

# THE BOOK OF VRGRAYNE



A BOOK OF SIGNS & PORTENTS

MARK SMYLIE





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*The Book of Urgrayne* reprints short stories from the first three *Artesia Annuals* and what is probably a little-seen short from the 1999 Sirius Gallery (which was prepared and sold as a San Diego Comic-Con special), as well as pinup artwork from Sirius' limited edition *Artesia* #1 and *Artesia Afield* #1. The stories are arranged in chronological order as they occur in the narrative of *The Book of Dooms*. The contents of *The Book of Urgrayne* are © 1999-2003, 2011 Mark S. Smylie; *Artesia* is ™ 1999 Mark S. Smylie. All rights reserved.



# ◆ EPILOGUE ◆



ARE YOU  
LONELY  
YET?



ALONE,  
CERTAINLY...  
BUT HOW LONG  
BEFORE YOU  
MISS THEM?

SO HARD  
FOR A KING TO  
BE SILENT!

TO  
BE SILENT,  
AND ALONE....

ALONE  
IN THE RUIN  
OF YOUR CITADEL,  
TO AWAIT THE  
RETURN OF YOUR  
MISTRESS.





















THE AUDACITY  
OF THAT CHILD,  
TO INSTALL YOU AS  
A RIVAL FOR ME IN  
THE NIGHT!

SO MUCH  
LIKE HER  
MOTHER...

TWICE  
MORE SHALL  
ARTESIA AND I  
MEET, AS I TOLD  
HER...

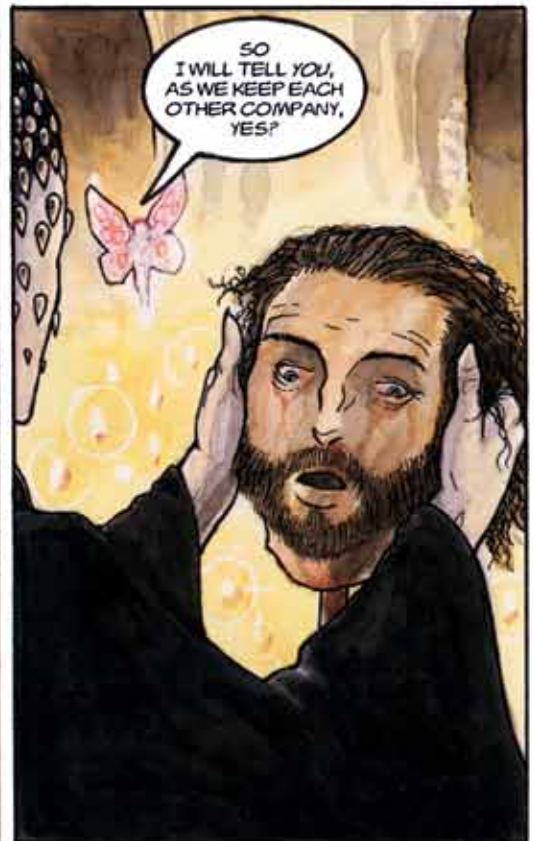
...THOUGH  
I DID NOT TELL  
HER THE *WHEN*,  
NOT THE *HOW*.

DO YOU  
THINK SHE  
BELIEVED  
ME?



ONCE ON  
HER PATH  
TO HEAVEN,  
TO YHERA'S  
CELESTIAL  
PALACE...













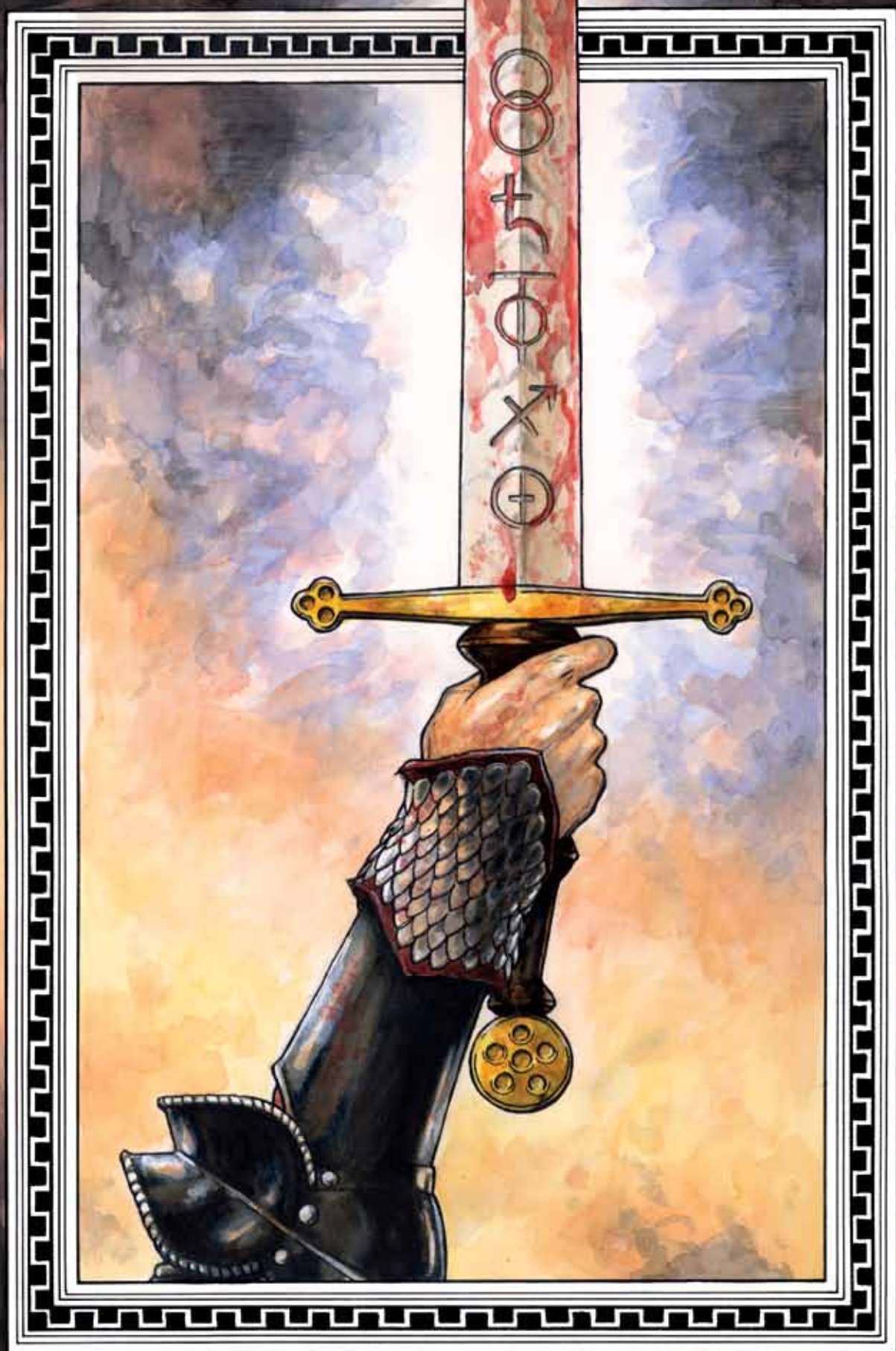
























WE  
MAY NOT  
NEED TO, SHE  
HAS **DECLARED**  
HERSELF, AND  
CLAIMED BRAN'S  
THRONE...

...SURELY THE  
**SUN COURT**  
WILL ORDER  
HER DEATH,  
WON'T IT?



NO,  
MUTORIC,  
NOT AT FIRST.  
REMEMBER,  
AWAIN HAS GIVEN  
HER **GUEST-  
RIGHT**.



THE  
SUN COURT  
WILL NOT PUT  
LOYAL KINGSMEN  
AT ODDS WITH  
THEIR OWN KING,  
BY ORDERING  
HER DEATH WHILE  
SHE IS HIS  
GUEST.

BESIDES,  
THE HIGH KING'S  
PLAN TO TURN BACK  
THE THESSIDS  
FAILED UNDER THE  
CURSED SUN.  
HE **NEEDS** THAT  
ARMY.

SO  
WE MUST  
ACT IN SECRET,  
TO KEEP BOTH  
THE KING'S PUBLIC  
HONOR AND THE  
HIGHLAND ARMY  
SHE BROUGHT  
HIM...



HER  
DEATH...

...AND AN  
**ALTERNATE**  
TO LEAD HER ARMY  
IN AID OF THE  
HIGH KING...



IT SHOULD'VE  
BEEN **BECIR**.  
HE WAS ONE OF  
MY BEST...





HE  
DIED WITH  
GREAT HONOR,  
NOBLE KING,  
LEADING THE  
CITADEL BANNER  
LORDS TO SAVE  
COLLWYN.

MIRSED  
IS LOYAL,  
AND WILL  
FOLLOW OUR  
DIRECTION.

YOU SHOULD  
CONFIRM HIM  
AS LORD OF  
LAMAT HUS.

AYE,  
IT WILL BE  
BETWEEN HIM  
AND **ROGERO**,  
FINLETH'S MAN,  
TO LEAD THEM  
AFTER HER  
DEATH.



OR  
LORD **PAVEL**,  
ARTESIA'S  
CHIEF BANNER  
LORD.

WE SHOULD  
ARRANGE FOR  
HIM TO DIE  
AS WELL.

AGREED.  
ROB HER OF HER  
ADVISORS AND  
CHAMPIONS...



...THEN WHEN  
DARA DESS  
FALLS, IT WILL  
BE BETWEEN  
**US** AND **ALEXUS**  
AS TO WHO  
WILL RULE THE  
HIGHLANDS.

THE TIME  
HAS COME FOR  
**DARADJA**  
TO BE **WHOLE**  
AGAIN.











# THE THRONE OF HVELT



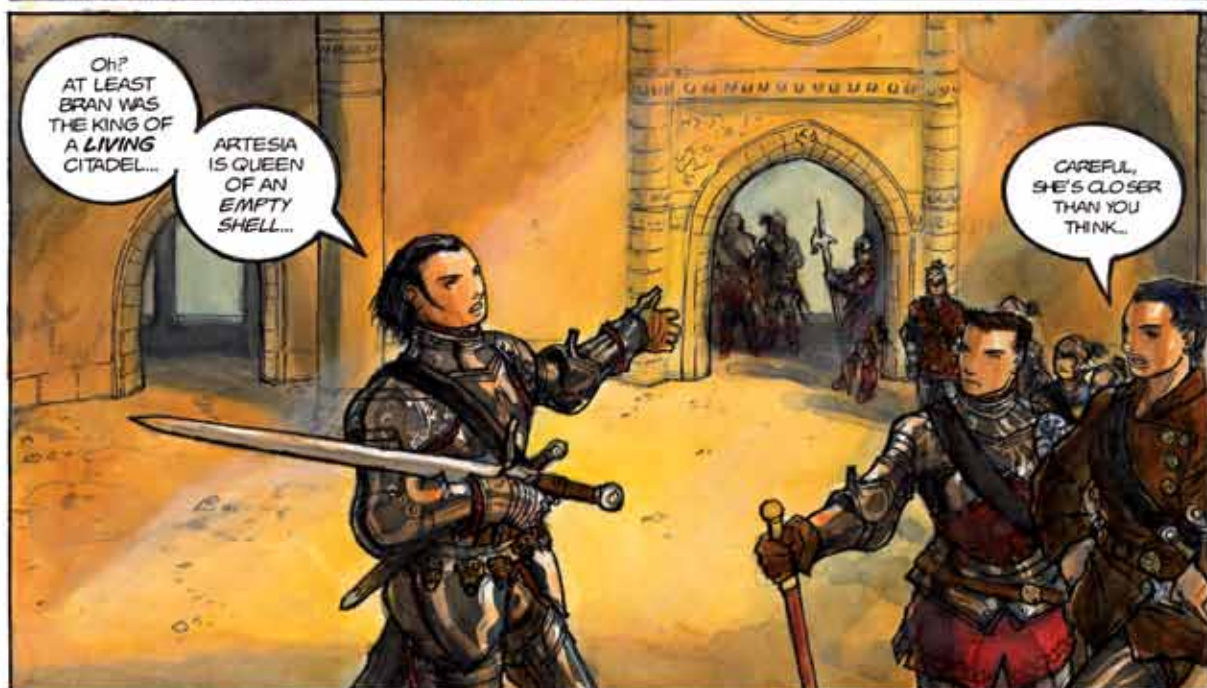
















A KING  
OR QUEEN  
IS MADE BY  
THE GRACE  
OF YHERA.



SO  
WHERE'S  
THE REAL  
THRONE  
OF DARA  
DESS?



NO  
ONE KNOWS,  
THERE'VE  
BEEN SEVERAL  
THRONES  
OVER THE  
AGES...

...BUT  
THE *FIRST*  
THRONE,  
THE *REAL*  
THRONE...

...THAT  
DISAPPEARED  
SOON AFTER  
DARA WAS SLAIN  
BY *THULA*  
THE SNAKE  
QUEEN.



DARA  
TOOK IT  
WITH HER TO  
THE HEAVENS,  
WHEN SHE  
WENT TO HER  
MOTHER.

NO,  
THULA  
STOLE IT  
AFTER SHE  
KILLED DARA.

AYE,  
IT'S IN  
ONE OF  
THEIR  
ROCKY  
HOLDS...





NO, IF  
THE THRONE  
OF DARA HAD  
LEFT DARADJA,  
WE'D HAVE BEEN  
CONQUERED  
LONG AGO...

THE  
THRONE'S  
PRESENCE  
IS A WARD,  
LIKE THE BODY  
OF **ERLWULF**  
BURIED  
IN **HETH  
MOLL**...

...A WARD TO  
EVIL SPIRITS  
AND ILL INTENT.  
IT IS STILL IN THE  
HIGHLANDS.

IT KEEPS  
OUR TRUE  
KINGS AND  
QUEENS  
SAFE.



Oh?  
LIKE  
**BRAN**?

KEPT  
**HIM** SAFE,  
DID IT?



**BRAN**  
WAS A  
KINGLY  
MAN.

BUT  
HE WAS NOT  
A **TRUE KING**  
OF DARA  
DESS.



AS  
MY MOTHER  
TOLD ME;  
DARA DESS  
IS A **QUEEN'S**  
HOLD...

...AND  
ITS KINGS  
ARE BUT  
**STEWARDS.**

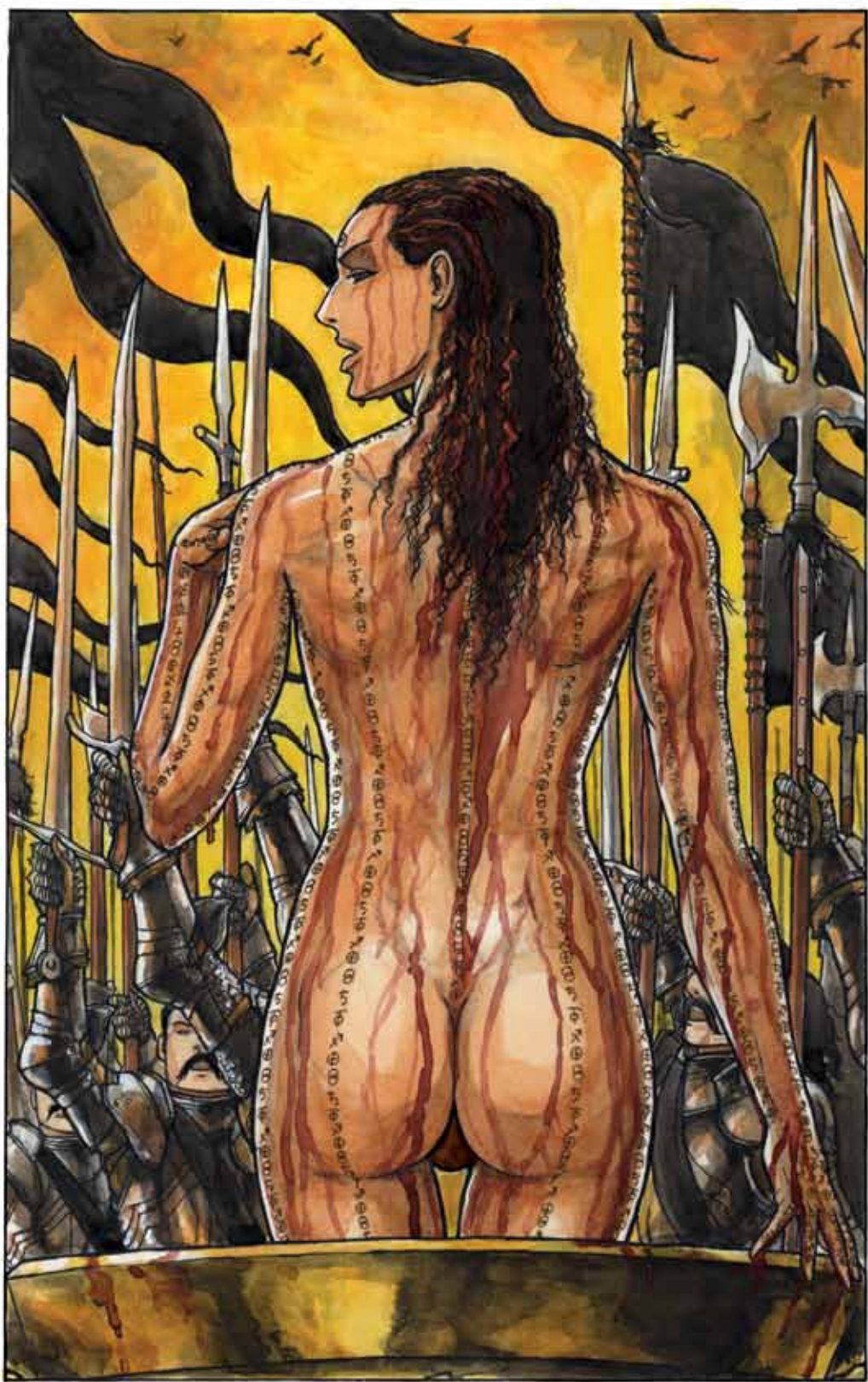








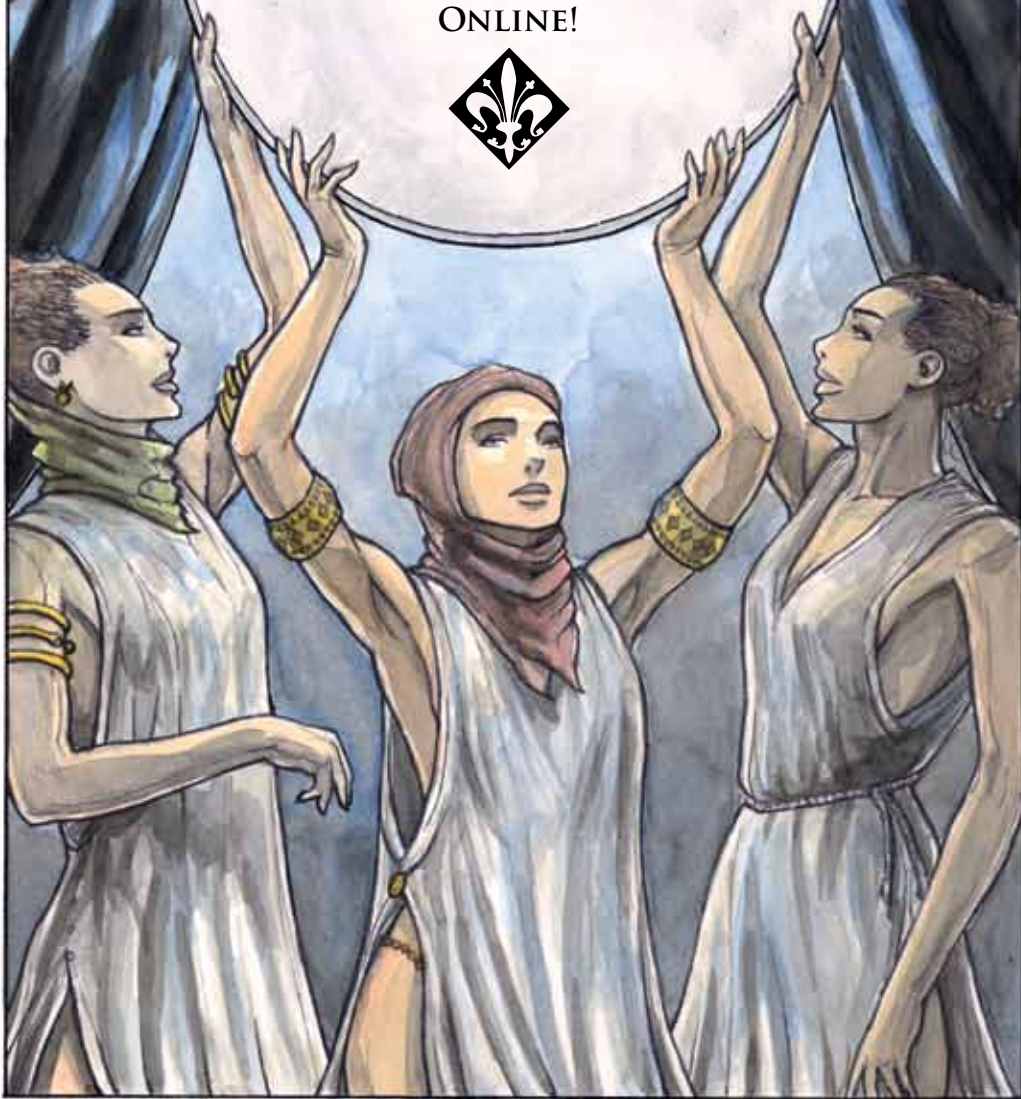






☞ THANK YOU ☞  
FOR READING!

PLEASE BE  
ON THE LOOKOUT  
FOR MORE MATERIAL,  
BOTH NEW AND OLD,  
FROM ARTESIA  
ONLINE!



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