

The graceful True Elder droops over the quickening waters of the Round River. In Elder shade, the muddy eddies of the ending year pile ochre Samaras and broken branches of profusely shedding Box Elders. These heaps of encapsulated greenery mold themselves in scum to the contours of boulders that greyly glower like the grand steppes of rain cloud high above.

The flowers of Califia's Elders are white or golden (Sambuca mexicana) at Midsummer. They readily lead back and forth between the Faerie River Ways of the annual Round, and the dry open fields of Summer-land. Many of Elder's blue-black berries she may hold into the thirteenth Month. Growing on the high banks with light summer flowers, but starting from low riversides, where her berries of winter jet are so in keeping, the therapeutic Elder is a prime revelation of the Great Goddess of Eternity in time.

Elderberry wine, and Sambuca, a liqueur distilled from her succulent nocturnal clusters, provide Winter tonics, both bracing and delicious. Various decoctions and teas of her berries, flowers, leaf-buds and roots yield purifying purges. The thirteenth and final month of the Sacred Tree Alphabet Calendar begins the annual phase of Purgation and Evacuation.

The Fays celebrate the Feast of Repose and Thanksgiving, dedicated to all stars, all worlds, and reduction to the raw elements. Under the stars, the Fays show mimetically how the seed husk decomposes in the rooted loam, and the invisible germ-star of life-to-come receives the convergent rays of all stars through the occult lens of the Moon. For the Moon rises full at her station farthest North around Yule, or Winter Solstice. Conversely, the Sun rises at his lowest declination South at this time.

On a dark, wood-ringed mead, where the nocturnal susurrus of the stream can be heard through shadowy lace of Elders, the Faeries form the Great Star of Cosmic Breath. They lie, face and belly up, flat on the dry grass, in a big circle. They clasp hands and lock toes. Children with little hurricane lamps glide slowly from the windy thickets surrounding the many-pointed star of supine bodies. The children softly sing venerable lays about the stellar bouquets in the

Phydiac of Lunar Mansions, as they swish by around the big Ground Star, under the watchful eyes of the enthroned Nimue Brauronia, and her Holly Lover Merlin, as God Frost. The dance figures of the little ones mirror the glittering constellations of Winter, especially those that pass directly overhead in these latitudes. From these regional stars, the dance reflects the Gediac (Geological Zodiac) of Star and Local Landmark correspondences. The entire lay of the land is unrolled by the masked mummers of the black, horizon-hipped heavens.

A somnolent, muffled pulse of distant hollow tree drums frames the sensuous suggestions of sistrums, jingling from afar, then very near. They create a subdued though potent wave to which all the Fays in the volcanic Ground Star adjust their respiration in unison. They inhale from the seething core of Earth, where sleep the Holy Lovers. They exhale what they visualize as a stream of Faerie sparks into the mystic knots of their linked fingers and toes. After a while, the hands and feet of the earth core celebrants begin to tingle strangely. The tingling intensifies and slowly seeps up their arms and legs until finally their whole bodies are streaming with a great current of almost painful pleasure.

Some Fays begin to stiffen into contortions and the Brauronia must subtly alter the rhythm of the drums and sistrums. This great breath has to ascend smoothly through flexible limbs in order to reach its final heights and depths of world irradiation.

As the hours pass, the stars of the heavens seem visibly to change position and pirouette about. The terrestrial stars of the children’s lamps merge with those over the outstretched Fays. In their fused breath, the Celebrants fuse into one shuddering, penumbral form: Mother Earth. She, in turn, merges in the teeming ground of Deep Heaven. The limitless soil of all stars lies yearningly fallow, titanic nebula limbs akimbo in sweet, innocent longing. Then shimmers the moment without image, the absolute Wedding of the Living Dark, wherein every remote immanence is Wild Virgin Bride Forever for the first time pressing into every other remote immanence.

Jingle!!!

“Great Fays of the East, South, West and North; of the Nadir, the Zenith and the White Wedding Stone, join us here and now in the Faerie Ring between worlds. Through the Portal ‘twixt Moon and Sun we open with Spells of Soil, Water, Air and Fire, re-enter Your Earth Abodes from the Far Faerie-land of Stars!!!”

Grey-eyed Ocean, unlike Earth, becomes more active in Winter. At first, the elementals of brine commune quietly with the violent uproar of her white haired breakers. Then, in the wet, dismal ebb, over cold, bubbling sand flats, the Oceanides dance out the magnificent, obsidian-edged fury of the Cyclonic Harridan. The presence of the Storm God enters the ecstatic dancers for the cataclysmic finale, for the Alchemical Prima Massa Confusa of the retreating Year. Exhausted at last, the departing Fays toss black Elderberries into the blanching surf.

Dilated with catabolic joy, the Fays wend their way up narrow defiles in high barren cliffs, and then descend into “The Cave of the Arch Divinatrix.” Here in obscurity, the Fays review hoary sticks and stones, and other Sacred Things of Ancestral Memory.

Deep in the bowels of the Cavern, Cauldrons of Kymric Keridwen, Navajo Estsanatlehi, and African Nyame fume and bubble. About the walls strange athanor furnaces roar, and alembics pass fitful vapors through tangled shadows of armillary globes with which scented torches queerly stripe the walls.

The domed ceiling is a mosaic of the night sky. This composition descends the walls in mimetic, legendary chains that unite archetype and eco-system in regional specifics and celestial universals of seasonal metabolism. All about, in radiating niches and chapels, are the Grand Faerie Forms of prevailing winds, of dominant minerals, plants, animals and biomes of this Queendom; the Daimones of the seasons; the Horai of the daily rotation.

In perfect silence, the Kabeiroi solemnly manipulate their apparatus to show how, in this phase of the Year, the Sleeping God of Time dissolves entirely into the Sleeping Goddess of Eternity, full ripe with His Seed for vernal resurrection. The timeless mystery drama of the cave shows how the God’s Spirit, as seminal shooting star, streaks from Polaris to Midheaven, and thence down into the foetus weighted womb of Earth, shortly before the dawning of Yule.

The Phyrllt, or Faerie Alchemists and Artificers of Molten Mysteries, paraphrase the visionary words of the Hermetist Daustenious:

“So now this is our solution, that you marry the Gabricum with the Beja, which when He lies with

the Beja, dies immediately and is changed into Her Nature. The Beja is a Woman, and She improves the Gabricum because He is come out of Her."

Thus Human to Nature just as this Alchemical Text may reflect the syngamy of protozoans in the vanished Eden of the Pleistocene Era.



On Yule Eve, when the Nadir Gopher prepares once more to disgorge the Sun, the Fays festively deck their Halls with Youth Boughs of the Season. They parade through the conifers, singing and frolicking, in search of dead and fallen Yule logs. When these are located, the Fays decorate and merrily drag them back to the many hearths of Korythalia. The Yule Logs are lit only after Sunset of Winter Solstice - after the Fays have returned from dressing Pines, Yews, Spruce and Firs in the higher Life zones.

The Sacred Fir Groves are swathed in glittering garlands, colored balls, and hung with candles in colored glass safety lamps. On this Eve of Yule, all through the lamp-lit Forests, as around the hearths of home, the Fays stack gifts for each other. Actually, they exchange gifts at all Nine of the major Festivals. These gifts are hand made with Love, usually by the giver him or herself, and must express something meaningful between giver and recipient. For the most part, the gifts are hand-crafted with painstaking care through the long Winter months. Each one is ear-marked for a certain person at a certain Festival, the esoteric meaning of which, on the Mandala of the Year, is pertinent to the psychic development of the receiver. Or one may fashion gifts and offerings for special extra-human friends anywhere in wilderness.

Giddy anticipation combines with drowsiness and contented sleep as the Fays await the Day outside Time.