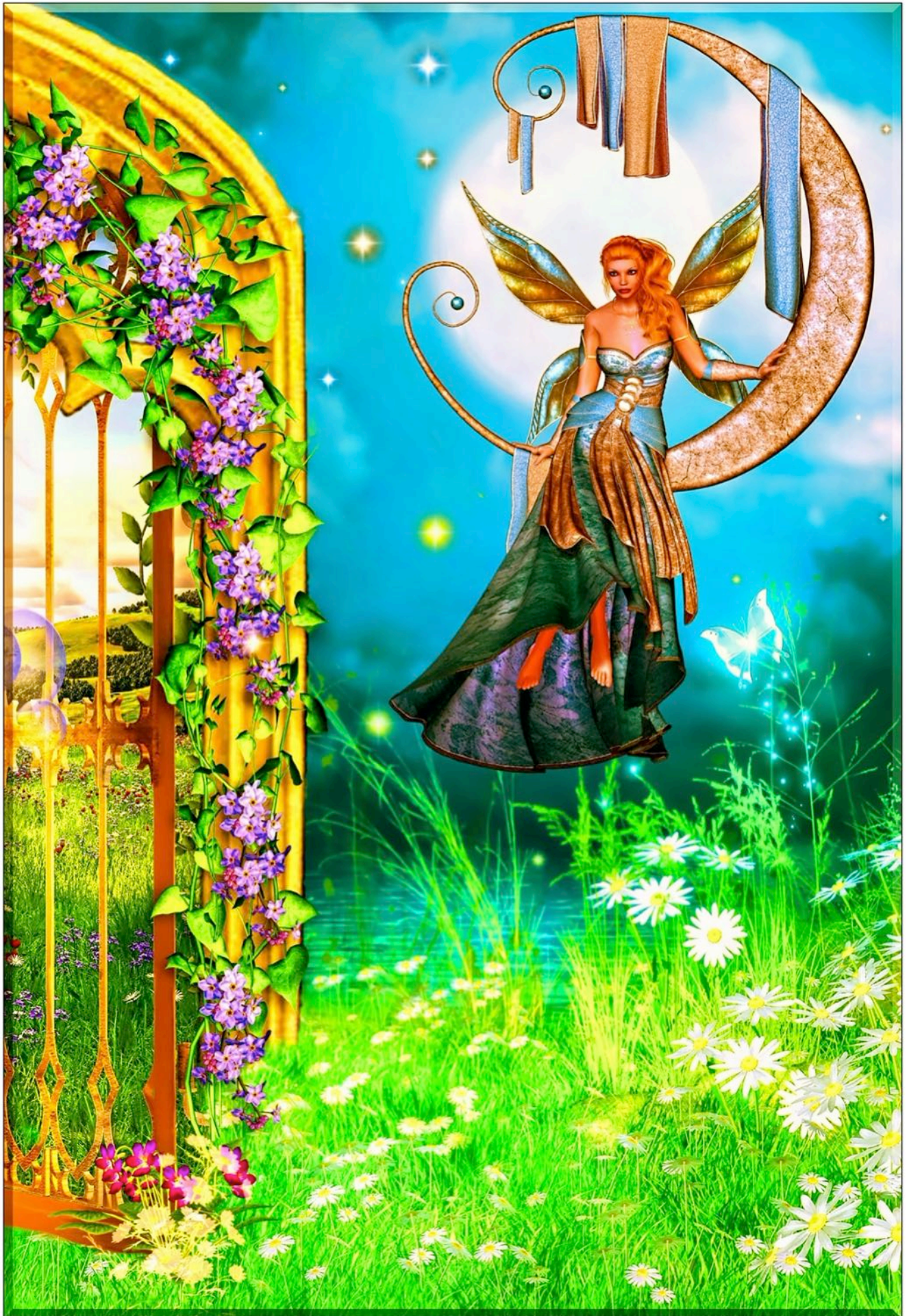
He paused, looking over to Cho, and then to Alice, wondering if he should say something with Alice there, and then continued, “Miss Cho, I should tell you now that a disaster befell the Chinese connection at the Korean seaport. Somehow, their fuel tanks malfunctioned and set off an inferno that destroyed their warehouse, their docks, and even their ships. In this way, there was no international incident. I’m hereby making you an honorary U.S. Army soldier.”

Cho saluted and said, “Thank you, sir. My pleasure, and my friend here, Alice, is Taiwanese, in case you were wondering.”

“Yes, that is different, of course, and I’d figured as much. Happy to meet you, Alice, and congratulations on your new IBM job. I think we’re going to buy our next machine from them, especially if it’s as fast as you say it’s going to be.”

“Thanks, sir,” Alice replied. “You’re very astute.”

“You don’t have to call me ‘sir’, but now that I’m surely not any kind of Lieutenant, I don’t know what you’ll call me, but I guess ‘The Bird’ will do fine.”



We walked back to our motorcycles through the eerie stillness of the fort, back in this concave of the high officer's residences, the sad war already turning into a memory purposely made dim and grey so as to get rid of it by making it fade away quicker, and replacing it with the bright and colorful present of vibrancy.

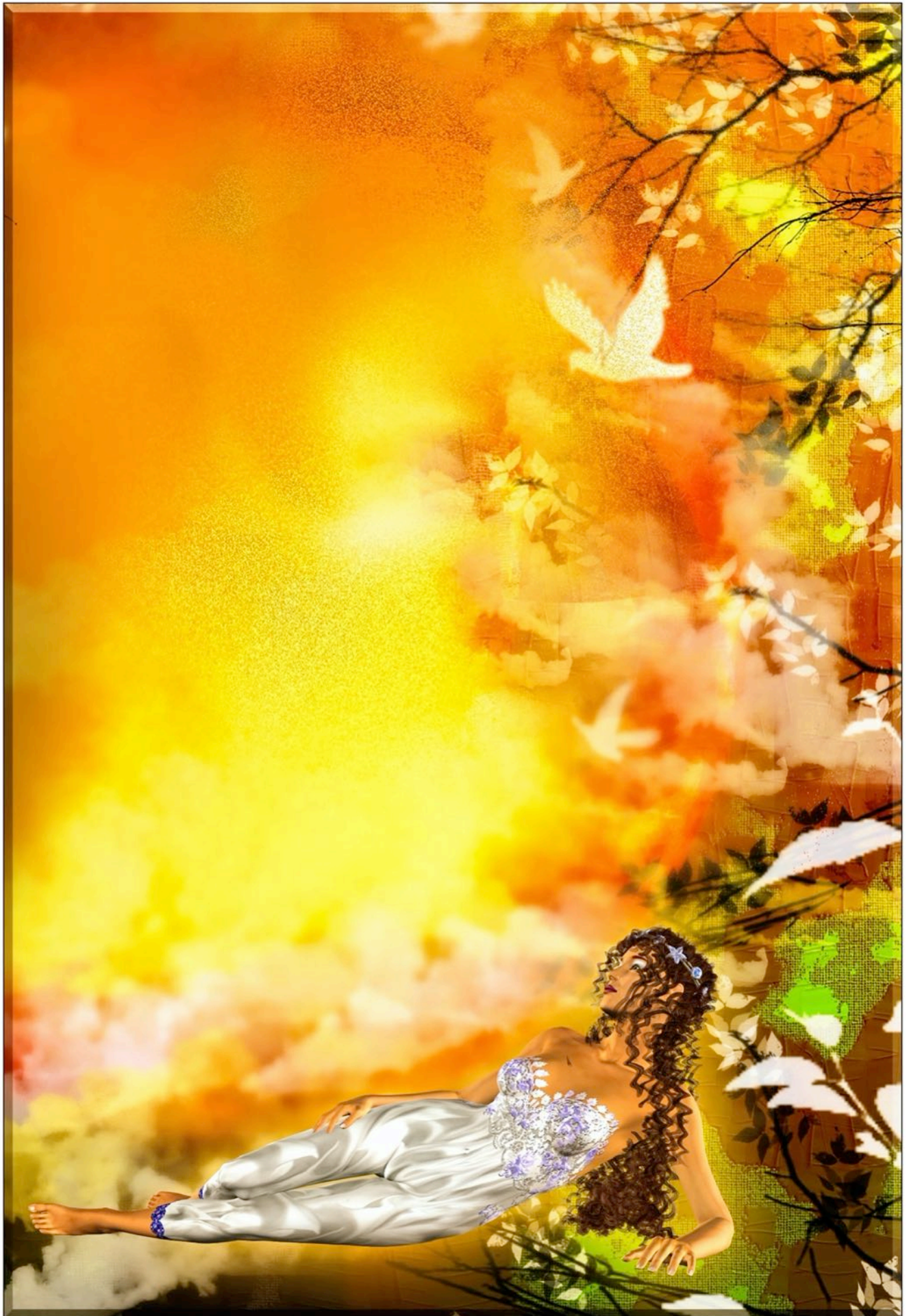
“So,” Cho began, “The great old and previous General is still pursuing the evils of the world from some-where in Bora-Bora to bring to them the justice of death that they deserve.”

I answered, “And we could have been working for him, but life calls to us here, although we can feel better that ‘The General’ is still on the job, in his civilian capacity.

“One day, I’ll tell you how we assassinated a General of the Philippine Army way in the south, whose allegiance had turned to the Muslims around there, but this evening is too grand in all of its implications to get into that in which I again had to run for miles.”

Alice lamented, “This is our last night up in our camp for a while, but I’m really going to love the hotel; I’m going to swim in the ocean and shower for hours. Can we come back to the camp once in a while? Perhaps on some weekends?”

“Sure,” I said, “the variety will spice each place versus the other. We also don’t have to work real hard; we’ll just keep things moving along, piece by piece, and one day it will be done. I’ll write up a list of functions that we need, tomorrow, to start us off, but now...”





Up at our mountain retreat, Alice continued my thought.

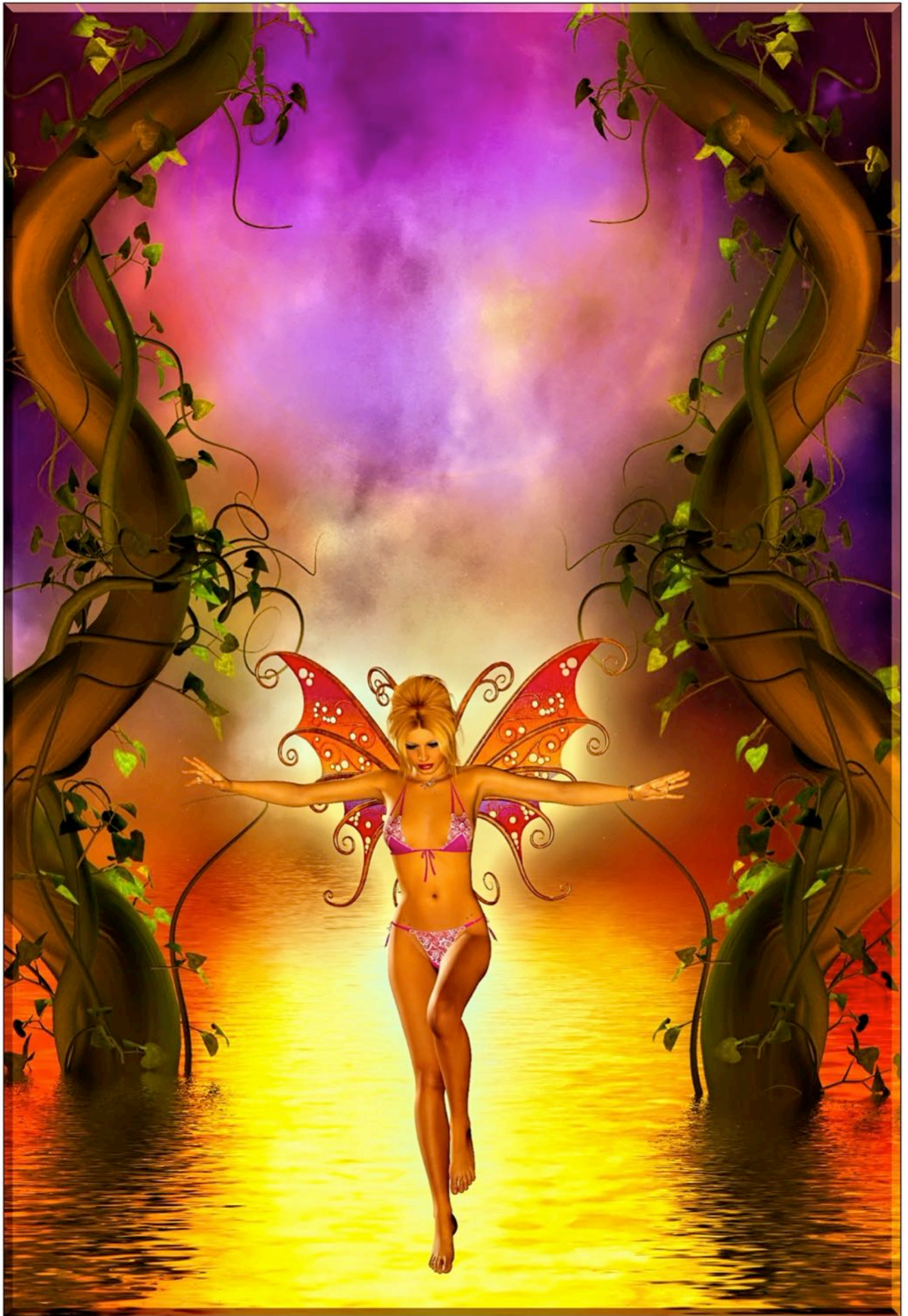
“...Now, we celebrate what the fates have brought together under this silver dome of the night stars who are our ancestors winking their knowing smiles to us to interplay our sensations into flowing passion onto and into each other in this airy balm.”

“I’m so happy, Alice, that you will be with Patrick at IBM while I remain here to learn and study unto my graduation two years. Everything is working out. Win-win.”

Alice offered to Cho, “You’re the most generous person I’ve ever known, my dearest friend and love.”

“Well, I could have still been stuck in Korea’s pall in the midst of nowhere in an old unmoving, culture.”

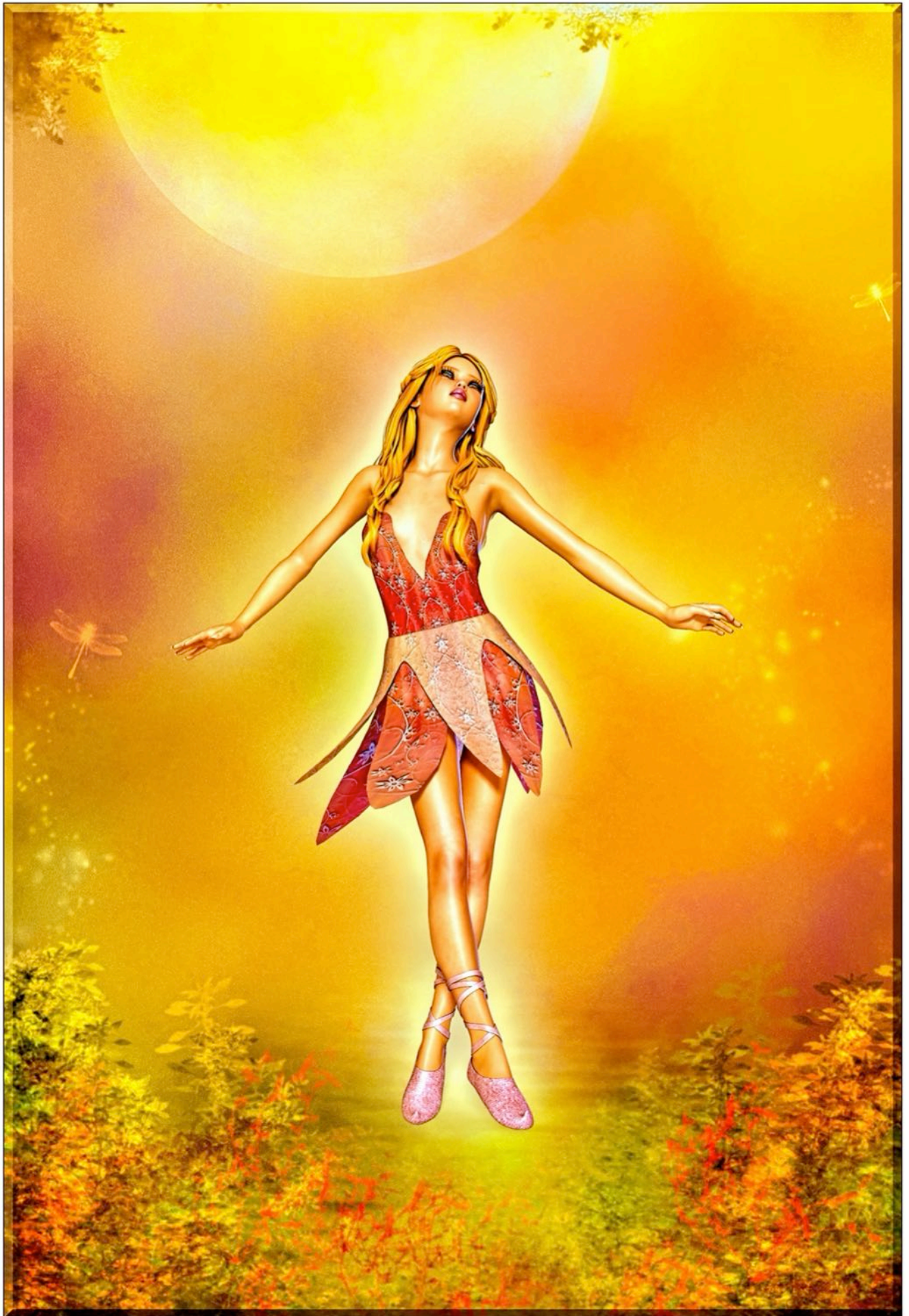






On Thursday, we slept in a bit, and then had a quite leisurely breakfast near the edge of the precipice, taking in the world that had so kindly taken us all in.





We took a walk near the ridge, and sat under a tree:

*Here the blessed and haunted old forest,  
Whereat the base of a koa we rest,  
While all about lay wondrous deep coverts,  
And a green-turfed path that leads o'er a crest.*

*It was so still you could hear a nut fall,  
And the musical strain of mystic call,  
In soft tones flowered upon the silence,  
As floating on the surface of the All.*

*'Twas that time of morn when the exiled rise,  
Thrown to time's Earthly bondage through the skies,  
Being for an hour their own Heavenly selves,  
Their full glory unhidden by disguise.*

*These forest fairies, dryads, nymphs, and fauns,  
Ever flash their nude blossoms on the lawns.  
They beckon me along, for though the air  
I pass thoughts of love, verses, and songs.*

*The life of her face is in her deep blue eyes,  
Soft-lipped mouth, and the ears that pointed rise,  
As the moon and stars reflect in a pool,  
Which look as for a lifetime pours surprise.*

*I dive into her eyes, her soulful gate,  
And worship before her heart's flaming grate,  
Midst flowers in the gardens of her dreams,  
Then whirl back up through her eyes as her mate.*

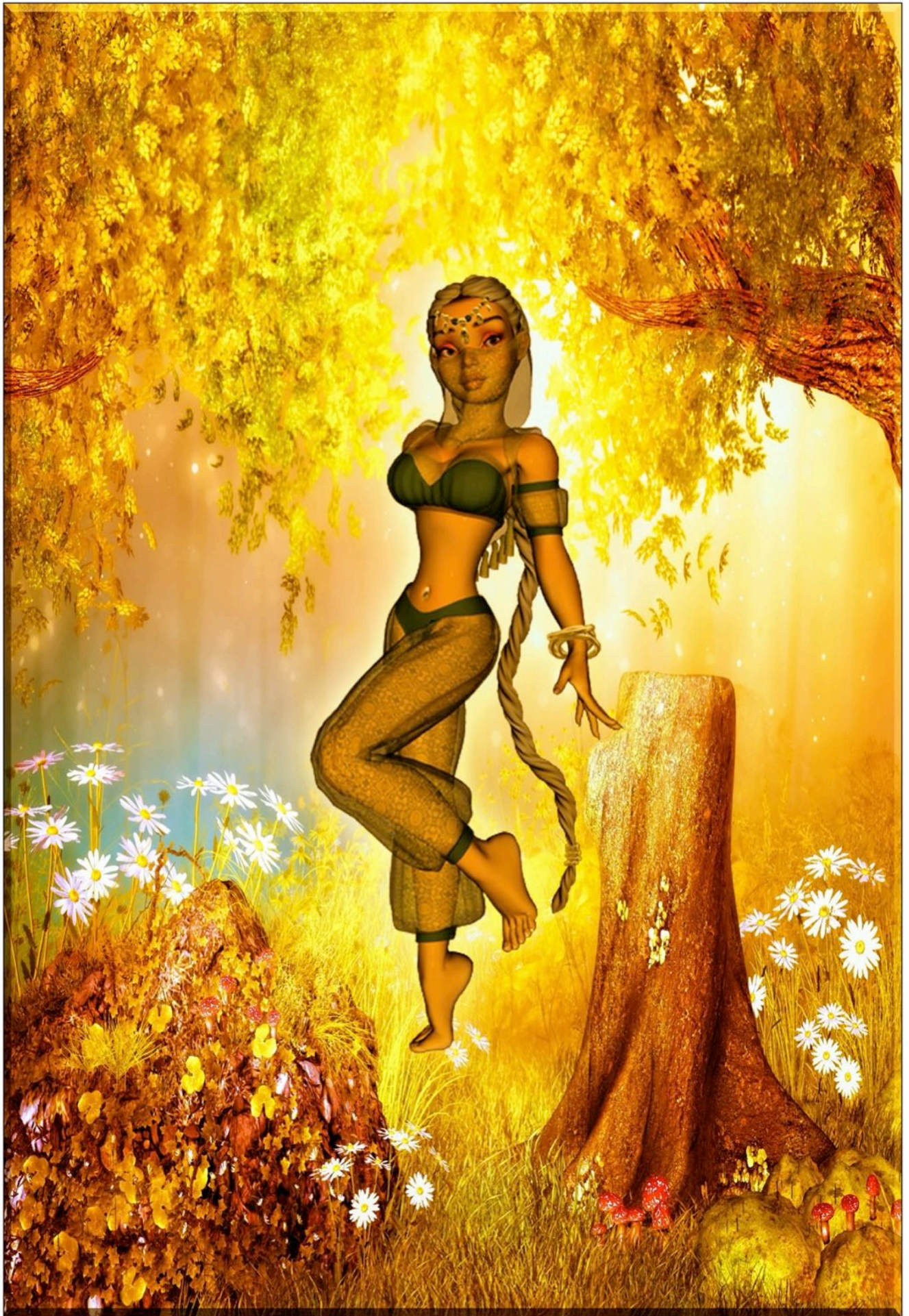
*I'm left with a feeling that's no mere spell,  
But a fact in Heaven that's fancy in Hell,  
Of elemental affinity's flame,  
Deeper than thought, much older than speech can tell.*

*(Poem inspired by Gallienne)*



It was moving day, so we gathered a few things and then headed down to my office at the fort to check for messages, finding out that we could check in to the hotel at 4 and that Laura's flight would get in about 1 PM on Friday, which was my only Army work day.







We headed for Waikiki, and jumped into the ocean near the Sheraton, watching our ocean liner go right on by.









At 4 we checked in, and obtained free drinks.







We had a view of Diamond Head crater. Alice and Cho removed their suits and sunbathed on the lanai. *Wait till Laura sees this, I thought. Xanadu!* We went down later to dine and dance the evening away.





*We were all dancing, within love's treasure vault  
Within the framework of the broadening thought,  
The lights pulsing and the waves reverberating,  
Where the good times had become everlasting.*

*Tribal primal field currents were raging  
From speakers of the energy matrix pounding;  
They whirled and twirled as loving gestalts  
Of sentient consciousness knowing no halt.*

*There were rhythms of constant contraction  
And expansions of bosom-energy projections  
Converted to scalar waves of blinking attraction,  
As fission and fusion beckoned the connections...*

*Ever forming in this Omni-sound emporium,  
Where tone waves vibrated in waves of creation.*



We went out afterwards to thank our lucky stars and look for the Southern Cross, finding it, and vowing to find ourselves more directly under it one day.



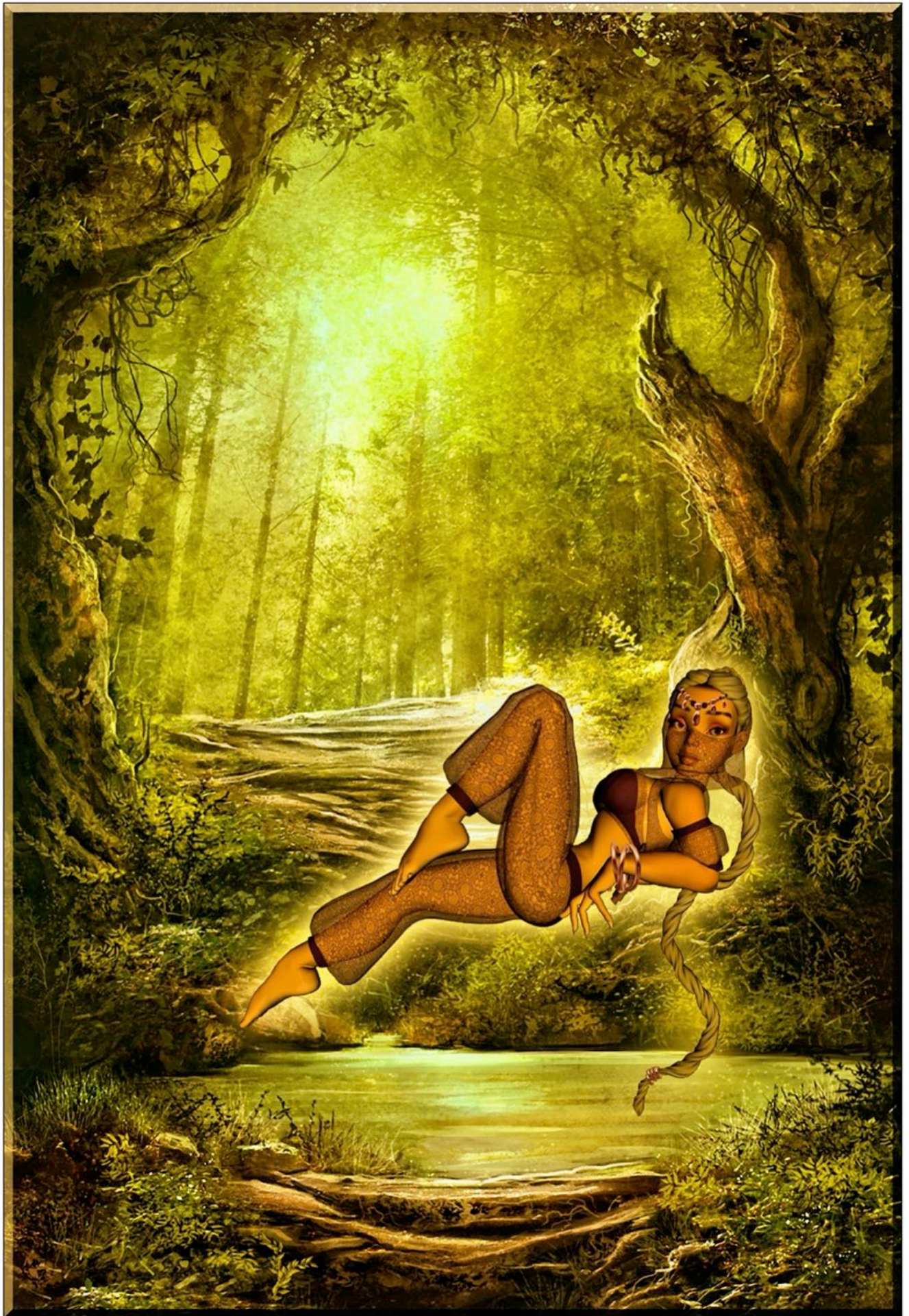


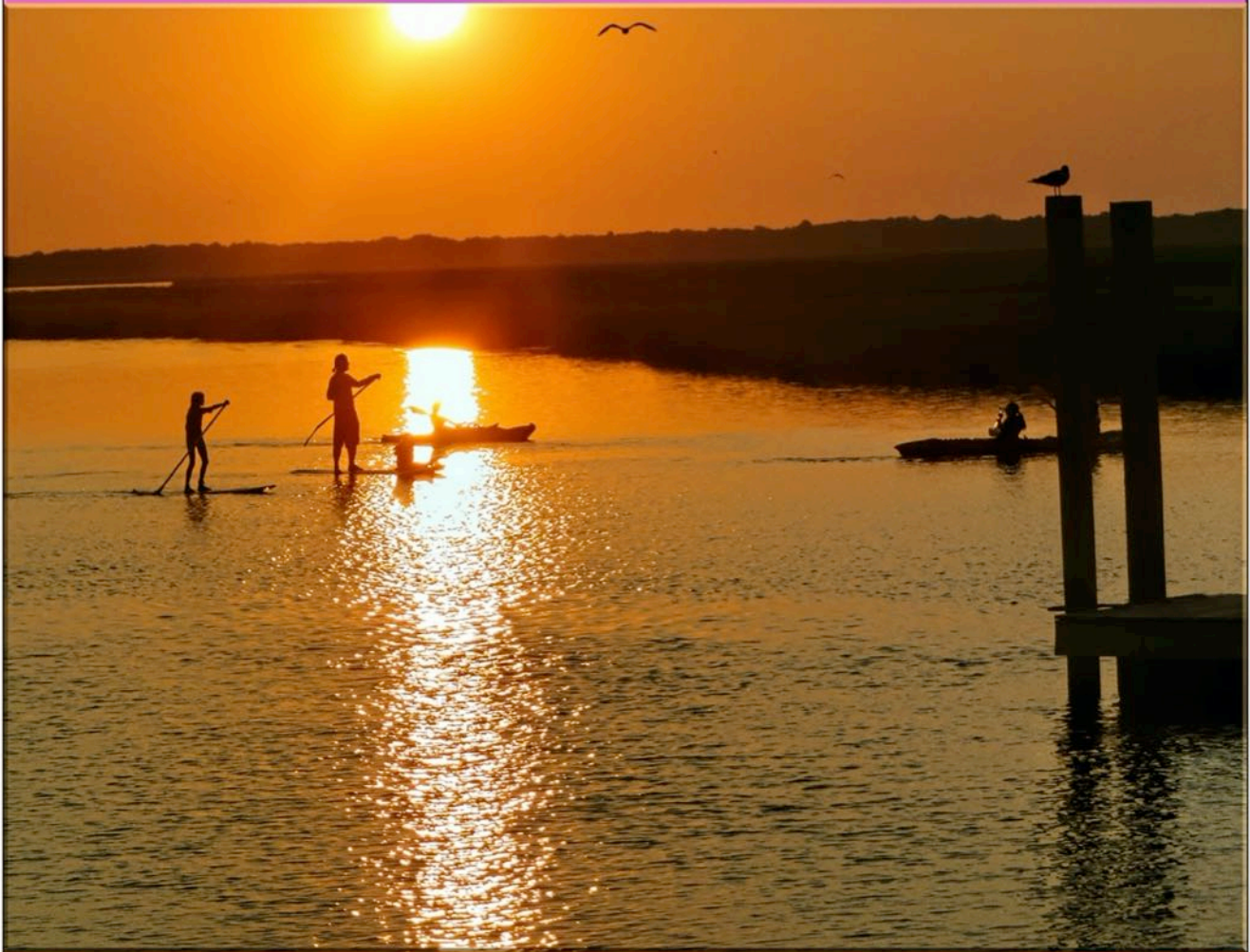


It wasn't easy getting up for work on Friday, but I managed, recalling last night. Alice was going to paint her face happy, and use the shuttle to pick up Laura.











Alice held up a sign and flagged a surprised Laura.

“Hi, I’m Alice. Patrick is at work and Cho is gathering our free lunch. Welcome to paradise. Oh, there’s the shuttle waiting outside. Give me some of those bags.”

Laura took in the local scene, as well as the Pali mountains off in the distance, a sight that inspires everyone and raises their consciousness to the max.

“She exclaimed, “One day I’m in a half-empty workplace doing not much but some odds and ends, and all of the sudden I’m packing and flying off on a plane for ten hours to the Garden of Elysium to help our company. Did Patrick set this up for me? I owe him.”



“He would have, but he let his boss suggest it first.”



“That’s always good to let the boss do, so he thinks he’s actually running things. Ha-ha.”

“We had pretty much figured everything out before Mike called, and isn’t Patrick your boss?”

“Yes. I love your painted face; it’s so vibrantly happy.”



“I’ve never been happier, as you will see; there have been several miracles arriving out of nowhere.”

“That’s for sure. I’m in some kind of shock myself.”

“We’re here. We’re in the best top-floor suite. Come.”



“Hello, Laura, I’m Cho. We’re having a light lunch. We’ve heard a lot about you; we need your talents.”

“Patrick hired me as a temporary worker, and I guess IBM liked me, for now I’m very permanent. Mike gave us this VIP suite, holy moly, I must be dreaming!”

“Have a bite and then relax or unpack or whatever, or go shopping, dip in the ocean, anything. Patrick wants us to take the weekend off. We’ll worry about the project for real on Monday, although he may just sort of size it up for us in general later, for it to percolate within us.”



“OK. I’m going to rest for awhile after lunch. This is all too good to be true, yet it is so real I could cry!”







When I returned, I found them all in the lagoon-pool drinking Singapore Slings, and so I ordered one, too, and lit up a smoke, sitting on a whale sculpture. Cho came over and hugged me whole and then Alice came and climbed on my back. Laura followed them.







“Alice is my shadow,” I explained to Laura, who looked both amazed and pleased with the goings on.”

“Hi boss, I mean Patrick. Thanks for getting me here. I’m tipsy from drinking; the girls are corrupting me. We’re going shopping after dinner; they want to spend the new pay that they don’t have yet, to celebrate, and to get some wild outfits for the Kamehameha nature festival and dance, right on the beach behind our hotel. See, I can already speak Hawaiian and it looks like I got into town just in time. Pinch me and kiss me. I’m entranced by the sights and drenched with the luscious perfumes of the flower garden.”

What the heck, I thought, so I gave her a pinch to wake up but she said, “Good. I’m still here,” and so then I gave her a welcome kiss, and then Cho and Alice gave me a long kiss on each ear, to Laura, too.





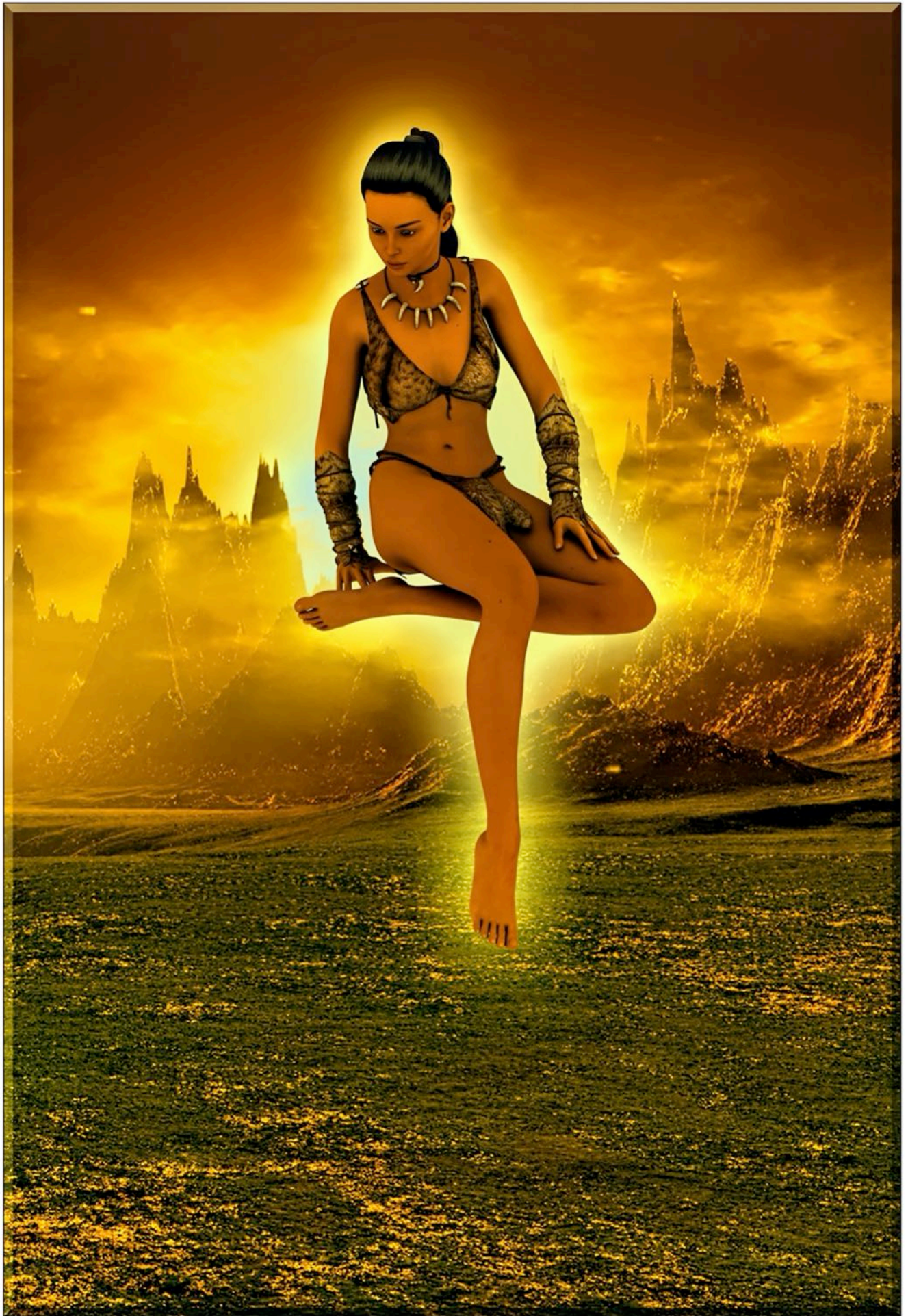
*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.*

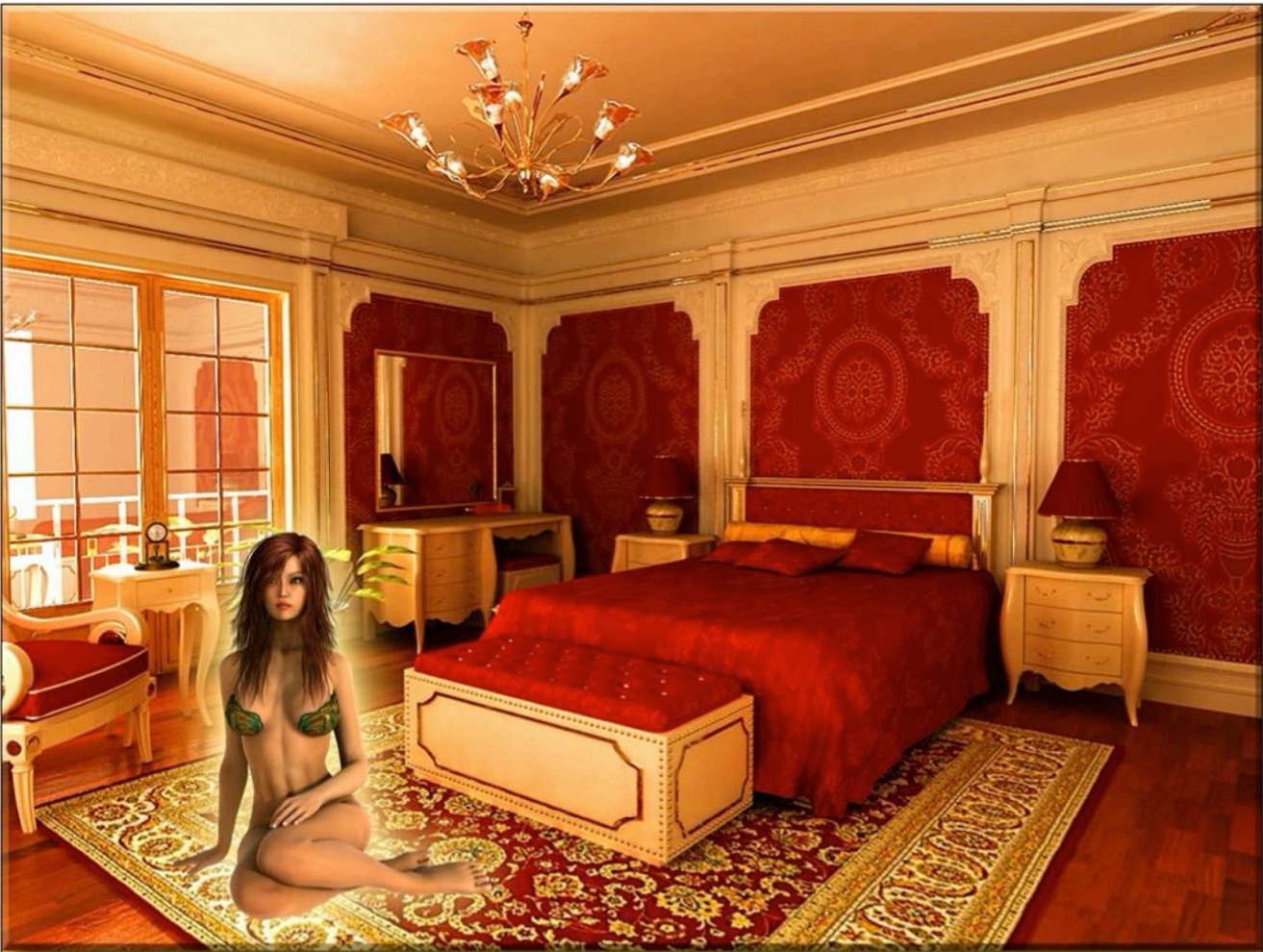
We ate at the buffet in the main dining hall, catching up on the day, devouring the oriental delicacies.

“Alice, here are your papers to sign. Cho, you have a letter from home. Laura, you’re gleaming and shining, even beneath all the suntan oil. How was your flight?”

“I saw nothing much until the Grand Canyon and the Rockies; I really have to get out more. We landed in L.A. briefly, and when the new Hawaiian crew came aboard it finally hit me that I was really heading for Eden. Alice is going to make-up us all up later!”

“Good pun, Laura,” I remarked. We headed up.





Cho offered, “We’re getting clothes for you, too, my dear Patrick; I’m sure you’ll love them. Are you going to write up an overview of our programing project?”

“Yes, you guessed it. I thought about it at the fort.”

Cho replied, from Coleridge,

*“Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.”*

and then someone interrupted old Coleridge’s opium trance and he never wrote another word to the poem.”

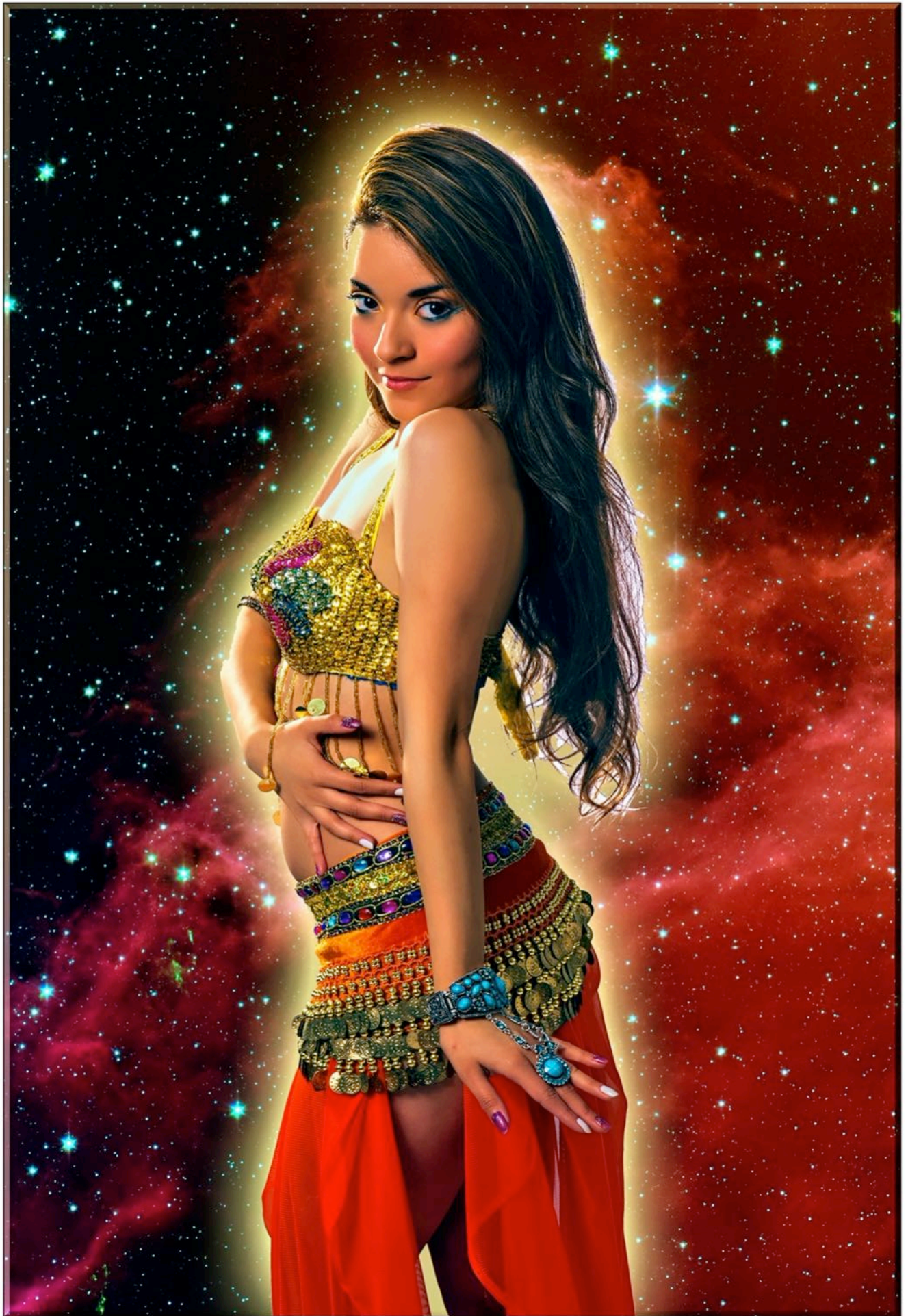






...

I finished my my work, and they their shopping and their make-up. Alice was dressed as a Chinese Elf, Laura was a bejeweled belly dancer, and ...





... and Cho was a flowered, nature, fairy-elf combo.



(And here I am above, as an elf, posing for a picture.)

We had someone take several photos of us all together. I said, "I'm going to send one of these to Mike so he can see his crack programming team at work!"





After the festival, we sat on a bench on the beach near the ocean, where all was quiet. Someone produced a joint, not that we even needed it, in this atmosphere.”

“You’re a wild dancer, Laura, and full of spirit,” Alice said, “What more can you tell us of you, if you dare?”

“My parents were from England, and so I guess that makes me kind of a Brit born in America, as I picked up a bit of the old accent. I’m a woman now, but I’ve only recently matured into one. Maybe I shouldn’t have written Patrick so many love notes; however, I did, in my exuberance for having a job and getting away from going back home after college, at which I studied biology and computer programming. Patrick never took advantage of my school-girl-like crush on him, leaving me plenty of room to grow, and he always invited me out with his friends to lunches, parties hikes, and whatnot. It’s been a whirl-wind that has hardly touched down, and now it’s a typhoon-size circulation within myself, but I am the eye.

“I’m up for both adventure and work; I am incredibly fit, and I really and actually enjoy hard physical work; I’m doing lots of yard things at home. I’d be good in the Army, but would hate to leave all my fashions behind.





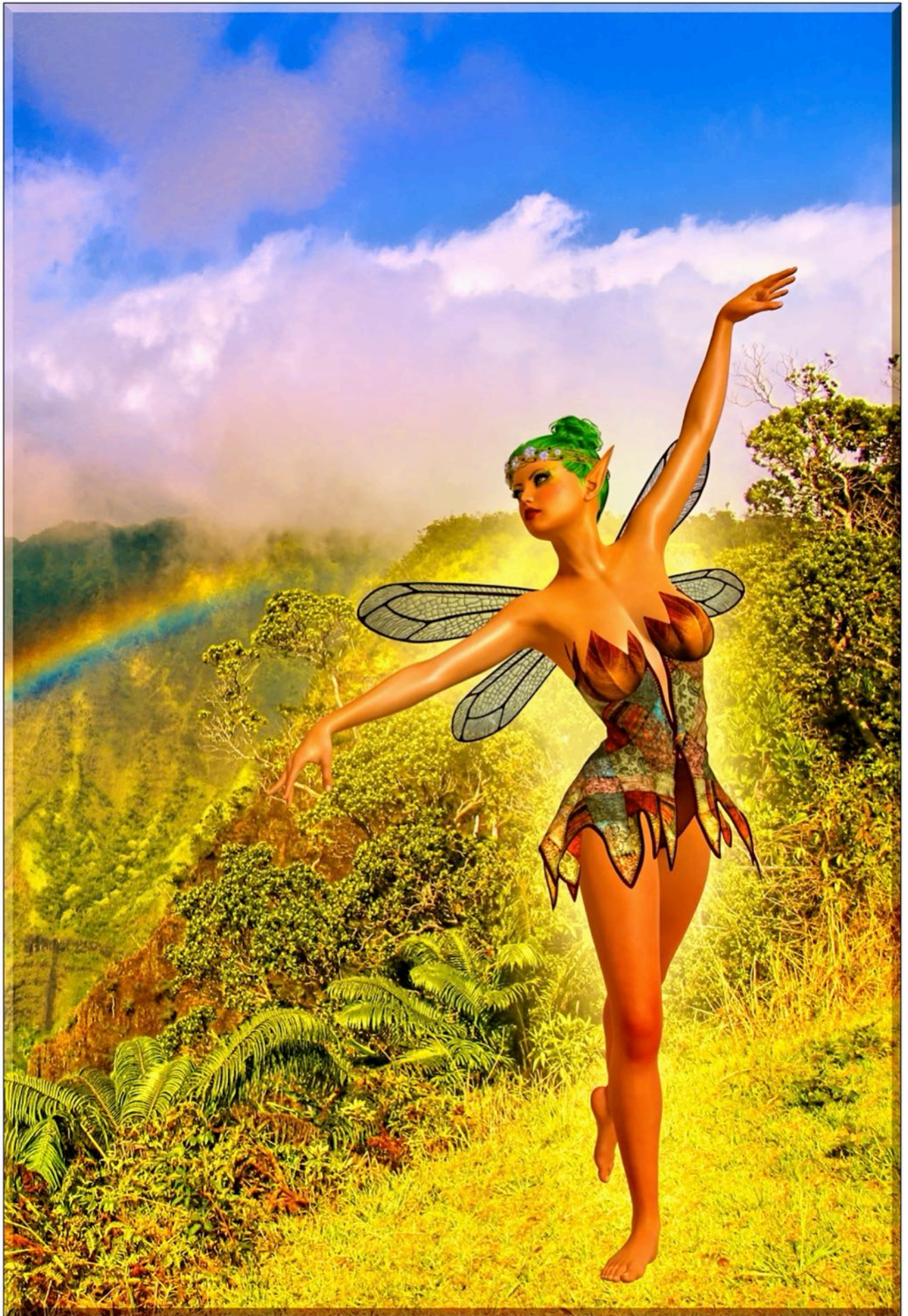
“I’m definitely open and honest, too; I have no pretense or secrets. I want to give my views about the best way forward, always preferring to be the driver rather than the passenger, but always happy to be an equal. Yet, I am also a complex young woman, due to my continuing growing pains, so I may appear to some as mysterious and enigmatic but I can be a living dream to the few, although I’m kinda hard work, too. Patrick knows me.”

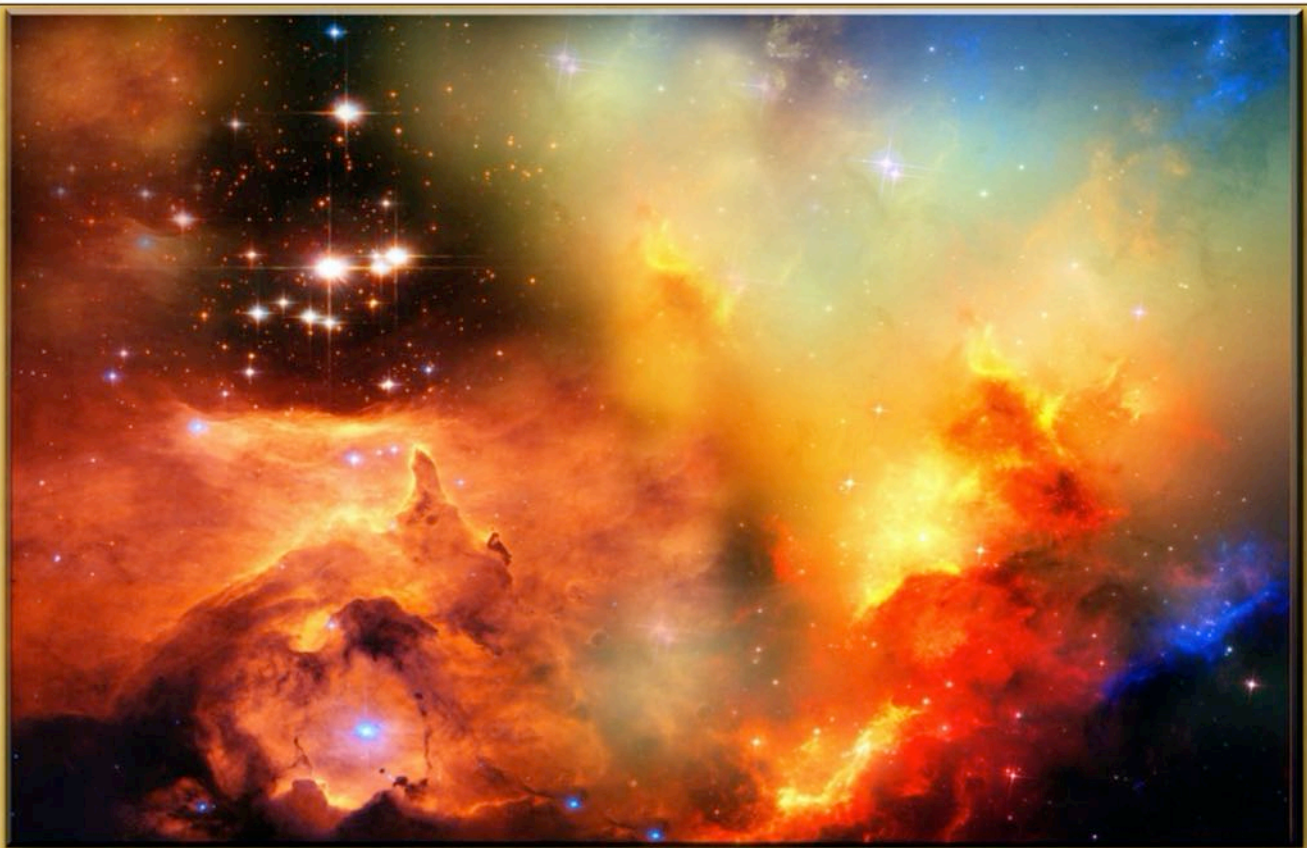
Cho asked, “Did you bring all those love notes?”

“I sure did! I scooped them back out of Patrick’s in-box.”

“It’s your night, Laura, as our new guest, for whatever you’d like tonight, tomorrow, or whenever. I think you’re old enough for Patrick now, if your crush still says so.”







“I am, Cho, and it does, and I’m also very surprisingly feminine and accommodating in romance, well, as of right now, anyway, and especially. There, I said it. Take me, you all! I’m free and flowing and on vacation.”

“OK,” Alice chimed in, “We’ll dump the love letters all over our king-size bed tonight, and we’ll all initiate you with pleasures, back scratches, rub-downs, kisses, loving, sex, and more. We can all sleep in tomorrow.”

“Sure, why not,” Laura answered, it’s really over the top but there must be something in the air, here, exciting the passions, and injecting one with super spring fever, where living dreams qualifies one to the max, with the mysterious and the enigmatic adding to the intrigue.”

“I added,” In Hawaii, we are overcome by the enchantment, and more than a few melt right into you with their glances. It’s a really live and ‘dangerous’ minefield.”





“Speaking of sensualness,” Alice said, “it appears that it is behind much of advertising, especially that of cosmetics and fashion, which hit me all the more during a course I’m taking now, concerning beauty, which I’d like to pursue on the side, along with more physics, which also demonstrates another kind of beauty and truth.

“Sure, we want to look our best, through make-up, fashion, jewelry, and the other accouterments, but then there is ever the underlying component of attracting the male, as like bees to the flowers, which we discriminate.

“We are complete in our range of studies, here, in that my physics and cosmology studies underlie Cho’s chemistry courses, wherein such as perfumes can be made from molecules from physics’s atoms, which chemical realm underlies Laura’s biology investigations, as like perfumes’ effect, all of these taken in through Patrick’s thoughts about the human condition, in life and love.





“And including all the horrors, too, that can be visited upon us, which Patrick has seen firsthand, along with all of our dwellings on our metaphysical wonderings connecting them all, and that’s my story for tonight.”

“Well done,” said Laura, “I have a slightly horrible story of terror that comes to mind that I remember from a literature class as a special assignment in poetry that shows life is not all peaches and cream, but...”

“Laura,” Cho assured, “we ever tell each other whatever we like or what comes to us, whether profound, funny, day-dreams, or whatever. This keeps our minds going.”

Alice added, “And the full moon is out and glowing, seeming to have risen right out of Diamond Head, it devouring the slight clouds and bathing us in its shine.”

“OK”, answered Laura, but it might be a bit frightening.”



## THE WARNING

*'Be quick!' he shouted, 'Run, get out, and scatter while ye may!  
'Do not tarry and do not wait, for evil comes this way!'  
A dozen eyes looked up in fear, yet distrust curbed their haste,  
'Who is it comes? What have ye seen?' an old man asked at last.*

*The stranger turned his glassy gaze towards the huddled crew,  
'A dreadful sight that burns the eyes and turns the brain to stew.  
'A beastly, foul and fiendish thing and – oh that odious smell!  
'But you must hurry, leave this place while yet still whole and well.'*

*A murmur rose among them then, but one thought to resist,  
And from the quiet corner, still the old man's voice persists,  
'Is it a man or devil's horde? And which way does it come?  
'How big is it? What of its shape? Or is it just phantom?'*

*The stranger's breath caught in his throat as visions came to mind,  
'It moves like nothing moves on Earth and no man's seen its kind.  
'Oh God!' he cried, 'It's everything that's evil, bad and vile,  
'Its impish breath's obnoxious and corrupt its vicious smile.'*

*The old man's gaze was steady as he locked the stranger's stare,  
'How big is it? Does it have eyes – or teeth or horns or hair?'  
'Oh, teeth like no teeth ever seen and eyes that are not eyes.  
'It steps and jumps and slithers as it rolls and crawls and flies.'*

*The stranger looked around and then he moved towards the door.  
'But I'll not linger here,' he said, 'I'm bound for distant shores  
'And ye'd be well advised, I think, to heed the words I say,  
'For though ye doubt, ye soon will see that evil comes this way.'*

Laura paused, "I showed it to Patrick way back, he saying, 'What kind of ravenous hell hound is this demonic creature?', and then he eventually wrote what turned out to be the middle of it, for I then added more pearls after his part, after which he gave me a kiss on the lips, and so I thought, 'What are kisses but the prelude to consummation? And I lived on that thought."





*The stranger opened the door, and gazed to his right,  
Then turned to the old man, his face all full of fright,  
"It's here!" and quickly ran off, toward his boat ashore,  
But the old man saw no creature nor heard any roar.*

*Yet the stranger went hurtling on down to the stream,  
Then stared back in dread, while untying the rope.  
The old man thought: The specter was an opium dream,  
For no one beast can fly, roll, crawl, slither, and lope.*

*As the old man sat, relieved, a rumble shook the floor,  
Followed by a grim roar, so he leapt up, to the door.  
There it swept, demon-eyed, rolling, as a snaking coil,  
Jumping the roadside log, then crawling through the soil.*

*It flew down the river bank, steadied by its flaring tail,  
Landing on the rope just released by the stranger,  
Who had now jumped into the boat to give it some sail,  
Yet the creature had set fins and crept into the water.*

*The stranger rowed hard, but the beast was closing in.  
He'd dropped the sail, but it hadn't yet taken the wind.  
The creature bit off an oar, it getting stuck in his teeth,  
While a gust filled the sail, pushing the boat out of reach.*

*The beast was whirling, screwing onward, all the more,  
So the stranger began to circle back around, as to shore,  
Heading his bow toward the devilish brute, to the clash,  
To the do or be done in point taken, now forced as rash.*

*The creature propelled faster, driven by evil's anger;  
The stranger steered the rudder, heading into danger.  
The sharp bow split the ogre's head near in half;  
The bow then separated, all the way to the mast.*

*The mast hard crashed down, onto the stunned fiend,  
Lifting the stranger from the stern and flinging him  
Through the air, onto the monster, whose reflex mean  
Was to tighten its coil, through which roil, none could swim.*

*The old man had rushed through the dust, to the stream,  
Seeing all, then the whirling pool of blood, and a scream.  
They had both gone beneath, and run out of breath;  
He dove in, and swum, under, noting the peace of death.*



*Thinking all was past and done,  
The old man went back to his chums.  
'Ok', he said, 'p'raps I was wrong,  
The stranger was right all along.'*

*'Still, there's no need to worry now,  
I saw the critter sink below.  
The stranger's gone as well, I fear.  
Still, we are safely gathered here.'*

*Just then they heard a fiendish shriek,  
The door flew open with a creak,  
And there, a mutilated corpse  
Stood grinning at their screams and gawps.*

*'Did you think evil so soon dead?'  
It blubbered through its shredded head,  
'One incarnation just gives way,  
Allowing new ones to hold sway.'*

*It slithered, rolled and flew inside,  
Enjoying how its victims cried.  
'Now, ye would run!' it laughed and danced,  
'A pity you'll not get the chance!'*

Laura had finished, saying, "That's it, and that is enough for one to wonder, but it's only a story. Now, Patrick, what of our glorious project to save IBM?"

"We need to consolidate the data and turn it into wafer layouts, probably having to run one or two new lines for the new technology in between what we have, moving things to make room, but space we have aplenty. Alice can do the whole back end, and I'll do the middle."

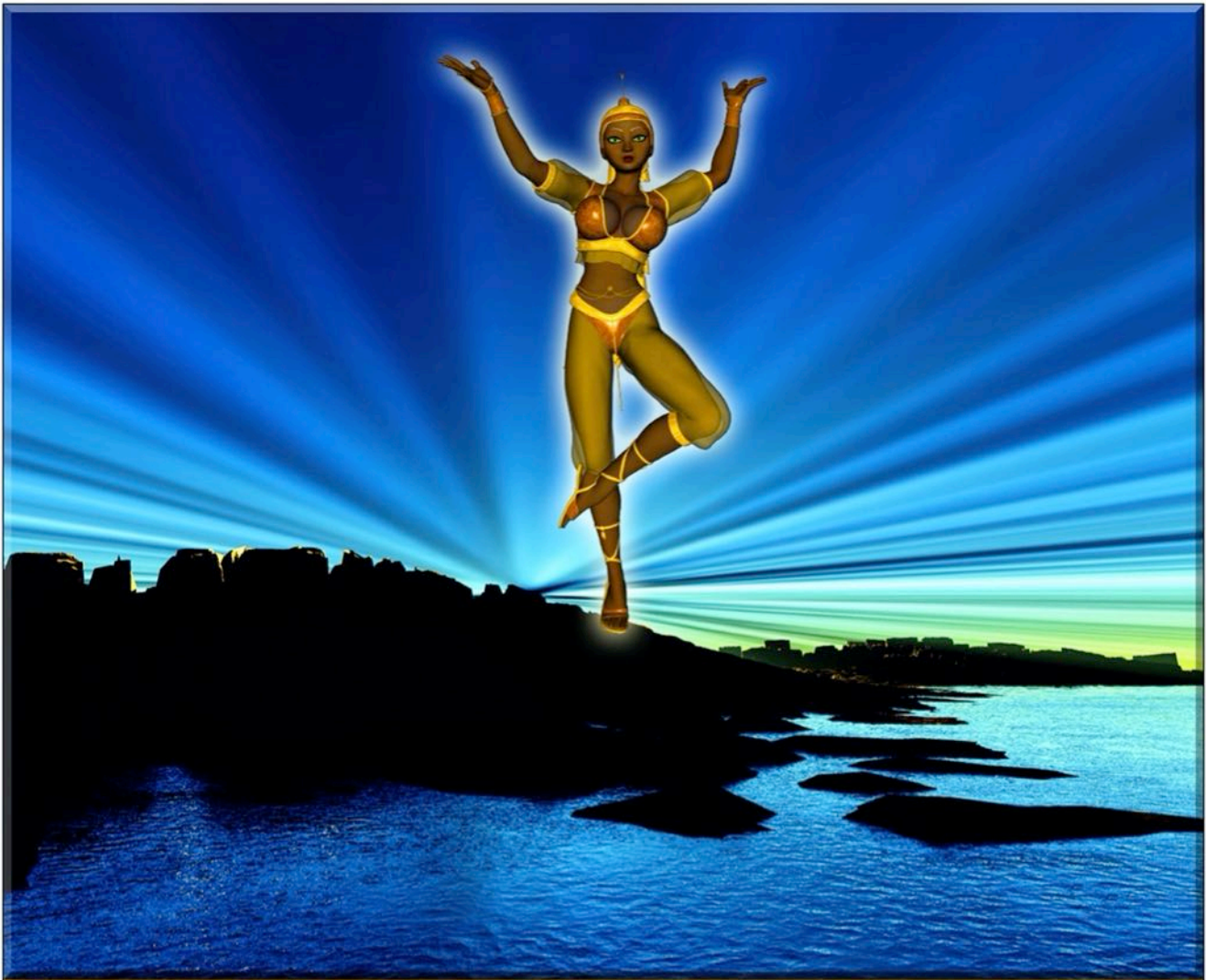




“Laura, you are well poised to do the front end, being familiar with it. We first need to compress what’s in the large and unwieldily fat logic segments, which were useful for the bit level for the Validation Tests, but not for our purposes. Most of the traced internals will be the same or similar for the whole 32 bit registers, so you can start by including what is common to the whole register in a new record, then for all the subsequent bit just put what changes, and write this all on a new tape. It can be done pretty much sequentially. That will get us going, during which time, I’ll write up functions for any-one to work on. There’ll be a pile for what to do, one for listings still being worked on and getting fixed, and one for completed ones, and another for those tested. All will evolve; don’t worry.”

“It’s a bit scary,” Alice noted, “but I’m very up for it; meanwhile, I’ll analyze what Laura brought us. I loved Laura’s poem and I have a new cosmological one...”





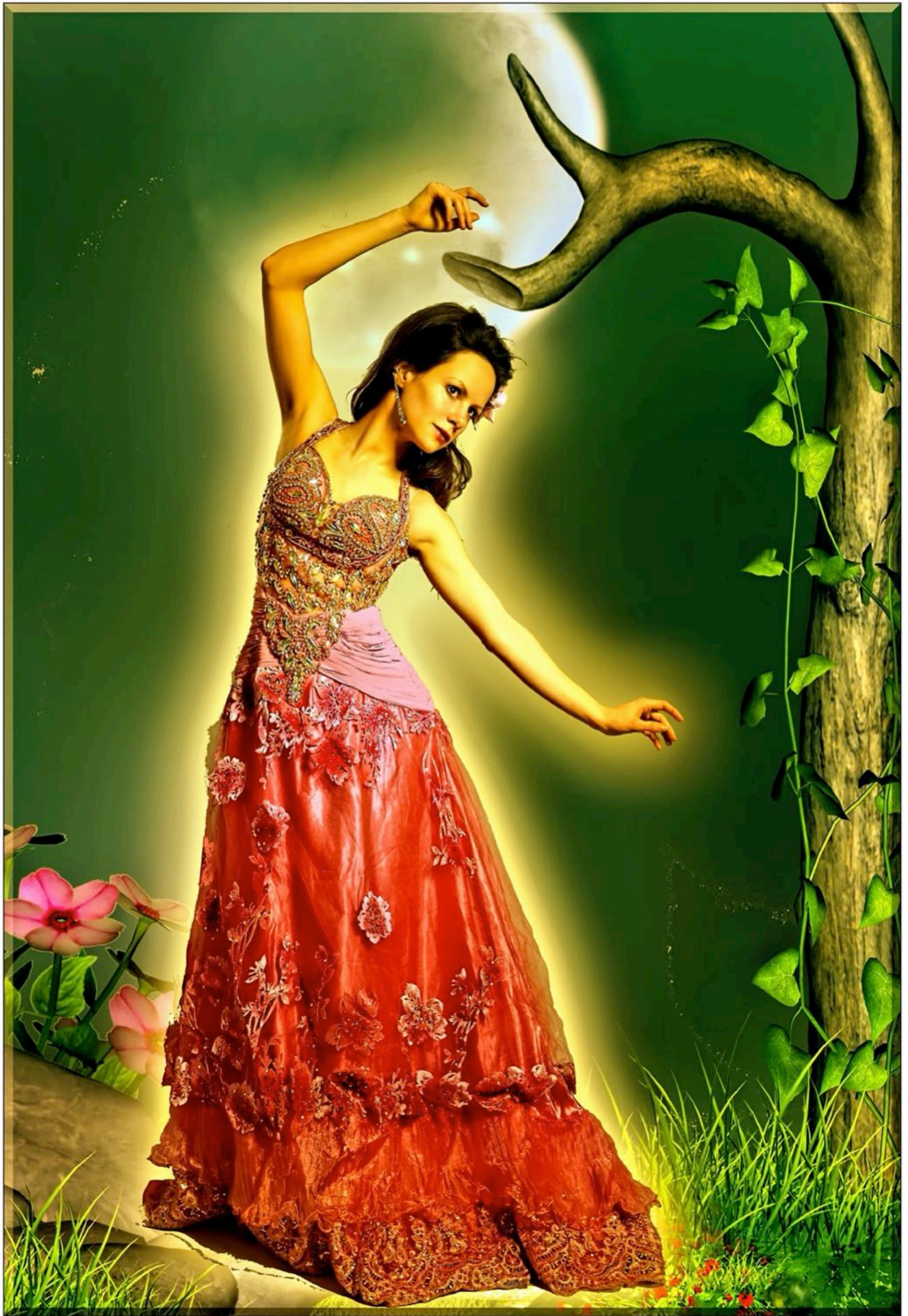
*Over a hundred billion galaxies and more exist overall,  
This realm being so large since the Planck is so small.  
We on our Earth are very near to the insubstantial,  
Our existence not at all elemental but circumstantial.*

*The continuing expansion will spread all unto the deep,  
Where the thinned out gruel lays itself down to sleep.  
And so this tells us what our beginnings ultimately meant,  
Which is nothing at all within this vast cosmic firmament.*

*To look for what endures in the ongoing cause,  
Turn to the basics, such as the conversation laws,  
For they, in summation, with infinite precision,  
Maintain from their depth all the other decisions.*

*Yet, the cosmos continues on, as it ever has done,  
And always will, all of quantum balanced as one,  
Heeding not the puff of smoke of rot  
That was once a tiny pale blue dot.*







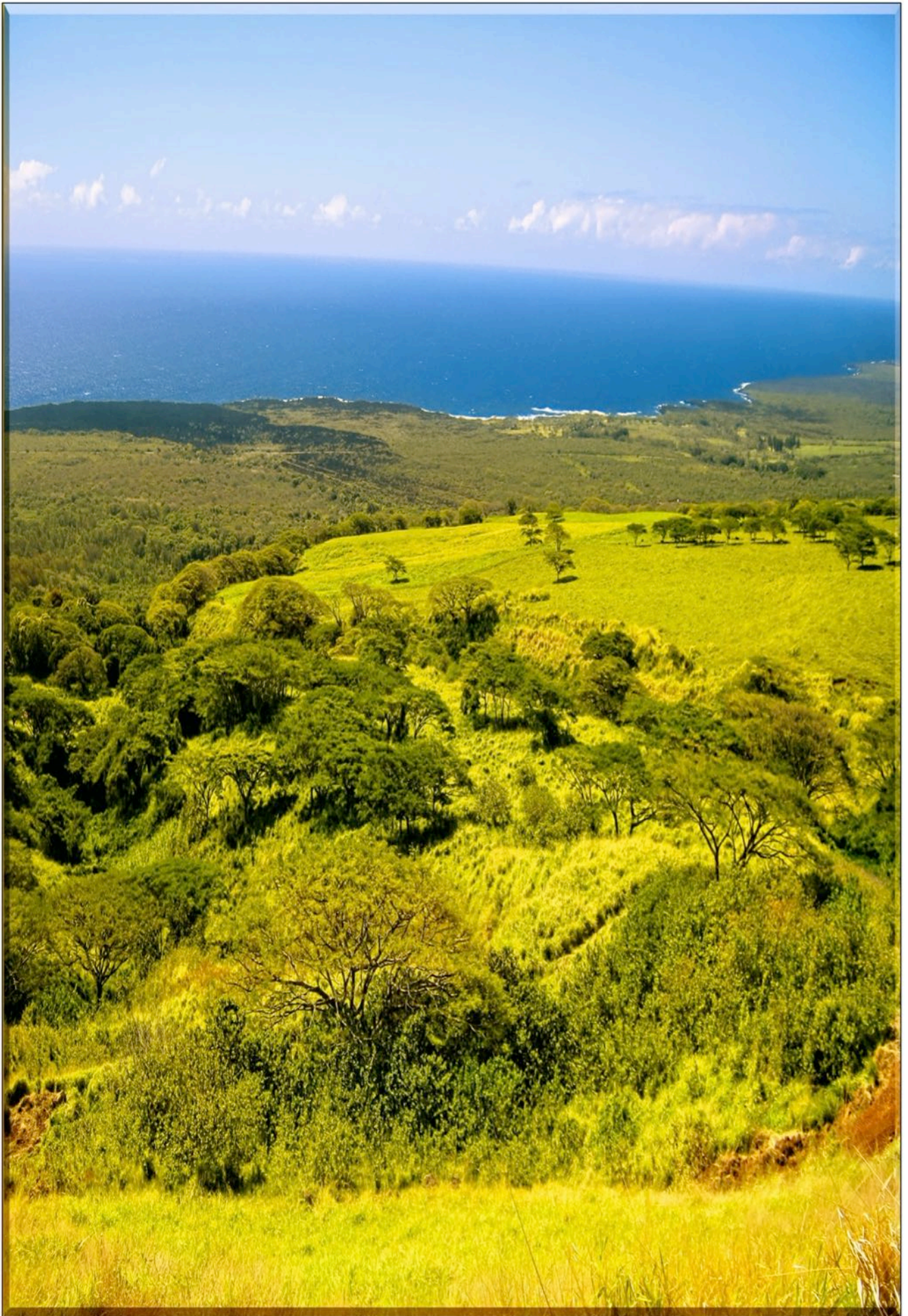


Cho stood up and said, “I’ve just made up a crazy time travel story in my head, and I’d like to try to tell it now. It’s not anything spectacular, but it just seemed to come to me, I know not where from, but perhaps it came from the future. It’s nothing, really.”

“We’re ready, even for any meandering streams.”

“I had liked our brief visit to the Big Island, so I boarded a flight to Hilo, Hawaii. Taking a ferry would have been long and slow, although delightful in its own way, but I was saving that for another time. Molokai, Maui, and Lanai passed beneath, off to the left. I even somehow have pictures of some of my fantasy journey!”







“Thoughts of essence pale away, within the brightness of living, just as they ought to, the light of the candle being more useful than why the wick burns, one’s felt state of being much closer to us than the states beneath that make it up, the adventures in a new land eclipsing the reasons that the place formed from lava mountains.

“I took out a map of southern Hawaii. There it was, South Point, and its beach, the very last southern landfall before Antarctica. Ah, here is the 12-mile dirt road on the map, off HY 11.



“I set off, with my backpack and a sleeping bag, and rented a Honda motorcycle, reaching the dirt road in half an hour. So far, it had been a rural area where not much English was spoken, except back at the airport, where there were only a few white faces.

“Palm branches were waving just overhead as I spun up dust on the trail that was called a road. In the winter, many arrived in this cheaper part of the archipelago, from the Northern Hemisphere, with a lot from Canada, a really cold place, and some even from hot places, like India, and in the summer from the southern hemisphere. It was ever like the United Nations on an outing.

“I drove up a mountain, toward its end, and we could see the ocean from there. This is where Patrick’s friend, Joe, lives, far off in the future. I was going to spy on them both, from afar, and then approach them later.









“I walked to the bushes on the side of the beach. The people of interest were sitting at a table, way across the beach, in the shade of a nook, with laptop computers, and Patrick was rolling cigarettes and selling them.

“It was windy, so he was just taking a pinch out of the green bag at a time. Some would pay and leave right away, but some would linger, and engage, and so they would get their cigarette for free, and some would remain for quite a while, probably negotiating a way to stay under their wing when their hotel time was up. Just can’t trust those girls!



“I surmised, ‘That must be Joe next to Patrick, and I can read his lips, with my glass, and, oh, it’s funny: Joe’s saying “I’m an old man! And soon to be a married man, on St. Patrick’s Day.” Well, so the girls are hitting on them, as would be expected, but they both look spry.’

“I approached Patrick, smiling, and he spoke, and then he offered, ‘Cigarettes, twenty-five cents, the going rate, but they have full flavor and they are long and hand rolled, free if you stay a while and talk.’

“I took one, relating, ‘Hand rolled, by your machine, now put away, as cranked really, Rio menthol pipe tobacco, \$8 a bag, put in a slot, with a little door that closes over, so as to have just the right amount, a little metal half-cylinder going out into paper tube.’

“He said, ‘How did you know? You didn’t even light it up yet.’

“I spied on you from those bushes way over there, from the past. I’m here, in my future, from way back.

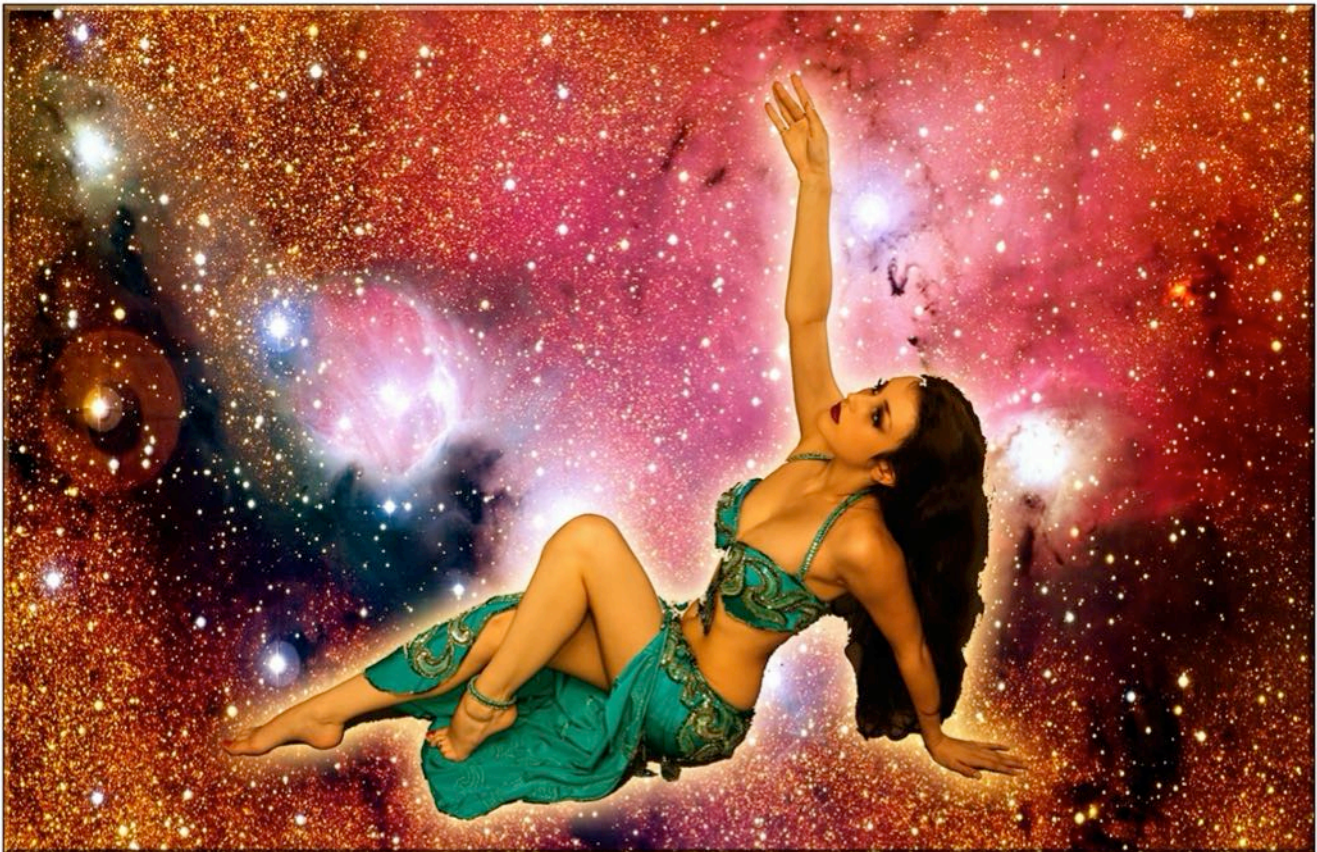
“‘Good, I like that, for you are prepared for this time.’

“I lit up, inhaling deeply, remarking, ‘Helps concentration, such as for figuring out reality, clear and dear, the most often wondered question on Earth’s sphere.’

“‘I am an old man who is still very young at heart, both for love and for philosophy.’

“And I am the one you seek; I am the seer, the oracle, the the sage—answering your SOS. We met, long ago, somewhere in time.





“Patrick nearly fell off his chair, and then did, as a joke, and then got up and gave me a hug, Joe adding a jug.

“I was thirsty, and drank a long gulp, saying, ‘Yes, I came all the way here, following your meta interests.’

“You are indeed Sherlock’s younger sister.

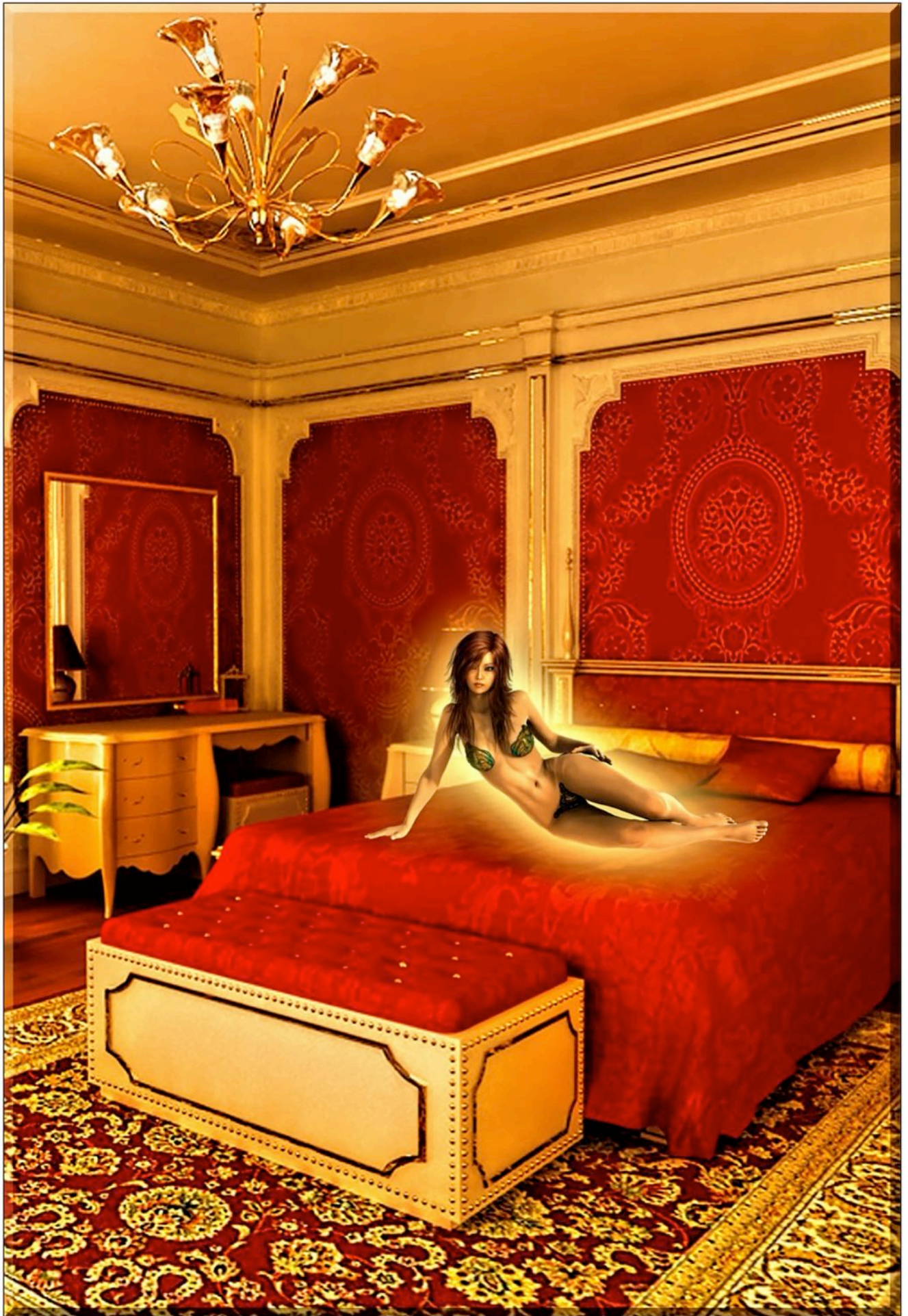
“And in deed, a detective.

“And I could hardly even get anyone interested...’

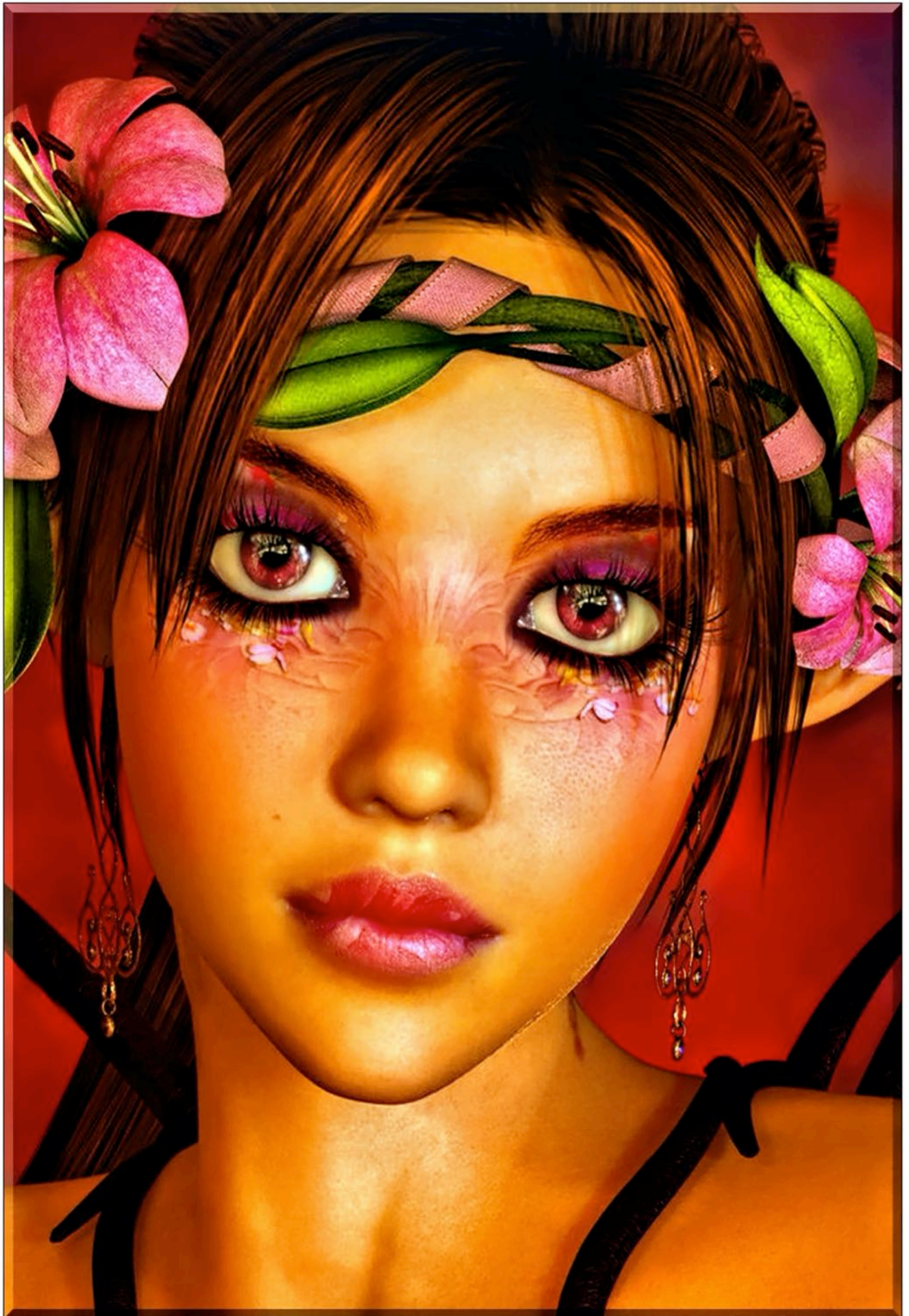
“We think alike; in fact, we are the same: both extrovert and introvert, sensing and intuitive, thinking and feeling, spontaneous and orderly, although INFP based.

“Patrick didn’t tell Joe that he’d known me all his life. That’s the end of the tale. I’ve glimpsed some kind of a future, from somewhere in the deserts of time’s time.”



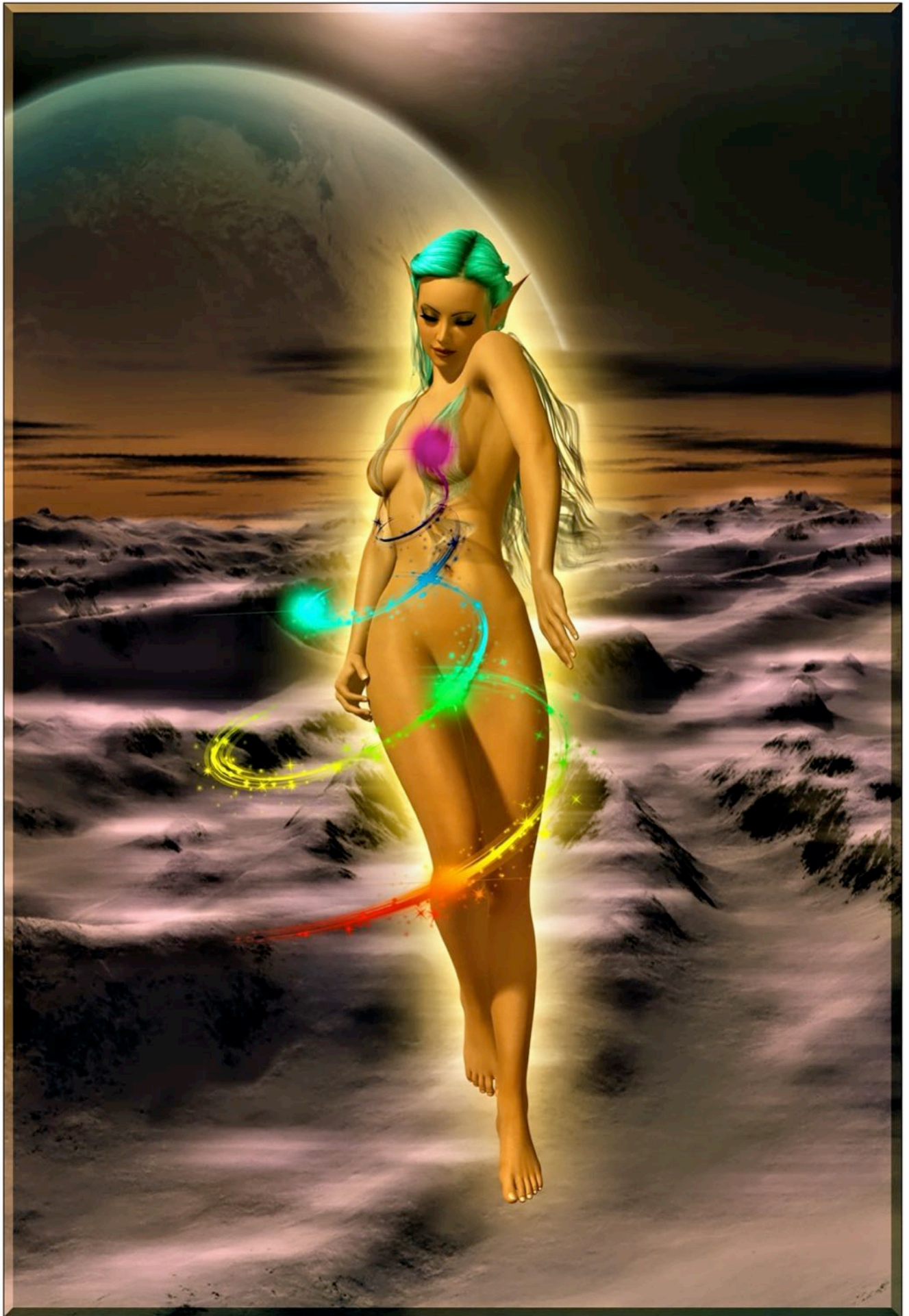






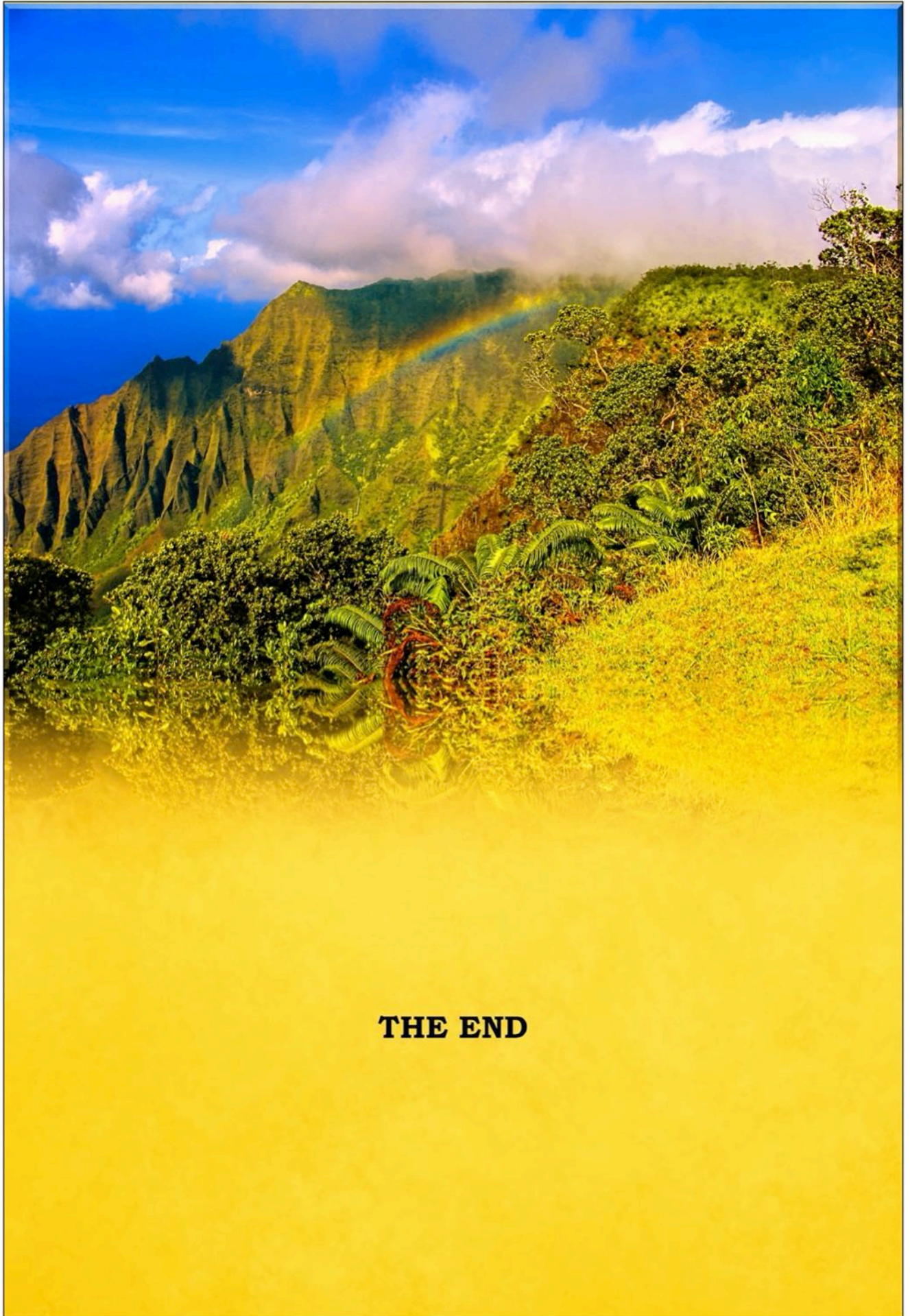


So, then, readers, here the last part of the story, 'Young Lives, Loves, and Words', ends its run, on this evening of promise, back in the past, and in the future in South Point on the Big Island.









**THE END**