

# La Belle Dame Sans Merci

Marianne Faithfull

Oh 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 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's side

And that is why I sojourn here  
Alone and palely loitering

Though sedge is withered from the lake  
And no birds sing