

BLUEBELLS

Be wary in the woods; the wet blue pools
of bluebells hung with spells
are a well-managed enchantment.
Such doctoring is danger to a human child.
So do not let your children wander,
like that boy left to wade ungoverned,
who was locked in deep pockets of oak and song,
fed green broth of garlic and hawthorn,
and glamoured so none could find him,
though we called through the hours to bring him home.
The year turned bitter before he returned,
crept up to his mother's hearth – half-starved,
shivering and dazed – fairy-strayed,
tuned to the habits of the woods and strange,
running in his sleep with the deer.
On the longest night we went with lamps
to the darkest part of the woods and left him there.