

Every wood has a witch in it. This one hides.

At the appropriate hour she spun an enchantment about her cottage like the layers of gossamer cobweb that conceal a spider's prey. Her charm was cleverly fashioned to repel any foreign gaze.

The witch's caution is because her home is nestled among the trees not far from the clearing where the sacred labyrinth was carved so long ago. That meadow draws many visitors — some willing, some tripping dazed and blind along unseen ley lines.



“Oh Devouring Mother,” the witch cries out, “let us be alone together!” But she knows that her entreaty is made in vain, having become grudgingly accustomed to her patron's primordial

indifference. The Queen of Clay is always otherwise occupied. And Aster — the witch — realizes, though it rankles her: rites by a single devotee with no extraordinary power are insufficient to sustain the Mother, our lady of such cavernous appetite.

Once, long ago, even longer than when the labyrinth was laid into the ground, this place saw a city which boasted a gorgeous central temple on the very spot that is now soft meadow and mild maze.

The temple's exterior was covered in intricate carvings, dark wood depicting legends of the city's history. The inner sanctum was clad with blinding bright brass and inlaid patterns of electrum, that iridescent alloy of silver and gold.



This resplendent structure was dedicated to chthonic fertility goddess Elkatron, whose hunger is matched only by the grief that drives her to continually weep, weep, weep. Even today her tremendous, monstrous body is secreted far beneath the surface soil, down where rock meets smoke. Elkatron soaks the deep ground with her deluge of delirious tears.

Whatever finds its way to Elkatron is consumed. She feasts on the serpents of kings and the kings of serpents.



