

Text by Alessandro Mattioli after Niki de Saint Phalle's "Sun God"

The Sun God's Judgement

Interviewer: Robert Hatchins (US Foreign Affairs)

Interviewee: Solarian Representative Erickson

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List of Acronyms: Solarian Rep Erickson=SRE, Robert Hatchins=HR

SRE: —ace the mic right here on my shirt?

RH: Indeed, Representative Erickson.

SRE: Thanks Trilby. Now have y—

RH: Agent Hatchins sir, not Trilby.

SRE: Sorry, I just felt that it was quite a fashion choice in this decade since the last time I saw them was back in the late 70s when I was but a child. But enough reminiscing. Onto the subject of discussion, have you ever heard of the utopia known as Solas?

RH: Isn't th—

SRE: Rhetorical question, since we wouldn't be here discussing it, while being recorded no less. You see Hatchet-

RH: Agent Hatchins.

SRE: Hatchins, Solas is this grand, hidden civilization located smack down in the middle of South America. Now there were rumors about it, some true and some less so, making it seem as if it was a mythological civilization like that of El Dorado. However, unlike El Dorado, Solas is a real civilization and the reason that it was lumped into the same category as it was due to two astounding aspects. The first aspect... one moment.

[takes a sip from the glass of water besides him]

Sorry, was a tad thirsty. As I was saying, the first aspect that made Solas seem mythological was the progress that it had achieved, despite its isolation. By the time America gained its independence, Solas was already working on automobiles. Not to mention, the citizens themselves have achieved wisdom comparable to Buddha himself, possessing answers to questions that were beyond average human understanding, and in being so damn intelligent they were able to create so many things ahead of their time. This means that Solas possesses some of the brightest in the world and these minds work to further its progress. Even now they possess technologies and knowledge that I can't reveal due to the very nature of how much greater in comparison to what America boasts is the pinnacle of ingenuity, and I'd rather not bash that fragile ego. However, the second aspect is definitely harder to swallow.

RH: Alright, so from what I gathered, Solas is an isolated nation with very little contact with the outside world. So how has it been able to become so self reliant despite that? Also, what is this second aspect that is so "hard to swallow" as you put it?

SRE: The answer to both those questions is one in the same; the Sun God.

RH: [pause] Sun God?

SRE: The Sun God. That is the second aspect of Solas and is the reason behind both its flourishing progress and why no one can find it.

RH: So what exactly is it?

SRE: It's a bigass bird, one capable of some of the most craziest shit you'd ever see.

RH: I mean no offense when I ask this Representative Erickson, but are you fucking with me?

SRE: What, of course not. At least, not intentionally. The Sun God isn't just a bird, but a being of immense power that bestowed upon Solas plentiful resources which allowed it to operate as it has to this day. In fact, good ol' SG is the reason why no one is able to find Solas, at least not by satellite, plane, or any other method other than on foot.

RH: How does it manage to do this, does it bend the light or keep it in a separate dimension?

SRE: Now who's sounding crazy. Honestly, I know fuckall about how it's done and ended up chalking it up to god magic so I don't try to overthink it. Anyway the Sun God also had another role when it came to Solas: being its gatekeeper. SG would judge any who managed to make their way to the entrance in order to make sure that those who sought it were worthy of being a part of Solas and the gifts that were offered within. It's a pretty effectively selective test if you ask me.

RH: And I assume that you yourself have been subject to and passed the Sun God's judgment? And how does one manage to arrive at Sols' entrance and pass such a test?

SRE: Answering your first question, I did pass SG's judgment and was granted entry into Solas. As for how to get to Solas, I can only say that they must seek it out with fervor since there is no one way of getting there. And as far as passing SG's test is concerned, well, I got a tale on the subject, of which is true, that I feel should enlighten not only you but to all the dear listeners.

As I mentioned before, there were many rumors of the civilization of Solas, such as the advanced technology and knowledge, and such rumors would reach people from all different walks of life. Many were curious of Solas' existence, all for various reasons and purposes, and there were three such individuals back in 1984. All three had managed to learn of its location, and each had come from different walks of life and for different purposes.

The first of these individuals was the youngest of four and son of a wealthy and successful CEO and owner of a corporation, I think it was called Cormat or Curman, that dealt in various products, from sugary snacks to clothing, yet ended up going to shit in the 90s due to various scandals. As for his name, I can't recall it so I'll just refer to him as The Heir throughout the tale. More convenient character-wise.

RH: Do you mean Coremen Industries, because if so th—

SRE: Ssshhhh, no interruptions. Anyway, The Heir, young and arrogant, sought out Solas hoping to bring it into the world and have first dibs on any business opportunities that would arise, all in order to prove to his father that he was capable of becoming his successor. When he had managed to reach the entrance to Solas, he was taken aback by the large stone archway that greeted him, the vines and foliage taking up residence and hugging on all but its peak, which remained bare.

The Heir was then startled by a sound from the pathway, turning in its direction only to see a thin figure. The figure was that of a woman who appeared malnourished and wearing a robe accompanied by sandals past their prime. This was the second traveler who I'll refer to as The Monk, since I think they were Buddhist, and practiced asceticism in order to find wisdom through suffering. She sought out Solas to seek the knowledge that would hopefully help her to reach Nirvana.

The Heir, believing her to be a Solarian guide, exclaimed "about damn time. How long does it take to get some service around here."

The Monk replied "I'm afraid you're mistaken young man, since like you, I too seek Solas, yet it seems for different reasons."

Out of nowhere a voice says "So is this where we get into Solas, because if not then this is gonna be a major bummer for all involved, heh." Thus both turn their attention to the final traveler, a young man wearing snappy clothes and a backpack two sizes too big for him who had hitchhiked his way all the way from Missouri to get to Solas. I dub him The Fool, for both his easygoing personality and that he didn't seek knowledge or opportunity, but just wanted to see if Solas was real due to his own intense curiosity.

Thus all three had gathered at the archway, with The Heir bickering on about what he planned to do as The Fool listened on, and The Monk meditated in a corner. After a few hours gusts of winds unlike any felt before reached them, causing them all to be at attention to its source. And so their eyes fell upon the Sun God who was perched atop the bare stone on the archway, its very being invoking awe. All three couldn't help but let their eyes wander throughout the form of the giant aviary, its very feathers the colors of the rainbow, both blending and contrasting with each other as if fighting for dominance. Its wings as large as its body, its feathers changing color with each movement. The stop its head lay a golden crown, signifying its rule over all as the dominant being. However, the last place their eyes fell upon were its talons, each slicked in emerald and sharp enough to dig into the arch, causing all to gulp in unison yet being left in awe at the splendorous colors brought about by the Sun God's presence.

However, someone had to go first and to no one's surprise, The Heir stepped forward to enter the archway, only to be cut off by a vibrant wing larger than himself. When he demanded a reason behind his declined entry, the SG knelt its head towards him, its piercing eye right in front of his face and revealed the reason. It showed not only him but the others that The Heir, in pursuit of his goals and desires, caused harm to many whether intentionally or not, so that while he lived life he did so at others' expense. This

would never be allowed into Solas and so The Heir was declined entry, which angered him so and, without thinking, punched SG right in the face. The next few seconds passed with silence, then a flurry of sound and light followed. Where The Heir once stood now laid a pile of ash, causing both other travelers to become hesitant in approaching.

After some time though, The Monk made her way forward and attempted to pass under the arch as well, only to be met by the same wing. Wondering why she herself was declined, yet much like before, the wise eye of the Sun God revealed the reason. The Monk had lived a life that deprived her enjoyment, focusing more on suffering rather than actually living, even depriving herself of sustenance, and such a way of life wasn't welcomed since life is meant to be enjoyed, not suffered. This left The Monk disheartened and defeated, yet SG proceeded to envelop her with its wings, surrounding her in color and terror. After unfolding its wings, The Monk was nowhere to be seen, yet The Fool was assured that she was safe, somewhere.

All that remained was The Fool, who said fuck it all and proceeded to enter the archway, Sun God be damned. Yet to his surprise he wasn't stopped like the others and passed on through, laying witness to the rumored civilization in all its splendor, with words failing to describe it. When he wondered why he looked back towards SG, who revealed in his all seeing eye that he live a life full of enjoyment, yet did so without bring harm to anyone and in fact was one that took pleasure in assisting others, never letting it dampen his experience. Left satisfied with his reason, The Fool proceeded to his new life in Solas, never looking back.

That is the tale of how to enter the civilization of Solas, give or take a few small details and lofty embellishments. And so Hatchy, you've gotta live a life that doesn't cause harm for others or restrict yourself to the point that you can't truly enjoy it either, at least, that's what I interpreted from the Sun God when I was judged. There could be a deeper meaning but I'm fine with just understanding the gist of it, since that's all I need.

RH: Well that was certainly enlightening, to say the least. If what you told is a true story then definitely have to report it to my superiors since the disappearance of Michael Coremen was never solved. But that's another matter, and so onto my next question. Who were you before you became a part of Solas and a representative?

SRE: Oh, little ol me. I wasn't anyone important, just a curious fool from Missouri.