

Tending the Grove

'In Malegwn's presence, Taliesin challenged the court bards to answer riddles unknown to them due to their ignorance of ancient poetic lore.' From the *Hanes Taliesin*.

Ever after: tattooed. Her ownership, his skin.
The populace thought him Gothic and cheered
or scowled as bold enchantments revealed
the vacuity of the celebrity bards.

But this was not her purpose. The grove was
always a world and though the populace
thought him Gothic, the minor dramas of
an obscure king, hid deeper epiphanies.

His lowly birth, her patient education,
their mannered erudition, his breath-gasping
vision. The grove was always a world, and
the world expanded with each recitation.

Ever after: tattooed. Her ownership, his skin.
And though the love that made him sing
made the world expand with each recitation
the longing would not abate - for love

is cruel when first encountered - perfection
of soul being its preferential goal. Useless
to declare the love that made him sing, if this
the long ago maiden would not return.

But love was not the purpose: the grove was
always a world, and the bold enchantments of
a fast-expanding vision, hid deeper epiphanies.
Ever after: branded. Her ownership, his skin.

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