

Article created Friday 31 October 23:43

Whether you're a follower of Phasmata, or a non-believer, you need to read this. It's time everyone knew the truth about the Church, and its evil leader, Sky Fisher. I realize I'm taking on one of the world's most powerful institutions, not to mention bucking one of the fastest-growing trends of modern times. Trust me, I wouldn't do it if I had a choice, and I may very well pay for it with my life. Please, just read it, and you'll understand.

For starters, don't believe what it says in their Sacred Text, or what you see depicted on the walls of the Phasmatian temples. The Universal Spirit did *not* enter Sky Fisher as he stood on the top of Mount Skylight, purified after seven days of fasting and meditation. I should know. I was there. Or, more accurately, I wasn't there ... but neither was Fisher.

No, the closest thing to a divine epiphany actually took place in a trailer a hundred-odd miles away, where Fisher and I, and Stan Shiu, may the *real* God have mercy on his soul, were wrapping up a whopper of a weekend binge. Fisher suffered from the worst constipation I've ever seen in any living creature and was struggling in the washroom when his revelation arrived. As that cosmic conspiracy of the bowels finally relented and delivered forth a raisin of a turd that even a gerbil would be ashamed of,

Fisher screamed out, “I’ve got it!” You won’t find *that* in your Sacred Text. Holy shit indeed.

Don’t get me wrong. I’m not trying to belittle Fisher’s role in the whole Phasmatian phenomenon—none of it would have happened without him. Take that weekend in the trailer, for example. Stan and I did brainstorm key pieces of the scheme at different points during our bender, but I mean, we were just blueskying wild-ass ideas in between shots of vodka and hits from the bong. Fisher was the one who had the fire in his belly to actually make something happen. It was Fisher who took the ball and ran with it—all the way to the end zone, and well beyond that, I’d say. Still, he couldn’t have done it without our help.

Most importantly, Fisher actually came up with the money, including pouring every bit of spare cash he possessed, and could beg, borrow, and steal, into bringing the Phasmatians into reality. The rest, as they say, is history (also religion, politics, sociology, economics, science ...) and by now hardly anyone in the civilized world hasn’t been steamrolled in some way by the Phasmatian juggernaut.

Certainly things would have been different if Fisher and the Phasmatian religion hadn’t ended up becoming The Next Big Thing. I doubt Stan would have risen up and got himself killed if Fisher hadn’t become the global icon he is now. I don’t blame poor Stan. I mean, you can’t pick up a magazine, or turn on the TV, without Fisher’s beneficent smile beaming down on you, and it’s tough to keep your mouth shut under those circumstances, not from jealousy of Fisher’s enormous wealth and success, but because he’s a fraud, a felon, and one supreme asshole—and a constipated one at that.

But I guess Fisher’s holding all the cards now, and I’m the one scared shitless to leave this hiding place. The odds are when the Phasmatian monks track me down I’ll be as dead as Stan. So, I suppose that’s why I’m writing this—part revenge, part penance. If by some miracle (a real, old-fashioned one, not the

scams Fisher peddles) I manage to get this onto the Net, and if it’s not deleted, and if some politician who’s not under the Phasmatian thumb has the balls to launch an investigation, then maybe it will have been worth dying for. I’m no martyr, and I’m not ashamed to admit I don’t want to die, but if I’ve got to go, I’d sure love to take Sky Fisher down with me.

Sorry. I’m rambling. As a writer (even a hack advertising copywriter) I should know better. Let me lay some of the foundation down for you, so you understand where I’m coming from—and more importantly, why you should believe me.

I first met Sky Fisher—born Louis Skyler Fisher—at Warren & McCaul, the ad agency where we both worked. The fact that Fisher was once a high-powered Madison Avenue account executive seems to have been conveniently edited from the official record—I guess they don’t want you to even suspect how he schemed to concoct the whole Phasmatian thing. The Sacred Text portrays him as a sort of wandering mystic who was called to Mount Skylight to receive The Universal Spirit. (I don’t have a copy of the Text here, so I’m going strictly from memory, but then I *did* practically write the thing.) So let me tell you that Fisher was an ad man, and a damned good one. You probably recall some of the campaigns he came up with in his time: Preter-Comm, Sashu, UtiliMotion, RoboXen, Borealex. Remember that beer commercial that had every joker in North America going around screaming, “Where’s your head at?” That was his too.

In hindsight, Stan and I should probably have been suspicious when Fisher started chumming around with us. I mean, he was a good half-dozen levels above us on the organization chart and tended to move in different circles from the rest of us lowly grunts. I think now that it was Stan he was targeting all along, and I just sort of fell into it. Stan was, after all, Warren

& McCaul's alpha geek, and had engineered all of their biggest and coolest client web sites. Not that he ever got the credit he really deserved, even when the agency spun off some of the software he developed and made themselves a tidy sum, of which Stan got zilch.

But Fisher was a smooth talker, and a consummate flatterer, and Stan and I ate it up. Drank it up too, all on Fisher's tab. A lot of Asians have a genetically low tolerance to alcohol, but not Stan Shiu. I guess that's why he and I had hit it off. We were both partyers (some would call us drunks), and Macbeth's, over on East 29th Street, was our regular hangout. (Damn, I could use a drink now. Maybe when I figure out where to upload this file, I'll find a liquor store.)

Anyway, one night, apparently out of the blue, Fisher bumped into us at the bar.

"Stan! Brad! Fancy meeting you here, dudes. Can I buy you a drink? What are those, vodka martinis? How about doubles?" He pushed his way to the front of the crowd and waved a platinum card at Bill, the bartender. "Good sir. A round for my esteemed colleagues here, if you will, and keep them coming." Stan and I exchanged a look like we'd just won the New York State Lottery.

It's not like we all didn't know each other, of course. A lot of Fisher's accounts included a web component, so we had worked under him before. He would have been familiar with the work Stan and I did. Even so, face-to-face contact had amounted to little more than a dozen of us minions sitting around a boardroom table while Fisher did all the talking. Now, here he was in the flesh, not only casually calling us by our first names, but wanting to party with us too.

Fisher played it real cool at first, sticking to innocuous conversational topics. He had probably been drinking with us practically every night for two weeks before he started picking our brains. I remember him pouncing on the news that some trendy

social networking site, which had grown to thirty-odd million users in only a few years, had recently sold for \$2 billion.

"The two guys that started it are, like, twenty-four years old now," Fisher said, shaking his head in awe. "I tell you guys, the internet is the place to be... that's the twenty-first century gold rush."

"C'mon, Lou," said Stan (he was still Lou to us in those days—Sky Fisher came later). "You're doing alright. You're making six figures and the scuttlebutt has it you're in line for VP."

"Chump change," said Fisher. "These guys are making millions... billions, even. It's not the technology per se. Shit, Stan, a world-class guru like you could set up something in your sleep, right?" I remember Stan smiling giddily, like a debutante who's just been told she's the most gorgeous girl at the ball. "It's just coming up with the right idea."

"The good ideas are all taken," I piped in, swirling the ice in my empty glass so Fisher would take the hint.

"Bullshit!" Fisher said, but he did fetch fresh drinks, and afterwards he proposed a toast. "Here's to finding a killer idea, and to the three advertising geniuses that can make it happen—concept, content, and execution."

I excused myself after that. (By then I was already starting to notice that Fisher's use of the bathroom was, to put it mildly, eccentric. I could never figure out how so much food and booze went in, and so little came out.)

When I came back, Stan and Fisher had their heads busily together, babbling about eBay and Google and YouTube, and were ignoring everything else around them, even the hot blonde admin assistant from W&M who was practically sticking her huge tits into Fisher's back, trying to get his attention. I tried unsuccessfully to flirt with her, but she knew I was just a lowly copy writer and had her sights set on bigger game. That should have been one of my first clues as to just how driven Fisher was. In any ad agency, rank has its privileges, and there were plenty

of sweet young things trying to get his attention, but he stuck to our trio, and stayed on topic. Now, of course, he has his harem of Phasmatian nuns, but that's another story.

When I poked my head back into the huddle, Fisher was saying, "What we should do is go away this weekend ... you know, like in the country some place ... stock up on booze and weed, and have a serious brainstorming session."

I certainly didn't know I was about to make history—it just sounded like a party, and the fact Fisher was including us in his weekend plans was not lost on me either—so I quickly said I was up for it, and that's when Stan, eager to please, suggested his folks' place.

"They own some land in the Adirondacks ... and there's a trailer on it," he told us. "There's plenty of room for the three of us. It would be perfect."

Now, Stan and I had known each other for over three years, and that was the first I was hearing of the availability of a country retreat, but at the time I took it in stride. I can see now it was an indication of how he was being seduced by Fisher. You could say it was also the first step on the path that led to Stan's death ... and maybe mine.

Damn, that just sent a shiver down my spine, or perhaps it's just the cold outside. I guess I'm pretty worn out from the trip here—three hundred miles on a motorcycle, dressed up as The Grim Reaper for part of the trip. Okay, I know that begs an explanation, and I'll do that tomorrow. Right now, I'm going to shut down my laptop and get some sleep.