

Open your eyes and fix the scene of this time and place in memory. Close your eyes once more, and see the image of that scene strongly. It will be your anchor to return from your travels . . . The image becomes flat, like a photograph, the edges hazy. The image is a disk of light and color against a cool gray mist that glints and sparkles with color. A tendril of brighter silver reaches from your center to the ever-shrinking disk. This tendril ties you securely to your manifest form as you move now, outward through the mist.

You notice a faint path before you within the swirl of gray. It is the only feature in this featureless world. You begin to walk, not knowing where the path will lead but trusting that you are headed in the right direction. You sense the presence of your fellows from the circle walking along with you. This is a path that moves not through space, but through time . . . As you walk, forks and crossroads appear. Always, your inner sense tells you which way is correct, and you proceed, trusting your guidance.

Gradually, the mist begins to thin and fade. The warmth of a Summer sun penetrates the cool. Shadows appear, then turn solid. Gray becomes pastel, then vibrant color as your steps emerge into a scene of sound and action, of people walking, children running, music, laughter and bright tents arrayed on a rich green lawn.

The scene is familiar, yet strange. The hillsides are dotted with tents and other structures as far as the eye can see. People are dressed in all manner of clothing—or not clothed at all. Everywhere are devices and mechanisms whose purpose you can only guess. This is the ancient rite of the gathering of the tribes, made new in every era by the inventiveness of humankind.

As you walk between the rows of tents, you notice banners set at regular intervals. They bear symbols, glyphs and runes of all kinds but each carries at its top something familiar: it is a twelve-spoked wheel with the signs of the Zodiac at the rim and a central octagon bearing the Cauldron and the Egg of Spirit. You are at a gathering of the Assembly of the Sacred Wheel, and it is vast beyond comprehension.

You notice a tide of people beginning to flow down through the central valley. All are dressed in white robes overlaid with turquoise tabards. With quiet efficiency, heralds guide the participants into large circles, each circle joined at its edges by other circles. In a moment of dislocation, you see the whole scene from above: Twelve rings arranged to form single a huge ring across the valley floor.

The sound of “Aum” rises up on a wave of thousand voices, then silence falls. Someone begins speaking. You hear the voice as if they were standing in the center of your circle, though no one is physically there. It is the well-known voice of the elder Craft Mother of the Assembly, she who has been nurtured in our tradition since childhood. She speaks,

“We are gathered this day to celebrate the Rite of Lammas and to begin of a week of learning and doing, as been our tradition for many generations. We celebrate this day, the fruits of many long years of work and bless the seeds of that which will become tomorrow’s harvest. Let the Rite begin!”

With chant and motion, the Sacred Circle is cast, encompassing each of the twelve rings and the greater ring as well. The air shimmers with power as the Gates are opened, each a magnificent arch alive with the signs and symbols of its Element. As the Circle is completed, the forms of those from the Neighboring Realms—the Fey, the Land Spirits and the Ancestors—take solid form and twine themselves into our gathering, greeting old friends and new among us.

Throughout the afternoon and evening, we chant, we sing and dance the joy of being alive in these magickal times. The re-enchantment that our forbearers spoke of and worked toward is now fully realized. Our hearts and souls are joined with the Spirit of the Earth and this day, we celebrate the hard won struggle to bring the vision of the Assembly into manifestation.

As the day wanes, after the feasting and merriment are done, you settle down for a well-deserved rest. Laying aside your ritual garb, your fingers graze the token on its string around your neck: a tiny crystal from the ritual’s altar, charged with the energies of this place and time. As your eyes close, you review the scenes you have witnessed, marveling again at what your people have become.

The mists rise around you once more as you drift into sleep. The thin thread of silver tied to your center brightens. You rise and follow it, traveling back through the hazy paths, moving from the future into the Now . . . Ahead, a spot of light grows, grows larger, becomes distinct as the place you left behind. You are here in the Sacred Circle of this Lammas Rite. The smells and sounds of the familiar world flood in. Take a deep breath. Feel the solidity of your body and the place where you touch the Earth. When you are ready, open your eyes.