

Ceridwen Initiates

Due to her books and her wild eyes, her
uncanny sense of the astrologic moment, and
her unnerving silences - he kept his distance.
Stirred the pot, gathered the firewood,
and did as he was asked. Besides, she

was often away - mountains and woodlands -
returning always with a sack full of wonders -
pungent herbs, kaleidoscopic bugs, writhing
creatures of the soil, the dung of legendary beasts
or the petals of mythopoetic flowers.

He asked few questions - was often forced to
ponder oblique replies: 'Nothing makes sense,
Gwion, unless you see our cauldron as a troubled soul -
unless you dream the distillations and purifications
as antidotes to sickness - portents of renewal ...'

Love-sick and suspicious he gloomed about
the campsite. Long gone now the maiden
on horseback - her fair words and trusting
ways. His was the path of fever - nightmare
hooves, blackthorn and enigmatic communications

His was the path of poetry, stringed sorrows -
fabulous imaginings. He dreamt the road long
before the fateful night - the road of rare metals,
vital humours, peacocks and dreamy salamanders.

Hers now - to shape and haunt and test.
His first task - to externalise the poison.