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From palace coups in the lost city of Hattusas to treachery in the Egyptian court of Tutankhamun, I, the Sun, the saga of the Hittite King Suppiluliumas, rings with authenticity and the passion of a world that existed fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. They called him Great King, Favorite of the Storm God, the Valiant. He conquered more than forty nations and brought fear and war to the very doorstep of Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt, but he could not conquer the one woman he truly loved.

I, the Sun Details

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From Reader Review I, the Sun for online ebook

Joe Bonadonna says

This masterpiece of historical fiction was based on the actual writings and historical records of Suppiluliumas I, the great Hittite king who dominated the Middle East around the 14th century, BC. He rebuilt the old capital of Hattusas, and from there exercised his Imperial Power over the Hittite heartland, controlling the lands between the Mediterranean and Euphrates. But he was not a king to sit back on his throne and pull the strings of his minions, advisors and subjects. No, he was hands-on, and long before he became king he made his way in the world, fighting and whoring and playing politics. His military career included dealing with the eastern kingdom of Mitanni, and regaining a solid grip on Syria.

I, The Sun was first published in 1983 by Dell Books, and with this classic story of Suppiluliumas I, author Janet Morris laid the groundwork for her most famous fictional character — Tempus the Black, whom she first introduced in the original Thieves' World™ series, and in her own, later novels such as Beyond Sanctuary, Beyond the Veil, Beyond Wizardwall, and The Sacred Band, written in collaboration with her husband, Chris Morris.

In I, The Sun, Janet Morris weaves a brilliant, sprawling tapestry of events in the life of this great king of the ancient world, whom we first meet when he is known by his birth-name, Tasmisarri. This historical novel, cleverly written in first-person to stand as the official autobiography of Tasmisarri/Suppiluliumas, begins with the death of his father, the Great King Arnuwandas. Since Tasmi cannot sit the throne until his majority, his uncle Tuthaliyas inherits the crown. But so much can happen until Tasmi comes of age, and so, to keep his own brothers from killing each other — and him, and thus seizing the throne, Tuthaliyas adopts Tasmi and makes him his heir. From that moment on young Tasmi is surrounded by the political maneuverings and machinations of such players as another of his late-father's brothers, Prince Kantuzilis, whose nature is far more malicious than princely. Even Asmunikal, Tasmi's mother, has her own secret agenda, and very soon he is caught up in court intrigue, surrounded by enemies and sycophants, becomes embroiled in one military engagement after another, and grows to become a major player in the game of empires.

Tasmi first becomes a pupil to Kuwatna-ziti, a lord and warrior who is also a servant of the Sun Goddess of Arinna. Kuwatna-ziti recruits Tasmi for the Storm God Teshub of Hatti, husband to the Sun Goddess. And thus begins Tasmi's education. He later meets Daduhepa, a lord's spoiled brat serving at the temple to make her holy until she can be sold off in marriage. Tasmi falls for her and then, unable to control his needs and desire for her, rapes and takes her virginity. But she is of high birth, and so Kuwatna-ziti tries to mend things by saying it would do them all good if Tasmi married the girl. So Tasmi agrees to marry Daduhepa, and she becomes his first wife and the mother of first son, who he names Arnuwandas II, after his late father.

When Tasmi is sent to the garrison at Samuha, he learns that Daduhepa is again with child, his second son, named Piyassili. But she will not join her husband at that frontier garrison, and goes instead to Hattusas, the old capital city. In the meantime, Tasmi grows farther into manhood fighting the wild tribes of Gasga, and takes for himself a lawful concubine named Titai, much against the wishes of his friend and comrade, Kuwatna-ziti. (Please note: Titai is the only fictional character in this historical novel.) After a nasty winter, Tasmi, Titai and Kuwatna-ziti travel to Hattusas, and from there Tasmi intends to return to Samuha with his wife and new-born son. But Uncle Tuthaliyas, the Great King, orders Tasmi to remain in Hattusas.

Allegedly, and against Tasmi's wishes, Titai works magic against the Great King, who grows increasingly ill. (And there is more to her story, to her relationship with Tasmi and her ultimate fate that I will not reveal here.) Soon Tasmi's thoughts turn toward kingship and how it might best be administered by his own hand. During Tuthaliyas' illness, his brother Kantuzilis — Tasmi's other uncle — assumes the throne and plots to rid himself of Tasmi by sending him and his men to war against the Arzawaens, the Gasgaens, and the other tribes of the lower country. Suspicious of the machinations of both his uncles, and uncertain of even his own mother's loyalty, Tasmisarri confers with Kuwatna-ziti and his most trusted men. But at this point they have

no choice other than to march off to war — securing all, conquering all in the name and for the glory of his uncle, the Great King Tuthaliyas. But Tasmi's suspicions and fears ride with him, and he begins making plans of his own.

Upon their triumphant return to Hattusas, where they are to be honored, Tasmisarri and his men find that the Great King Tuthaliyas has fallen even more ill, and is now half-mad. The Great King denounces Tasmi and his heroes, and right then and there Tasmi realizes that he must now follow through with his plans. He in turn confronts and denounces Tuthaliyas: swords are drawn, blood is spilled, and uncles are slain. Tasmi, victorious, is now proclaimed "Tabarna, my lord, Great King and all other appellations. . . ." When Tasmi's mother Asmunikal denounces and turns her back on him, he exiles her to the isle of Alashiya. Now Tasmi begins to round up the families of those lords who opposed him — to be executed or sent into exile. Tasmi then renounces the name Tasmisarri, the name his mother gave him, and declares himself Suppiluliumas, meaning "Pure Spring."

There is so much more to this grand historical novel that for me to keep relating events in this review would be an exercise in exhaustion. Suffice to say that Morris' characters live and breathe and bleed, driving the story forward, providing all the drama and intrigue one expects from any novel, fictional or factual, that deals with kings, queens, and dynasties. This novel is textured, layered, and rich in intrigue, action, and complex characters that stand at the center of this "autobiographical" novel. Suppiluliumas is no two-dimensional character by any means: he is truly one of the most engaging, interesting, and perplexing characters I've encountered in a long time. Cruel, vengeful, even blood-thirsty at times — he is not unkind, not without heart. And because Morris used his own writings to add depth and texture to this novel, she has given us greater insight to his thoughts and feeling. Here he speaks of what it is like to be king:

"It is a lonely thing to be a king unloved by his land. It is anguish deep beyond measuring, to be a general separate from his armies. Power's curse comes in an ache behind the eyes from reading and folds around the belly a snakelike girdle of fat from sitting."

Or here, in this passage, where he broods about war:

"Never again have I felt such loathing for war and death. Some say it is a thing of youth; personally, I think every man whose word sends others to their deaths must experience it, or become like the stone god Ullikummis; with no heart in him to speak like a mortal man's."

Indeed.

A little research will reveal to you the accomplishments of this ancient king, whose name was unfamiliar to me until I first heard of this novel.

Although established in the Bronze Age, the Hittites were forerunners of the Iron Age, developing the manufacture of iron artifacts from as early as the 14th century BC. The Hittites were also famous for their skill in building and using chariots, a skill which gave them a military advantage. Janet Morris truly nails their time and their place in history; the settings, traditions and customs of the various people in this part of the ancient world, the very grandeur of their era ring true with the vivid poetry of her writing. This is a well-executed and thought-provoking historical novel, filled with character drama, romance, tragedy, action, plot and counter-plot. There is a certain power that comes through while reading this novel, a power derived from knowing that this is real life as it was lived nearly 2000 years before Christ, told to us by a master of storytelling and history.

Janet Morris paints a solid portrait of Tasmisarri, Prince of the Realm — wild, reckless, a rebel, who later in life becomes Suppiluliumas, the Great King, the "Pure Spring." At first, in his youth, Tasmi comes across as arrogant and even heartless, but beneath all that we can see the makings of a brilliant leader, a ruler who cares about his people and his empire. Just thinking about the amount of research Morris did in preparation to writing this epic, the note-taking, the outlining, the planning, staggers my mind. These ancient dynasties were complex and convoluted, and keeping names, dates and events straight alone are worthy of praise. Janet Morris is, besides being a wonderfully gifted writer and storyteller, a devoted scholar of history, and this novel was truly a labor of love for her.

-- Joe Bonadonna, author of *Mad Shadows: The Weird Tales of Dorgo the Dowser, Three Against The Stars, and Waters of Darkness*.

Zoe Saadia says

The best historical fiction I read in years, since picking McCullough's "The First Man in Rome", which happened some decades ago, decades that were filled with historical novels aplenty for me. But not like this one!

"I, The Sun" left me completely enthralled! It's a fairly long read and I found myself racing through it, eager to know what's next while at the same time trying to prolong the reading - I knew I won't be happy when it'll come to the end, simply because I would love to read more and more. And indeed, the moment I finished, I found myself peeking into the opening pages anew, to be caught in the magic of Suppiluliumas I's life - or Tasmisarri for some - all over again. I just didn't want to part my ways with this great Hittite king, his inner world, his glorious deeds and no less fascinating thoughts about all this, his passions and disappointments, his qualms and dilemmas, his love for his women, some of them, and his infatuations with others, his hatred for some his enemies and his understanding and acceptance of others, his patience with his children and heirs, and most of all, his reflective thoughts, the observance of his nature, or at least this is how he has been presented in this masterpiece of historical work.

Another merit of this novel is its 'rareness'. Having read historical novels concerning this or that period of Egyptian history, I never ran into Hittite's side of telling the story. Usually these people appear as a background, an exotic enemy to keep this or that Egyptian court on its toes. But not this time. This time it's all about Suppiluliumas I, the Great King, the Favorite of the Storm God, his conquests, his struggles, the story of his life. And as much as I want to, I'm not sure I will find another historical novel featuring the Hittites of Hattusas and not just as a part of the story of their powerful neighbors such as Egyptians or Babylonians.

The first person narrative made it easier to sympathize with the Great King, understand him and feel as though being one of his confidants. The author made the brilliant job of balancing the historical credibility while presenting us with a man whose values were so far away from our modern-day reader and yet whose deeds were still understandable, still acceptable, still human in the way they had been presented, through his inner thoughts and feelings. This is the most definite sign of worthy historical fiction for me, the ability of the writer to make the reader understand and sympathize with the character without taking his, or her, authenticity and believable way of behavior away.

I can't recommend this novel highly enough. I wish there was more to this tale!

Uvi Poznansky says

Before I share with you some of the exquisite writing in *I, the Sun*, let me start at the end. On the last page of the book you will find an impressive bibliography list that attests to the meticulous research into the life and times of Suppiluliumas, who was a great warrior and statesman. This research provides the detail, the authentic detail necessary for constructing the shell of this story, its events and the descriptions of the locale.

It is into this shell that the author, Janet Morris, has blown a breath life, fleshing out a fascinating historical figure. His voice has an unmistakable elegance to it. Describing a mysterious presence that follows him

throughout his life, Suppiluliumas says, “He has been in my dreams before every moment of crisis, for every tumble onto truth that has ever befallen me, striding away, his shoulders like a second horizon.”

We follow Suppiluliumas starting at the age of 14, just before his coming of age ceremony, until the moment he hands the kingdom over to his successor, his first born son Arnuwandas. In place of showing Suppiluliumas drawing his last breath, we witness him being summoned to the top of the hill, as his chariot starts ascending. He is on his way to meet his fate, symbolically represented by the Storm God.

It is an epic saga, with heroic action bringing the Hittite kingdom to Imperial power and consolidating its heartland. Seen through the man in the eye of the storm, we gain a brilliant power of observation. He says, “My life always had events taking place within and without at different intensities. On the outer edges, matters foment and wild winds blow; on the inner, things display themselves to meticulous examination under a clear sky.”

The writing gives a sense of a depth to the character, and so does the cover art. I simply love the way it is layered:

- (a) The deepest layer is adorned with images done in relief based on the hero’s adventure (a Hittite king standing in his chariot and aiming his arrow at a stag)
- (b) The middle layer done as the royal seal of Suppiluliumas
- (c) The front layer containing the title, in immensely solid, metallic letters that—quite appropriately—reflect a strong sunlight.

Five stars.

Cas Peace says

I am a relatively recent convert to the genre of historical drama, although as a fan of fantasy I have frequently delved into works by authors such as Mary Stewart and Manda Scott. The strong element of fantasy in such novels appeals to me more than their historical or pseudo-historical content, yet I nevertheless find myself absorbing historical information as I delve deeper into the characters and plotlines. Such facets are essential for an engrossing read, and they were exactly what I found within the covers of “I, The Sun,” by Janet Morris.

I knew next to nothing about the Hittites before reading this novel, and learning about them and their place in history was not the reason I began the book. What I hoped to find were real characters with complex personalities; lives I could care about and become absorbed by. I knew from other works by Janet Morris that she is a past master at creating characters so deep and intriguing that they affect her readers deeply, and I was curious to see whether she could accomplish the same feat with a people and a main character from actual history, rather than the more fantasy-oriented novels I had read before.

I’m delighted to report that I found exactly what I was hoping for. The life of the Hittite king Suppiluliumas (he of the unpronounceable name!) came to life almost by itself as I read: the mark, for me, of a true master of fiction. And as if by osmosis I absorbed the culture, political climate, historical flavor and machinations of the time, a revelation to someone who generally thinks of herself as rather shallow when it comes to ancient or classical historical knowledge. Authenticity shines from the pages of this novel, along with intrigue, betrayal, political maneuvering, brotherhood, loyalty, war and death. All human life, in fact!

I’d strongly recommend this novel, and not only to lovers of historical drama.

Amira Awaad says

From a modern day Egyptian woman, this is gold!

Seth Skorkowsky says

This book is written like an autobiography of the Bronze Age Hittite king Suppiluliumas. Going in I knew absolutely nothing of the Hittites or much about the period. However, I, The Sun does not treat the reader as if they should already know about this time period and it keeps everything very clear and easy to understand and follow.

The first thing I realized with the book is that Janet Morris's prose are outstanding. Seriously, this is one of the most well-crafted books I've ever read. The amount of research she did is incredible. The novel is chopped full of little tiny details about everyday things that a person living in 1300 BC would have encountered. Normally I'd have expected an author that has done this much research to lay it on thick, causing the story to drag, but it never does.

The version that I read was the Audible Audio version read by Christopher Morris. His voice is perfect for the role and he adds the just the right amount of emotion to his performance that enhances the whole experience.

Victoria Adams says

Since history is one of my first and most cherished loves, I am rather picky when seeking the “historical fiction” story. It’s not because I don’t enjoy a great story, it’s because I want to read the work of authors that cared enough to really do their homework when it comes to describing people, places and events somewhere in our past. Janet Morris took me on a journey that I have rarely experienced. Be prepared to stay up late at night and grab moments in the day until you help The Sun mount his chariot for his final ride.

Throughout the reading of this fascinating and meticulously written history, I had to constantly resist the urge to return to my own history texts to see what would happen next. Morris laces the book with the words of Suppilulima I himself (although in a slightly modernized version of the ancient record). Her story is peopled with documented participants from the court of the king of Hattie (save for one very unfortunate slave girl).

Suppilulium I was the throne name of the king of the Hittites ca 1344-1322 BCE. Taking the throne by force in his late teens. He immediately proceeded to rebuild the reputation of the ancient Hittite Empire through statescraft and war. Through his early connections with mercenaries, and one of his father-in-laws, he built one of the most extensive and responsive intelligence networks in the ancient world. He was nearly killed in a war against Mitanni, but regained his strength and eventually reduced that country to a vassal state. His most unfortunate error in timing and strategic planning was the offer of his son, Zannanza to the widow of Tutankhamun. On the way to Egypt, Zannanza’s party was attacked by the forces of Horemheb and all were murdered. The elderly Ay then took the throne of Egypt at the side of the young widow.

The assault against Zannanza ignited a firestorm in the Hittite Empire and The Sun set out to do battle against any and all of Egypt's protectorates just as the country was beginning to awaken from the daze imposed by Akhenaten and the worship of his one god – Aten. Successful in battle, the armies were not able to combat the plague introduced by the Egyptian prisoners. The plague killed both Suppiluliuma I and his successor and eldest son, Arnuwanda II.

It is not an easy task to bring these ancient courts to life. Often a writer comes across stilted or sounds like a monument builder more than a recorder of human activities including their joys and pain. Many of these stories have no life, no everyday struggles that make up the recorded history. What manner of men and women built these great empires and suffered these epic defeats? Morris brings these people alive and does so in brilliant prose. Painting the picture of a man who struck terror in the hearts of many a king; she also shows the warrior taken and held by the touch of a woman that could match him as a king. Most obvious in the story is the love Suppiluliuma I had for his queen Khinti. A woman left to rule in his place while he sought control of the ancient Middle East; who in her loneliness could not resist the temptation of those left at home. As beloved as she was, Morris paints the pain of a sovereign granted the status of a god when he is forced to exile his wife for adultery rather than have her killed as demanded by the law. It is many years before a son of his first queen reunites the two.

The history of the Hittite kingdom is not a great mystery since a large amount of information has survived that tells us about the events, people and life style of the kingdom in the form of clay tablets and stone monuments. If, however, you prefer to take your history in the form of a story told by those who lived it, I highly recommend this wonderful and engrossing read.

Bruce says

My interest in the Hittites goes back decades when I first read about them in the Larousse Encyclopedia of Ancient and Medieval History. They were a fascinating culture that, inexplicably, little has been written about, especially given their importance in ancient times. That said, I missed 'I, the Sun' when it first appeared in 1983, but rectified that with the release of the updated version.

This is an excellent read. Told in the first person, 'I, the Sun' is the story of Hittite king Suppiluliumas, from his early childhood full of courtly intrigue to subsequent rise to power. Janet Morris puts us in the head of this king who is, truth told, a ruthless man of his times, a ruthlessness required to lead his people on a path to expansion and glory.

Given the dearth of knowledge about the Hittites, the amount of research that went into this book is outstanding, right down to source material like translations from ancient texts.

Full of intrigue, war, confrontation, jubilation and personal loss, 'I, the Sun' should keep you captivated to the very last page.

Lori Myers says

Review for I, The Sun

I am not a reader of biographies. I find them boring and dry as they will put me to sleep faster than any other

book genre will. I started this one because it was a Janet Morris book. I love Janet, she is one of the early fantasy authors I remember reading as an impressionable teenager. That being said, I have to admit right off the bat to being a bit intimidated by the sheer size of this book. Impressively daunting. Being a novice history lover, I hiked up my pants and cautiously walked in. I quickly found out that I needed to read this in chunks, giving myself time to digest what I had read. Yes, there is a TON of history here. A lifetime in fact! I was impressed beyond belief at the bibliography at the end. I am a tiny bit of a researcher myself, so I know that endless hours were spent learning about this most fascinating of subjects.

From the very beginning, Tasmi, later known as Suppiluliumas, pulled at my heart strings. An underdog for sure, I didn't think he would make it to the throne. He held on to that throne as well as he drove his chariot. Shaky at first, but with each skirmish, his skills improved and soon lead to him being a most worthy king! I was particularly taken with the skill in which Janet Morris wrote this one. I am a huge Tempus Thales fan (okay, Niko is the one that make my fan girl heart go pitter pat, but that is neither here nor there) and I hoped that Suppiluliumas would be another character that I could sink my teeth into. Part of me expected dry history. Names, dates, places. The horrid stuff they made us memorize in high school. The larger part of my mind knew better. On the very first page, Janet brought Suppiluliumas to life, breathed life into a king that lived in the second millennium B.C. She gave us a unique glimpse into a most strategic thinking mind. I shared his heartbreak over Khinti, his most beloved, I shared his pride in his creation of a dynasty. I didn't expect that, to be pulled in and be made a bystander in this one. But I was. To me, that is the earmark of a great book, the engaging of my senses and losing myself for a few hours at a time in events that happened a mind boggling amount of time ago. Janet Morris did that and more in this one. I feel like I just stepped out of the front row of a history class that was taught by a masterful teacher. Her passion for this king, shows in every word.

Deborah McClatchey says

Biographical novel of the conquests of the greatest Hittite king, Suppiluliumas I. Full of war and passion, the story of this historical hero in the 2nd millennium BC reaches from the Black Sea to the gates of Amarna Egypt, whose queen begged him to send her a son of his to rule beside her in Egypt. This book takes you the ancient world of Mesopotamia and lets you ride beside a man who conquered kingdoms more easily than the three women who were his queens or his sons, more than twenty of whom he made kings in their own right. A fascinating dynastic saga in which every character but one slave girl really lived. Called by Dr. Jerry Pournelle "a masterpiece of historical fiction."

Pdmac says

An exceptional story brilliantly told. A must for any fan of historical fiction - if you like Michener or Clavell, you'll thoroughly enjoy this story. For the ancient history aficionados, Janet Morris crafts a convincingly real drama of the life of the Hittite King Suppiluliuma (ca. 1344-1322 BC). Cleverly told via first person narrative, the reader is brought into the mind of the king as he deals with the competing demands of empire and family. Add to this the painstaking research that virtually qualifies her as a Hittite scholar, Ms. Morris has adeptly woven a biographical chronicle that is both intriguing and compelling - and never dull. Battle scenes will leave the reader ducking arrows.

Arjun Chandrasekhar says

I, the Sun is a magnificent literary remake of the mighty king Suppiluliuma's prosperous and powerful Hittite kingdom of the 2nd millennium BC(1344-22 to be exact) between the 558 precious pages. The book is in 1st person narration – as dictated by the king himself. This should be noted as an important feature, a cleverly added one to be exact. Applauses for the author's genius- for, the reader actually starts to savor the whole story through the senses of the king himself, that he/she will eventually develop a particular liking for the king- whom history labels as arrogant and violent(Not to mention his treatment of women). Because the reader is so close to the king as he perceives the whole tale through the King's eyes. So that deep inside he/she starts to acknowledge the circumstances or environments in which King Suppiluliuma had to act as such; as arrogant, violent and cruel. The reader involuntarily arrives at the agreement that it was all for the sake of an empire! For the Hittite empire, for its people, for its progress and prosperity. The historic observation that the Hittite empire reached the peak of prosperity and power under king Suppiluliuma strengthen this. Referring to this I, The Sun could be described as a brilliantly written book on the Hittite empire(among the other few) in an entirely different perspective. The literary strategy of choose king Suppiluliuma as the protagonist and leading the story through him, has its distant resonance to the introduction of "anti-hero" by Fyodor Dostoevsky (for example the axe murderer's portrait in Crime and Punishment), "Randamoozham**" by Malayalam writer M.T. Vasudevan Nair*- where the whole story of Mahabharata is retold through Bhima's perspective , "Ini njan urangatte"** by P.V.Balakrishnan*-the story of Mahabharatha through Karna's perspective, Asura, the tale of the Vanquished* by Anand Neelakandan*- "Ramayana" through the villain Ravana's perspective. The magic that these exceptional works bring about is that they completely redraw the mental image of a historic/ epic figure that history and society had for long made. The impression gets replaced with a new , more compassionate one.

With a thorough reference to the Hittite history one can understand that every account in "I, the Sun" really happened in the life of Supilulimas. This enlightenment (better to someone who had not heard about the Hittites before and is referring for the first time) leaves the reader in absolute thrill. At this point it is impossible for one to do away with appreciating the dexterity and brilliance with which the author had created the novel, enjoyable and intriguing, yet with good justice to the historical accounts- for it could have ended simply as a boring history lesson if it was just history and history alone. There is romance, rage, bloody battles, defeats & victory, like a colorful action cinema, I must say.

The only negative point that caught my attention is the confusing title "I, the Sun", but that too for a person with good knowledge of the Hittite culture and ways will appear as the "most appropriate". I had to do a little study of the topic to know the deep meaning and relation of the usage. I could find that the name is connected to the "Hittite way" of calling the king by the title "Mu sun". to readers who had marked this Janet Morris masterpiece as "to be read" my advice is to do a slight study of the Hittite period that you can enjoy it better, like it will be an entirely different experience , even if the book itself tells the whole history. I mean, it will be more enjoyable to a reader with some knowledge of the Hittite.

Story

King supillulima was the king of the Hittite kingdom who had fame as a fierce worrier and a successful ruler. He acquired his throne by force and consolidated his power suppressing all domestic oppositions. Suppiluliuma then began to channel all his efforts in rebuilding (and in that way strengthening) the Hittite kingdom. Supillulima I eventually amazed a strong army and an indomitably loyal intelligence network. With his forces he manages to annihilate all the enemies of the Hittites and widens the borders of his kingdom successfully nullifying his enemies like the Mitanni. At the height of his power, he is met with the tragedy of his son Zannanza's murder at the hands of Horemheb's forces. It drags the king to utter remorse and anger as his son was travelling to Egypt to marry the young widow of Tutankhamun in response of a letter sent to

Hittite King by Tutankhamun's widow pleading to have her married to the Hittite king's son. Raged by his son's death king Suppiluliuma wages war against all territories of Egypt and ultimately turns victorious. But quite unfortunately they become defenseless against the devastating disease of "plague" that the Egyptian prisoners bestowed. The disease kills King Suppiluliuma and his eldest son Arnuwanda II.

Darrin Mason says

Before reading this book, I had never heard of the Hittites. Now I have and I also know more of this time in our history than I had ever hoped to know and it's because of this book. Make no mistake, this is no history lesson. It is a magnificent historical novel so well written you can't help but find yourself bang smack in the middle of the action. Highly recommended.

J.P. Wilder says

In this age of formula fiction and uber-mass market storytelling, historical fiction has become the instrument of the romance market. A hundred romances set in medieval Scotland or Renaissance Italy, or Victorian England. It is the mainstay of a class of fiction that is as prolific as it is average.

And that is profoundly disappointing to me. I love history. I love reading historical nonfiction and I itch to read fiction that can bring history to life. It could be—it should be—the greatest fiction—stories of historical, bigger than life figures that actually lived—people whose real lives are at least as interesting and filled with drama as Aragorn's or Tywin Lannister's or Luke Skywalker's.

I, the Sun is that story.

This book is, far and away, my favorite book of the year—and I read a lot of books. Anyone with a penchant for historical fiction or fantasy fiction should find a reason to sit down, open this one up and throw themselves into it—body and soul.

The ancient world is a time that has interested me in the past, but could never really lure me away from my deep love of history in feudal Asia and Europe. But, this book changed many of my predispositions, and stoked in me a new interest in the ancient world.

One might think that a work of this caliber would require some knowledge of the history of this great civilization, but I knew nothing of the Hittites or their greatest King Suppiluliumas before reading this story.

I didn't need it.

In this excellent work, the reader quickly becomes immersed in the world. The description is so sharp and beautiful and real, that the reader feels transported into the Bronze Age world, surrounded by all the cultural and physical realities of a dark and very real existence. It closes in on you, sweeps you away. The world of the Hittite king is more deep and thrilling and filled with intrigue than any fantasy world.

What's more – this story is filled with all of the great things that I love about stories of conquest, imminent death, a bigger-than-life leader, bloody combat and the lamentations of the vanquished. I can now officially

say – I rode in a chariot, side by side with a conqueror, dust filling my nostrils, my eyes, choking, clinging for my life.

King Suppiluliumas is not your typical story book conqueror. He is a man of ever-developing character, responding with great, decisive strokes to the many conflicts he finds in the world and events around him. No flat character here: he is filled with regret, but never dissuaded by continuous inner combat with dark insecurities and strong beliefs that challenge the status quo in a world where that meant death.

You will know him. You will grow with him from a young person shunted off into a brutal childhood to the ruler of (arguably) the most powerful empire of the time. His was not an easy life, and his rise to power was no easy path. You will experience it all in grim reds and browns: a story steeped in trail dust, blood and tears.

If you like fantasy. If you like history. If you like adventure. This is the story for you. I dare you to open this book and delve into its dark, and very real story.

A.L. Butcher says

I had been looking forward to reading this for a while and I was not disappointed. This book is superb!

Based on actual events (save one character) this story recounts the life of Suppiluliumas, King of the Hittites, favourite of the Storm God, and empire builder. Told from the perspective of the king himself it is an exciting, moving and in some places heart-rending story of the adolescent and angry prince who survives court intrigue, treachery, heartbreak and war to lead his people to a golden age. Translations from actual historical tablets merge in with the author's own words to present this fantastic book and present a vivid recounting of a world which existed fourteen centuries before the birth of Christ. This must be remembered when reading this book, as it tells of slavery, violence and inequality against women, atrocities of war and other issues which harken back to a different morality than our own. The author neither condones nor condemns these views - they are a fact of the time.

In many ways the story is tragic and I have to say, even though in a couple of places I guessed at events and I knew the ending I was almost moved to tears, I did not want to story to end. A touching and rather sad love story interweaves, proving that whatever else Suppiluliumas was he was still a man, and a flawed one at that.

I was totally drawn in by the diverse, well described characters and their culture, from the lowliest slave girl to the man who was favoured by the gods. The Storm God himself is enigmatic but his role is crucial to the story and in following him one follows the journey of the man who was known as the Sun.

Highly recommended, this will certainly be added to my list of favourite books.

I will also be seeking out other books about this time period as it is so fascinating.

Larry Jr. says

A historical novel of exceptional accuracy and depth, I, the Sun is a masterpiece! Thoroughly and

painstakingly researched, this book chronicles the life of Suppiluliumas who ruled as king of the Hittites in the 2nd Millenium B.C. Janet Morris drew upon material regarding the life of this enigmatic figure, and even utilized direct quotes attributed to him from historical sources. The bibliography at the back of the book is a testament to just how much of this research went into writing this account of his life and times. Full of political intrigue, battle scenes, betrayals, and accounts of the many wives Suppiluliumas took as his queen, and the even more numerous concubines he took to his bed, it depicts the gamut of events that affected not only his own life and kingdom, but the entire ancient world around him.

Here are a few choice quotes I have pulled from the pages of the book:

"The man is a fool who says he has never known fear; he is worse than a fool: a liar and a pauper both. Whence but out of fear comes that surge to superhuman deeds that makes of a man a hero?" -I, the Sun, by Janet Morris.

"There are things that happen in life so poor in grace and empty that no god could condone them, unless he be meaner even than a man." -I, the Sun, by Janet Morris.

"When the bowl of my life is licked clean and all that remains is a wine-soaked pyre and the flame, someone will doubtless say that ancient formula over me. And if indeed I have gone up and become a god, then the Storm God and I will laugh about it."

-I, the Sun, by Janet Morris.

Known in his time as Favorite of the Storm God, the figure of Suppiluliumas inspired Janet Morris to write about who is arguably her best known character of all her stories and novels, Tempus Thales, avatar of the Storm God, and commander of The Sacred Band.

If you love an exciting story that you will not want to put down until you finish it, and then will make you want to re-read it again and again, then this book is for you. Whether you are an aficionado of history, or just love a good novel, you will enjoy I, the Sun.

Wayne says

This is a fascinating book. When I first read it back in 1983 I'd no idea of how much impact the Hittites had on history.

While it is a novel, historical sources like the Armana letters were used as a base. This adds a richness to the setting that you'll never see in most novels, or even in a lot of histories. If you read anything this year, make it "I, the Sun"

Andrew Weston says

If you thought political scheming, familial betrayal, and murderous plots – interwoven in any way you care to think of – and treacherous tales of love and lust was a theme invented by the modern world about us, or the likes of George R. R. Martin, then think again.

Hittite king Suppiluliumas is a historical figure who lived during the second millennium BCE. In I the Sun,

we follow the epic scope of his life. From an angry, arrogant boy who was just as likely to be murdered in his sleep by his siblings—to accomplished military leader and tactician, loyal to his men, but ignorant of the bureaucratic intrigue that could still result in an untimely end—to the brilliant leader who cared as much for his people as he did for the empire he worked so hard to inherit.

But what a journey it took to get there, for even his own family were without scruples, and colored by traditions that were as calculating, as they were cold and merciless. Think of Suppiluliumas as a king in the making amid a pit of vipers.

Despite the odds, he overcame everything to achieve the throne in a game that was as staggering in its scope as it was brutal.

And remember, this man actually lived...

If you're looking for a quality read, one that is as meticulously researched and historically factual as it is thought provoking and intellectually stimulating, then look no further. The journey of Suppiluliumas' life will possess you, entertain you, and keep you enthralled to the very end.

A polished and accomplished epic, as gripping today as it will be decades from now.

A Game of Thrones for adults.

Jan Raymond says

History has always fascinated me and one of the most fascinating civilizations that I believe captures the imagination of many, is Egypt. You can just never get enough of it. Janet Morris weaves an amazingly accurate and vividly detailed story. I am in awe of the amount of research that must have gone into it. But research is just one part of writing the book. To make history accessible and interesting is something that the author has done incredibly well.

Till I read this book, I had only heard about the Hittites in passing as part of some fictional story, though they did pique my interest enough to read up a bit about them. But I realize now that I just grazed the tip of the iceberg. In *I, the Sun*, the author describes a world of kings and queens, of heroism, betrayal, deceit and passion. It is a long book, but I found myself staying up to read 'just one more chapter', and it took me a lot longer than usual to finish but it was well worth it.

This is an amazing read, an incredible journey, and I have to commend the author for the passion and dedication that has gone into the writing of this book!

Stevie Turner says

Janet Morris has excelled herself in this well-researched epic work of historical fiction. It's been a real learning curve for me; I had never heard of the Hittites at all, but found this faction novel very informative and entertaining. Well done!
