

A. Kali sat up in her stone bed filled with heather ... Her mother still slept in the stone bed-place on the other side of the hearth.

B. Kali emptied the limpets and shellfish on to a stone slab and began to scrape the limpets out of their shells into a shallow bowl. She used a tiny flint scraper as a knife. Stempsi [her mother] took the crabs and eel and wrapped them up in a covering of wet clay which she thrust into the glowing heart of the fire, prodding it into place with the long leg-bone of an ox which she used like a poker.

c. The women prepared new tunics of the softest sheepskin. With flint scrapers they scraped away the wool and washed the skins in the stream ... They kneaded and pounded them on the stones till the skins were soft and supple. Then they shaped them into tunics, sewing up the sides with sinews from the sheep. Kali joined the women ... She had begged two soft lambskins ... Kali sewed them into a tunic ... She tacked a deep pocket on the inside of the tunic and fastened it with whalebone pins.

d. In preparation for the longest day of the year the tribe of Skara had many things to do. The previous day they cast off their old tunics and rushed into the sea. They rubbed their bodies with white sand till the skin was reddened. This was the ceremony of cleansing.

Next came the ceremony of painting. The women had prepared pigments in little basins made from whale bones. There was a yellow paint made from a clay ochre, a red paint made by crushing pieces of rusty-looking stone, and blue paint from a flax plant.

Birno came to the meeting place carrying six beautifully carved stone balls. These were the symbols of the Sun belonging to the tribe of Skara ... Two of them had been carved by Birno himself. Birno looked with pride at the last stone ball he had carved. The carving on it was so deep that the pattern stood out in spikes like a hedgehog. It had taken Birno a whole year to carve ... The spikes represented the rays of the sun.

There were two ways across the moat [into the ring]. Birno halted and lined up his people. Only the men would cross into the sacred ring ... Birno ... gave the word, "Lift up your symbols of the Sun." The six leaders held the carved stone balls high in their hands ... The company advanced across the earthen bridge with the signs of the Sun held aloft ... Three times the tribes of Orkney marched round the Ring of Brodgar and each time the men passed the highest stone of all, they lifted the signs of the Sun which they carried and shouted loudly.