



'La Belle Dame Sans Merci' by John Keats

Summarise what the poem is about in full sentences:

Annotate the poem with points you remember from your initial study:

La Belle Dame sans Merci

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Oh what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

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

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.

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.

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

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

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep
And there I dreamed – Ah! Woe betide! –
The latest dream I ever dreamt
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried – 'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

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

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

What is the background to the writing of 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'?

What is Keat's intention in writing this poem?

When was this poem written?

How might Keats love for Fanny Brawne be relevant to the writing of this poem?

How might Keats diagnosis of tuberculosis be relevant to the writing of this poem?

to describe

to highlight

to raise questions

to comment on

| Language | | Structure and form | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Example and effect | | Example and effect |
| Adjectives | | Ballad | |
| Verbs | | Regular rhyme | |
| Sensory language | | Dialogue | |
| Symbolism | | Questions | |
| Alliteration | | Repetition | |
| Metaphor | | Contrasts | |

What other poems in the anthology can we link to this poem to and why?

How does Keats present love as a destructive force in 'La Belle Dame sans Merci'?