

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

Loreena Mckennitt

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

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

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 fairy's child
Her hair was long, her foot was light
And her eyes they were wild

Set her on my pacing steed
Nothing else saw all day long
For sidelong would she bend
And sing a fairy's song

I made a garland for her head
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone
She looked at me and she did love
And made a sweet moan

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 fast asleep
And there I dreamed, ah, woe betide
The strangest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hillside

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

I saw their starved lips in gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hillside

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering

The sedge is withered from the lake
And no birds sing