



And when Sol did reach its apex, all the chief priests and the people came to a ridge above the city of Vallia that is called *Costa Deus* to make false claims against The Mother, that they might put her to death.

And they led her by rope as one doth livestock and delivered her unto the feet of Imperator Erebus of Vallia, who presided as ruler and judge.

And The Mother stood before the great palanquin of the tyrant king, and the king asked her, saying: Art thou the mother of God?

And The Mother saith to him: *As thou art king*. And when she was accused by the prosecutor and the clerics, she answered nothing.

And when she was beaten by the soldiers of the king before the people for her silence she answered nothing still.

Then the king saith to her: Hast thou lost thy ears with thy vision? How doth thou plead against the great testimonies alleged against thee?

And she said to him: *Though my sight is gone, the light of Sol shines through the shadows of deception and illuminates to me the truth.*

Their words belong not to them. I shall lend my ears and tongue only unto the party who hath quarrel.

Again the soldiers of the king went to lay lashes upon The Mother for her sharp tongue, but the king raised his hand as her words did cause him wonder.

And Erebus turned to the people and saith to them: May any who hath quarrel with the false mother speak now and receive reward, and may any who side with her step forward and give testimony.

No sooner hath the king said this that Liesl and Conrad stepped forth from the crowd to defend the mother of Sol as if she had birthed them.

But so too did Grimoald, who revealeth his true face and spoke to the king before Liesl or Conrad.

And he said: The false mother hath taken tithes from the people for her benefit.

They give her what few talents they have for a salvation that will never visit them, and deprive thou of thyn rightful taxation.

Then rose a great tumult from the people, and the king raised up his hand to silence them and saith: It is as thou sayest. But as I am a fair judge, let us hear from the companions of this woman.

And then Liesl, who was always calm amidst even the strongest storm spoke, and she said: I know not the reason for this betrayal, for The Mother herself welcomed this man called Grimoald into our congregation and hath loved him as a son for many a season and caused him nie vexation.

Any alms received by The Mother were given freely by those that loved her as a sign of gratitude.

And then Conrad, who was fiery in his passions said: I am of the same mind as Liesl. I know not the reason, but I do know this: Listen not to that poison lipped Grimoald, for a hound that doth bite the hand of his master knows not his place and is a danger to all around him.

But the words of the companions fell upon ears stuffed with wax and gold talents, for the king heard only that which did benefit him.

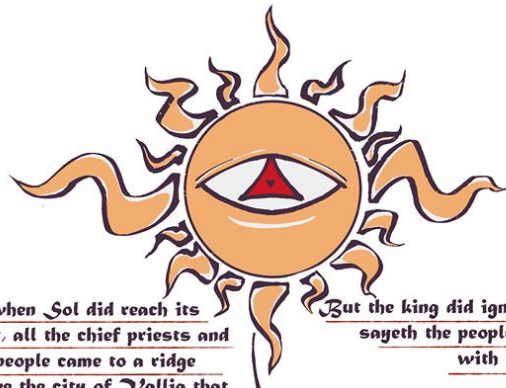
Erebus turned to the people once again, asking: If a farmer finds foxes amongst his hens, doth he allow the beasts to roam free?

They answer all: *Nay.*

The king saith: *Nay indeed*, the farmer set his hounds upon them and allows none to live.

What shall be done then with this woman that is called the Mother of Sol and her companions? They say all: Let them be put to death.

And Mother protested, saying: *My disciples hath done no ill. Why should they meet death for speaking truth?*



But the king did ignore her righteous pleas and proclaimed: So sayeth the people. Let the disciples of the false mother die with the vixen so Vallia may prosper long after

I am dead and buried.

Let us gild them in her ill gotten gains so they may shine as brightly as her god when they meet him in death.

Then the soldiers of the king, seizing the mother of Sol, placed a great iron collar about her neck and about the necks of her disciples who spoke on her behalf.

And they bound chains to the collars, and hammered stakes into the earth.

And after they bound the chains to the stakes and pulled them taught.

And they brought forth a bubbling crucible which they carried between them, and placed it before her.

Then, stripping the bandages from her blind eyes, they exposed her face to the people and applied hyssop oil to it and spat upon it.

And as they poured the molten alms upon her serene countenance, she and her companions made no sound nor any complaint.

And after they had poured the barbarous castings, the soldiers counted the remaining tithes, placed bets, and mocked how her disciples perished.

And they sat and watched her.

For she hath not fallen with her disciples.

The blessed mother remained knelt with gilt visage and clasped hands turned westward toward the loving light of her divine child.



And when the casting had cured and was cold, The Holy Mother placed her hands upon it and removed it from her unblemished countenance.

And the people cried: A miracle hath been bestowed, hallowed be The Mother by the rays of Sol.

And the bars of that gilded cage which imprisoned the heart of Grimoald began to bend, for he knew what he witnessed.

Yet he stood firm in his false convictions, as one does who hath charted his course wrongly, but has already traversed a great distance from which there is no return. But the king wished for the death of the mother of Sol above all else.

For he who doth dedicate himself fully to worship at the altar of wealth covets it above all. Love nor faith, nor threat of damnation shall sway he who bows to gold.

The king raised his hand to render the masses mute, and said:

No miracle hath been bestowed here today, and hallowed be she not. Art my subjects so feeble in mind as to believe such a display holy? Murmurs and confusion arose amongst the Vallians.

The royal heathen did continue, saying: This woman aims to spread her affliction to ye, blinding all who art fool enough to listen with the light of her false god.

What ye have witnessed today is no miracle, but an act of witchery. This creature in the guise of woman must be burnt. Then Adelheid and Lotta did stride nobly from amongst the Vallians to defend The Mother, but the people cried out the more, saying: Let them be burned.

And the soldiers of the king did surround and capture them. Then a pyre was built and the two companions were bound to her, one to her right hand and one to her left.

And as before, the king and his cabinet of fools sought to burn She who is hallowed by Sol, who itself had begun to wane, yet stayed and watched awhile longer to ensure the safety of its mother.



Then roaring pyre hath finally become ember, night reigned and The Mother was yet untouched.

The king of Vallia was enraged for he had been made a fool before his queen and people, and he drew his blade and approacheth The Mother.

She that had birthed Sol did raise a venerable hand and sayeth: If thou intend to take my life, do so with honor in the light of day.

Thou thinketh the dark conceals truth from Sol, but the ancestors stand vigil, and thine cowardice and treachery is illuminated to a thousand pinprick eyes.

The king of Vallia, consumed though he was with anger, understood the wisdom of her words and heard the murmurings of Vallia around him and he saith: Escort this woman to a cell. Come break of day on the morrow, she shall die here by my hand. And the soldiers of the king guided her to a cell within the walls of Vallia, and with reverence left her to her prayers.

But not long after did the queen of Vallia enter that place seeking an audience with The Mother.

The queen sayeth: O Mother, hallowed be thy name, I come to you in earnest. For the soul of my husband is corrupt and I damn his name. I wish to never speak it nor be called by it for as long as I live. I do not wish to see ye perish come morning, but I know not what to do.

The Mother sayeth: This meeting was foretold to me by Sol. Heed my words: I will die when my child waxes come morn, for as long as I live thine husband shall oppress my people.

This saddened the queen deeply, but she knew the mother spoke truth.

The Mother continued, saying: I will die, but I shall not end. For a worthy successor shares the dark with me, and her line shall be equally worthy of that same honor. Their reign shall ensure that Vallia stands eternal.

The queen, overcome with confusion did ask: How shall I continue thine legacy? My blood may be royal, but it is not divine.

The Mother sayeth: Those who rule under his teachings are the closest to Sol. They art his divine regents.

I stand before you, proof that thou need not be born divine to create or become it. I was but the daughter of a merchant till Sol did conceive itself within my womb.

Noble daughter, heed my request: procure my golden visage from the treasury of Erebus.

When he hath taketh my life, don that visage and lay a kiss upon the mold of my lips. This shall bind thine visage to mine, and Sol shall deem you worthy to stand in my stead and speak on its behalf as I hath done.

She knew that The Mother spoke with truth and wisdom, yet still the queen sayeth: Surely there must be another way. Surely you may yet live. There are those amongst the soldiers of my husband who are loyal to me, and by my command they may free ye and allow thou to flee with thine followers.

The mother said: I hath fulfilled my purpose child. The followers of Sol grow in number by the day and I am fit to lead a congregation, not a kingdom. You have little time, leave now with my blessing for thou art worthy.

The queen left with shattered heart, but grim determination and a faint ray of hope in her bosom, for a new path had appeared before her.

As Sol did rise, so too did The Mother toward the peak of Costa Deus.

The king stood at the apex of that accursed place with wicked blade drawn, for he had lost his patience for ceremony. The soldiers did guide her to him and with care, helped her bend the knee. She did bless them for their courtesy while the king cursed them for it.

He rested the cruel edge of his blade against her middle and asked: Have thou any last words?

Two more followers attempted to protest and approach, but The Mother sensed this and raised her hand to arrest their progress. The Mother answered: I hath nothing to say to the likes of ye, or it would bring me nor my people any fortune. Do what ye will and be done with it.

The king did laugh, for he found her defiance amusing and admirable. Yet still he did heft his blade and cleaved the womb of The Mother asunder.

The blessed martyr did gasp softly but made no sound beside as she fell to her knees.

And the tyrant did scoff and said: It is as I thought. Witchcraft did keep this strange woman alive. She did vex me so, but she is no divine creature, see how her blood floweth crimson as does our own.

And the whole people answering, said: Her blood be upon us and upon our children.

And no sooner had these words been spoken that a brilliant light of golden hue did exit from the wound which Erebus had inflicted.

That divine light rose with grace to the heavens where Sol burned alabaster with rage.

For she died holy and was, for her pious merit, carried to the stars.

The people did wail and rage against their king and he that had killed the mother of God dropped his sword in awe and fear as the Vallians surrounded him and his soldiers.

The queen of Vallia leapt forward then and seized the fallen blade which had stolen the life of her mother.

Then, she placed her lips softly and with reverence upon those of the visage before placing it over her own.

That lady did stand before the corpse of The Mother and in a voice that was similar to, but was not her own did sayeth: Thou hath committed an act so terrible, mere words cannot well enough describe it.

I shall take my leave of ye, for I am destined to a new calling. But heed my words godslayer: one day I shall return for thine life and all that thou dost hold dear.

So the blessed lady slipped out amidst the chaos and climbed down the hilltop taking with her the two remaining companions who were among the closest friends to her mother: Inge and Manfred were their names.

And close behind followed those soldiers of the king who liked his wife better, and they forded the Annis Lacrimulae before the king could reach it.

The King went in pursuit of the lady, but Sol, who takes care of its own in any peril, caused the river that had once carved Vallia to boil and swell up and prevent his crossing.

Sol caused the river to leave its normal course—and such a rescue was a miracle. King Erebus waited there for a long time but he could do nothing. He did not dare enter the water for it was too wide and deep and would scald him. Thus the regent of Sol escaped the power and brutality of the king.



Rushed words did spread across the continent
from city to village and lip to ear.

They whisper of a legion that grows to the east
where peasants and holy peoples march together,
pitchforks and staves side by side.

They whisper of the miracles they perform:
of mortal wounds cured, of plagues banished,
of dead men who live yet again.

They speak of the gilded woman leading it all.

They say flames dance in her wake,

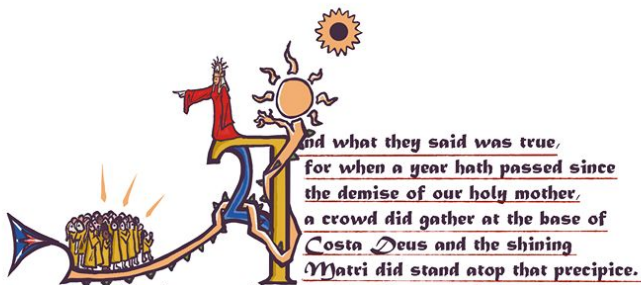
that her hair and clothes art woven from sollight.

They say her shining countenance belongs to The Mother.

They say that she is returning home.

They rename her in Vallian tongue.

They call her Matri Incarnationis.



And what they said was true,
for when a year hath passed since
the demise of our holy mother,
a crowd did gather at the base of
Costa Deus and the shining
Matri did stand atop that precipice.

The Matri surveyed her people and sayeth: Gather, all ye
misguided of Vallia, all ye secret followers of Sol.
There is no need to disguise thyselfs any longer, for our day
hath arrived.

Here, on this forsaken precipice, as Sol awakens from its
slumber beneath the earth, we gather to reclaim what rightfully
belongs to us.

Entombed in fine cloth and the fruits of thy labor, thine
murderous ruler slumbers.

He is no husband of mine, nor even man at all.

Thou art governed by a beast, one to be hunted as he did our
maligned vixen.

No longer am I mere wife of the godslayer, nor will my
children be descendents of that cursed line.

I speak on behalf of our martyred and maligned Mother,
who hath offered me and all that doth succeed me that honor.

I hath donned her golden visage as proof of this and so I
may embody her fully.

No longer shall my line be individuals, but aspects of the
holiest life which hath ever lived.

We shall be aspects of she who hath created the creator.

We shall be mothers of all.

Go now to the murderer of thine mother.

Go put an end to his rule, for he hath committed a sin greater
than any committed and which shall be committed.

Let not the light of Sol wane upon thine righteous anger, for
its flames are not solely for the warmth of thine spirit.

They too are the flames of passion and fury, which lap at the
heels of the heathen, the heretic and the apostate with equal fervor.

Set thine soul alight and fear not, for thou art witnessed by the
blazing iris of the true ruler of these lands and all that doth stretch
beyond.

Fear not, for this head, like God, is judge and witness to thine
imminent victory.

Go forth ye noble, ye chosen of Sol.

Go forth and deliver divine justice.



And all the followers of Sol did as The Matri commanded,
for her words were divine and righteous.

They spread through the city streets toward the palace of
Erebus, which was illuminated brightly by the rays of Sol
atop the Agger Palatinus as if it were a signal fire.

And as the living flood washed through the city, many more
spilled from homes and seeped into the Vallian ranks.

And any who opposed them were dispelled as a torch doth
darkness.

And as Sol did crest on the horizon, it did so measuredly so
as to keep the advancing Vallians hidden within the shadow
cast by the high walls of the city.

For those that serve Sol shall benefit both from the light it
creates and the shadow it casts.

For all it has and shall touch belong rightly to the chosen
people.

And as the chosen peoples charged the agger, the remaining
soldiers of the king fled or were trampled underfoot.

And as the gate to his palace was rent from its hinges and
vengeance-blind Vallians poured through it, that king did
stand alone and defenseless in bed clothes made by those
which hath surrounded him.

And the skulk did part and from it the first Matri emerged
brandishing that blade Erebus had used to cruelly rip light
from The Mother just one year ago.

She said not a word nor heeded his empty pleas, and gutted
Erebus where he stood, as he did her mother.

Joy echoed as The Matri Incarnationis ascended her
throne, and Vallia did prosper henceforth.



Lost were the peoples of Vallia
under the rule of King Erebus
until they were found and led to salvation
by The Matri and her regents.

A kingdom cannot prosper when the ruler
alloweth the subjects to rule and speak for them.

A voice should be one, not many.

A mind should be unified, not fractured.

She who birthed Sol did appoint a lineage to act in her stead,
did permit a line of bodies worthy of donning her visage.

It is the divine duty of the people to obey those who art
blessed by the blessed.

May any who disparage her unending eminence or sew doubt
never feel the warmth of Sol's grace and be
damned to unending abyss.

There they shall stumble and writhe in darkness,
blind, as they lived, to
the glory of Sol.

There they shall scramble over the writing bodies
of all who wronged it and its emissaries.

There they shall shamble up mountains of heathen flesh
and claw at its divine rays with frozen hands,
but never again shall they feel love nor warmth from them.

Such is the fate of the faithless and the nonbeliever,
may unending dark envelop them all.

May the light of Sol forever shine
on the Matribus and the Peoples of Vallia.

