

Omar Returns Rubaiyat



Austin P. Torney

Of this moonrise,
I am reborn today,
Having been whirling
within the Persian Way,
Untying entangled knots

of wild thoughts,

For I heard these
twisted quatrains' word play:

*Oh, come with the Ancients, and leave the Lot
Of Khayyam and FitzGerald forgot:
Let Omar cry "To Tavern" as he likes
Or Edward cry "Rubaiyat"—heed them not!*

*Proclaiming when Myth's lure was Man's whole Sky
All heard the Voices of the Ancients cry,
"Adore Him, Little ones, and fill His Cup,
Before His presence in your self goes dry."*





***And, as the Bells tolled, those who stood before
The Mosque shouted out—"Open up the Door.
You know how little while we have to pray,
And, once in Heaven, may worship no more."***

***Eden's Garden is gone with all its Rose,
And Heaven's Magic Tree where no one knows;
But still the Myth the ancient vision yields,
And still the patron in the Temple shows.***

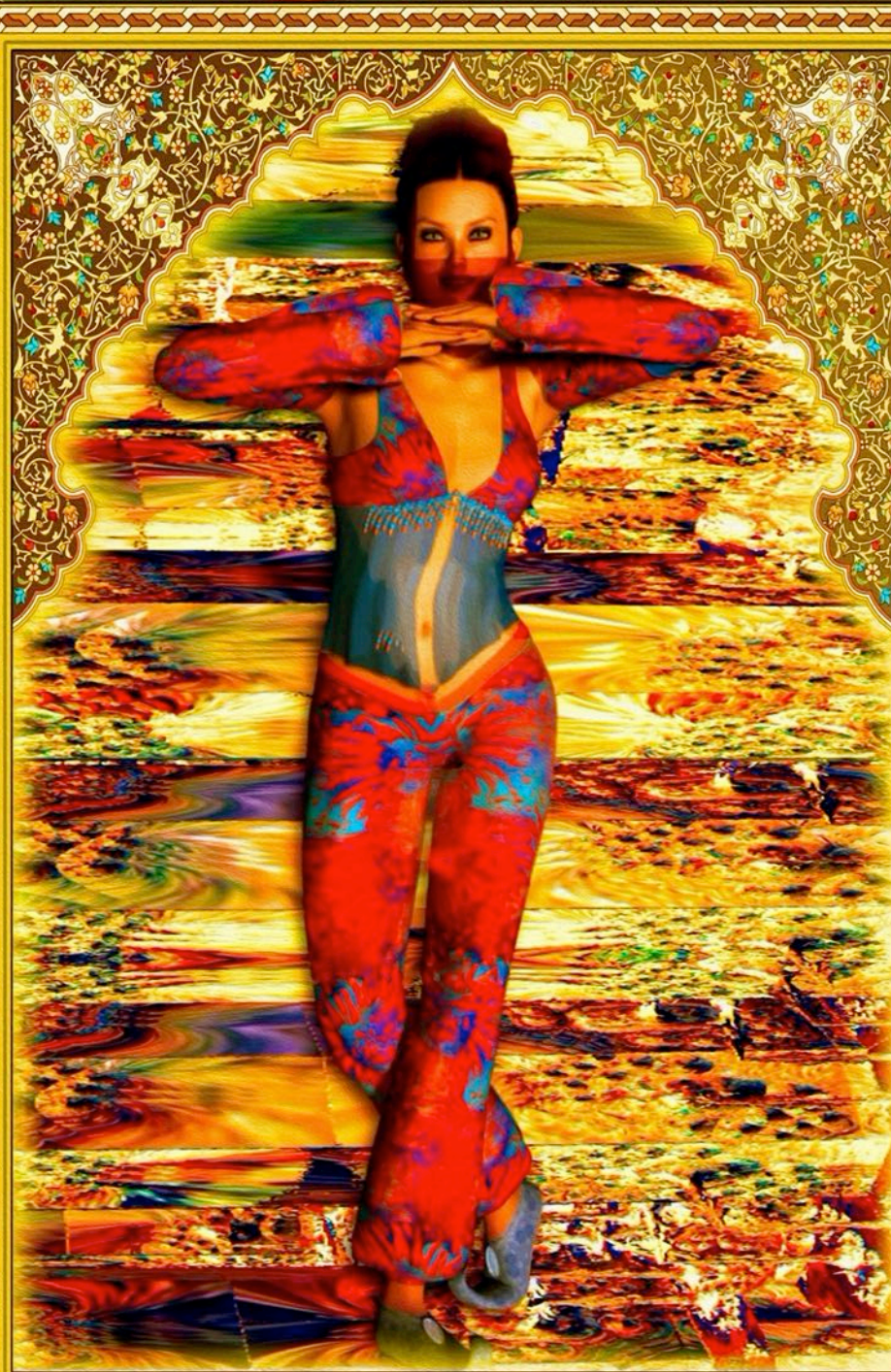
***A Book of Psalms unveiling the How,
The Blood of Him, His Body of Bread—and Thou
Beside me hymning in the Sanctuary—
Oh, the Worship House's Paradise enow!***

***The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts aplod
Turns Ashes—or it prospers, if well trod;
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Sod
It lights one little Hour or two for God.***





**Beware! for Dogma from the Dark of Night
Has Carved in Stone what puts Reason to Flight:
And Lo! the lasso of Blind Faith has caught
The human beings in its Noose of Fright.**

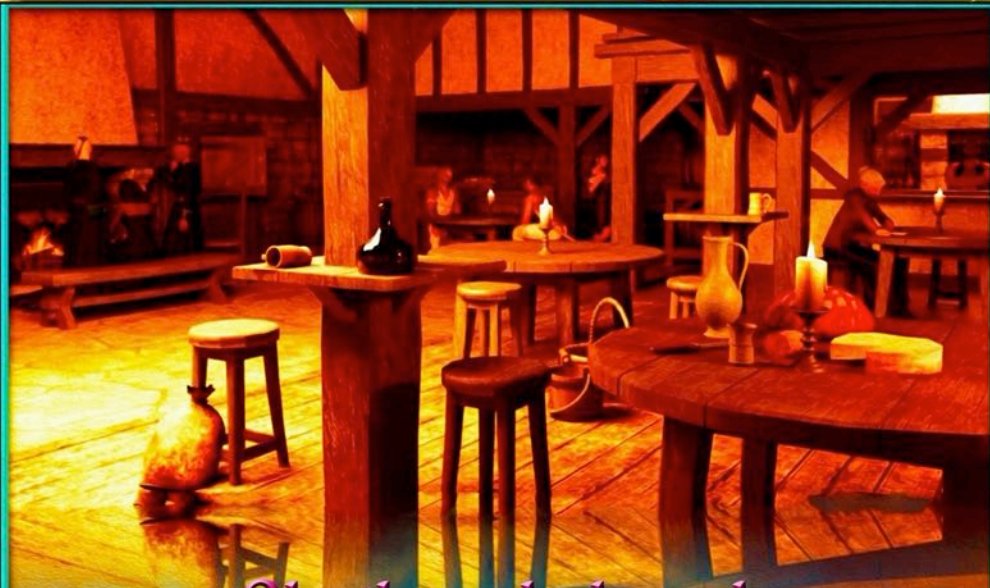


I don't much mind
what Idol they adore,

Nor what structures
about it they implore;

But, when they state it all
as truth and fact,
That misleads, at best,
and's dishonest more!





Oh, thou, beloved,
moon of my heart's delight,
I return, with new rhymes,
from the night,

To unlock, with philosophic logic,
The Secret of Existence
and man's plight.





We are ready to mix
the Witch's brew,

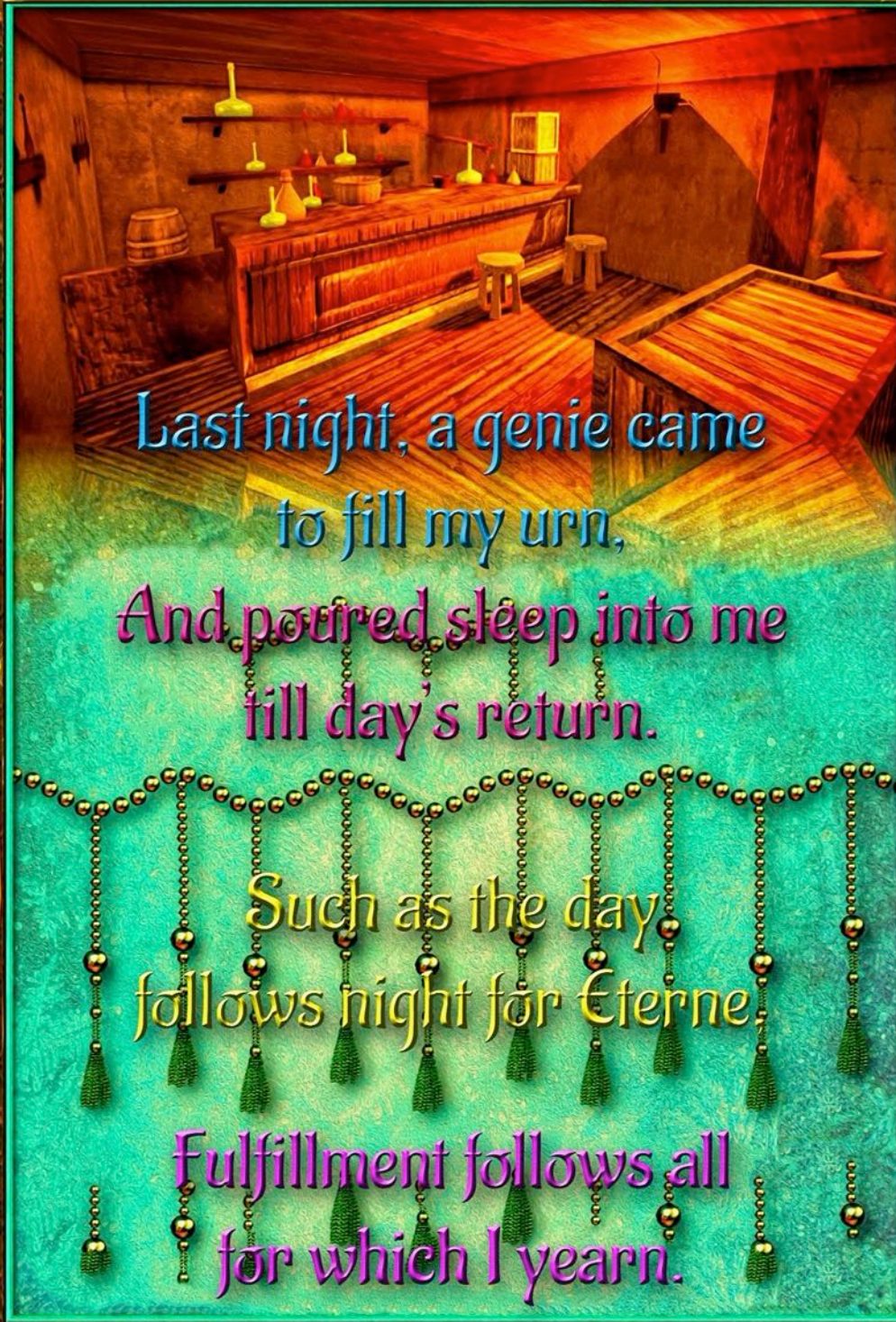
Of that endless energy
making me and you.

Stand back,
for when we tickle the tail

The dragon may laugh,
cry, or ach-choo.







Last night, a genie came
to fill my urn,
And poured sleep into me
till day's return.

Such as the day
follows night for Eterne

Fulfillment follows all
for which I yearn.



Starlight is the origin of our being
The source of matter,
energy; everything.
Permanent, reassuring,
unquenchable;
It's our radiant soul,
a self-winding mainspring.





Discourse, as with
a rich Persian carpet,
Can only be shown by extending it,



Spreading the beautiful
figures and shapes,

Inviting speech offerings into it





Here's a secret garden
half as old as time.

Where poets live and write
their words and rhyme.

While the nightingale
creates the rose,
By moonlight magic,
from their thoughts sublime.

The literary scenes unfold before us,
Such as music often approaches and surrounds,
And then builds on the vibrance which in one is—
To fill with beautiful visions and sounds.

Our quick thoughts rise, being mist from the dew,
As living dreams unveil more than we knew.
From poetry's light this garden grew,
Revealing mysterious wonders new.









Heaven's Great Wheel
e'er whirls its energy,
It having to turn and return,
to be,

Transforming, as ne'er still
—eternally,
Into life's temporary pattern—trees.

Change in the Eterne dooms forms' permanence;

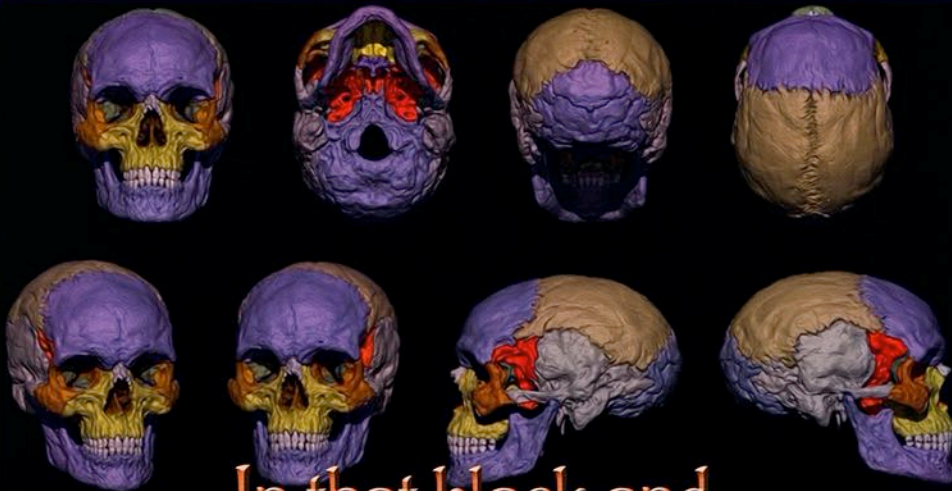
But the time required for their constructance

Restrains for a while the shapes' destructance;

Thus they can slowlytraverse some distance.



— The Wheel of Time —



In that black and
endless eternal deep,
Nature's fertile soil
grows us from sleep,



Sees us bud, flower,
leaf, thrive, and die,

Then lays us back to rest,
our souls to keep.

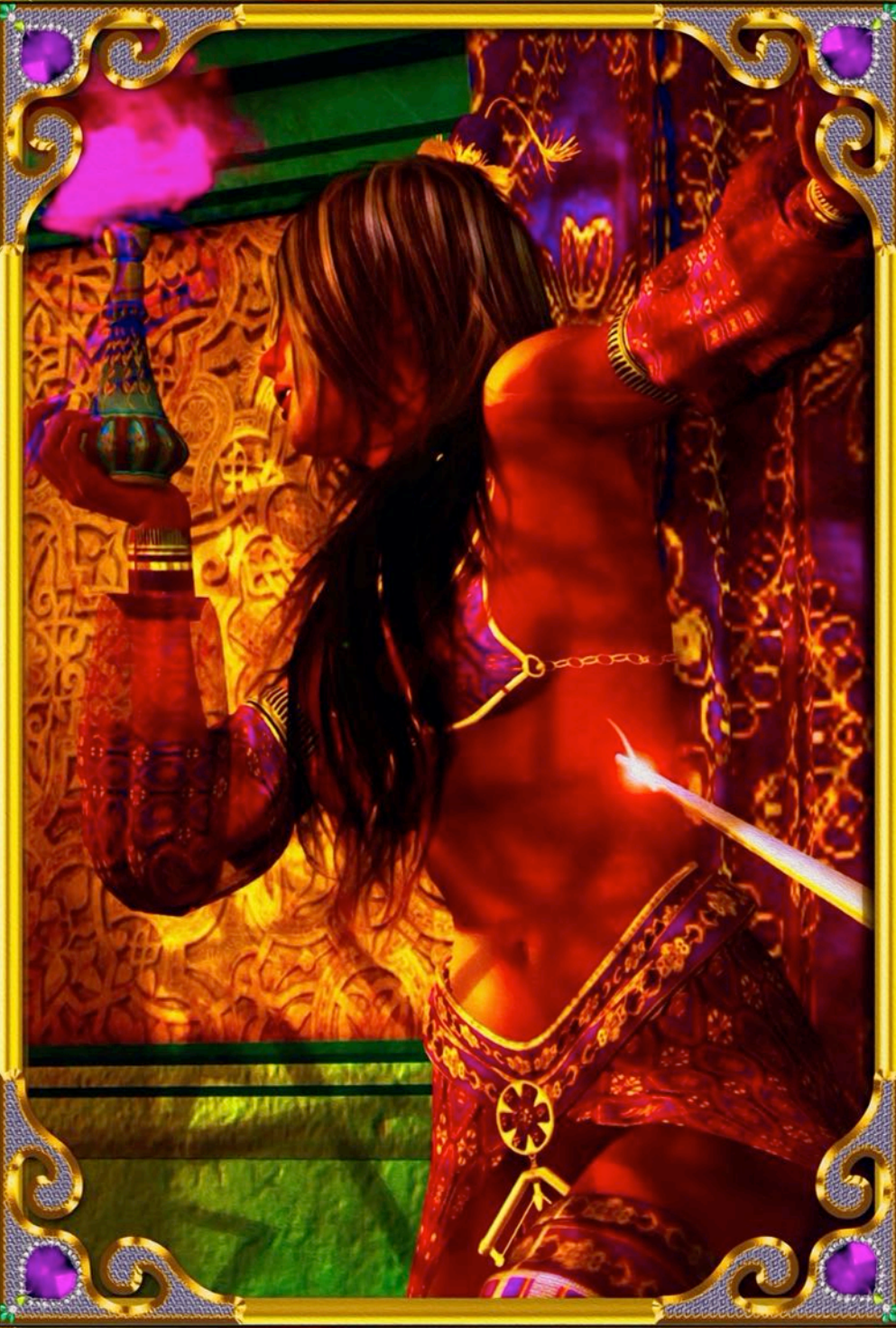




Night's mystical flight
of fulfilled desires

Heralds the day-star,
as darkness retires;

The Sun subsumes the stars,
fire-paints the dawn,
And captures
the Sultan's holy spires.





People are like stained-glass
windows without:
They sparkle and shine
when the sun is out,
But when darkness sets in,
their true beauty
Is revealed only
if there's light within.





Love's spirit weaves the soul's
warp, weft, and wave,
Creating an eternal, perfect braid.
Wound from strands of Truth,
Goodness, and Beauty;
Each different forms,
but from the same All made.



Our mental fabric
quilted truths have been sown.

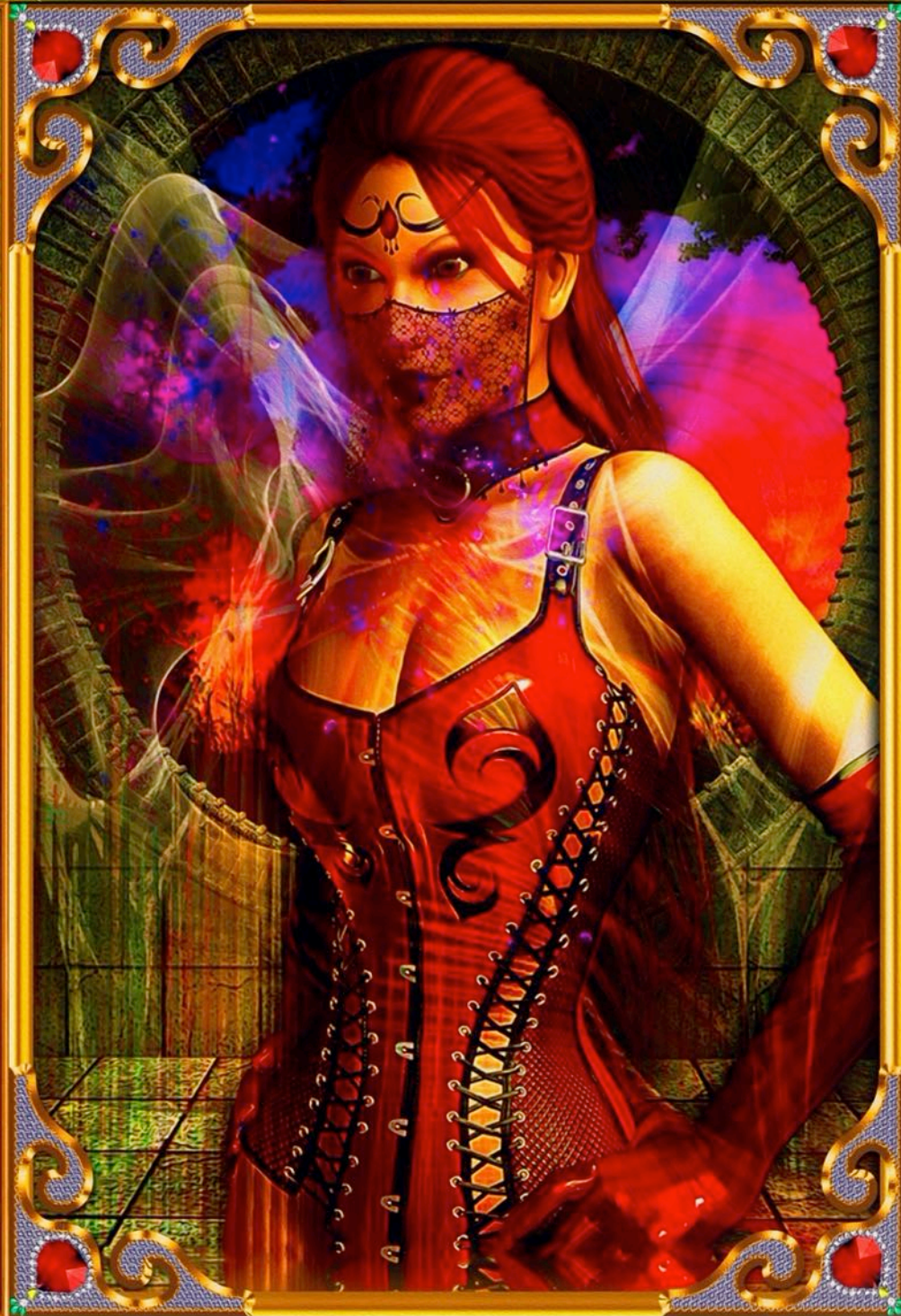
By evolution, as what
wove and wooed the known.

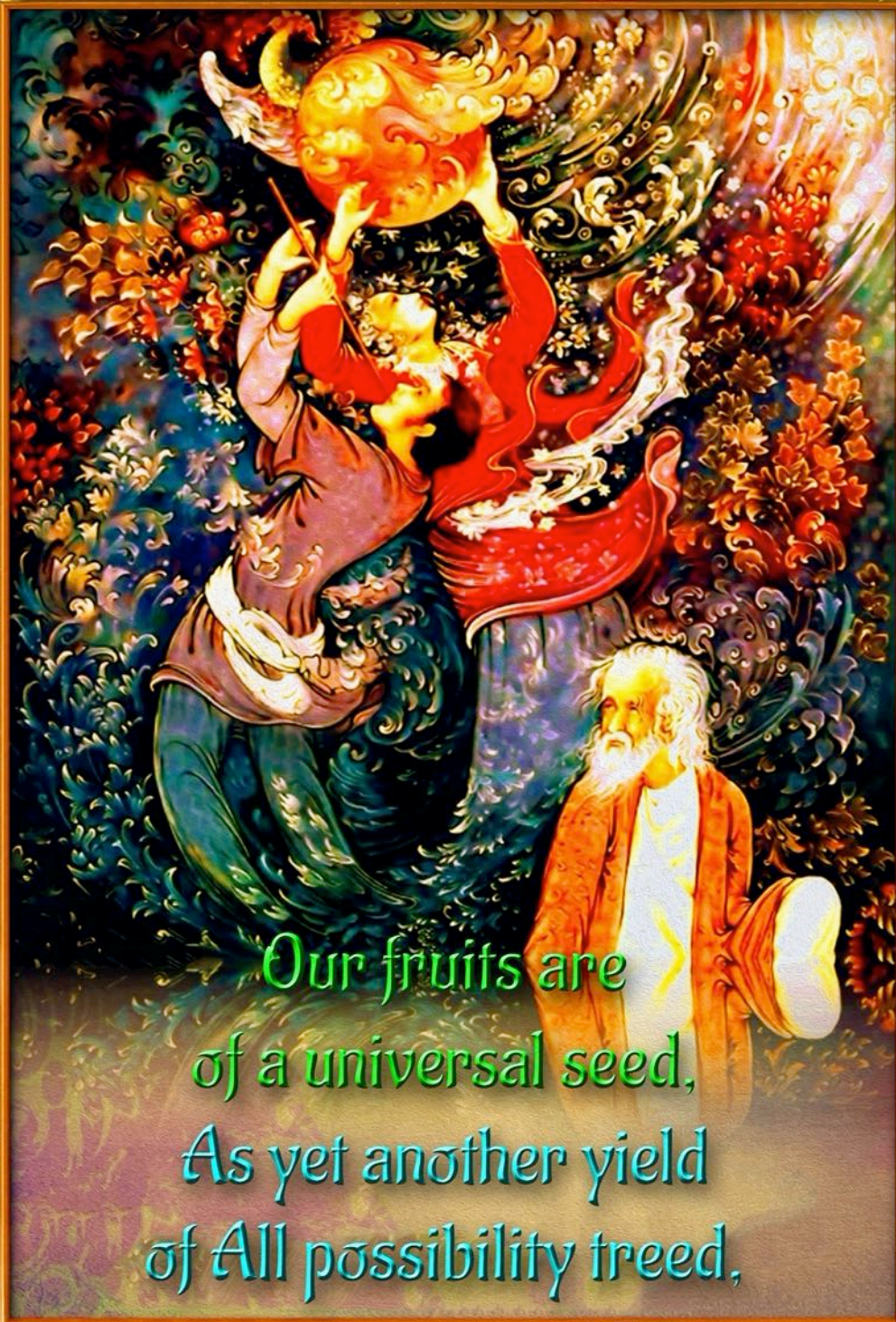
At first we admire
but a few strands unknown,
Then blend the weave and weft
—all the beauty shown.

I'm the All and the One,
present-Omni,

For I'm eternal
and can neither be

Created nor destroyed,
being my own cause
And the Ground of All—
I am Energy.

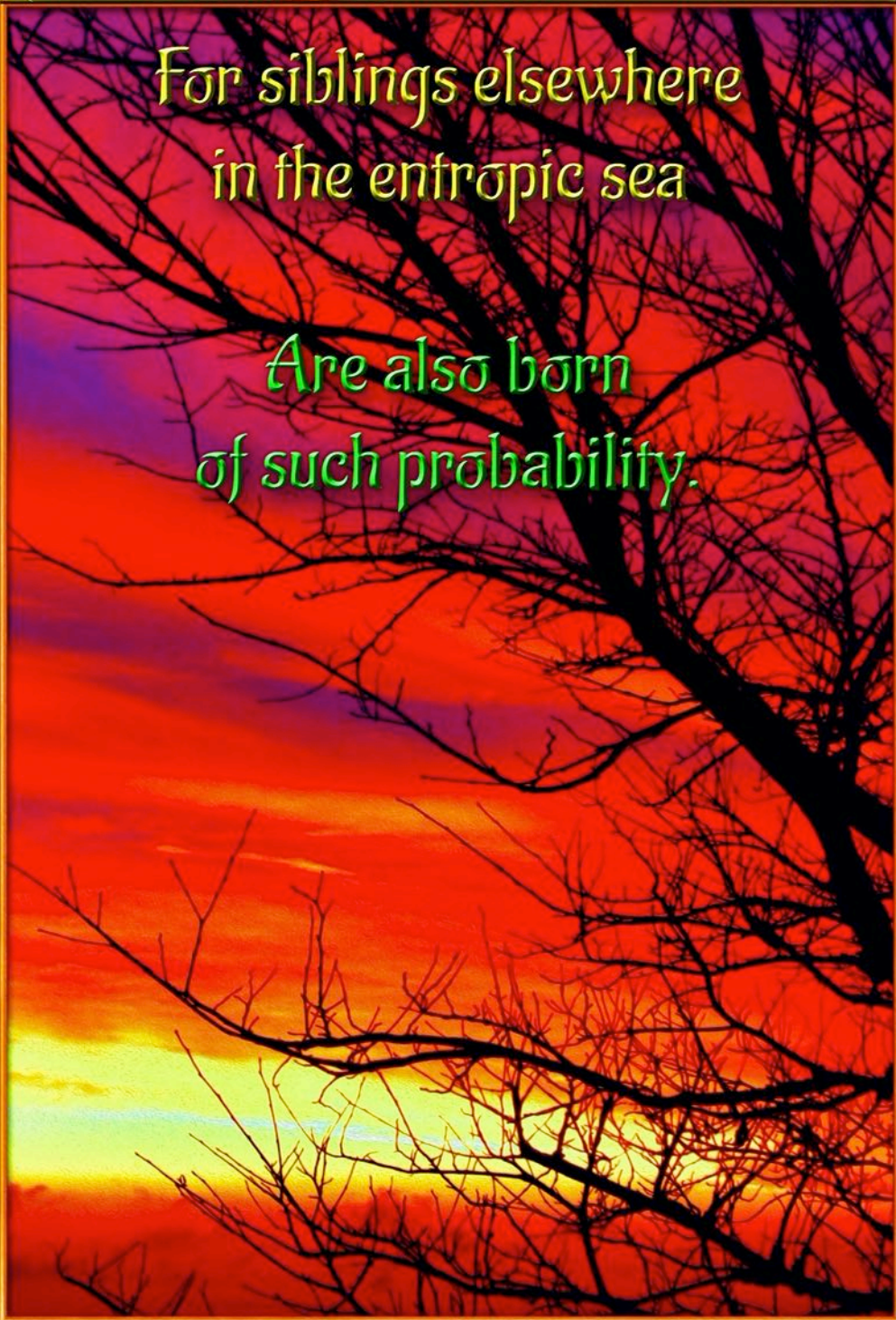




Our fruits are
of a universal seed,
As yet another yield
of All possibility treed,

For siblings elsewhere
in the entropic sea

Are also born
of such probability.





There could not have been
any special time,
One that was privileged
over any other chime,
Nor any special place
nor any specific form
Arising out of the
necessarily causeless realm.



— The Cosmic Order —



**All possibilities must exist,
Because nonexistence cannot be so.
Existence is inevitable. *What does exist?*
Whatever is possible to exist does exist.**

**'Possibility' is what's fundamental,
For all that can be must first be possible.
This 'Potential' for All is the default,
Since a Not can't be, nor even be meant.**

**The necessity of no One and no None
Makes for no absolutes, which means
That time, space, matter, and motion
Have no intrinsic, indivisible qualities.**





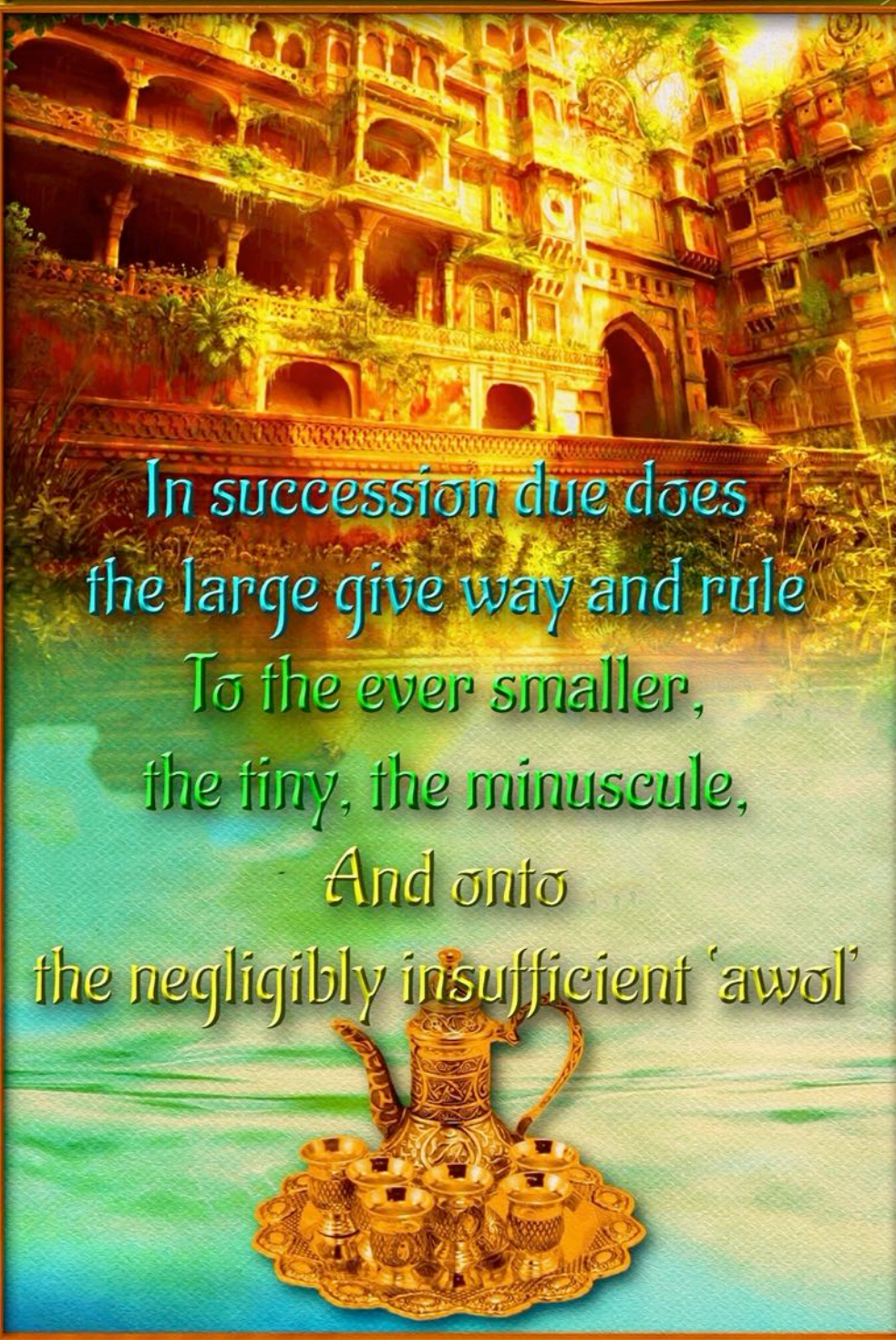
Light peels information
off the object;

Air waves carry
vibrations select;

Odors are molecules
brought to inspect;

Reality's but in
what mind connects.





In succession due does
the large give way and rule
To the ever smaller,
the tiny, the minuscule,
And onto
the negligibly insufficient 'awol'



Of not really much

of anything there at all.





**Down... where the mind whirls round and round,
As the ear draws forth the echoing sound,
As the eye sees the light, and of the dark the fright—
We brave the crypt of cause in the depths of night,**

**Beyond all death, despair, love, and sorrow,
Past yesterday, today, and tomorrow...
To the fathoms of the cryptic,
Where substance slept with arithmetic,**

**Toward the spark yet nursed by embers,
To the first and last the universe remembers—
To seek the gem that shines—the wealth of mines,
The jewels so treasured by thee and thine.**



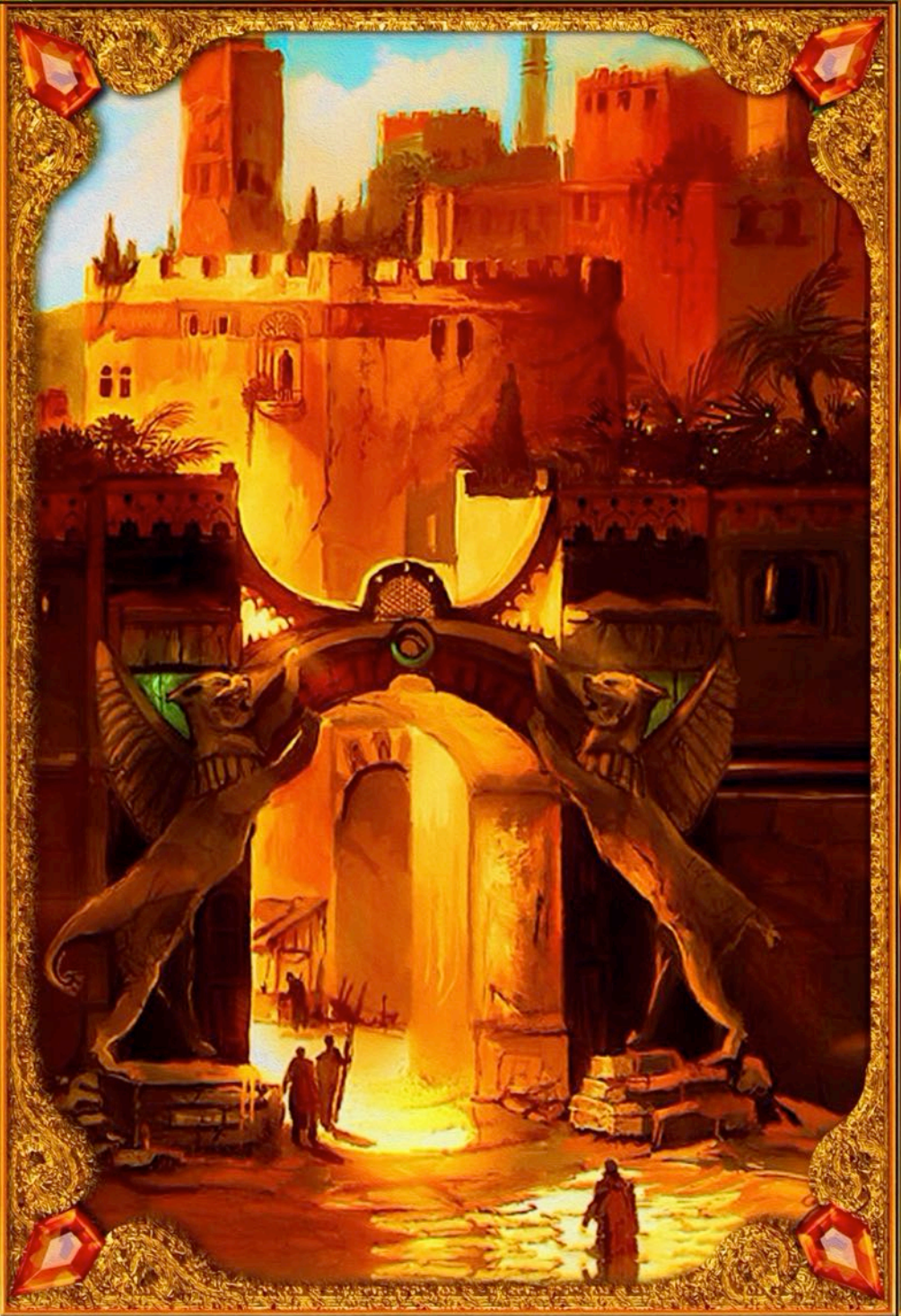




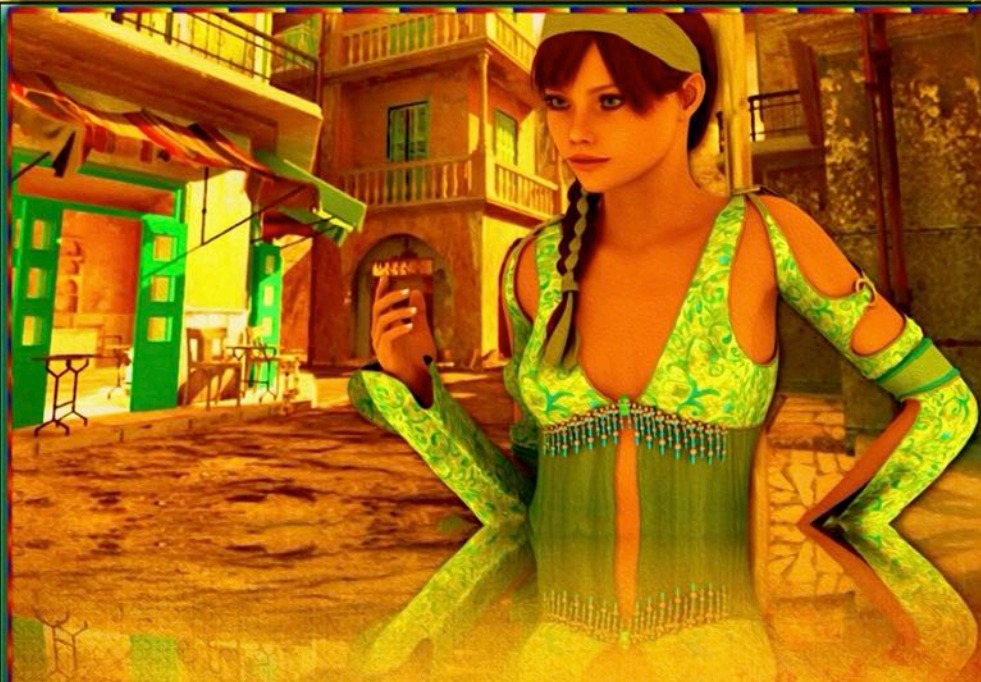
**Knowing that we can't solve all life's mysteries
Frees us from that senseless task of misery.
We can see, hear, smell, feel, and drink in all
Reality that penetrates sensibility.**



**Art and poetry enrich human experience,
But they're no substitutes for the living of it.
Like the figures on an urn, should we live life less?
No, because what is deathless is also lifeless!**







**Loss is painful when leaves fall, but we cope;
As always, new attachments form, with hope,
For the seasonal cycle mirrors all:
Life is a generous kaleidoscope!**

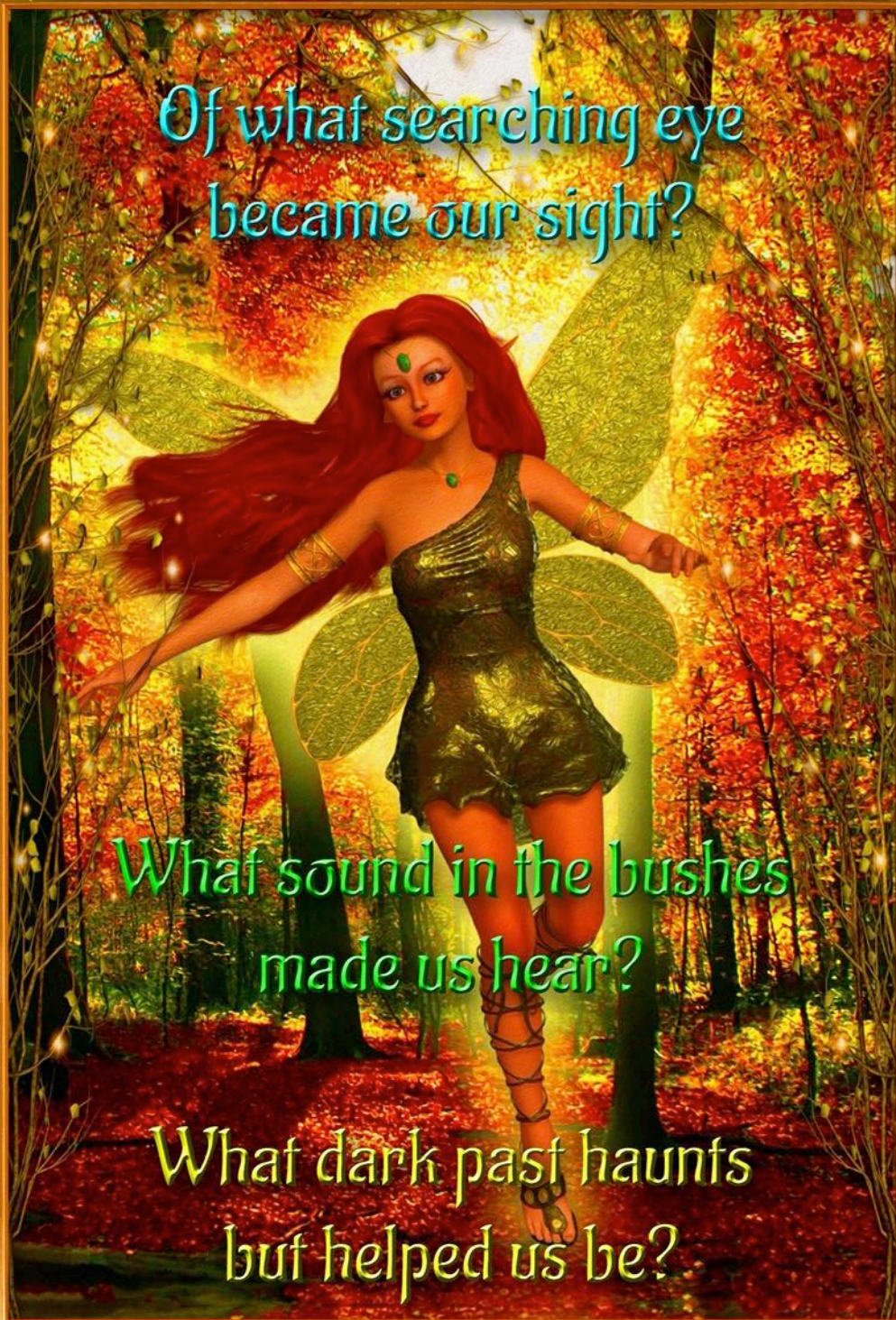


**For those of us who ignore life's romance:
Ignorance, like shadow, has no substance.
The shade is removed by the light within—
Feel the rhythm of the universal dance!**





From what beastly heart
sprung our zest?



Of what searching eye
became our sight?

What sound in the bushes
made us hear?

What dark past haunts
but helped us be?



**Might I be your angel, enfolding you,
Shining brightness upon you, holding you,
Nurturing, and carrying you aloft,
Where you belong, dear, far above it all?**

**Like living lenses, we mirror our love:
In feedback loops, images spiral above,
Echoing as infinite reflections
That fill up the scene—that's what love's made of!**





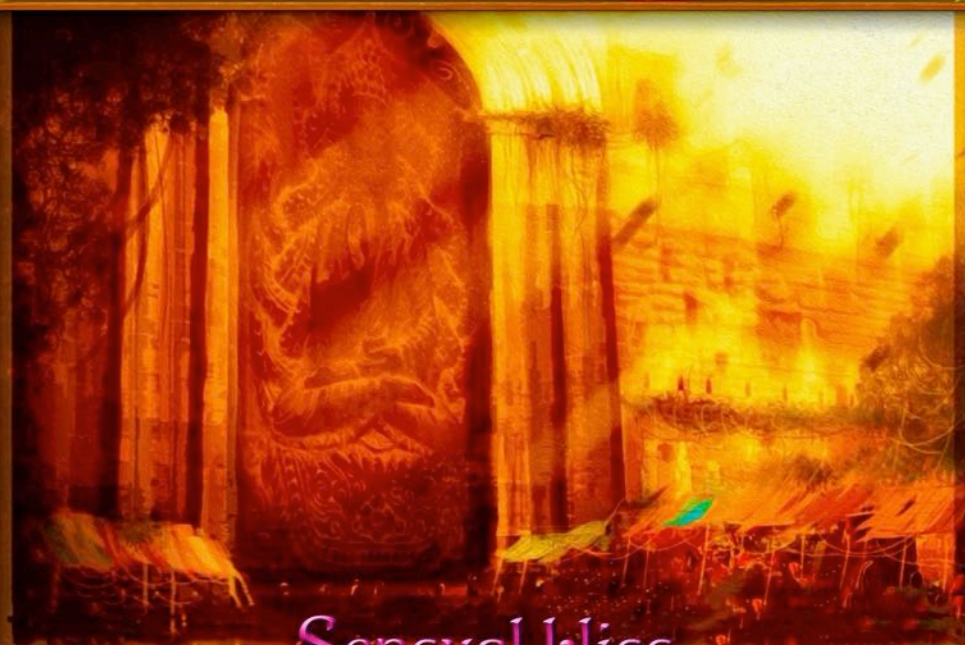
Pleasant smelling scents lift
your heart and mine;
Essence of lotus, rose,



amber, jasmine,
Night-queen, myrtle, saffron,
and sandalwood



Stimulate
the inner spirit sublime.



Sensual bliss

should not be a lost art,
For the body is an integral part
Of the human being,


joined with the spirit;


Realize thy self
with whole body and heart.

To find yourself,
lose yourself in another
For she will touch your being
and therein share.



Gently unveiling your heart,
soul, mind, and senses
Till there's nowhere to hide!
You're found, forever!



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white sari with a gold border, stands in a golden palace interior. She is looking back over her shoulder. The room features ornate columns, a large arched window with a grid pattern, and a green vase on a table.

What underwriter of
the universal wave of matter
Covers all loss and liability,
Guaranteeing payment,
by dipping into Possibility,



Issuing both
the credit and the debit?

A woman with long, flowing red hair, wearing a red and black patterned dress, stands in a palace interior. She is holding a book. In the background, another woman in a black and white dress is visible near a doorway. The room is highly ornate with intricate patterns and arches.

Enjoy the play
that you get to act in,
Sometimes retreating
to the back row,

As the distanced audience,
witnessing afar,
Finding peace
and everlasting gladness.



The thirsty sun raises
the morn's dewdrops,

And sculpts a mist,
forming clouds of airdrops.

Long the world lies dry
in afternoon's beam,

Till quenching darkness
cries forth its tear drops.






**The ancients found themselves here and not there,
Yet to fathom earth, fire, water, and air,
Asking why life was not square, as unfair,
So invented the Bad Role Model's care.**

**They looked unto their calamities,
Their powerful rulers and enemies,
Toward their olden family structure's way,
Of strict father, and mother with no say.**

**The Father Notion they based on themselves,
As the best answer that was ever delved:
The demanding Male Mind who was called 'God',
An idea for some to this day, as trod.**

**Answers were needed for them to persist;
They extended the Notion with more myths
And legends into lore layered upon,
Inventing all the scrolls of scripture on.**





**'God' brought both fear and comfort in those days,
Making people better through fearsome ways,
Although worse for others—unchosen tribes,
Protecting their notions, as taught by scribes.**

**A wasteland of superstition plod,
Instantiating a meaning for 'God'.
Emotion e'er sets up a firm blockade
When thoughts fired more build a stockade.**

**There were various modifications,
Yet the Creator concept remained one;
But natural understandings progressed,
Leaping ahead of the dogmatical rest.**

**Thousands of years came to pass, in stories,
But then we solved much of the mystery,
Irrefutable now, as gone beyond,
Utterly not any magical wand.**

**The basis is forev'r, no creation—
Energy being the primest potion,
And Entirety is seen that it can be
No way but than it is, eternally.**





**Claims of Revelation in Genesis
Of all of Nature's species made, as is,
Have been demolished, obliterated,
By evolution and data liberated.**

**Nature finds no requirement for a 'God',
Growth naturally forming from the sod.
The organic 'comes of the mud and slime,
Formed within billions of years of sweet time.**

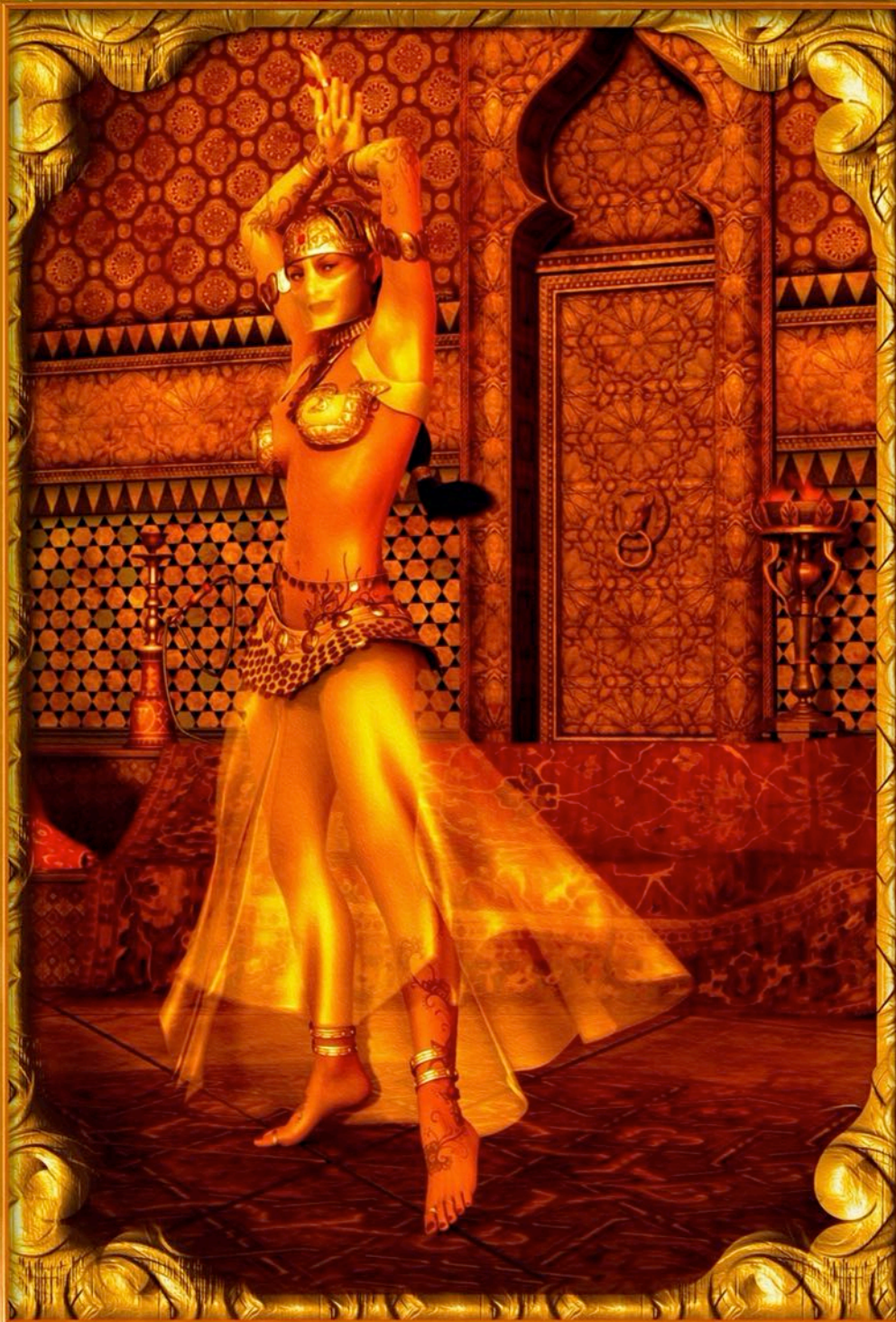
**A trillion lights shine through, of depths of the deep,
Stars afire, with us the souls from their keep.
Man oft spouts the 'truth' of a Creator,
As did proto-men near the equator.**

**Scrolled into scripture, 'God' brought rapture,
Enough for sad hearts to wholly capture;
Yet, there can't be First Complexity's shove,
And there wasn't much to make anything of.**



Still be the wine-house thronged
with its glad choir,
And Pharisaic skirts
burnt up with fire;

Still be those tattered frocks
and azure robes
Trod under feet
of revelers in the mire.





**Needs must the vintage-drinker bathe in wine,
For none can make a discolored name to shine;
Go! bring vino, for none can now restore
The spotless sheen to this soiled gown of mine.**

**In the Afterlife, they tell, Houris dwell,
And fountains run with wine and oxymel:
If these be lawful in the world to come,
Surely 'tis right to love them here as well.**

**From life we draw our wine, till dregs to drink,
Once flaunt our silk, and then in tatters shrink;
Such changes ledgers hold of slight account
To those who stand on death's appalling brink!**

**The rich, who wheel the deal, this world defy
With shameless empires, while the scroungers die;
Place in my ruby pipe the emerald hemp,
'Twill do as well to blind Care's serpent eye.**

**When the Great Allah molded me of old,
He mixed much baser metal with His gold;
Better or fairer I can never be
Than first I arose from His Heavenly Mold.**





**I flew here, as a bird from the waste, in aim
Up to a lofty perch my life to frame;
But, finding here no sage who knows the way,
Fly out by the same door where through I came.**

**He binds us in resistless Nature's chain,
And yet bids us our natures to restrain;
Between these opposed rules we stand puzzled,
"Hold the jar slant, but all the wine retain."**

**This Wheel of Heaven, which rends us all a-frayed,
I liken to a lamp's revolving shade,
The sun the candlestick, the Earth the shade,
And we the quiverings thereon portrayed.**

**In these twin compasses, O Lord, you see
One body with two heads, as you and me,
Which twirl round one center, circlewise,
But at the last in one same point agree.**

**To find great Jamshid's All-Reflecting Bowl
I traveled sea and shore, to survey the whole;
But, when I asked the seeing sage, I learned
That bowl was my own body, and my soul!**



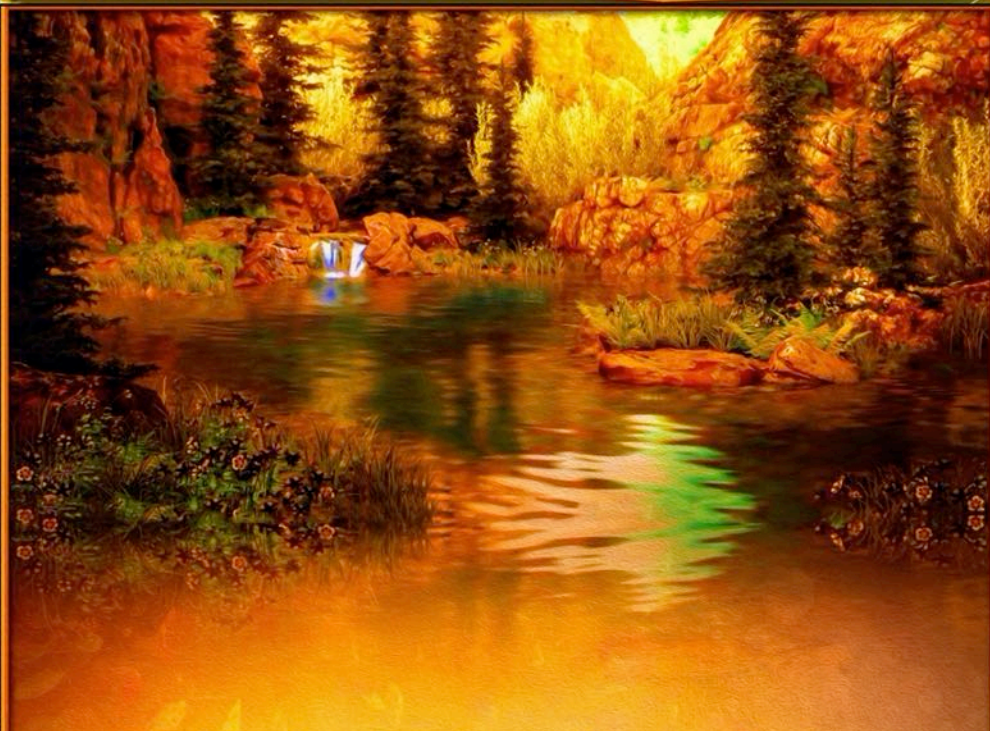


**King of old friends! listen to what I say,
Let not Heaven's deceitful wheel your heart dismay;
But rest fulfilled in your peaceful nook,
And watch the games that wheel is wont to play.**

**When life has Bed, and we rest in the tomb,
They'll place a pair of bricks to mark our whom;
And, a while after, mold our dust to bricks,
To furnish forth some other person's fume!**

**The drop wept for his departure from the sea,
But the sea laughed, for "I am all," said he,
"The Eterne is all, nothing exists beside,
That one point circling apes plurality."**





**The lake is calm, the stellar gaze benign;
The gibbous moon marks out the bay's smooth line.
High-leaping fish and iridescent birds
In chorus serenade the sacred vine.**



**Across the plain fly hosts of silent geese,
Their stridor muted by celestial peace;
For in the midnight haunts of hedonists
The irksome peals of daily strife must cease.**



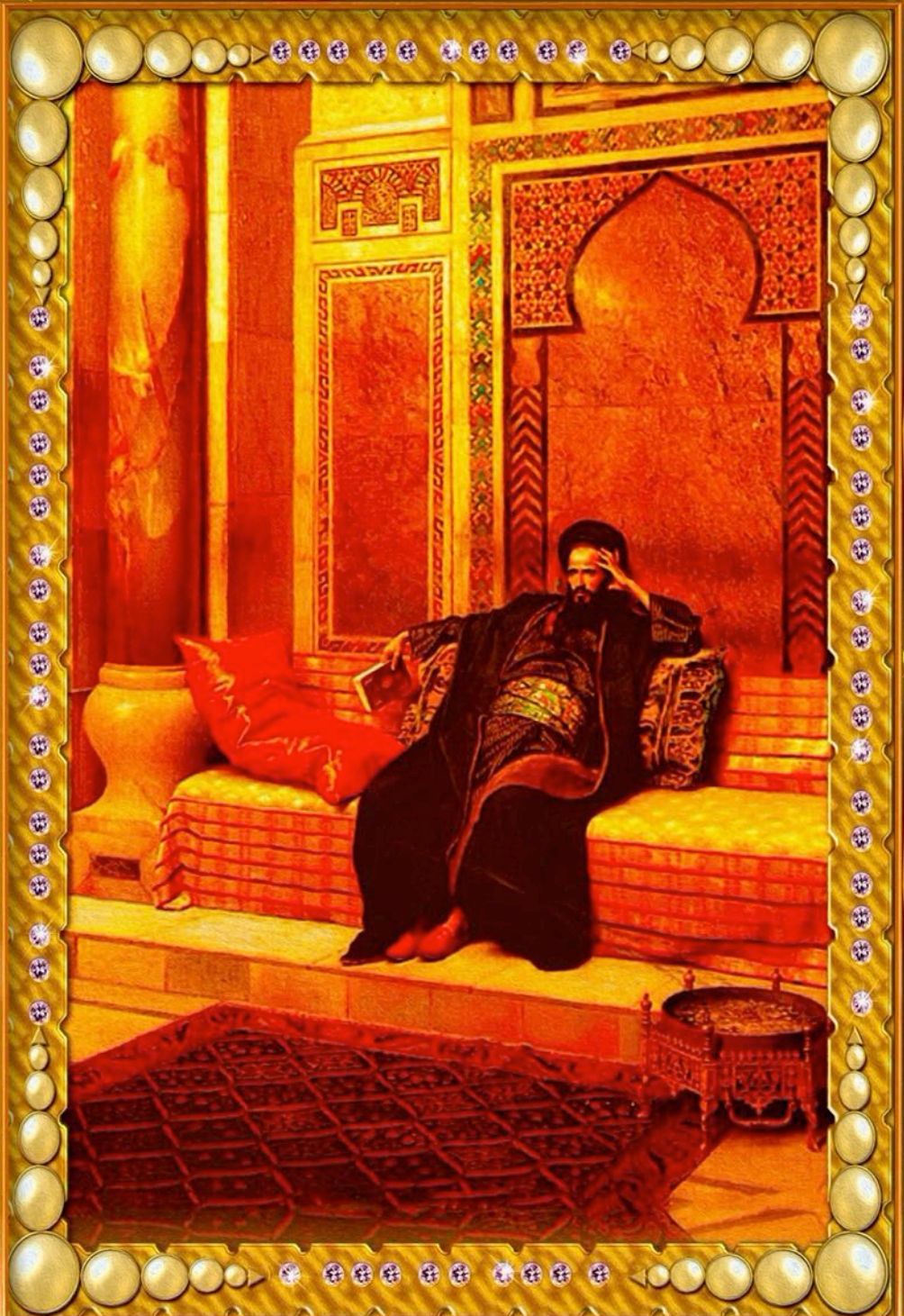




**Behold the magus at his nightly feast:
The very synthesis of god and beast!
Some montane maiden or riparian nymph
Inspires the musings of this pleasure-priest.**



**He plucks sweet cherries from a scented bowl
While waves of wisdom animate his soul;
He ponders things exalted and profane—
Love, music, and Creation's final Goal.**



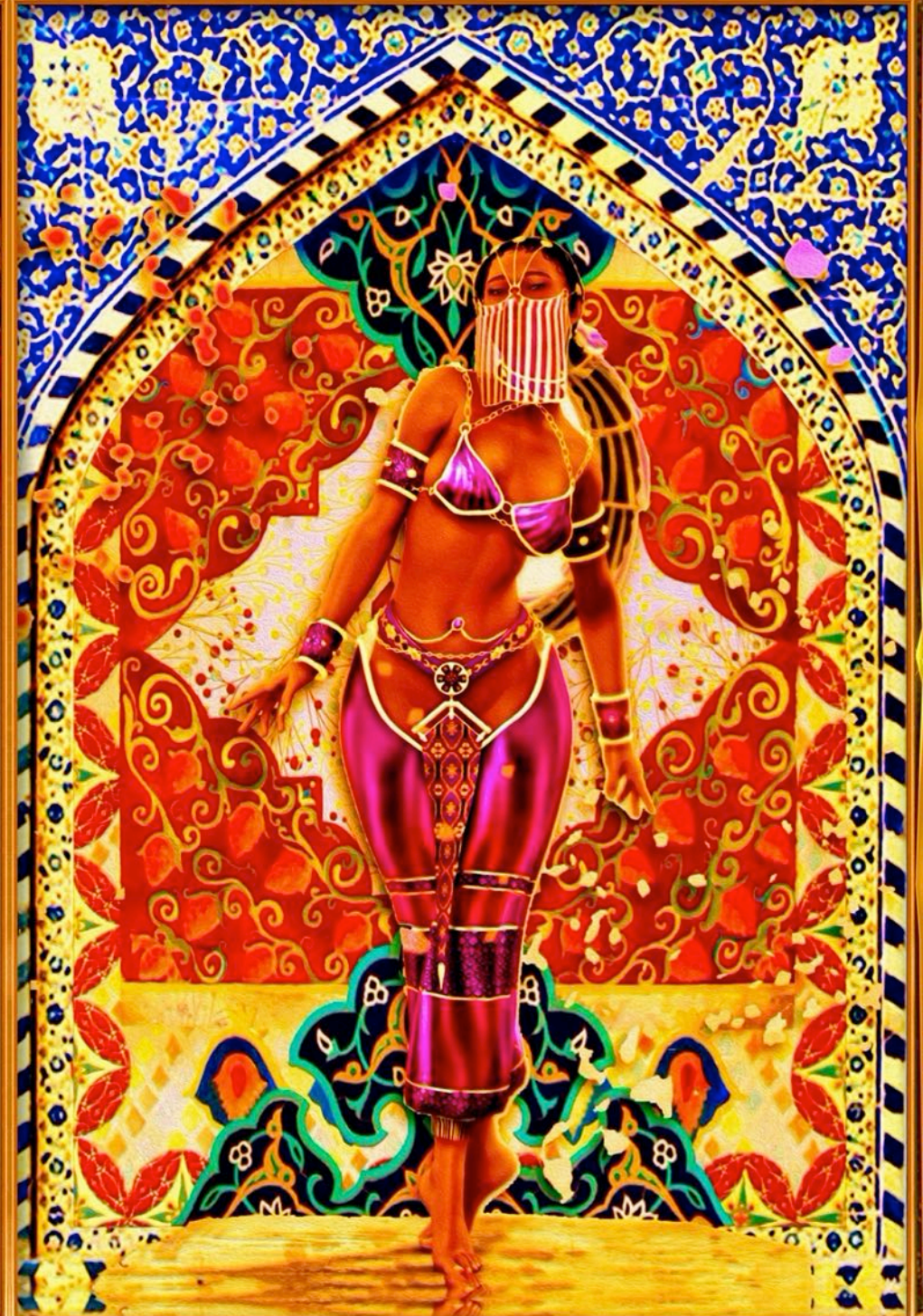




**The sage is joined by acolytes and friends
Who ask how far the universe extends;
He draws some parallelograms and squares
Before intoning gravely: "It depends."**



**One protégé, numerically wise,
Mistrusts such vague oracular replies,
And craves more detail; but the Master now
Heeds only his exotic lover's eyes.**







**A cloud of smoke appears, and seven jinn
Emerge in line abreast with violins;
A girl—half angel and half courtesan—
Gyrates before the players' lustful grins.**



**Bring us more grapes, and let the taste enhance
This spectacle of orgiastic dance!
I care not if she be a Hindu queen
Or *demoiselle* from semi-Christian France.**







**Mild faith consoles; but when Belief is strict,
Joy is expelled by holy interdict.
Life has no worth unless we gladly grasp
The pleasures that Religion would evict.**



**Did human life evolve by senseless course,
Or spring from naught, by Heaven's *tour de force*?
The questers scour the land for hidden clues;
The preachers quote a more dogmatic source.**





**Is all the world composed of partless grains,
Some loose, and others bound by ghostly chains?
Or can each Thing be infinitely cut
While all its Substance nonetheless remains?**



**Some say Geometry makes time and space;
Some claim pure Algebra is Being's base.
Unless our mathematic skill is strong,
We should withhold opinion in this case.**



**The wise engage in civilized debate,
In which diverse opinions circulate.
The foolish fling their facile fancies forth
And cause loud insults to reverberate.**



**While anger, to a limited degree,
Can whet the senses and dispel ennui,
'Tis an unworthy and inconstant friend,
Inducing madness and infirmity.**





**What an enigma human lives present!
Dynamic sparks of minimal extent,
Provisioned by an unimpressive star.
A cosmic need, or just an accident?**



**Astronomers have wondrous modern means
Of witnessing the heavens' distant scenes.
What unimagined realms may they espy
When aided by tomorrow's great machines?**





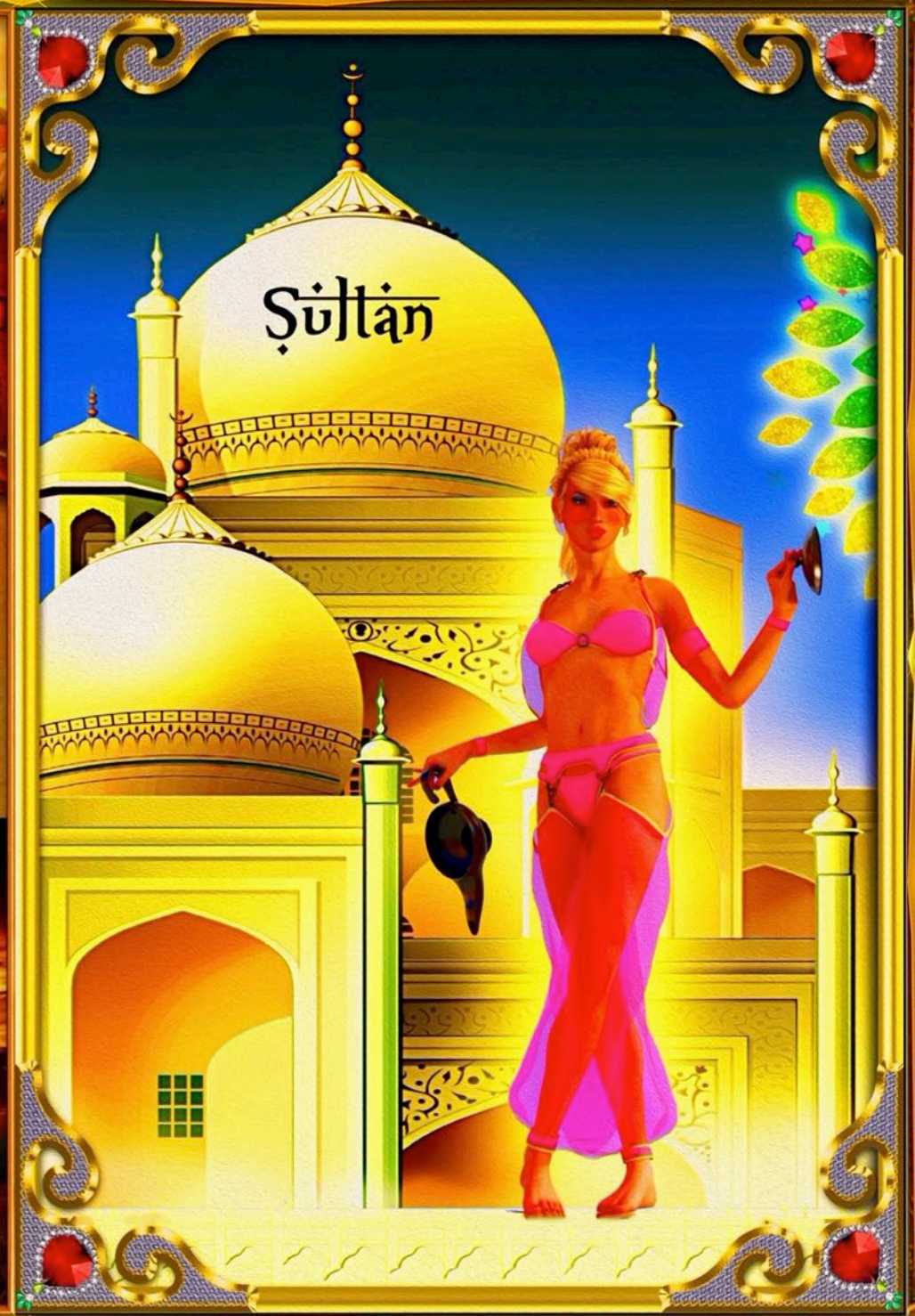
**These agonising puzzles take their toll,
Wherefore debauchery and alcohol
Are common comforters in Academe,
But intellect does not ensure control.**

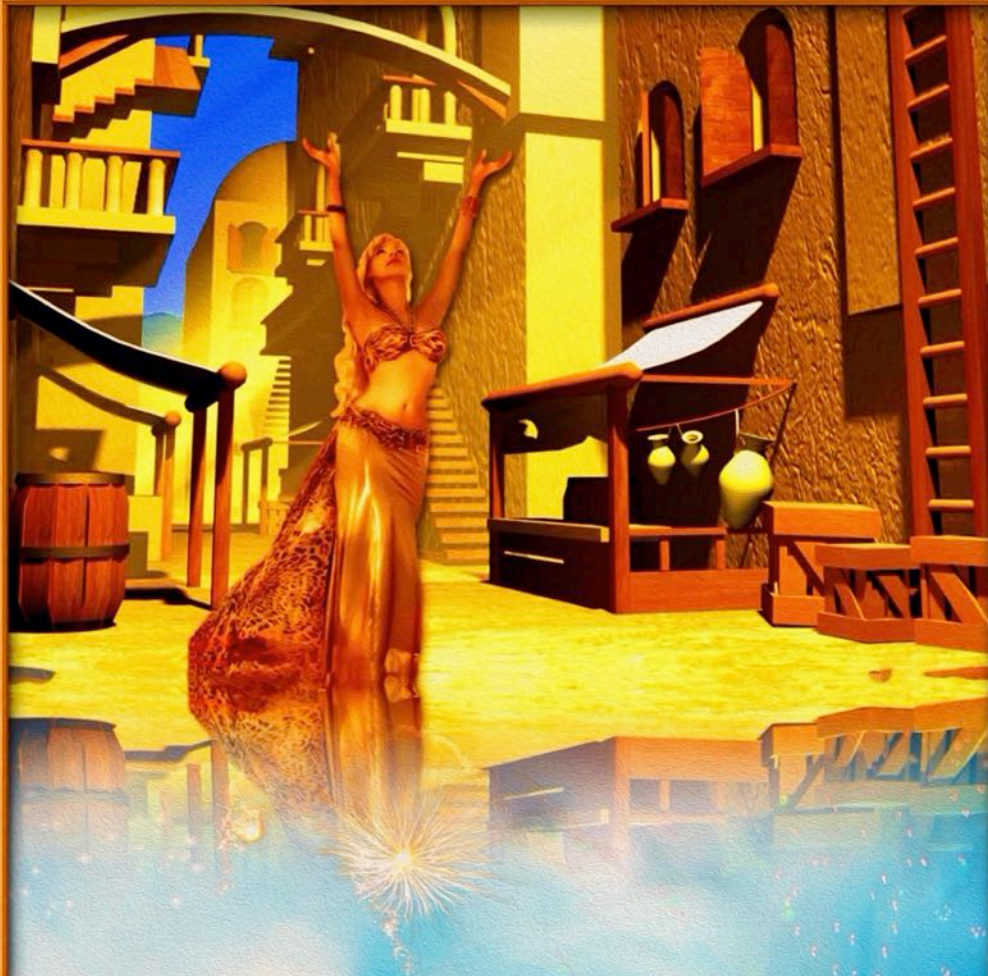






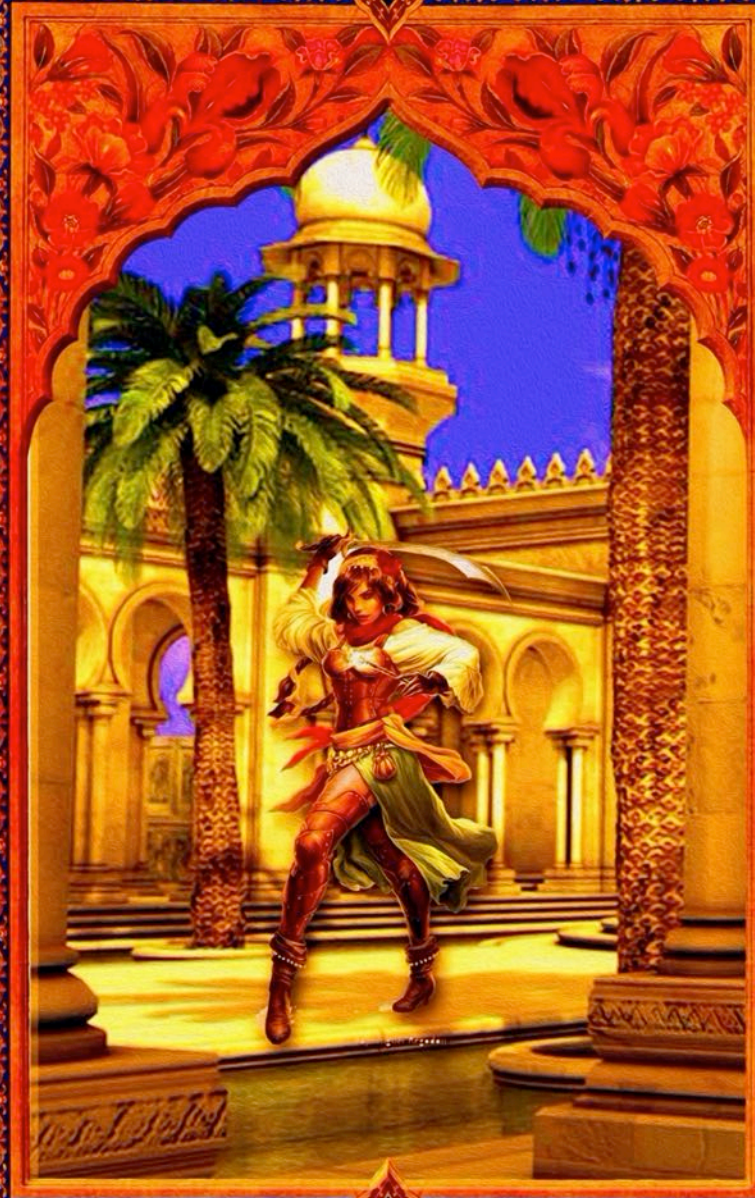
**The surest path to wholesome happiness,
And fertile thought, is to avoid excess;
So say the wise old Sultan and his muse,
The beautiful and erudite Princess.**

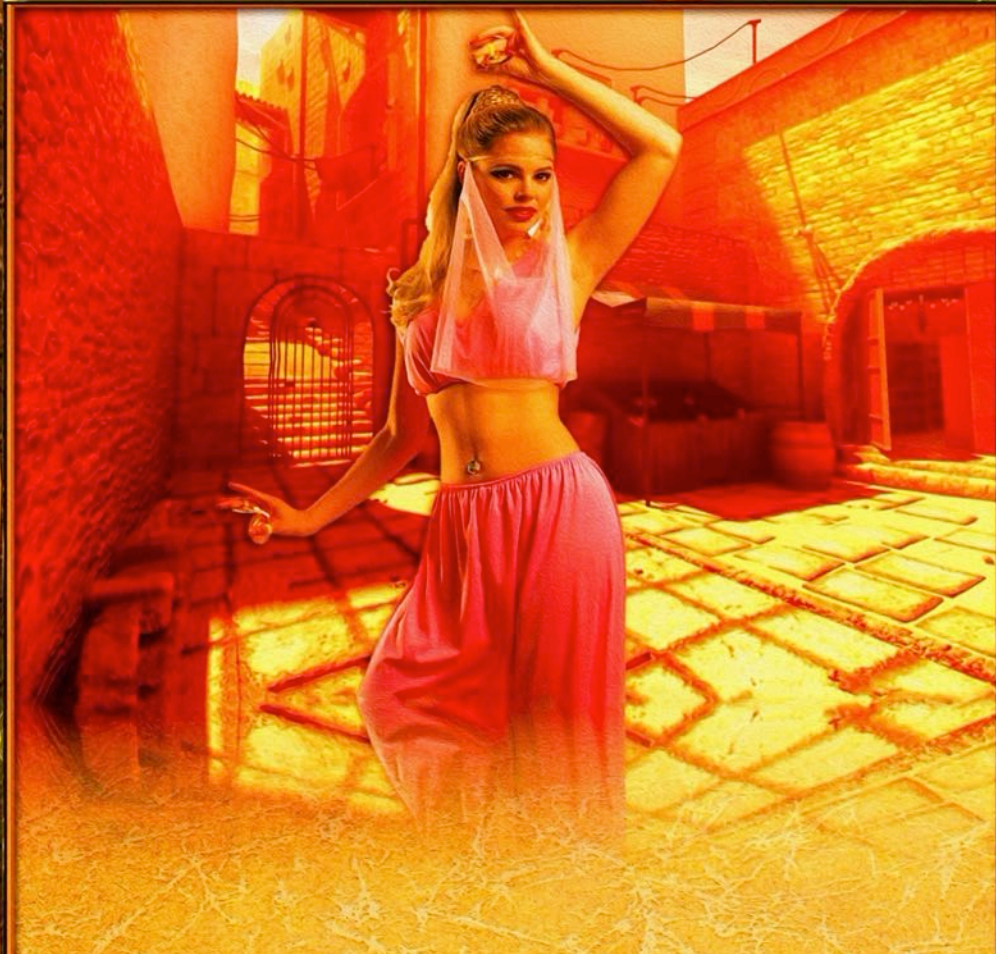




**The teeming galaxies have not a care
For human exultation or despair;
We must exploit the gifts that Chance bestowed,
And lead our lives without recourse to prayer.**

**We may not comprehend how Will is free
While subject to the Laws of Energy;
But let us not conclude that Choice is vain—
We cannot cede Responsibility.**





**What manner of phenomenon is Sin?
An independent entity, akin
To noxious fumes, which God resolved to clear
By proxy, through his Son in human skin?**

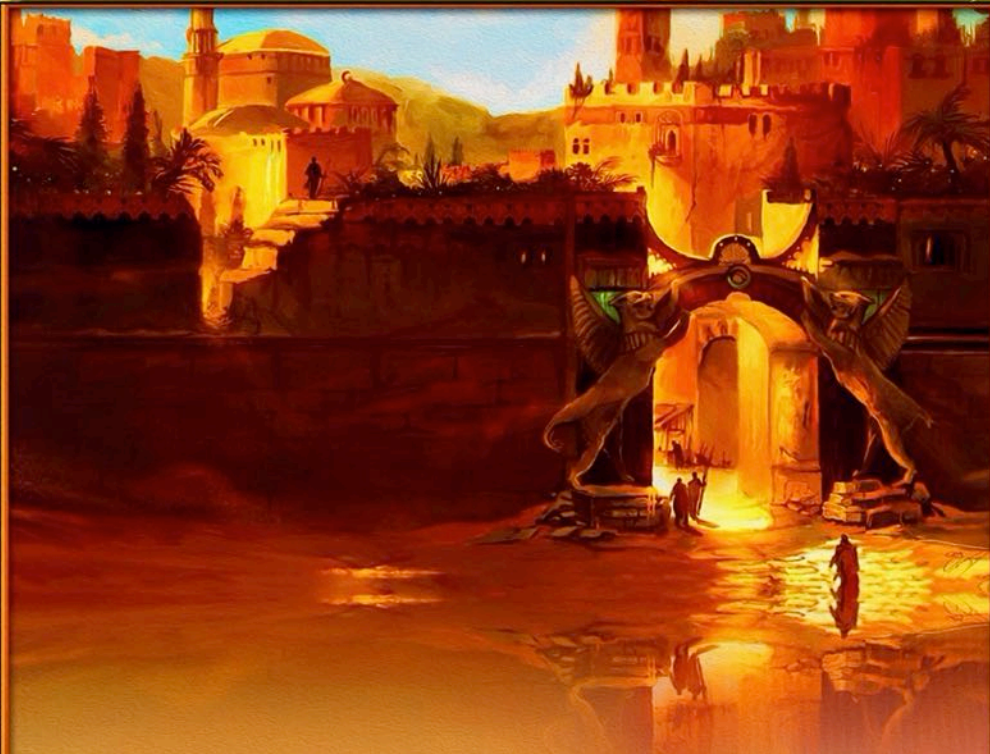
**Or is it just a property, possessed
By people who have willfully transgressed?
If so, a scapegoat proves of no avail;
The remedy lies in the Sinner's breast.**





**Stern tutors warn that Levity's a vice,
And call for Dignity at any price.
In truth, the sufferer who mocks his grief
Recovers sooner than the man of ice.**





**Some passing peasants in an ox-drawn cart
Sing rustic ditties with unpolished art;
The fiddles interpose some rhythmic chords,
With strange cadenzas in the highest part.**

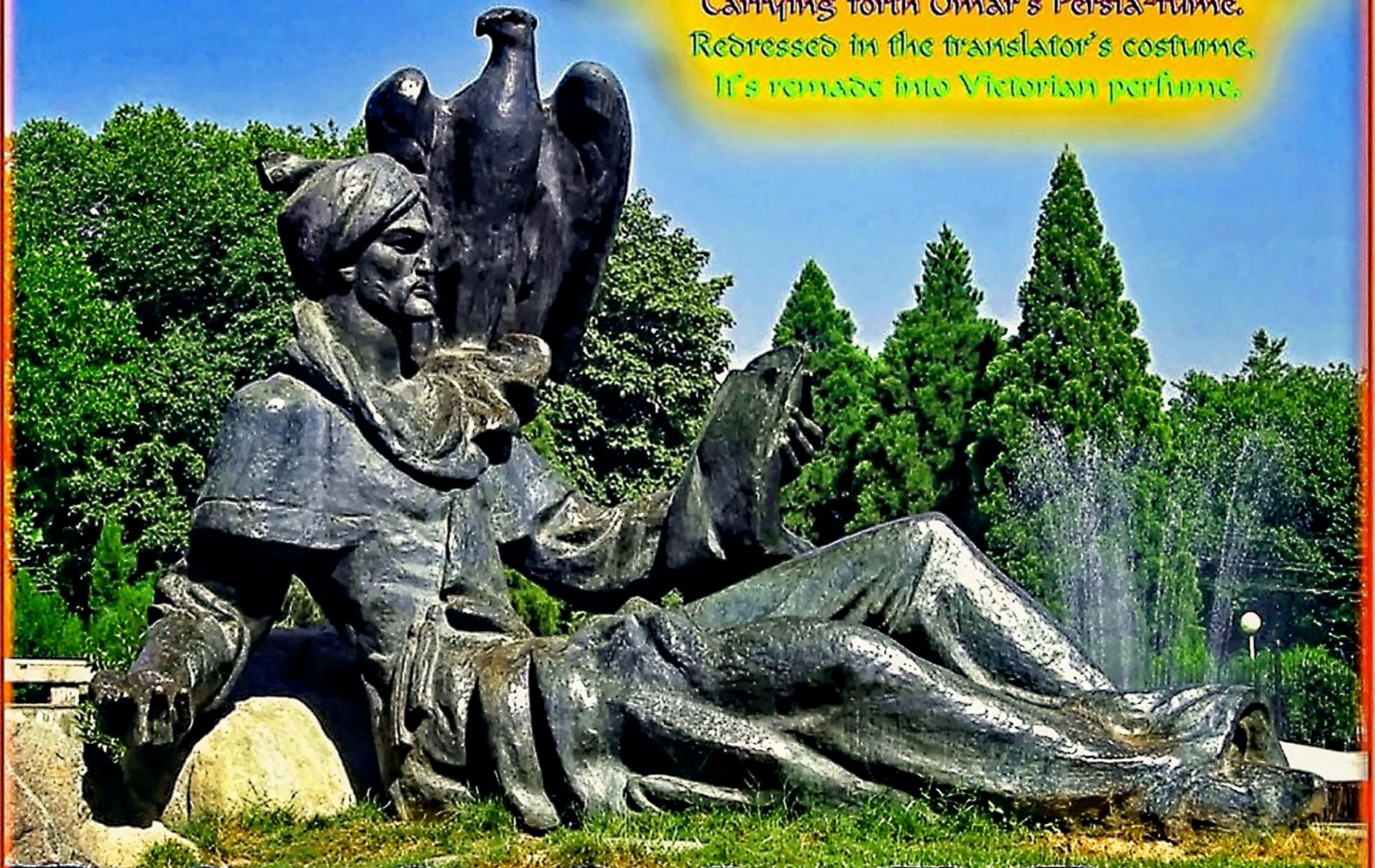


**The moonlit mermaids by the waterfall,
The sentries on the distant city wall,
The barrel-bearers and the servant boys—
A graceful aura lingers round them all.**





Across Khayyām's gravestone blows the simoom,
Carrying forth Omar's Persia-fume.
Redressed in the translator's costume,
It's remade into Victorian perfume.



Old Khayyām has gone to where no one knows, Sequestered far beneath the winter snows
Yet a voice through the centuries echoes, As still the summer blossoms with the rose.



