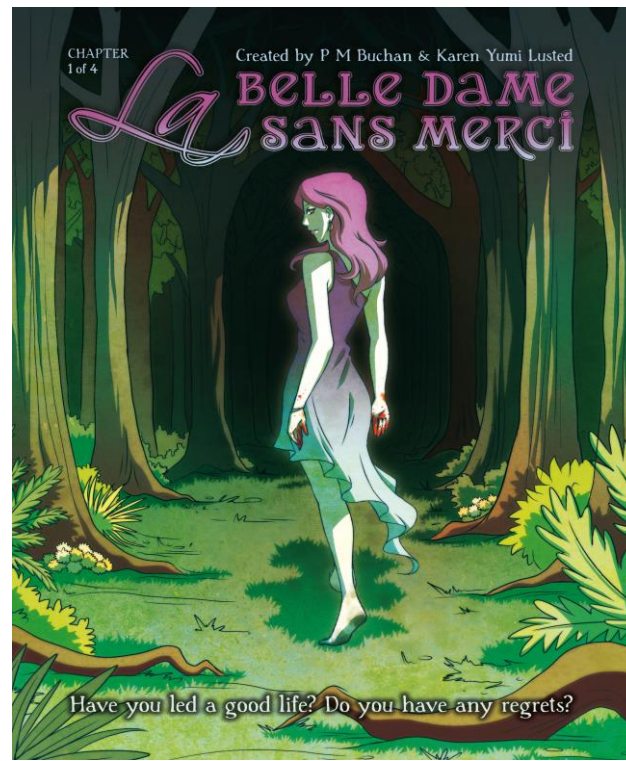




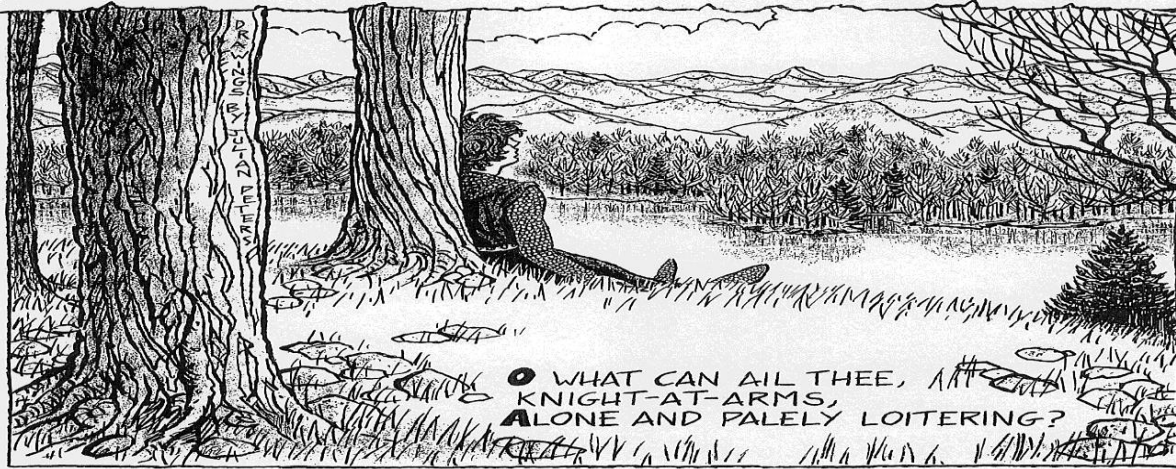
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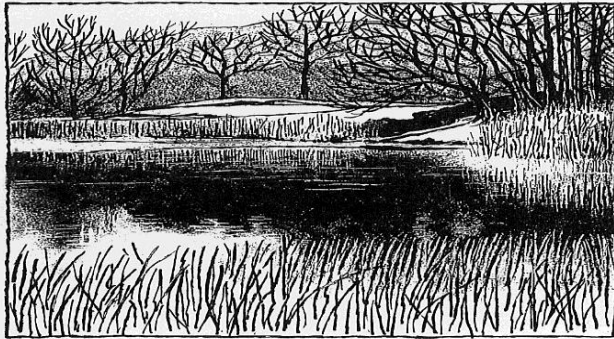
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LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

by
JOHN
KEATS



THE SEDGE HAS WITHER'D
FROM THE LAKE,



AND NO BIRDS SING.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Keats, (born October 31, 1795, London, England—died February 23, 1821, Rome, Papal States [Italy]), English Romantic lyric poet who devoted his short life to the perfection of a poetry marked by vivid imagery, great sensuous appeal, and an attempt to express a philosophy through classical legend.



LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

A BEAUTIFUL LADY WITHOUT MERCY

TYPE OF THE POEM

“La Belle Dame Sans Merci” is a **ballad**—one of the oldest poetic forms in English. Ballads generally use a bouncy rhythm and rhyme scheme to tell a story.

THEME

'La Belle Dame sans Merci' contains several themes such as **dejection in love, heartbreak, sadness, death, and illusion vs reality**. The most important theme of the poem is dejection in love.

10 Lines on La Belle Dame Sans Merci in English

- ▶ The poem has twelve stanzas with a simple structure.
- ▶ Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has referred the poem in his book.
- ▶ The poem has been referred to in several pieces of music, art and films.
- ▶ The poem talks about a fairy who lures a man into love.
- ▶ The poem gives very little detail about the characters.
- ▶ There are several times when dream and reality coincide in the poem.
- ▶ There is an essence of mystery and fantasy in the poem.
- ▶ La Belle Dame Sans Merci has features of an allegorical poem.
- ▶ Nature has been given the role of a moderator.
- ▶ The lady is referred to as the child of a fairy.

STANZA -1



Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

STANZA-2



Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

STANZA-3



I see a lilly on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

STANZA-4



I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

STANZA-5



I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

STANZA-6



I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

STANZA-7

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

STANZA-8

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kissed to sleep.

STANZA-9

And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill side.

STANZA-10

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

STANZA-11

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

STANZA-12

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

SUMMARY OF THE POEM

La Belle Dame sans merci, poem by John Keats, first published in the May 10, 1820, issue of the *Indicator*. The poem, whose title means “The Beautiful Lady Without Pity,” describes the encounter between a knight and a mysterious elfin beauty who ultimately abandons him. It is written in the style of a folk ballad, with the first three stanzas a query to the knight and the remaining nine stanzas the knight’s reply. The poem is sometimes seen as a counterpart to Keats’s “The Eve of St. Agnes,” which represents an idyllic view of love. Keats took his title from a medieval poem with the same name by the French poet Alain Chartier.

