

La Belle Dame sans Merci

by John Keats

translated into Cornish by Ken George

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

A pyth a'th grev jy, marrek kaz
'kwibessa gwann dha honan?
'Th yw gwedhryz hesk diworth an lynn,
edhen ny gan.

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.

A pyth eus genes, marrek kaz
mar hager ha mar dhuwonhyz?
Greunji an gwiwer lenwyz yw,
an drevaz gwryz.

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

Y hwelav lili war dha dal,
gans angoes gwylgh ha hwys a derth
war dha dhiwvogh unn rosenn wew
a skav yn kerdh.

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.

Arloedhes 'vetis 'berth y'n dol
o marthys teg — a fay an flogh,
hir o hy golz, ha skav hy throeze,
dewlagaz logh.

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.

Y fanjis garlont rag hy fenn,
ha grogys eth, armellow teg;
y karas, ha my yn hy lok,
ha kyni hweg.

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.

Y's gorris war ow steda skav
ha marnas hi a welis vy
ha kan spyryjyon oll a-dreus
a gana hi.

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 lullèd 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
Thee hath in thrall!’

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd 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.

Y kavas gwreydh a sawor hweg
ha manna gluth, ha mel a’n tir,
ha sur yn tavez koynt yn medh
“Y’th karav gwir”.

Y’m kyrghas byz dh’y mogow fay
mayth oelas hanaz yn deray,
y serris hy dewlagaz logh
dre beswar bay.

Y’n le y’m lullas hi yn kosk,
hunroez a wrug— A! pan gedrynn!
hunroez hunroeyz orth an fin
yn oer an rynn.

Y hwelis lies ruw ha pryns
ha kazor marow wann anfeuz,
a gews: “La Belle Dame sans Merci
a’th gwith dann veuz!”

Ganz gweusow nownek igor bras
y’s gwelis yn tewolgow tynn,
difunis hag omgavoez hwath
yn oer an rynn.

Ha hemm yw prag y taryav vy
’kwibessa gwann ow honan,
kynth yw gwedhryz hesk diworth an lynn,
edhen ny gan.

an 7vez mis-Gwynngala 2025