*Just remember that there’s other folks here that might not know folks and… and… just “Praise the Sun!” a lot and you’ll be fine.*

With decorations about and people already partying – enjoying the music, drinking, talking – Qyreia entered without turning much of any heads. For a generally happy person, she felt somehow nervous with all of the unfamiliar persons about. Her mute-red skin prevented showing the flush in her face, as did the white hood of her costume pulled over her head, as she scuffled between the islands of conversing people, making her way to the tables of snack and drinks. Looking down to pour herself a cup of punch, she briefly stared at the seemingly disinterested sun sewn onto the front of her monk-like robe.

*This is stupid. I don’t even like parties. I’m a Zeltron that doesn’t like parties.*

As her eyes continued to delve into the depths of her drink, she felt a sudden tap at her shoulder. Qyreia spun in place, heart rising to her throat, and came face to face with a taller Umbaran staring not unkindly at her. For a few brief moments she tried to think of what to do; what to say; frozen by her sudden need for words. *For Solaire!*

Rocketing her hands upward as in religious fervor, removing her hood in the process, she said loudly, “Praise the Sun!”

The broad smile on her face was clearly forced, and not a muscle of hers moved save for maybe a twitch in her eye as the man regarded her warily. It was when he looked behind her, then at her hand, she let her eyes follow his up to the now-empty cup in her hand, a thin line of sticky punch running over the fingers of her clenched fingers. She brought her hands down and looked at the somewhat compacted cup with almost confused curiosity, though it was a delaying tactic for what must come next.

Booted feet shuffled under her robe as she turned around to see a much, *much* taller human, pale with shaggy brown hair and short trimmed beard. From the top of his sopping mane dripped what was once her cup of ruby red punch. As nervous as she had been before, this giant made her knees shudder under her robe. *Well, at least this can’t get any worse. What the hell?*

“Praise the Sun!” she almost yelled again, her voice squeaking on the final word as she launched her hands up in solar acclaim.

The wet one looked at her forced smile for a moment before, grinning from ear to ear, he raised his own arms on high. “Praise the Sun! Shall we engage in jolly cooperation?”

Qyreia froze again, looking him up and down to gauge his body language. “Are you still quoting Solaire, or are you hitting on me?”

His expression was friendly, yet it held a cold matter-of-factness about it. “Just Solaire. I am Atra. You are?”

“Qyreia. Qyreia Arronen.” She looked again at his soaked mop of hair. “I’m *really* sorry about the whole punch in your face thing.”

“Not the worst punch to the face I’ve had.”

The laugh that passed her lips was finally genuine and, with all of the tension she had been holding in, was much needed. This man, Atra, excused himself to go clean up, leaving her alone again, save for the Umbaran that she had initially engaged. When she saw a certain Marcus Kiriyu, she dashed over to say hello to her recruiter. *At least there’s one face here that I recognize.* She greeted him in her now-famous catch phrase, though this time managed to do so without dousing anyone in any punch or other assorted sticky, sugary confections. He was friendly enough, and managed to introduce her to more people without any more social faux pas.

The remainder of the party went rather smoothly, as it turned out there were more people familiar with her costume than she might have thought. There were still quite a few that gave her a confused look when she threw up her arms in reverence of Solaire, but some played along anyways. Once she started getting some food and drink in her – particularly some of the spiked punch – her nerves relaxed substantially. Songs, none of which had anything to do with Halloween, were sung in “jolly cooperation,” as she liked to tell everyone. She walked up to complete strangers just to say hello, praise the sun, and once the liquor really started to kick in (after quite a few drinks) she even grabbed a few butts – usually in a way that would make them think it was someone else.

The party only toned down for her when someone saw her exchanging sexual innuendos with an R2 droid. “Drink some water,” they said, and motioned her to one of the chairs outside on the patio. *It’s not so bad out here*, she thought when she saw that each table had a themed cauldron filled with candy. After working her way through the cauldron at her table, she felt sufficiently sobered – yet even more hyperactive – to rejoin the party proper, this time with the overly-affectionate droid following closely. When its slicing probe tried lifting the hem of her robe, she roundly kicked the thing onto its side, much to the amusement of the onlookers.

She had pants on underneath, but it was the principle of the thing.

Come the end of the party, she had managed to not completely spaz out on any more guests. She had also managed to grab seventeen butts, eat three cauldrons of candy, and go through a healthy thirty two cups of heavily-spike punch. Suns praised: seventy… no, eighty four. She felt that her costume had effectively worked, on top of overcoming the initial social anxiety. She went home feeling the post-party glow. “I have become as grossly incandescent as the Sun!” she yelled drunkenly as she tottered home to the sound of angry residents.

*That was fun*, she thought, grinning.