

Just before dawn of the Day Outside Time, within the drowsy Halls of Faerie, a great commotion awakens everyone. From the Underground, sounds of drums and creaking timbers shake the floor. And from the roof come the piercing calls of long fanfare trumpets. The Seals burst off a set of doors that connect the Northern Halls of the Palace with the Aval Cellars beneath. Excited children pull open the heavy doors. Up the stone stairs steps the Great Lady in stately measure. The Northward lurch of the Infant Sun has not failed to awaken Her. Golden tresses feather out the full length of Her gracious form. On Her head shines the Sacred Silver Lucia Crown of the exalted throne and hegemony of Earth: La Luna!!

She bears arboreal dainties of the preceding year into Her Royal Kitchens from the cellar depths. After arranging the preserves, She ceremonially decks Her crown with leaves and berries of the Midnight Season. With a long taper, the Divine Queen contemplatively lights the nine Sumac Candles in the Tiara, each one suffused with the herb of its festival. Yawning voluptuously with a wan, delicate smile, She tosses the taper into the huge fireplace of the Audience Hall.

Her Crown radiant as Her sleep-rosy cheeks, the Great Queen and Her Faerie Handmaidens fetch the dainties and big decanters full of thick warm beverage, all sweet and spicy. This repast She and Her maidens distribute to everyone in the House of the Youth Bough.

The magical candle glow glides down dark passages. The Fays, young and old, wait breathlessly for it to illuminate their sleeping quarters and reveal the Beloved Majesty where they recline cozily intertwined midst hills and dales of countless pillows. They receive the Agape - the most delicious little meal of the year.

When the Sun, struggling toward Rebirth, breaks away from the South-Eastern Peaks, the Divine Queen repairs to Her gorgeous confinement apartments in a warm, semi-sunken quarter of the labyrinth. When She enters, the fire on the hearth flames up with renewed cheer.

Once again She drops off to sleep - the sleep known only to those who harbor new life. She dreams of Her divine lover’s return.

The risen Household busies itself re-exploring the apple Cellars beneath the sumptuously Sleeping Queen of All Wild.