

# The Beautiful Lady Without Mercy

by John Keats

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

O 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 thy brow,  
With anguish moist and fever-dew,  
And on thy cheeks 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 side.

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