







# *Written Wings*

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A Vectra Tillerman Adventure 1



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**Sarah Ickes**

Greek Mythology | Fantasy Adventure | YA

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The characters in this historical mystery novel are fictional and any resemblance to real people is coincidental.

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*“If you find yourself spilling your most  
darkened secrets and feelings, you might  
want to lay off of the honesty syrup in  
your tea.”*



*Thank you!*

to both Sherrys, who were my guinea pigs with  
this story.

## *A Special Note for the Reader*

Many of the references to the historical objects and events in this book, have real research to back them up. If you are interested in taking a peek behind the writer's curtain, to glimpse into the works I used for inspiration, you can check out three bullet points included in the back of this novel, as well as visit my website for a more indepth look.

[www.SarahIckesArt.com](http://www.SarahIckesArt.com)

Some words in this novel are older, and are not spelling errors. Definitions can be found at my website.

Thank you for trying out my story, and I hope that you enjoy the shared journey with history that Vectra is about to embark on, with you.

*and don't miss out on all the action!*

**Murial Robertson Mysteries**

**The Serpent's Star**

**Angled for Revenge**

**A Counterfeit of Death**

**An Ancient Poison (2025)**

**Vectra Tillerman Adventures**

**Written Wings**

**The Fall of Time (coming soon)**

**Vectra and Murial Cross-Over**

**The Nation's Grief (coming soon)**

**A Family's Masterpiece Series**

**A Family's Masterpiece (2025)**

**Cybil Lawson Mysteries**

**The Ghost of Christmas Pastel (2024)**



*Dedicated to the “real” Portobello road, and the  
treasure of a story it carries.*



# Characters

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Monica Browning.....	fourteen-year-old teenager, older sister to Dare
Derrick “Dare” Browning.....	ten-year-old boy, youngest sibling of the Brownings
Trevor Browning.....	brother, and Legal Guardian of Monica and Dare

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Artenian.....	ancient Greek warrior, visited Monica in a dream
Vectra Tillerman.....	mysterious woman Monica and Dare are sent to find

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Gaither.....	millionaire, used to employ the Brownings’ parents, and Trevor’s boss
Weston.....	works for Gaither
Nicholas.....	works for Gaither
Tom.....	works for Gaither
Ergon.....	works for Gaither

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Catriona Locksmith.....	old tea seller, lives in a run- down house with her brother
Jeffrey Locksmith.....	old plant hunter, lives in a rundown house with his sister
Servius.....	curio shop owner, deals in Olde Realm trades

## *Characters Continued...*

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Taminus.....	ancient warrior, after Vectra's job for centuries
Gregon.....	old book seller, a Kurzian, who is friends with Vectra
Rolan Gingerton.....	soldier ghost from the Civil War, is Vectra's roommate
Rae.....	coyote/fox creature, is Vectra's pet
Gears.....	an Olde Realm inventor
Rudi.....	Christmas elf, lives in a jolly camper most of the year
Aiden.....	annoying leprechaun, home-sick for Ireland
Ailsing (Astrid).....	an archer, and Celtic nymph, who is friends with Vectra
Martiban.....	who you will have to find out about later!

Along with the other members of this great tale.



The title 'Chapter One' is written in a black, cursive script. It is centered and set against a background of soft, grey watercolor clouds. Below the clouds is a thick, dark, horizontal brushstroke that spans the width of the title, giving it a sense of depth and texture.

## Chapter One

Monica gazed up at the street sign with its rectangular green background and sharp white lettering. Its metal surface reflected the sun's light and almost blinded her eyes from where she stood along the sidewalk. Dipping her head to the left, she was finally able to read what the street's name was: Portobello Road. *Finally!* This was supposed to be the place where she could find help in locating her missing older brother. At least, that was what the fourteen-year-old had been told.

Ever since their parents disappeared eight years ago, Trevor stepped up to become a legal guardian at the age of twenty-eight. He worked for a large company that operated from behind a heavily secured fence with a singular name on the front gate, and nothing else. Her brother never discussed his job at dinnertime, but would make a point to keep their parents' adventurous stories alive through made-up tales of treasure hunts. Though the orally shared memories would never be a true replacement for their parents, it was one of the ways the estranged siblings grew closer together. Such an age difference used to bother Trevor, but he gradually warmed up to his younger sister and younger brother

over time, even allowing Monica to see some of his journals he kept as a hobby. One afternoon, she captured a glimpse of a sketch lying atop her brother's attaché case and thought it was related to the ancient artifacts he liked to learn about during his time off. From her first glimpse, she could tell that the very old parchment consisted of multiple drawn lines which crisscrossed to create a schematic of a primitive machine. Before she could venture any closer to it, however, Trevor hurriedly stashed it away from her view.

*I wonder if that drawing has anything to do with his kidnapping?* Standing on the sidewalk, Monica couldn't help but feel a tiny sense of hope take aflame within her heart. Determined to not allow Trevor to vanish like their parents did, never to return home again, she secretly vowed to the smaller boy beside her that she would prevent them from being forced into foster care. Lovingly, Monica gazed upon her younger brother, seeing the studious look he also gave the road sign situated high above them. Though they dressed similarly in casual clothing and black sneakers, they did not share any familial traits to any of the strangers passing by them. *I can't let him go back into the system again. I just can't.*

She resisted the urge to wrap her arm around her brother's shoulders, as her mother would do for her whenever she needed comforting. Instead, Monica fought back the doubts trying to plant themselves inside her brain, and tried not to lose her own courage in the face of the enormous task ahead. "Well, Dare, should we get going?" The girl tapped her fingers on the nine-year-old's head in order to grab his attention. "No use in procrastinating."

"I suppose. But are you going to be alright in that crowd in there?" Dare pointed his short index finger at the packed street with people shoehorned in tighter than sardines in

a metal can.

Monica gulped down her anxiety, flashing him a crooked smile in an attempt to convince him that everything would be alright. "I guess I will just have to deal. Come on. It's already twelve o'clock."

Walking in single file, the siblings entered the antique market that took place every Saturday afternoon during the summer months in Pennsylvania. Vendors flanked the street with long chains of carts and awnings in a multitude of shapes, colors, and sizes. Tables were overburdened with a plethora of vintage items ranging from small furniture to jewelry pendants and rings. Wooden cabinets took up a large section of one seller's nine by nine foot space, whilst a neighboring seller was loudly hocking knick-knacks discovered in trash bins from over the mountain. Paintings carelessly hung from thin wire, in a tent further down the line, glistened with fresh paint, as fake jewels dazzled in the shining sunlight from across the street. To their right, a man was demonstrating how good the piano was that he was trying to sell; out-of-tune keys and all. His voice only added to the ear-piercing tragedy, and succeeded at keeping potential buyers moving swiftly by his booth.

"It's just a bunch of junk." Dare flatly stated.

"Remember what Trevor always says."

"What? Don't pee in flower pots?" Dare grinned upward at his sister sarcastically. "Or don't use our shirt sleeves to clean our nose?"

"No. One person's junk is another's treasure."

"I know. I was just trying to get you to smile. A real smile, I mean."

"I'll be smiling when we see Trevor again." Monica grabbed ahold of his hand, ignored her need to vomit within the fray of wandering people, and plunged into the

crowded marketplace. Normally, Dare would resist holding hands with his sister, being that he was far too old for that anymore, but this was under unusual circumstances. They had to find their older brother before Gaither decided that he was a liability, and better off being dead than alive.

Monica and Dare still felt that their predicament was as unbelievable as sending people to the planet of Jupiter. It all happened three nights ago, when Trevor was taken from their front porch. He was arriving home, late from his research, when Gaither's men placed a hood over his head and dragged him away into a dark minivan, off the lit sidewalk. The New York license plate, spelling out the words "GthBoys" told them who was to blame for the criminal deed. Since they knew their brother was working for a company called Gaither, it wasn't hard to connect the bread crumbs.

The following night, Monica had a dream of the most bizarre of sorts.

*It was daybreak, and the siblings were walking toward an unmarked grave in the woods at the edge of their neighborhood. After many years of weathering, the name was illegible and the dates of the person's lifespan were barely visible themselves. Monica had been trying to make out what the numbers were, when the sound of crunching leaves grabbed her attention. She quickly turned to the left, only to find a gentle stream bubbling along the river rocks and the trees as silent as ever. Hearing the loud footsteps once again, Monica and Dare swung their heads back around to see a huntress standing poised with a cloak draped over her shoulders.*

*Her left hand pulled down the hood, shrouding her face from their view, revealing two long brown braids cascading in front of her chest. Mindlessly flowing around her body, a cream-col-*



ored toga extended to her ankles, where gladiator sandals were wrapped around her feet and shins. A quiver rested against her back as a sterling silver bow was cradled in her right hand. "Do not be scared. I am here to help you save your brother."

"H...o...w do you k...n...o...w him?" Monica positioned herself between Dare and the ancient warrior. Her eyes frantically searched the forest floor for any form of a weapon she could lay her hands on.

"Let us just say that his work has captured a lot of attention, including that of my own." The woman smiled at the two siblings. And for some unknown reason to Monica, she had a strong feeling that they could trust this strange woman. "He was searching for something very powerful, and ancient, when a man by the name of Gaither took him. I fear that he will be forced to help them locate it in exchange for his life. Or perhaps, that of your own."

"Looking for what exactly?" Monica couldn't help but think back to the drawing on the parchment she had briefly seen months earlier. Trevor had acted strangely secretive about it, and nearly pushed her away from his leather case in the process of concealing it under the opened flap.

"A weapon mightier than the sword. If you wish to save your brother, travel to a place called Nectar Hill. Visit Portobello Road and find a unique woman by the name of Vectra Tillerman. She will be able to help you." A slight Greek accent lingered in her words.

"How can we trust what you are telling us?"

"If you do not, the world will be no more as you now know it; but a planet ravaged to ruin by a powerful dictator and no future worth living for."

"No offense, but don't the rich and powerful already ruin things?" Dare sassed. He always did like to crack a joke when feeling pressured. It was seen as a tactless coping mechanism by many, but his sister did not say anything. The ancient woman took a step

forward, causing Monica to do likewise in the opposite direction, ensuring the six foot separation between them.

"I can see you are no fool, Monica Browning. You will need your smarts for this task at hand."

"For someone I have never met before, you seem to know a bit about us. I don't care for that." Monica's eyes narrowed and her brows inched downward. "What's your name?"

"Artenian. Time is short, Monica. Visit Portobello Road when the antique market comes alive every Saturday afternoon and find the woman wearing a black fedora. Three playing cards will be atop her hat band. She has an aura about her of an older world long gone, and not of any modern appearance you would be used to."

"Like you?" Monica's spine was becoming prickly with suspicion. Being under trees in the woods was uncomfortable enough without talking to a woman dressed from Ancient Greece. For all she knew, the warrior could be crazy in the head, or an escapee from some psych ward. But her gut was still telling her that she could trust Artenian.

"Her attire would be akin to what your generation calls 'steampunk,' though it is no costume, and she has a mannerism with a life of its own. Tell her that her sister sent you." As Artenian spoke the final word, she disappeared in a flash of green fire in the blink of an eye.

When Dare first heard his sister tell him about her vivid dream, all he could manage was a blank stare at her for an elongated moment, before his lips began to move once more. "Are you sure we did not just have way too much soda for breakfast yesterday?"

"Dare!" Monica's call for him shook his memories away, bringing him back to the present. *I still cannot believe we are doing this!* He wanted to call the police, anonymously,

to report her dream to them, and let the officers deal with the possible lead into their brother's disappearance. But that was when Monica warned him about having to go through child services again, if they were to involve the authorities. With no other relatives to mention, this was their only chance to save Trevor, and they were going to have to take it upon themselves to find Vectra Tillerman before it was too late.