

EM

So you know places, but NOT faces?

SOLANDRIA

I know the Places Within very well. Such beautiful places, the worlds beyond... the potential of what can be, but lately... faces within them are destroying the creations like a disease. They haunt me like ghosts.

EM

You can't escape it.

SOLANDRIA

They follow... I hear it vibrating in my ears, pulsating, I see them in the CORNERS of my eyes lurking in angles.

EM

Do you embrace THEM?

She PAUSES thinking how to "EMBRACE THEM". The PEOPLE FADE BACK INTO 50% transparency as EM FADES OUT to 50%. A HOMELESS MAN in rags outside looks in. His face wears sad DESPERATION and ENVY at seeing people's CONTENT lives inside.

SOLANDRIA

I try to let them be. But they're a film that coats my eyes... too blurred to see what they truly are.

EM

Sometimes you strike at the shadowed silhouettes, as if they'll disappear... and still here we lay same as before, no further.

SOLANDRIA

YES!

EM FADES back IN to solid, while everyone else FADES OUT.

EM

And it's all a mirage.

SOLANDRIA

And it's real... Wait... what do you mean by MIRAGE?

PAUSE. EM waits for her to grasp what she ALREADY KNOWS.

SOLANDRIA (CONT'D)  
I need to know! You have to tell  
me. WHAT IS THE MIRAGE?

EM  
-They're not REAL, though your  
experience of them is VERY real.

She's PUZZLED, as this contradicts her experience.

SOLANDRIA  
(assertive)  
How can they NOT be REAL? You  
didn't answer the question.

EM  
They're from an illusionary  
reality. DOES a magician make MAGIC  
or do they make ILLUSIONS?

SOLANDRIA  
No, they feel VERY REAL to me.

EM  
So does a magic trick... Tell me...  
who OWNS your faces?

She's PERPLEXED that "faces" can belong to someone. Making a  
PRESUMPTION of him, she grows EXCITED by FALSE REALIZATION!

SOLANDRIA  
YOU DO! You've mastered the world  
of faces haven't you?... If so,  
then YOU MUST BE their master.

EM  
I do??... How can I own YOUR faces,  
they're YOUR faces.

SOLANDRIA  
No, YOU DO. It's you I've been  
searching for most my life! The  
faces belong to you. It was YOUR  
face I FIRST saw within THE PLACES.  
YOU opened the door by which ALL  
other faces came.

EM  
But then you must know WHO I AM...  
if that is true.

SOLANDRIA  
(ecstatic)  
I AM YOU... your reflection! I've  
(MORE)

## SOLANDRIA (CONT'D)

written about you, dreamed about you... it's been you who's been calling to me from afar. THAT'S IT!

EM

(resisting)

That would mean... that you're just TALKING TO YOURSELF.

The people FADE IN to 50% and EM OUT to 50%. SHE WONDER'S if they see her talking to him. They FADE OUT again.

EM (CONT'D)

Then again, how can you be "talking TO yourself" when the love you GIVE ME is far greater than the SELF LOVE you hold for yourself?

(pause)

No, I'm NOT their master... Tell me though... where do you go when you seek them, the faces?

SOLANDRIA

(over emphasizing)

I DON'T seek the faces! They seek me. I prefer NEVER see them again!

EM

And yet you sought to face me FACE to FACE... ADMIT IT, You DO seek faces. You SEEK faces of people TO BELIEVE in you. You SEEK FACES of freedom, as you face the future. And though faces seek you, it is YOU too who seeks THEM. So then... WHERE DO YOU GO when you seek them?

SHE's frustrated at the notion that the faces she seeks are embedded with the faces she avoids. She's also HURT Em's not playfully feeding her ROMANTIC DESIRES that crave connection.

SOLANDRIA

I don't know... Wherever they are... HERE, my only escape... the borders between HEAVEN and BROKEN EARTH. I'm servant to the mirror.

SHE bows her head shifting into TEARS. EM gently places his hand on her cheek in comfort. She looks up with TENDER EYES.

EM

You see, Love, you've no clue WHERE you are. You only glimpse to see within, so it controls you. You

(MORE)

EM (CONT'D)

don't know WHAT IS "WITHIN"... let  
alone WHERE you are within it.  
WHERE ARE YOU?

SHE looks at the fantasy around in SOMBER search. OUTSIDE,  
she sees a distant ugly LIQUER STORE. EM stands taking her  
hand for her to follow. They EXIT OUTSIDE to see closer.

GRUNDGY drunks in front of the STORE guzzle BEERS in paper  
bags. It's a CRUDE AWAKENING. Her REPULSION to their nasty  
feel SHIFTS into her ACCEPTANCE of them as SHE REALIZES:

SOLANDRIA

I know where I am NOW... somewhere  
stuck in THEIR WORLD. No, it's not  
mine, I'M THE INTRUDER. That's why  
they keep finding me WITHIN IT...  
I'm trying to bring MY world INTO  
theirs, rather than creating my  
own... I'm the invader.

UNDERSTANDING she's A VISITOR, she RELEASES anxiety from her  
battle to define reality. But SHE FALLS short of the deeper  
question: "If she's not from HERE, then WHERE IS SHE FROM?"

SOLANDRIA (CONT'D)

WHY ME? Who am I?

EM

Who am I? Who are THEY?

SOLANDRIA

They're faces within, a world not  
my own... That's the truth you want  
isn't it?

EM

The answer depends who you ask and  
who wears the mask. You still don't  
know WHAT they are. WHAT ARE THEY?

SOLANDRIA

They are the monsters of the  
world... exposed for who they truly  
are without their masks to hide the  
ugliness within.

EM

OR PERHAPS... you're just SEEING  
masks BEHIND masks? Their mask of  
charms hides their ugliness...  
BUT... Is that UGLINESS just a mask  
they've merged with BELOW a mask?