

Whispering Lake Grove



Imbolc

February 6, 2005

Pre-ritual Briefing 5:30 PM

Ritual 6:00 PM

Grove Attunement

(Sacrificer) Closing your eyes, take a few deep, cleansing breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth; **(pause)** in through your nose and out through your mouth **(pause for a 4 count)** As you breathe, begin to slow your busy thoughts. **(pause for a 4 count)**

(Bard) Feel the chill in the winter air. See the gentle breeze as it carries each snowflake from the Sky to the Earth **(pause for a 2 count)**. See this gentle breeze as it carries away your worries and troubles of this world. **(pause for a 4 count)**

(Sacrificer) Feel your feet firmly resting upon the Earth. Imagine that from your feet roots begin to grow. **(pause)** See your roots as they break through the icy ground. **(pause for a 4 count)**

(Bard) Feel your roots as they reach the swift current of primal waters. **(pause)** With each breath, draw the icy current up through your roots and into your body. **(pause for a 4 count)** Feel this ancient energy as it restores you and lends strength to your being. **(pause for a 4 count)**

(Bard) Turning your attention Skyward, extending your arms high into the sky above. **(pause)** Feel your arms begin to lengthen like the branches of the mighty oak. See your branches reaching the depths of the cosmos. **(pause for a 4 count)** Feel the primal power of the Sun; of the Moon and of the Stars.

(Sacrificer) A flash of electric energy rushes toward your out stretched limbs. Feel this electric power of the Sky as it shoots down your arms, illuminates your mind and mingles with the Earth energy throughout your body. **(pause for a 4 count)**

(Bard) Feel the power of Earth and Sky as the energies merge within you. Feel the strength and balance this power brings to you. **(pause)**

(Sacrificer) Opening your eyes, see all who have joined together this night as one tribe and one people.**(pause)** Feel the harmony that surrounds you as we begin our worship between the Earth and Sky.

Procession

Prior to the ritual a Brighid's bed is prepared and placed beside the hearth fire. The brideog, that was decorated prior to the ritual by the male members of the Grove, will be left outside the feasting area until the seasonal enactment..

(Bard) Now let us raise our voices in song as we proceed to our Nemeton.

In song

*Come we now as a people
To gather at the sacred well
Come we now as a people
To gather in the warmth and the light of the flame*

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Repeat until all participants have entered the Nemeton.

Once all participants have entered the Nemeton they will be censured and asperged.

Opening Blessings

Earth Mother & Sky Father (Druid #1)

Great Earth Mother and Sky Father,
Through your sacred union springs forth all life.
Your children gather between Earth and Sky in your honor.
Mother and Father of all that was, of all that is and all that will be.
We come before you in love and respect and ask that you uphold and bless our gathering.

(Sacrificer) *A sacrifice of bread and clarified butter is made.*

Earth Mother and Sky Father, accept our sacrifice!

All: Earth Mother and Sky Father, be welcome among us!

(Bard) And now we raise our voices in song to the Earth Mother and Sky Father.

All in song

*Earth Mother, We sing to your body,
Earth Mother, We sing to your bones,
Earth Mother, We honor your body,
Earth Mother, We honor your stones.*

(lyrics and music written by an unknown author)

*Sky Father, We sing to your spirit,
Sky Father, We sing to your light,
Sky Father, We honor your spirit,
Sky Father, We honor your might,*

(lyrics by Scaan Glass)

*Your children, We gather before you,
Your children, Together we call,
Your children, We honor your presence,
Your children, Look to us all.*

(lyrics by Raven and Carrion Mann)

Invocation of Divine Inspiration (Bard)

Stepping from the sea upon her shores
Inspiration consumed both heart and mind
Eloquent words echoing throughout the skies.

Swift as the wind upon the sea
Mighty as the roar of the wave
Fierce as the bull of seven battles
And keen as the hawk upon the cliff.

Valiant as the wild boar
Sharp as the head of the spear in battle
Wise as the salmon in a pool
And fairest of all flowers.

A lake in a plain
A flash from the sun
The God that puts the fire in the head.

Amergin of the White Knee,
Grant us the gift of divine inspiration and eloquence!

(Sacrificer) *Honey is sacrificed to Amerigin.*

Amergin, accept our sacrifice!

All: Amergin, be welcome among us!

(Bard) Now let us raise our voices in song as one people.

Deep Peace (Author Unknown)

*Deep peace of flowing air to you
Deep peace of the sacred flame
Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth*

*May peace, may peace, may peace fill your soul
Let peace, let peace, let peace make you whole.*

Repeat Chant 3 times

Purpose and Precedent (Druid #4)

Tonight we gather between the Earth and Sky.
To worship and honor the Kindred as one people.
To sing their praise and make our sacrifice.
As we seek their blessings in return.

We gather this night in celebration of the turning wheel.
Enjoying the warmth and protection of our hearth's fire.
Tonight we celebrate life, death and rebirth,
As we remember those who have walked before us.

We gather this night at the crossroads.
In celebration of the Feast of Imbolc.
Enjoying the promise of the returning sun.
As we remember the ways of old.
While we welcome the first signs of Spring before us..

May all who gather this eve be welcome among us!

Fire, Well & Tree

To the fire (Druid #1)

Kindled of the hearth fire
Sacred flame upon the Earth
Joining together hearts and minds
Darkness banished before the roaring blaze

Transcending the realm of light and shadow
Purifier and cleanser of mind, body and spirit
Sacred fire, open the way to the Shining Ones.

(Sacrificer) *Incense is sacrificed to the fire.*

To the well (Druid #2)

Threshold to the Otherworld
Window to the souls
Cauldron of inspiration
Sacred shrine of old

Ford of cleansing waters
Vessel of rebirth
Sacred well open the path to the Mighty Dead.

(Sacrificer) *Silver is sacrificed to the well.*

To the bile (Druid #3)

Mighty oak of the ancient grove
Roots burying deep within the Underworld
Wise teacher of traditions old
Branches reaching into the heavens.
Keeper of sacred knowledge
Pillar joining Earth and Sky; spanning the three worlds

Road to all realms; Sacred tree
Let all who walk this way walk in your wisdom.

(Sacrificer) *The bile is asperged with water from the well and censed with incense.*

To Land, Sea & Sky (Druid #4)

The waters support and surround us.
The land extends about us.
The sky stretches above us.
And the center burns a living flame.
Let us pray with a good fire.
May all the Kindred bless us.
May our worship be true.
May our actions be just.
May our love be pure.
Blessings and honor and worship to the holy ones.

Land, Sea & Sky Text by Ceisiwr Serith

(Bard) We now raise our voices in song.

All in song

***By Fire and by Water, between the Earth and Sky
We stand like the World-Tree rooted, deep, crowned high.***

***By Fire and by Water, between the Earth and Sky
We stand like the World-Tree rooted, deep, crowned high.***

*Come we now to the Well, the eye and the mouth of Earth,
Come we now to the Well, and silver we bring.
Come we now to the Well, the waters of rebirth
Come we now to the Well, and together we sing.*

CHORUS

*We will kindle a Fire, Bless all, and with harm to none,
We will kindle a Fire, and offering pour,
We will kindle a Fire, a light 'neath the Moon and Sun,
We will kindle a Fire, our spirits will soar.*

CHORUS

*Gather we at the Tree, the root & the crown of all
Gather we at the Tree, below & above,
Gather we at the Tree, together we make our call,
Gather we at the Tree, in wisdom and love.*

CHORUS

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Opening the Gates (Druid #4)

Manannan MacLir, it is your might and magic that wards the threshold.

Grey Rider of Aonbarr, we ask for your protection as we walk through the mist this night.

Mighty Lord of the Crossroads, as we travel between the worlds of man and Sidhe may you part the mist before us.

(Sacrificer) *A sacrifice of Irish whiskey is made.*

Manannan MacLir, Mist Weaver, accept our sacrifice!

All: Manannan MacLir, be welcome among us!

Manannan MacLir, merge now your magick with mine!
See the flame leaping forth from the fire.

And the mist arising from the well,

Flame and mist converging upon the tree
Forming a meeting place between the realms.

Tracing a triskel over the fire

Let the fire burning towards the heavens open as a gate that we may follow the way to the Shining Ones.

Tracing a triskel over the water

Let the well whose depths reach the Underworld open as a gate that we may follow the way to the Mighty Dead.

Let the tree, pathway between Earth & Sky, be open to us.

All: Let the Gates Be Open!

(Bard) Let us now sing our praise to the Gatekeeper.

All in song

*Gatekeeper open the portals,
Between the Gods and mortals,
Power freely flows, as our magic grow*

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Repeat chant three times

Kindred Offerings

Noble Spirits (Druid #3)

Beasts of legend and lore
Lurkers of mist and shadow
Creatures of fur, fin and feather
Allies of the middle realm

Guardians of the woodland and stream
Protectors of the mountain and glen
Spirits of the natural world
Companions in life, death and rebirth

Beings of myth and magic
Messengers of the Otherworld
Dwellers of land, sea and sky
Watchers of this sacred ground

Noble Spirits who inspire our hearts and minds
Creatures who guide our actions and intentions
Join us this night as we celebrate Imbolc.
Hear us, Spirits both great and small, for we are in need of
your company!

(Sacrificer) *A sacrifice of corn meal is made.*

Noble Spirits, known and unknown, accept our sacrifice!

All: Noble Spirits, be welcome among us!

The Mighty Dead (Druid #2)

Priests of magic and lore
Chieftains of kith and clan
Bringers of law and order
Mighty Ones of the realm below

Heros of myth and legend
Warriors of strength and courage
Champions of might and honor
Beloved Dead of blood and spirit

Hunters of forest and glade
Tenders of flock and field
Fishers of lake, sea and stream
Ancestors of flesh and bone

Mighty Ones who inspire our hearts and minds
Ancestors who guide our actions and intentions
Join us this night as we celebrate Imbolc.
Hear us, Teachers and Guides, for we are in need of your
wisdom!

(Sacrificer) *A sacrifice of beer and bannocks is made.*

Mighty Ones, known and unknown, accept our sacrifice!

All: Mighty Ones, be welcome among us!

Shining Ones (Druid #1)

Guardians of hearth and home
Protectors of kith and kin
Bringers of peace and plenty
Shining Ones of the realm above

Champions of honor and might
Wielders of war and destruction
Dwellers of light and shadow
Deities of land, sea and sky

Patrons of song and music
Masters of fire and forge
Warders of the thresholds
Gods of life, death and rebirth

Shining Ones who inspire our hearts and minds
Gods who guide our actions and intentions
Join us this night as we celebrate Imbolc.
Hear us Eldest and Brightest for we are in need of your
blessings!

(Sacrificer) *A sacrifice of clarified butter is made.*

Shining Ones, known and unknown, accept our sacrifice!

All: Shining Ones, be welcome among us!

(Bard) We now raise our voices in song to the Kindred.

*Gods and Dead and Mighty Sidhe
Powers of Earth and Sky and Sea
By Fire and Well, by Sacred Tree
Offerings We Make to Ye*

Repeat chant three times

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Key Offerings

Descriptive invocations of the patron powers for the rite are given. Offerings are made and a portion of each is held back for the final sacrifice.

(Bard) *Anvil strikes three times*

(Bard) Let the women among us now raise our voices in song!

In Song

*Holy water, sacred flame
Brigid we invoke your name
Bless my hands, my head, my heart
Source of healing, song and art.*

(words by Diane Baker/music by Anne Hill)

Druid 2, Druid 4 and the Bard will approach the Shrine to Brigid and join hand while saying the following invocation.

(Druid #1) Gentle are the hands that kindle life's first spark

(Druid #2) Warm is the love that fills a mother's heart

(Bard) Bright is the flame that inspire's the mind

(Druid #1) Fair is the maiden of inspiration divine

(Druid #2) Sweet is the sound of her voice on the wind

(Bard) Blessed are her waters that cradle our kin

(Druid #1) Wise is the protectress of hearth and home

(Druid #2) Beautiful is the Lady of the Shores to behold

(Druid #1) Primal is her power

(Druid #2) Ancient is her wisdom

(Bard) Great is her love.

(Sacrificer) *Brighid's crosses, milk and honey are sacrificed to Brighid*

(Bard) Lady Brighid, Goddess of Spring's Renewal, accept our sacrifice!

All: Lady Brighid, be welcome among us!

Seasonal Enactment

Following the Seasonal Enactment, ritual participants are given an opportunity to make praise offerings in the form of poetry, song, dance, or works of their hands etc.

A male member of the Grove will leave the Nemeton briefly to get the brideog from beyond the feasting area bringing her to the doorway of our ritual space. At this time an unmarried female member of the Grove will proceed to the doorway and carry the brideog into the Nemeton and once around the sacred center to her bed by the hearth's fire as the remaining participants chant:

All: Brighid is come, Brighid is welcome!

The brideog and wand are laid in the bed. The unmarried female, carrier of the brideog, lights the first of nine candles from the hearth's fire saying:

(Druid #1) Through this flame may the warmth of the sun return to us, as the days grow longer and life begins to stir within the Earth. May she grant us the strength to **persevere**.

A second candle is lit from the hearth's fire saying:

(Sacrificer) Through this flame may our hearts and minds feel the spark of inspiration that kindles new beginnings and fosters creativity within us. May she teach us **moderation** in all endeavors.

A third candle is lit from the hearth's fire saying:

(Druid #2) Through this flame may all that lay sleeping beneath winter's blanket of white be renewed. May she bring **fertility** to awaken the Green world.

A fourth candle is lit from the hearth's fire saying:

(John) Through this flame may we find protection for our hearths and homes as we forge a pathway within this world. May she bless us that we may find **courage** when facing the storms of our existence.

A fifth candle is lit from the hearth's fire saying:

(Druid #4) Through this flame may we extend our love to the Kindred and the folk. May her flame's warmth offer **hospitality** to all.

A sixth candle is lit saying:

(Sharon) Through this flame may we cleanse and heal our hearts, our bodies and our minds that we may find peace within us. May she show us the way to **wisdom** and ancient knowledge.

A seventh candle is lit saying:

(Druid #3) Through this flame's light may we forge a pathway to the Otherworld that we may travel in safety beneath its shield. May she grant us the **vision** to see beyond this realm.

An eighth candle is lit saying:

(Pat) Through this flame may we bring forth the ways of old with new vitality that the Kindred may flourish with our honor and worship. May she guide us to act with the truest **integrity** always.

A ninth and final flame, the eternal flame is lit saying:

(Bard) Youthful Maiden and Great Mother, may your eternal fire burn bright within our hearts and minds. May your eternal flame bring forth life anew.

Lady Brighid, You have come!
Great Lady, You are most welcome!

Praise Offerings

At this time cluties can also be brought forward and tied on the tree on the Shrine with or without spoken words.

Sacrifice and Omen (Sacrificer)

Through Manannan MacLir, Great Warder of the Ways,
We have opened the Gates this night.
Through our praise, love and sacrifice;
We have honored the mighty Kindred as they walk among us.
Through communication with the Otherworld;
We receive guidance, inspiration and insight;
As we prepare to make our final sacrifice.

A final sacrifice is prepared. (Sacrificer)

Kindred of land, sea and sky we call to you!
Hear us this night for we are in need of your guidance and wisdom.

Tonight, we call out from the crossroads to all who aid us!

We call to those of the middle realm; those of the Green World!
You who have offered your guidance and friendship.
All spirits of nature that aid us in our journey.

We call to those from the realms below; from the Lands of the Dead!
You who have offered your wisdom and inspiration.
Ancestors and beloved friends that aid and inspire us.

We call out once more from the crossroads!
Hear us eldest and brightest of the upper realms!
Deities known and unknown to us;
Shining Ones, whose might and bounty knows no bounds!

Mighty Kindred, accept our sacrifice!

The final sacrifice is made. (Sacrificer)

All: Kindred, accept our sacrifice!

It is with love, honor and respect that we have offered hospitality to the Kindred this night.
We have called through the Gates and deep within the Otherworld our invitation to gather in their honor.
We have sung their praise; made our sacrifice.

It is our hope that our words and sacrifice have conveyed our love.

Participants meditate on the kindred, sending their energies through the gates.

(Druid #3) Let us now close our eyes and open our hearts and minds to the Kindred. Breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth; in through your nose and out through your mouth (pause) With each breath pouring out our love as we prepare to receive the blessings of the Kindred upon us.

(Druid #3) We send our love, honor and respect into the Middle realm to the Noble Spirits, our protectors and guides. It is their secret knowledge and companionship that we strive to share and be one with. May they feel our love; see our sincerity and hear our praise in their honor. (pause for 2 count) Feel the presence of the Noble Spirits. (pause) Hear their whispers as we await their message.

(Druid #3) As we have gathered here as one people, joining hearts and minds we see those we have honored this night. We feel their presence and hear their whispers from the Otherworld. We send our love, honor and respect deep into the Sacred Well to the Mighty Dead, our ancestors of blood and of spirit, it is their timeless wisdom that inspires us to strive always to better ourselves and our world around us. May they feel our love; see our sincerity and hear our praise in their honor. (pause for 2 count) Feel the presence of the Mighty Dead. (pause) Hear their whispers as we await their message.

(Druid #3) We send our love, honor and respect through the Sacred Fire into the heavens to the Shining Ones, Eldest and Wisest, it is their guidance and blessings we seek. May they feel our love, see our sincerity and hear our praise in their honor. (pause for 2 count) Feel the presence of the Shining Ones. (pause) Hear their whispers as we await their message.

The Omen is taken. One Ogham stick is drawn for each of the three Kindred. The seer then interprets the omen,

leading the company to contemplate the things they would ask of the powers, especially as suggested by the omen.

From the Nature Spirits _____.

From the Ancestors _____.

From the Shining Ones _____.

The Kindred have spoken. What use have you in your lives for their knowledge and wisdom.

The Blessing (Sacrificer) & (Druid #4)

Two cups will be filled and sat in the midst of the hallows. The following words will be spoken over the cups.

(Druid #4) As in the ways of old we have given our gifts freely and as in the ways of old a gift is given unto us in return.

(Sacrificer) We will drink deep of the Cup of Inspiration. May the blessings of health, wealth and wisdom be ours.

(Druid #4) Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

(Sacrificer) We gather with you between Earth and Sky. We are proud to call ourselves your people.

(Druid #4) Once again, Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

(Sacrificer) We have brought our offerings. We have made sacrifice.

(Druid #4) One last time, Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

All: Shining Ones your blessings upon us!

The cups are lifted saluting the fire, well and tree.

(Sacrificer) Behold the Waters of Life!

(Druid #4) Shining Ones hear and bless us.

(Sacrificer) Lady Brighid, Bright Goddess of Spring's renewal, hallow these waters of life.

The cups are lifted before the participants.

(Druid #4) Behold the Waters of Life!

All: Behold the Waters of Life!

(Sacrificer) As we drink deep of the blessings of the Shining Ones, may we remember those of our tribe that could not be with us this night.

Pouring the first of the blessing cup upon the ground.

(Sacrificer) May the blessings of the Shining Ones be with them. May the waters support them; lending strength and courage in times of need.

(Druid #4) Now Good folk, drink deep; the blessings of the Shining Ones.

Blessing cups are passed and all participants share the waters. As the cups are passed the following song is sung by all participants.

(Bard) As we receive the blessing of the Shining Ones let us raise our voices in song.

All in Song

Pour the waters, raise the cup; Drink your share of wisdom deep; strength and love now fill us up. As the elder ways we keep.

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Repeat until the cups have been passed to all participants.

Thanksgiving and Closing

(Bard) We now prepare to thank the powers that have attended us during this rite. At this time the gates between the worlds remain open and we invite any to give personal offering or sacrifice to the powers.

Participants are given time to make final offerings.

(Druid #2) Lady Brighid, Great Mother of the Tuatha and White Maiden of Spring's Renewal. We thank you for the blessings you have given us. May you continue to inspire our hearts and minds. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Brighid, we thank you.

(Druid #1) Shining Ones, Eldest and Brightest. May you continue to guide and bless us as we walk this path. Shining Ones, known and unknown, we thank you for your blessings and guidance this eve. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Shining Ones, we thank you!

(Druid #2) Mighty Ones, of blood and spirit. Those who inspire and guide us in our lives. Beloved Dead we thank you for the wisdom you have shared with us. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Mighty Dead, we thank you!

(Druid #3) Noble Spirits, beings of land, sea and sky. Companions who aid and guide us in our journey. Noble Spirits we thank you for sharing your knowledge and protection. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Noble Spirits, we thank you!

(Bard) Amergin of the White Knee, Great Bard of the Celts, The God that puts fire in the head! We thank you for divine inspiration and eloquence throughout our rite. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Amergin, we thank you!

(Druid #1) Earth Mother and Sky Father, Mother and Father of all that was, all that is and all that will be. We thank you for your life giving union that springs forth all life. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Earth Mother and Sky Father, we thank you!

(Druid #4) Manannan MacLir, Weaver of Gray Mists; we thank you for your protection and guidance this night. We now ask that you close the gates, warding the way between the worlds once more. May there be peace between us until we meet once again by the hearth's fire.

All: Manannan MacLir, we thank you!

Manannan MacLir, Great Warder of the Way, Let the Gates be closed!

All: Let the Gates be closed!

(Sacrificer) We now return all that has gone unused to the Earth and the Sky, may they continue to support, surround and sustain us.

All offerings that remain are burnt in the fire or scattered upon the Earth.

Grove Attunement & Meditation-Part II

(Bard) Good folk, join me as we once again close our eyes; breathing deeply in through your nose and out through your mouth; **(pause)**.

(Sacrificer) As the mighty oak is part of the forest, we are all part of the great circle of life. Remember the blessings we have received together this night. **(pause)**

(Bard) Feel the oneness and reflect upon the journey we have taken together. **(pause)**

(Sacrificer) Remember the voices of the Noble Spirit and the friendship and knowledge that they have shared with you.

(Bard) Remember the ancient wisdom of the Mighty Dead and the knowledge and life's blood that they have offered.**(pause)**

(Sacrificer) Remember the blessings of the Shining Ones. The

guidance and wisdom they have offered to all who have assembled here this night.(pause)

(Bard) Once more feel your roots reaching the depths of the Earth and your branches reaching the heavens. Feel the strength and energy of Earth and Sky flowing throughout your being.(pause)

(Sacrificer) Feel this strength and energy as it mingles within you. See this energy as it begin to pool in your heart. (pause)

(Bard) Let us join this energy as one and send it forth from our beings into the Great Lake.(pause)

(Sacrificer) See this energy heal and protect her as we conclude our worship.

All: We will keep the faith until the sky falls upon us and crushes us; until the earth opens and swallows us; until the seas arises and overwhelm us.

(Bard) Once more may we now raise our voices in song as we leave our Nemeton.

As participants leave the grove the following song will be sung until all participants have exited.

CHORUS

*The sky fuels the waters
And the waters sustain the skies
We walk together from this place
With the honored as our guides*

*Strong in our purpose
We balance and survive
From many wells of fortitude
Our spirits are revived*

CHORUS

*Joyous in our sharing
We honor dead and alive
With voices of sacred wisdom
We travel the path of our lives*

CHORUS

*Fulfilled in our learning
Our souls will always thrive
In our varied hearts and minds
We keep the sacred for all time*

CHORUS

(lyrics by Moon Dragon; music by Raven of the Sorrows)

Following the rite once the Hallows has been returned as it once was a final offering in thanks is made to the spirits of the land for its us.

Special Thanks To:

All who attended, participated and shared in our celebration.

Stone Creed Grove, ADF for the chants

Gods & Dead and Mighty Sidhe; The Gatekeeper Chant, The Portal Song; Pour the Waters

Anne Hill and Diane Baker for the chant: *Holy Water, Sacred Flame.*

Ceisiwr Serith for the text for recreating the cosmos.

***Whispering Lake Grove
Imbolc Ritual
2005***

Ritual Text

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