

## Blodeuwedd

by Jenni Wyn Hyatt

They formed me out of flowers of the oak,  
the yellow broom and fragrant meadowsweet,  
by wizardry – a maiden forged complete,  
a bride for Lleu, whose mother had decreed  
he'd never have a wife of humankind;  
created new, yet ancient as the earth  
whence flowers grew that brought about my birth.  
They gave me beauty and a spirit – wild,  
indomitable, like our cherished land  
and so I came, with passion, to resent  
this union forced on me without consent.

It chanced that, while my husband was away,  
a weary huntsman passed the court at dusk.  
I offered hospitality and rest,  
invited him to enter as my guest.  
Our love bloomed quickly. We devised a plan  
to rid ourselves of Lleu once he came home.  
Pretending still to be the loving wife,  
I whispered that I feared for his life  
and needs must know the nature of the charm  
that kept him safe – and how he might be killed,  
that I might help protect him. Willingly  
he told me what would serve to set me free.

A spear must be fashioned for a year  
in secret when the household was at mass  
and thrown at dusk to bring about his death,  
by riverside, not naked nor full-dressed,  
with one foot on a bath, one on a goat.  
My lover forged the weapon, lay in wait,  
while I enticed my spouse to demonstrate.  
The aim was true – and, with a dreadful cry,  
a wounded eagle rose and flew away.  
Such happiness we had, but 'twas short-lived.  
Restored into his rightful form and healed,  
Lleu slew my lover. I was spared, but turned  
into an owl, abhorred by other birds.

Wiles turned to wisdom, freedom found in flight,  
soft and yet strong, my spirit owns the night.

