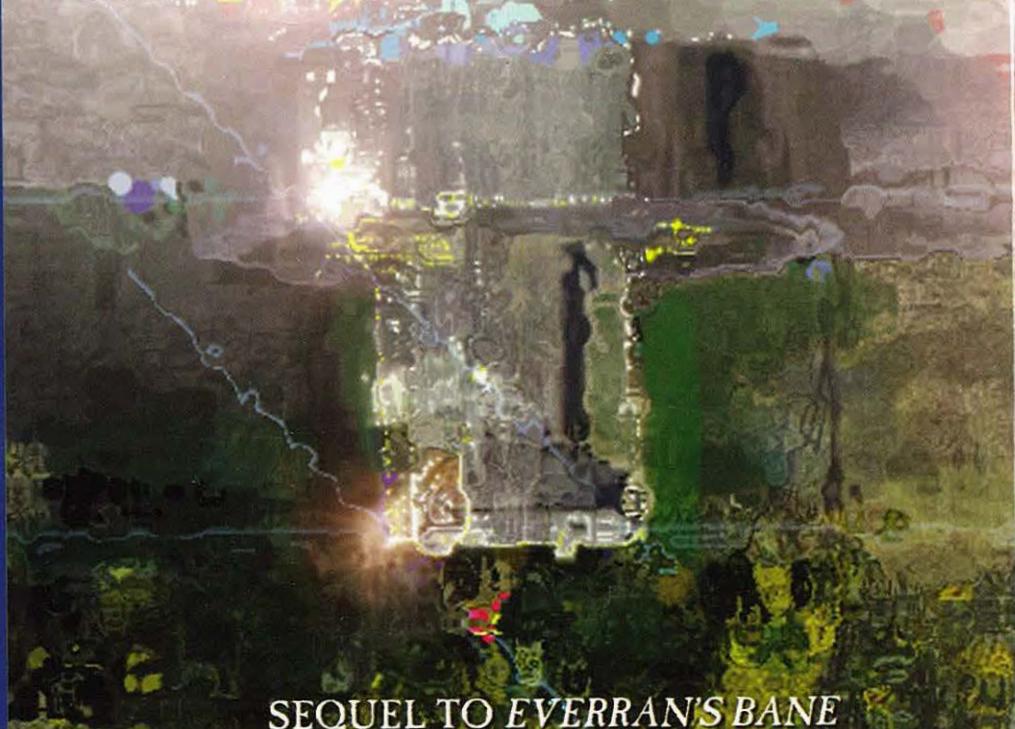


The Moving Water

BOOK TWO OF THE RIHANNAR CHRONICLES



SEQUEL TO EVERRAN'S BANE

SYLVIA KELSO



The great empire of Assharral is wealthy, peaceful and secure. Its ten provinces stretch across desert, plains and mountains. Its rooftree shields eight different races. Neighbours cannot breach its defences, rebels never disturb its peace. And nobody in Assharral sings.

The Empress of Assharral dreams by her fountain. Moriana is powerful beyond question, beautiful beyond flaw, immortal beyond the threat of age. Under her hand rests the Well of Wisdom, wizardry's ultimate tool. The water moves, but by the fountain, Time has stopped. An empress need not concern herself with vagabonds. Even a vagabond who can steal the loyalty of her Imperial Guards, a vagabond who knows how she has enspelled Assharral. A vagabond wizard whose arts might match her power. The power of the Well slows Time, twists minds, breaks bodies, levels mountains. It can destroy any wizard who dares defy it. Only one power can stand in its path. A vagabond who dares look at an empress and laugh.

The Moving Water is a vividly realised high fantasy set in the world of Rihannar that appeared in *Everran's Bane*, which was praised by reviewers for the depth of its world-building and its attractive characters. The characters have moved on, but the stakes are higher, the battles more epic, as love and magic contend not merely for an empire but for the dominion of human souls.



THE MOVING WATER

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RIHANNAR CHRONICLES

THE MOVING WATER

SYLVIA KELSO

FIVE STAR

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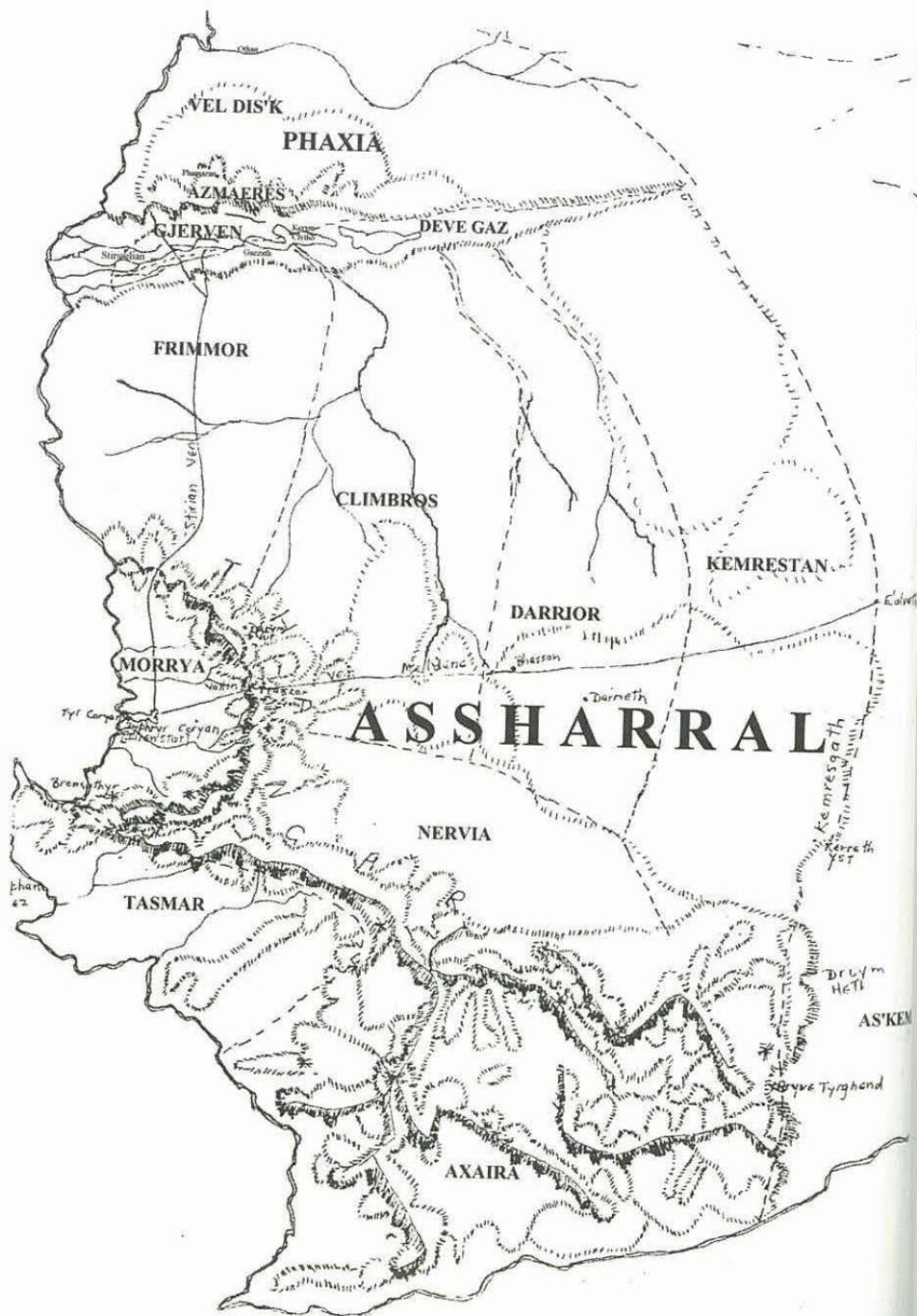
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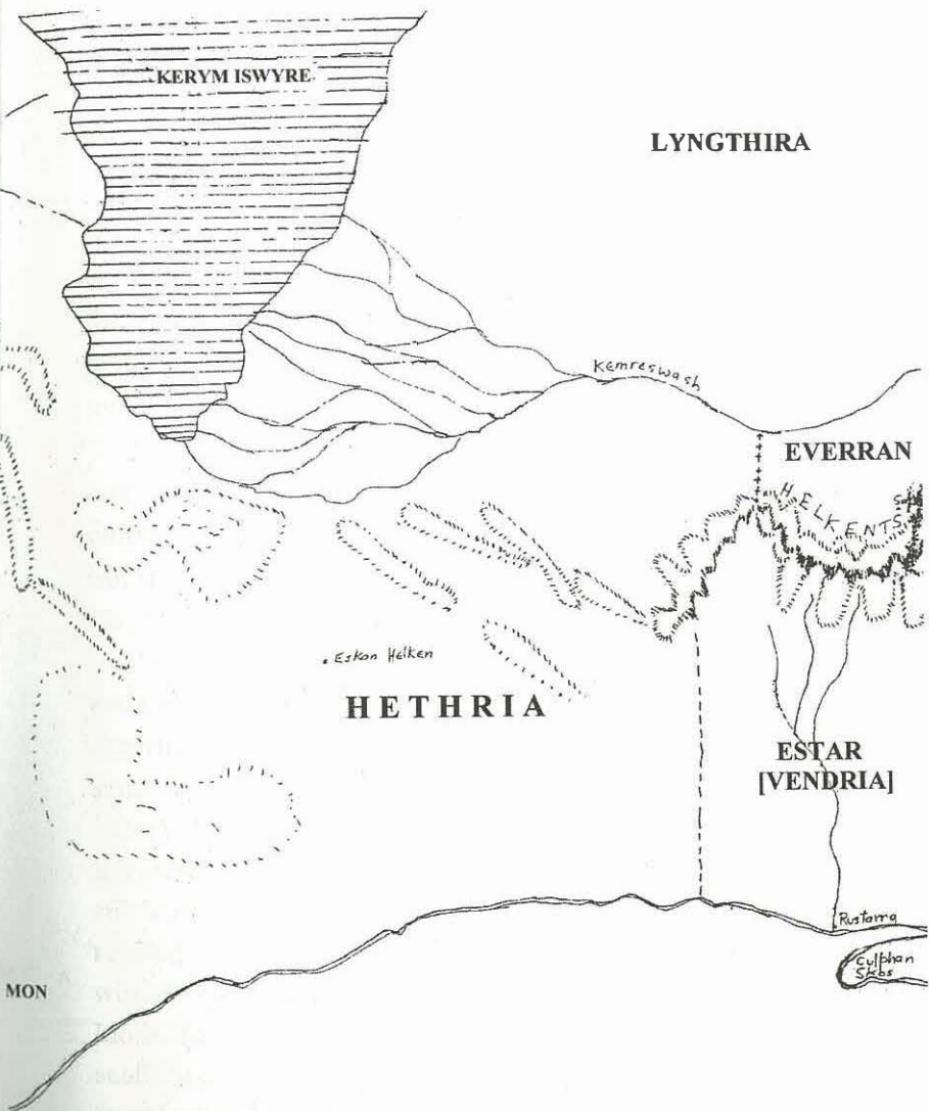
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For my parents
Here and *in absentia*

*With thanks to Lillian Stewart Carl for more than
ordinary editing.*

The title of this book comes from Robert Payne's translation of a famous Li Po poem, variously titled "Conversation among the Mountains," "Green Mountain," "Question and Answer," etc. The translation first appeared in Payne's anthology of Chinese poetry, *The White Pony*, in 1947, and the third line reads, "The peach blossom follows the moving water": an allusion to TaoYaun Ming's even more famous prose tale of the peach blossom fountain whose waters led wanderers out of their world and time. I have been unable to get permission from Mr. Payne's estate to quote the entire poem.





from the
for the

CHAPTER I

It is a long road to Eskan Helken here in the wastes of Hethria, and longer still when you do not know you are traveling it. As I did not. The day my journey began, I had never heard of Eskan Helken, and only vaguely of Hethria. All I knew was that, after morning inspection, the Lady Moriana wanted words with me.

Hardly momentous? But no one who served the Lady Moriana answered such a summons without a degree of sweat in the palms and tallying of his own and others' recent sins. Certainly not the Captain of her Guard. Certainly not the newly promoted Captain of her Guard.

That was in my second's manner when I said, "Hear defaulters for me, Evis. I'm going up there," and he nodded without meeting my eye. It spoke from the rigid stance of the two sentries I had just posted, as I clanked between them up Ker Morrya's green marble entry steps. From the schooled face of the steward with moontrees on the back and breast of his black silk surcoat, when I said, "The Lady asked for me," and he replied, "This way, sir." It persisted in the fit of my helmet, which was too tight, in the slip of my boots, which were too loose. In the chill of the first long colonnade whose tiles were scalloped moss-green, jade-green, by each archful of morning sun, in the piercing sweetness of a black-beaked eygnor's song, and the suddenly lovely curve of each water-fern's drooping frond. Such things grow precious when you may be seeing them for the very last time.

GLOSSARY

Proper names given with capitals.

Coll., collective noun

Imp., imperative

Neg., negative particle

Note for readers of *Everran's Bane* who find word variants. This glossary uses eastern spelling, while Harran's tale was written down in the west.

aedr (pl. aedryx), in common sense, wizard. In aedric usage, practitioner of Ruanbrarx, q.v.

ahltar, sun

Ahlthor, Phaxian deity. From ahltar, sun, nur-nor, white

Alkir, Assharran personal name. Lit. Sower, from kyre, to sow

alsyr, peace. From ax, neg., syre, to weep

Ammath, evil. From ax, neg., math, good

anor, song, tale

a'sparre, aedric art. From ax, neg., yn-ynx, hands, sparthe, to kill

Assharral, empire. From asshar, roof-tree.

asterne, watch-tower, outpost

Astyros, Assharran border fortification. Lit. Wide-wall, from

ax, neg. tyr, narrow, os, wall

ax, negative particle

Axaira Assharran province. Lit. No-farewell, from ax, neg., xaira, parting

axos, aedric art. To blind, from ax, neg., os, sing. eye

axvyr, infinity. From ax, neg., vyrne, last, end

axynbrarve, aedric art. Telekinesis. Lit. to act without hands, from ax, yn-ynx, briarve, all q.v.

az, blue

Azmaere, Phaxian range. From az, blue, maer, shadow

belphan, bay

ber, sea

Berrian, aedric personal name. Lit. Sea-fire or flame

Bhassan, Assharran town. Lit. smoke-place, from bhassa, smoke

brenx, peak

breve, pass

briave, to act, with sense of having power/competency to do so

caissyn, sugar-cane. From cau, stick, ais, sweet

cennaphar, sandalwood

Cessala, Assharran district. Lit. Sugar-land, corruption of cais-syn, sugar-cane, q.v.

chake, aedric art. To command by compulsion

cletho, mud

clethra, mangrove tree

Climbros, Assharran province. Lit. grain-walls, from climbar, grain, os, wall

clythkemmon, Lyretail menura. From clythx, heart, kemmon, tail

Colne Clethra, Assharran fort. Lit. Mangrove Four, from clethra, mangrove, colne, four

culphan, cape

darre, taipan

Darrhan, aedric personal name. Lit. taipan-tongue. Venomous

Darrior, Assharran province. From darrith, room, space

del, gold

Delostar, aedric personal name. Lit. Wall or Eye of the Golden Flower, from del, gold, os, eye or wall, tar, flower

delryr, poinciana. From del, gold, rien, crimson, nur-nor, white

deve, valley

Deve Gaz, Lit. Fallen Valley, from gase, to fall

Deve Saedryx Korven Battlefield. Aedric oath. From deve,
valley, sal, sour, bitter, korb, korven, ghost

Eakring Ithyrx, archipelago. From eakring, island, ithyr, spice

earnn, “kikuyu” grass

el-ela, coll. tree

elond, ironbark tree

emvath, lantana. From ema, poison, vath, shrub

end, apple

ensal, “quinine” tree. Lit. bitter-apple

Eskan Helken, Lit. Red Castle

Etalveth, Assharran town. From etal, sunset, veth, first, i.e.
westernmost

Ethryn, Alpha and Beta Centauri. From ethyre, to point,
indicate

Everran, Confederate kingdom. Possible corruption of Ber-
rian, q.v.

eygnor, magpie. Lit. black-white, from eygja, black, nor, white,
with play on anor, song

fanx (pl. fann), dog

femaere, demon. Lit. cruel-shadow, from feng, moon, fell,

cruel, with supernatural overtones

fendel (pl. **fendellin**), Assharran currency. From feng, moon, del, gold

feng, moon

Fengela, Lit. Moontree, from feng, moon, el-ela, tree. Matriarch of the Morheage, q.v. Also Assharran mythical being

Fengsaeva, Lit. Moon-wind. From saeva, wind

lengthir, aedric art. To command imperceptibly. Lit. to draw like the moon

Fengthira, aedric personal name. Lit. moonlight. From feng, moon, thira, light

ferrathil, bellbird. Corruption of pirra, bird, thellis, bell

ferroth, pawpaw

fing-fyng, green

finghend, emerald. Lit. green stone

Firkemmon, Scorpio. From fir, sting, kemmon, tail

Frimmor, Assharran province. From ferim, dairy-herd

Fylghjos, aedric personal name. Lit. Granite-eyes, from os, eye, fylg, granite

fyr-x, kelpie sheep-dog

gar, skin, hide

gas, spear

gastath, lancewood tree. From gas, spear, tath, wood

Gazzal, Lit. The Fall, from past. part. of gase, to fall

Gazzarien, Assharran district. From gazzal, the fall

Gazzath, Lit. The Fallers

geber, east

Gebria, Everran province. Lit. east-land

Gebros, Lit. East-wall, from geber, east, os, wall

Gerberra, whip-bird. From pirra, bird, ger, whip

Gesarre, Everran district. Lit. East-flower

Gevber, Lit. East-sea, from ber, sea, geber, east

ghend, stone

Gjerven, Assharran province. From gjer, grass, ven, way, road
gyar, foot (Gjerven dialect)

hasselian, swamp. From haz, earth, ilien, water

havos, spider. Aedric line

Haz, Sky-lord worshipped in Everran. Lit. earth

Hazghend. Lit. **Earthstone**, from haz, earth, ghend, stone.
Aedric line. Confederate nation

hazian, ruby. Lit. earth-fire, from haz, earth, iahn, fire, flame

Hazyk, inhabitant of Hazghend, q.v.

heagar, banyan fig. From heage, branch, gyar, foot (Gjerven dialect)

heage, branch (tree) family (sentient beings)

Heagian, aedric line. Lit. fire-branch, often called Flametree

Helkents, Confederate range. Untranslatable term for red of earth or rock

hellien, eucalyptus. Coll. from ilien, water, el-ela, tree

helmyne, pandanus tree. From helym, barb, yb-ynx, hand

helve, V., imp., to go

Heshyr, Arcturus. From heshyr, shepherd, from huesh, coll., sheep

hethel, olive. Lit. desert-tree

Hethox, indigenous Hethrian inhabitant

Hethria, country. Lit. desert-land

hisgal, box tree. From his, gray, gar, skin

histh, gray

Histhira, Confederate range, aedric line. Lit. gray-light, from histh, gray, thira, light

hisyrx, heron. From his, gray, yrk-yrx, legs

Holym, Confederate country. Coll. cattle

hyrne, fang

Iahn, Sky-lord worshipped in Everran. Lit. fire, flame
idrigg, cold

Ilien, Sky-lord worshipped in Everran. Lit. water

Iliennor, Lit. water-song

imlann, prized type of wood. Poss. "dead finish" tree

imsar Math, invocation. In the name of Math, q.v. below
istarel, saltbush. Lit. salt-tree, from istar, salt, el-ela, tree

kanna, banana

keerphar, bauhinia tree

keld, mine

Kemrestan, Assharran province. From kemres, border, march

Kemreswash, Everran River. Lit. border-water. From kemres, border, wash, river

Kenath, Assharran town. Lit. sale-place, from kenar, auction

ker, house, in sense of dynastic dwelling place

Ker Morrya, Lit. Black Keep, from ker, house, morg, black

kerym, lake

Kerym Cletho, Gjerven lake. Lit. Mud-lake

kymman, tamarind tree

langu, python. Assharran semi-mythical being

lase-lash, suffix, meeting, crossroad, junction

lathare, aedric art. "Mindspeech," verbal telepathic transmission

Latharyn, Lit. The speakers. V. Ystryn. Assharran form of Tarot

lethar, dream

letharthir, aedric art. To mesmerise. Lit. to make dream, from lethar, dream, thire, to be.

lisbyr, rainmaker. From lisva, rain, byr, Ulven corruption of briave, to act, q.v.

Lisdrinos, Assharran forest. From drinos, forest, lisva, rain

los, spring, or contraction of lios, face

Los Morryan, Lit. Blackwater Spring

Lossian, aedric personal name. Lit. The Well or Face of Flame

Los Therystar, legendary spring. Lit. Well of the Purple Flowers. From theryx, purple, tar, flower.

Los Velandryxe Thira, aedric artefact. From los, well, velandryxe, wisdom, thira, light

Losvure, Lit. Sky-faces. From lios, face, os, eye, vur, sky

lydel, possum. Lit. tree-hopper, from el-ela, tree, lyde, to hop

lydwyr, kangaroo. From lyde, to leap, hop, wyre, great

lydyr, hopper. Coll. Small marsupials, bandicoot, paddy melon, kangaroo rat, etc. From lyde, to hop

ly'ffanx, kangaroo dog. From lydwyr, kangaroo, fanx, fann, dog

lyng, morning

Lynghyrne, Confederate mountain. Lit. fang of the morning

Lyngthira, country. Lit. morning light, from lyng, morning, thira, light

lythian, poinsettia. From lythe, leaf, iahn, fire, flame

maer, shadow

Maerdrigg, aedric personal name. Lit. cold shadow, from maer, shadow, idrigg, cold

Maerheage, aedric line. From maer, shadow, heage, family

maerian, opal. From maer, shadow, iahn, fire, flame

Mallerstang, Assharran town. Lit. orchid-cross, from mallar, orchid, tang, cross

math, good

Math, abstraction. Aedric equivalent of god

meldene, west. Region of Everran

morg, black

morgar, black-butt tree. From morg, black, gar, hide, skin

Morglis, Lit. black-nose. Confederate cape. In Assharral, black kite. From morg, black, perraglis, hawk

Morheage, aedric line. From morg, black, heage, family

Morhyrne, Assharran mountain. Lit. Black-fang

Moriana, aedric personal name. Lit. Black Fire

Morrya, Assharran province. Lit. Black-land, ref. to volcanic soil

morsyr, black widow spider. From morg, black, syr, widow, from syre, to weep

morval, crow. From morg, black, val, wing

nerran, swamp tree

nerrys, ocean

Nerrysyr, ocean. Lit. peaceful ocean, from alsyr, peace, from ax, not, syre, to weep

Nervia, Assharran province. From nerev, banker, money-lender

norgal, ti-tree, paperbark. Coll., from nor, white, gar, skin, el, tree

os, eye or wall

Othan, Phaxian river. Lit. strong

pellathir, aedric art. To cause illusion. From pelere, to bear, carry, lethar, dream

perra, eagle. Corruption of pirra, bird

perraglis, hawk. From perra, eagle, aglis, small

perridel, coll. wattle-tree. From per, silver, del, gold, el-ela, tree

perrilys, fish-eagle. From perra, eagle, ilys, fish

Phamazan, Phaxian capital. Lit. The Gathering

pharaon, Lit. maker, creator. Loose aedric usage for "god"

pharaone, aedric art. Telepathic vision. From phare, to see

Pharaon Lethar, Lit. maker's dream. Aedric term for (1.) The physical universe, (2.) The Other World of ghosts and shamans. Cf. Hindu concept of Brahm who creates by

“dreaming” the world

phare, V. to see. Aedric art, to “read” an entire psyche

pharraz, farmer. Lit. earth-seer, from phare, to see, haz, earth

pharyn, Lit. seers. Assharan Tarot. V. Ystryn and Latharyn

phathire, aedric art. Lit. see-being, from, phare, to see, thire, to be. Mental re-creation of the past

Phathos, soothsayer. Lit. seeing eye, from phare, to see, os, eye

Phatrexe, aedric art. From phare, to see, trexe, to write. To imprint telepathic messages on matter, keyed to correct receiver

Phaxia, country. Lit. The People

Quarred, Confederate country

quennis, lawyer cane. From quienn, hook

ras, source

Rastyr, Lit. Port-head, from tyr, narrow or port

rhodel (pl. rhodellin), gold coinage of Everran. From rho, round, del, gold

rhonur, cotton. From rho, round, nur, white

riendel, cocky-apple tree. From rien, crimson, el, tree

riengjer, kangaroo grass. From rien, crimson, gjer, grass

rienglis, red kite. From rien, crimson, perraglis, hawk

Rienvur, Mars. Lit. crimson-brow

rivannon, scented tree, possible kind of cassia

rovberra, kookaburra. From pirra, bird, rove, to laugh at, mock

ruan, mind

Ruanbrarx, aedric arts. Lit. mind-acts, from ruan, mind, briarx, past. part. of briave, to act, q.v.

Ruanbraxe, aedric art. From ruan, mind, braxe, shield. To block from other aedryx’ awareness

ruand, numeral one. Also leader, head capital, etc.

saeva, wind

saeveryr, wagtail. Also Cape, "where the wind turns," from saeva, wind, ryde, rythe, to turn

Saevetir, south wind

Salasterne, Assharran fort. Lit. sour-watch, from sal, sour, asterne, lookout

salgar, Lit. bitter-bark, from sal, bitter, sour, gar, skin, bark. Assharran version of cinchona bark

Saphar, capital of Everran. Lit. delight

Sathel (pl. Sathellin), wanderer, nomad

scarthe, aedric art. Telepathic perception. Lit. to read verbal thought

Selionur, Sirius. From selloth, stars, lios, face, nor-nur, white

Sellithar, personal name. Lit. Star-flower

sellothahr, frangipani tree. Lit. Sun-star, from selloth, stars, ahltar, sun

skos, broad

slief, plateau, tableland

slithil, ibis. Lit. water-knife, from ilien, water, slith, knife

stiriand, north. Region of Everran. Aedric line

Stirian Ven, highway. Lit. North Road

Stirsselian, Lit. North-swamp, from hasselian, swamp, from haz, earth, ilien, water

syvel, wilga tree. From syve, thick, el-ela, tree

tar, flower

tarsal, gidgee tree. Lit. sour-flower

taskgjer, Mitchell grass. From task, tussock, gjer, grass

Tasmar, Assharran province. From tassa, cloth

tathrien, red cedar. From tath, wood, rien, crimson

Taven, Lit. wood-road, from tath, wood, ven, road

Tengorial, Assharran town. Lit. cleared-land, from tengre, to clear, cut down

terrephaz, brolga. From az, blue, terre, to dance

terrepher, lyretail menura. From per, silver, terre, to dance

terrian, jacaranda. Corruption of theryx, purple, iahn, flame

Thangar, Assharran province. From thangos, hilly

Th'Iahn, aedric personal name. Lit. The Flame

thillian, diamond. Lit. light-water-fire, from thira, light, ilien, water, iahn, flame

thira, light

Thiryx, Sky-lord, worshipped in Everran. Lit. air. See Haz, Ilien and Iahn

thorgan, king

Thor'stang, aedric chess. Lit. king's-war, from thorgan, king, gastang, war

thrithan, bamboo

tingan, lyretail menura. From tingrith, all, han, tongue

tingrith, numeral. Eight, all. Quarred government, loose confederation of aedric lines

Tirien, aedric line. Lit. south water, from tirs, south, ilien, water

tirs, south. Everran region

Tirstang, Crux Australis. From tirs, south, tang, cross

tyr, narrow. Port, in Hazyk dialect

Tyr Cletho, From tyr, port, cletho, mud

Tyr Coryan, Lit. Maze-port, from tyr, port, coryan, maze, labyrinth

Tyrwash, Lit. narrow-river. Aedric line

ulfann, dingoes. From ulce, wild, fanx, fann, pl. dog

Ulven, Neolithic Gjerven tribe. From ulce, wild, Gjerven, province, q.v.

Valinhynga, Venus. Lit. horns of the morning, corruption of valin, horn, lyng, morning

Vallin Taskar, Assharran landmark. From vallin, horns, taskar, gate

Velandryxe, wisdom. Lit. high-vision, from vel, high, andeir, second or non-physical sight

velandyr, sage. Lit. high-seer

Veldisk, Phaxian plateau. From vel, high, disyk, brown
ven, highway, main road

Vendring, Assharran town. Lit. road-works, from ven, road

Ven Selloth, Milky Way. From ven, road, selloth, stars

veth, first

Vorn, aedric personal name. Lit. the tooth

Vyrenia, country. Lit. last-land, from vyrne, last

Vyrlase, Lit. Last-meeting, from vyrne, last, lase, meeting, crossing-place

vyrne, Lit. the last. Nickname of Vorn, q.v.

Vyrne Taskar, Phaxian province. Lit. last-gate, from vyrne, last, taskar, gate

wash, river

wreve, V. to master, control

wreve-lan'x, aedric art. Beast mastery, from wreve, control, lanyx, coll., beast

wreve-lethar, aedric art. Lit. to control the dream, i.e. to control or change the world. From lethar, the dream, aedric term for universe

wreviane, aedric art. Pyrokinesis

wrevurx, aedric art. To control the weather. From wreve, control, vur, sky

wrock, ridge, esp. watershed

wyre, great

wyresparyx, goanna. From wyre, great, emsparyx, lizard, from

yrk, yrx, legs, and emspar, snake, from ema, poison, sparthe, to kill

Xaira, farewell, separation, aedric myth of same

xhen, aloe vera. From xhen, burnt, past. part. of xhiane, to burn

yazyk-yx, thief

yeld, blood

yeldtar, poppy. Lit. blood-flower. Juice used as soporific

yeltath, bloodwood tree. From yeld, blood, tath, wood

yst, truth

Ystanyrx, Lit. true songs. Cosmogony as preserved by Everran harpers

Ystir, Invocation. Truth it is

Ystryrn, Assharran Tarot cards. Lit. truth-tellers. See also Latharyn.

yx, sing., before, pl., eyes

yxphare, aedric art. Lit. to see before. Clairvoyance

Zem-and-Zam, Assharran personal names. Lit. This-and- That

Zyphryr Coryan, Assharran capital. From zyph, city, wyre, great, coryan, maze, labyrinth

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sylvia Kelso lives in North Queensland, Australia, and has been writing or telling stories for as long as she remembers. *The Moving Water* is her second fantasy novel, the sequel to her well-received *Everran's Bane*. She has also published poetry in Australian literary magazines, and has a Creative Writing MA for an alternate history/SF novel set in alternate North Queenslands. She lives in a house with a lot of trees in the garden, but no cats or dogs. She makes up for this by playing Celtic music on a penny whistle and is now learning the fiddle as well.



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Author photograph by Elisabeth Vonnarburg

Praise for Sylvia Kelso's *Everran's Bane*:

“Strong characters and a fully realized world combine with action and adventure”
—*Library Journal*

“The prose is dense and chewy, the worldbuilding complex and colorful, and plotting kept me turning pages till four in the morning . . . not without sly humor . . . as well as heartbreak and heroism. Highly recommended.”

—Lois McMaster Bujold, author of Nebula- and Hugo-winning *Paladin of Souls*

“Epic battles, magic, betrayal, courage, and love abound . . . there are so many themes—friendship, the nature of courage, what it means to be a leader—intertwined within the core of this tale . . . it would be a shame to miss it by not picking up this book.”

—Kathy Samuels, *Romance Reviews Today*

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—Harriet Klausner

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