

La Belle Dame sans Merci

John Keats

La Belle Dame sans Merci (The Beautiful Lady without Mercy) is a [ballad](#). This poem is written by [John Keats](#) in 1819. The poem tells a sad and tragic love story of a knight. The knight falls in love with a beautiful lady. But the knight is betrayed by the lady. The knight could not get the love of his beloved lady. The poem is autobiographical also. In real life John Keats also could not get success in love with his beloved Fanny.

The poem tells a story of a knight disappointed love with a beautiful lady. The lady is mysterious. The poet meets a knight. The knight was sad and wandering by the side of the lake. The plants were shriveled. The birds were not singing. His forehead was pale like a lily. There was moist with the sweat of a painful fever. The color of his cheeks was once bright and lively like a rose. It is fading now quickly. The squirrels had gathered their materials for winter and humans had harvested their fields.

The poet asks the knight why he is so sad and pale. The knight replies that he met a beautiful lady in the meadows. The knight felt she was the child of fairy. She had long hair. She moved so gracefully. She seemed to hover over the earth. She had a mysterious wildness in her eyes. The knight was fascinated by her looks and beautiful features. He made a garland for her hairs from flowers, stems. He also made bracelets, and a belt strong with the scent of the flowers. She received his gifts. They both travelled on a horseback. Then he saw nothing but only that lady. She was singing a mysterious song. She dug up sweet, nutritious roots for him. She also gave him wild honey. The honey was so heavenly in taste. It reminded him of manna, the food that kept the Israelites alive on their journey out of Egypt. He understood that she felt in love with him.

They reached the cave of the fairy. There the lady expressed her love for him and sung a song to sleep him. He saw a dream.

In the dream he saw pale kings and warriors. They told the knight that La Belle Dame sans Merci (The Beautiful Lady without Mercy) had taken him as her prisoner.

The warning of the kings and the warriors terrified him. He woke up. He found himself by the side of the hill. This was the reason why he was pale and sad. Frustration in love had made him sad, dejected and pale.

It is a romantic ballad. It deals with the theme of love. The theme of a fatal, magical love luring a man to his doom is found in folk literature of the middle ages. It creates an atmosphere of the middle Ages with its atmosphere.
