

After the sweet blossoms of the wild apple fall, they begin to scent the ambiance of the groves with an arousing tartness.

The happy sorb-apple takes the Fays out of the open fields of Midsummer, and back along “The Round River” of the sacred year. In the North the wild apples follow rivers almost to their mouths. Neriads sport in white billows of brine.

The Orchard Faeries ceremonially cut the ribbons that close off the cultivated hardies - pomes and nuts. The melon patches follow. After picking the berry patches, the Fays commence the mysteries of fruit preservation for Winter. Fruits are heaped on the boundaries of the garden groves for wild animals of all kinds to feast upon. Even predators develop a taste for these prizes, coming in from the parched back-lands.

Into the opened groves, Aphrodite and Ares return from their long wanderings through the fields. With long stangs, Ares props up the luscious weight of leaf-shaded nuts and fruits bending down the boughs: Aphrodite matches these curves with the deepening roundness of Her own Body. Miraculously, her skin distills and diffuses every fragrance of Summer’s wealth.

There can be no doubt that the fruits are filling and their colors rising. And so it is with Aphrodite; against a fluttering line of damsels it appears that her breasts have grown and the aurioles are darker. She may be pregnant with the God and continuing plenty of next year.

One lovely apple, similar to her golden breast, the Goddess of the swelling groves plucks from the bough the God lowers to her life-giving hand. With equal passion she passes the sacred fruit to Him. The Fays give ovation to the miracle of she who bestows the fruit of love: Great Aphrodite.



Then the sluices are opened into the groves. Great mountains of earlier fruits and melons are piled on the sandy margins of the river, and on the strands of lake and sea. There is an incredible eruption of fruit juices as hundreds of naked grovers dive into the baths of pulp, splattering each other, and sinking neck-deep into the delicious syrupy squash. It is Lugnasad (pr. “Loo-nah-sah”), a feast for the marriage satisfactions of the Moon Goddess and the Sun God, Lugh.

The rivers cloud with sweet tree-meats from the bodies of splashing celebrants. They follow the colored waters into Temenos Hesperides. Here a wondrous faerieland playground dazzles the gaze. In this season, the ponds of wilderness thicken and scum over with algae, or dry up utterly. But in the Temenos, waters still riot over smooth gleaming rapids calculated to the spill of tender human curves. The flesh of fruits and Fays scramble in delirious spin of waterways that lead through tunnels, out into mid-space as spouts, and then drop down spiraling slides. Diverging and converging, the streams of paradisal play flow into boiling jet baths that pummel bodies into pliancy as it rides along; they roll through fuming caverns of steam, and spread out in huge pools of silken clay-goo. Out of the water ways rise vast networks of climbers, swings and vine-frilled webs. These provide transitions between the mighty elements of water and air. Aerial climbing realm excites the human passion for free primate play, absolutely necessary to healthful human involvement of soul in body. Twirling through the air, the Hesperides may view the land-sky-love body from every conceivable angle and line of travel. The regional surround becomes the shape of the soul.

High arboreal architectures lead imperceptibly into subterranean chambers; these turn, shell-like, to the earth surface, or into apical watch towers that glisten with interwoven Daimones of nature forces wrought in mosaics of tile and tesserae. The sense of tidily segregated levels and quarters of world-insertion are swept away by these bewilderingly self-concealing transitions. Chinampra-Islands of verdure float in the little lakes. From above, the Fays see the insular clumps of trees moving back and forth through the land groves, which everywhere throw up fountains of cometary spray from sculptured basins.

Temenos Hesperides graduate indiscernibly into wilderness, via strands of Califia's native trees, forbes and herbs, concentrated for contemplation, study, healing and forage. If one were to approach this late summer Temenos from the dry upland or lowland sides, she would never suspect what a strange unfoldment awaited her. The first signs of anything irregular on most tracks in are occasional natural formations that startlingly suggest "Feerie Des Bois": a withered tree stump that looks like a dragon munching succulent fungi, or stratification in a cliff that, a trifle too clearly, hallucinate into a dancing maenad. Perhaps the clumps of wild flowers are a bit too abundant, or their figurations suggest whimsical monstrosities. But then the roar of many fountains and falls give alarm of delight, of an inspired blending of purposefully wrought artifacture with spontaneously unwrought wilderness. And this is Faerie land! When the Fay finds a seam of lovely polished minerals inlaid in a canyon wall, leading by cryptic scrollery toward a portal blazing with reliefs of the soul's allegiance to Wilderness, then he or she is coming in! So it is for the loyal pilgrim to wildness when the breast gives its last breath to the trees.

The danced-out God Tendance (Therapeia, or Therapy) of the ripening fruits fills the Nights of Coll with pound and pulse of fecundity. The Fays watch the Black Walnuts grow toward later Harvest. In still, Hazel shaded pools, playful Fish are blessed with peaceful offerings of the gathering Harvest.

