Hecate and the Witches – Answer Sheet

Known as Queen of the Witches, she is sometimes depicted as having three faces and three different bodies fused into one. These were most apparent when the moon was dark.

She is also called Watcher of the Crossroads, because all three of her heads could look to see what was coming. She depicted as having three bodies because she was considered a complete trinity goddess with Demeter and Persephone. Demeter represented the old crone, Persephone the wife woman, and Hecate the Maiden. Her heads manifest as a dog, horse, and a lion.

She is often associated with the Underworld, because she was sent to find Persephone. It’s also thought that it was Hecate who gave Persephone the pomegranate seeds. Once she found her in the Underworld, she stayed with her as her companion and protector. She became the key-holder of hell, as she is also often depicted holding several torches and a key, and came to Earth at night to send out phantoms from the Underworld.

We see this in the witches calling to their ‘familiars’. The first witch’s familiar is Greymalkin, a grey cat. The second witch’s familiar is Paddock, a toad. The third witch’s familiar is Harpy, a mix between a woman and a bird. Hecate would have sent these to them. She is also called Queen of the Night because of this.

She acted as a mid-wife, wet-nurse, and foster-mother, and was worshipped by the mid-wives, healers, and seers. She was revered even by Kings, who would pray to her before battle for victory and glory in battle. She was to be honored and feared.