

Chapter 1 : La belle dame sans merci | Art UK

1. *"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" is a ballad* "one of the oldest poetic forms in English. Ballads generally use a bouncy rhythm and rhyme scheme to tell a story. Think about an event that has happened to you recently and try to tell it in ballad form.

Poem[edit] Of the two versions, scholars[who? 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? I see a lily on thy brow, With anguish moist and fever-dew, And on thy cheeks a fading rose Fast withereth too. 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. 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 this is why I sojourn here, Alone and palely loitering, Though the sedge is withered from the lake, And no birds sing. O what can ail thee, wretched wight, Alone and palely loitering? Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight, So haggard and so woe-begone? I see a lily on thy brow, With anguish moist and fever-dew, And on thy cheek a fading rose Fast withereth too. She found me roots of relish sweet, And honey wild, and manna dew, And sure in language strange she said. Analysis[edit] This section possibly contains original research. Please improve it by verifying the claims made and adding inline citations. Statements consisting only of original research should be removed. October Learn how and when to remove this template message "La Belle Dame sans Merci" is a popular form given an artistic by the Romantic poets. Keats uses a stanza of three iambic tetrameter lines with the fourth dimetric line which makes the stanza seem a self-contained unit, giving the ballad a deliberate and slow movement, and is pleasing to the ear. Keats uses a number of the stylistic characteristics of the ballad, such as the simplicity of the language, repetition, and absence of details; like some of the old ballads, it deals with the supernatural. Keats sets his simple story of love and death in a bleak wintry landscape that is appropriate to it: Keats relates the condition of the trees and surroundings to the condition of the knight who is also broken. In keeping with the ballad tradition, Keats does not identify his questioner, or the knight, or the destructively beautiful lady. La belle dame sans merci, the beautiful lady without pity, is a femme fatale , a Circe -like figure who attracts lovers only to destroy them by her supernatural powers. She destroys because it is her nature to destroy. With a few skillful touches, he creates a woman who is at once beautiful, erotically attractive, fascinating, and deadly. In his letters and in some of his poems, he reveals that he did experience the pains, as well as the pleasures, of love and that he resented the pains, particularly the loss of freedom that came with falling in love. In other media[edit] This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

Chapter 2 : La belle dame sans merci - French phrases in Downton Abbey | Merriam-Webster

La Belle Dame Sans Merci: Ballad: I. O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms, Alone and palely loitering? The sedge has wither'd from the lake, And no birds sing. II.

The oldest of four children, he lost both his parents at a young age. His father, a livery-stable keeper, died when Keats was eight; his mother died of tuberculosis six years later. Abbey, a prosperous tea broker, assumed the bulk of this responsibility, while Sandell played only a minor role. When Keats was fifteen, Abbey withdrew him from the Clarke School, Enfield, to apprentice with an apothecary-surgeon and study medicine in a London hospital. In Keats became a licensed apothecary, but he never practiced his profession, deciding instead to write poetry. Shelley, who was fond of Keats, had advised him to develop a more substantial body of work before publishing it. Keats, who was not as fond of Shelley, did not follow his advice. Shelley also exaggerated the effect that the criticism had on Keats, attributing his declining health over the following years to a spirit broken by the negative reviews. Keats spent the summer of on a walking tour in Northern England and Scotland, returning home to care for his brother, Tom, who suffered from tuberculosis. While nursing his brother, Keats met and fell in love with a woman named Fanny Brawne. Writing some of his finest poetry between and , Keats mainly worked on "Hyperion," a Miltonic blank-verse epic of the Greek creation myth. He stopped writing "Hyperion" upon the death of his brother, after completing only a small portion, but in late he returned to the piece and rewrote it as "The Fall of Hyperion" unpublished until That same autumn Keats contracted tuberculosis, and by the following February he felt that death was already upon him, referring to the present as his "posthumous existence. Agnes, and Other Poems. The three title poems, dealing with mythical and legendary themes of ancient, medieval, and Renaissance times, are rich in imagery and phrasing. The volume also contains the unfinished "Hyperion," and three poems considered among the finest in the English language, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode on Melancholy," and "Ode to a Nightingale. He continued a correspondence with Fanny Brawne andâ€”when he could no longer bear to write to her directlyâ€”her mother, but his failing health and his literary ambitions prevented their getting married. He died there on February 23, , at the age of twenty-five, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery. Agnes, and Other Poems Endymion: A Dramatic Fragment King Stephen: A Dramatic Fragment

"La Belle Dame sans Merci" ("The Beautiful Lady Without Mercy") is a ballad written by the English poet John Keats, who used the title of the 15th-century La Belle Dame sans Mercy by Alain Chartier, but nothing of the earlier poem's substance.

Referring to her education, Lady Mary says: The British aristocracy being a small world, the Dowager Countess relates that chasing Crawley women apparently ran in the Hepworth family: The translation is by the English poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti. I have a feeling Cora and I will be saying hello rather less than en garde! La belle dame sans merci. Tom Branson asks what the French phrase means, and Mr. Talbot responds, somewhat mysteriously: During the meal, the chauffeur-turned-son-in-law Tom Branson becomes argumentative about the political struggle between Britain and his native Ireland, appearing to be inappropriately drunk. When the ruse is revealed, Lord Grantham whispers to his mother the Dowager Countess: Levinson is a guest, Mrs. Crawley begins to describe her new interest in charitable work helping former prostitutes in York. Her mother replies with: Levinson, to give more of her vast fortune to save Downton. Bigger yachts, faster yachts. She asks Carson to change the seating plan so that Cora, rather than she, is next to him. Lord Grantham is puzzled and asks why she is refusing her privilege, to which she responds: Mason will lose his farming tenancy, Lady Grantham and Tom Branson decide that the right thing to do is to allow him to move to Yew Tree farm—even though the Crawleys had planned to use that land for themselves. The decision takes place while Mary is in London: They met and had the following exchange: But you must admit, your attitude is quite a volte-face. Is that a volte-face?

Chapter 4 : La Belle Dame Sans Merci Ballad Analysis & Summary

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" seems, on the surface, to be just another Romantic poem about knights who fall in love with beautiful (in this case, fairy or elfish) ladies. But wait: in this poem, the guy in question is literally on the verge of death because of his romantic encounter with this woman.

Many think John Keats got the idea for the title from a medieval French poem written by one Alain Chartier in old french merci meant mercy, not thank you as it does today and he could also have been inspired by the earlier Scottish story of Thomas the Rhymer, who is taken off by the beautiful Queen of Elfinland on a white horse. There are some strong arguments for a later version of this story being of particular interest. And Keats too had his own anguished relationship with Fanny Brawne to contend with. His letters to her are painful and passionate, and he knew that he would never be able to fulfil his hopelessly romantic dream. There is no doubt that he had difficulty expressing himself when in the company of women. I must absolutely get over this - but how? Keats created the poem using his imagination out of which came beauty and truth, contained in a dream-like and disturbing drama. In addition, the poem takes the reader into a supernatural world, where real or imagined experience morphs into fairy tale, where conscious control is lost to the seductive powers of a fleeting sensuality. Is the Belle Dame a kind of femme fatale? A succubus of sorts? What were the occupiers of his dream warning him about? The poem first appeared in a letter he wrote to his brother George in April. This version is the one shown below, as opposed to the second version, later published in *The Indicator* in 1817. 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? I see a lily on thy brow, With anguish moist and fever-dew, And on thy cheeks a fading rose Fast withereth too. 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 this is why I sojourn here, Alone and palely loitering, Though the sedge is withered from the lake, And no birds sing. Analysis of La Belle Dame sans Merci La Belle Dame sans Merci with its mysterious narrative and ethereal atmosphere, combines innocence and seduction in an unusual ballad form to produce a haunting story. Perhaps this is why the poem is so successful in its portrayal of a relationship that came out of nowhere, progressed to a different dimension and had such a profound effect on the male, and probably the female too. The reader is left hanging on, with a need to know more, thanks to the metric pattern of the stanzas and the bizarre circumstances the man finds himself in. And in certain sections of the poem there is the suggestion of a sexual liaison which is perhaps drug inspired. Notably, stanzas five and seven stand out, with mention of the man making garlands and bracelets and a fragrant girdle. While the woman made sweet moan. And later she finds sweet roots, honey wild and manna dew manna is the food from heaven as stated in the Bible, most certainly the food of love. The other question that has to be asked is: Has this whole scenario been imagined by the speaker? Is it some sort of dream sequence based on the polarities of pleasure and pain? Further Analysis The structure of this poem is more or less straightforward. The twelve stanzas are split: Stanza 1 - A stranger encounters a pale knight by a lake. There is something wrong with the man. Sedge grass has died, the birds are quiet - is this a winter scene or an integral part of the atmosphere? Stanza 2 - The stranger repeats his enquiry. This knight looks miserable and sick. Stanza 3 - There is a direct observation by the stranger. The lily and the rose are both symbols of death in a Petrarchan sense. Is the knight so close to meeting his Maker? Stanza 4 - The knight replies. He met a woman in the meadows Meads, no ordinary woman but a beauty, an otherworldly figure. Stanza 5 - The knight made love to her in the meadow. Stanza 6 - Afterwards he put her on his horse and he walked alongside as she sang her exotic songs. Stanza 7 - She knew just where to look for sweet and heavenly foods. Stanza 8 - She took me to her special place, deep in a grotto, where she became so emotional I had to reassure her, so wild were her eyes. I kissed them 4 times. Stanza 9 - She calmed me down too, so much so I feel asleep and had a dream. There was trouble brewing. That was my last ever dream. Stanza 10 - In the dream I saw pale kings, warriors and princes, near to death. They were warning me about the beautiful woman. Stanza 11 - Their mouths were gaping open in that dreamy twilight gloom. Then I woke up on a cold hill side. Stanza 12 - And so you find me here by the lake. A kind of vampire come to the human world to seek knowledge of flesh and blood? Or did he take advantage of the

woman first, after which she wanted some kind of revenge? Perhaps their chance meeting was a combination of wishful thinking on behalf of the knight and opportunity grasped by the beautiful if supernatural female. The whole poem suggests that the borderline between reality and imagination is often blurred. We give ourselves up to ideals of beauty, then in a trice it is gone, or we go through experiences that are not to our liking, that leave us spent, hollowed out. As in a typical folk lyric ballad, there are several repetitions which place emphasis on certain lines and reinforce sub-themes: More Analysis of La Belle Dame sans Merci La Belle Dame sans Merci is a 12 stanza ballad, each stanza a quatrain four lines , each quatrain having three lines of iambic tetrameter followed by a single line of iambic dimeter. The second and fourth lines are in full rhyme, so the rhyme scheme is abcb. Metre meter in American English This ballad has a classic iambic beat: The last line of each stanza therefore creates a kind of suspension. The reader, being used to the longer tetrameter lines, is then faced with a missing couple of beats, which adds a sense of loss, which in turn suggests mystery. In stanzas 2, 3, 4, 9 and 11 the last line has an extra beat, an anapaest foot da-da-DUM being employed:

Chapter 5 : "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (original version)

Perhaps La Belle Dame sans Merci is attracted to this kind of man. Or Keats may merely be imitating the folk ballad, which is a traditional and conservative form and tends to observe class lines. Click here for vocabulary and allusions in stanzas X and XI.

Many well known poets of the romantic era used this form in their written works. This particular ballad has a meter and rhyme scheme that produces a flow that engages the reader. The effect of this scheme is that it flows like a song, smoothly and with rhythm. Thus, it is called a lyrical ballad. The rhyme, rhythm, and tone are all designed to lure the reader in, just as the Knight in the poem was lured in by the beautiful fairy-woman. The sedge has withered from the lake, And no birds sing. With the opening stanza, the speaker sets up the scene and the subject of this poem. The speaker comes upon a Knight. The speaker knows that this man is a knight upon seeing him, but he quickly reveals that this knight is not behaving as one might expect a knight to behave. He does not seem brave and valiant. He seems to be wandering about aimlessly. The speaker wonders why, and he asks. He also makes a remark about the time of year. He is indicating that spring is over, and there is no lively singing or springtime beauty in the atmosphere. He wonders why the Knight would be wandering about, pale and lonely, during this time of the year. It is probably growing cold, as the birds have clearly flown south already. The speaker clearly finds it concerning that this Knight is sickly and alone, without shelter, at this time of the year. O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, So haggard and so woe-begone? With this stanza, the reader can grasp the full picture of what the Knight looks like. The setting is also described. The harvest is done. Therefore, the reader can imagine the bare, dry ground and the silence of nature after the birds have already flown south. Over all, this description gives the poem a very gloomy tone. The subject is clearly down-trodden, and nature itself seems stripped of all joy. The birds have ceased their singing and the squirrels have stored up enough food to go into hiding. Thus, the lonely knight is left utterly alone. I see a lily on thy brow, With anguish moist and fever-dew, And on thy cheeks a fading rose Fast withereth too. In this stanza, the speaker informs the knight that he looks very ill. He tells him that his face is as pale as a lily, and that his face looks moist with sweat as if he had a fever. He tells him that all of his color is fading quickly from his cheeks. He speaks to the knight to make sure he is aware of how ill he is. In the following stanza, the knight answers him. Here, the speaker is now the knight as he gives answers to the concerns of the first speaker. He tells him of a lady that he met. He describes her long hair, and her light step. It is clear from this stanza, that the knight fell in love at the first sight of this lady he describes. He describes her as not quite human. 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 In this stanza, the knight describes his relationship with this lady. It appears that he won her heart. He made her a garland of flowers for her head. Then he made her bracelets from flowers. He also adorned her private parts with flowers. Then the Knight implies that he made love to this woman. This implies that the two were intimate with one another in this stanza. This stanza can be read as an extension of the previous stanza, where the lady riding the Knights stallion is a metaphor for their continued sexual relations. On the other hand, it could be read literally. In either case, the Knight is so entirely absorbed with this woman that he sees and hears nothing else. He is devoted to her the entire day long. She feeds him sweet roots, wild honey, and manna. The sweet roots refer to her human qualities, but the manna and the wild honey are symbolic of her supernatural qualities. This same God promised the Israelites a land flowing with milk and honey. Thus, the fact that the fairy-woman was able to feed him bread from heaven, wild honey, and roots suggests that the fairy is part human, part supernatural. 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. He does not explain why she cried, but he does imply that he wiped her tears away with his kisses. This occurrence between the Knight and the fairy-woman allows the reader to understand the depth of their relationship. Earlier in the poem, they clearly connected physically. Here, they connect emotionally as the Knight is there to wipe away her tears. With this stanza, the reader can begin to feel a little uncertain about this fairy-woman. The readers should question why she is lulling this Knight to sleep. In the previous stanza, she cried, and there was offered no reason for her

tears. Now, she lulls him to sleep. The Knight has a dream. It is clearly a nightmare. He does not explain how he knows that this was the last dream he would ever have, but he seems so confident of it that the reader does not question. Suddenly, this poem has taken a turn for the worse. Something awful has happened, and the reader can begin to understand that the fairy-woman is at fault, but there are no specifics given just yet. Since the poem has already introduced biblical symbols of the supernatural, it is not too far-fetched to conclude that the pale warriors and princes and kings are all after the likeness of the pale horse in the book of Revelation, the final book of the New Testament. The pale horse and rider of the Bible symbolize death and bring destruction. This poem continues to become more and more nightmarish as it continues. This, of course, is the title of the poem. Suddenly, in the midst of his dream, the Knight becomes aware of what is happening to him. He has been seduced by a woman who would show him no mercy. Not only that, but he is one of many who have come to ruin at the hands of this fairy-woman. In this stanza, the Knight comes to the full realization of what has happened to him. Every man that the fairy has ever seduced has died. He describes these dead men that were in his dream. The Knight had already been seduced, and as a consequence of his moment of pleasure, he now faces death. From the original description of the Knight, the readers can conclude that he is in fact dying. And this is why I sojourn here, Alone and palely loitering, Though the sedge is withered from the lake, And no birds sing. In the final stanza of this poem, the Knight finally answers the original question of the first speaker. He ends the poem with the line with which the first stanza ends. The readers are left to grieve the loss of the Knight. He dies alone with no one to comfort him in his last moments. Not even the birds are there to sing a song to offer comfort in his death. He is utterly alone in his last moments, and all because he was seduced by that beautiful fairy-woman without mercy. He had already seen his mother and brother die from this terrible disease before he contracted it himself. It is likely that the knowledge of his own imminent death inspired this poem. He had seen the effect that the disease had on his mother and his brother, and he knew what was to come for himself. Even more tragic than his contraction of tuberculosis is that he was newly engaged and desperately in love. He claimed that he could bear to die, but he could not bear to leave his love. Although he does not appear to view his real life love as the cause of his death, there still remain striking parallels. Both the Knight in this poem and John Keats himself fell in love shortly before death. Both were unable to enjoy love for very long before death became imminent John Keats. Sadly, John Keats died at the young age of twenty five. Having studied some medicine, Keats knew his symptoms well enough to know that his time was limited. Just as Keats had found love, and just as his poetry was beginning to be noticed, he faced his own early death. Being fully aware of his symptoms and the result of his disease John Keats, Keats also faced depression. He saw that his life was to end just as it was beginning. He left behind a fiancée whom he desperately loved, and a plethora of poems that would eventually become some of the most renowned and beloved poems of all time.

Chapter 6 : "La Belle Dame sans Merci"

La Belle Dame Sans Merci is Keats' life and emotions set into verse. It is a story of unrequited love, illness, and the impossibility of being with whom one cares for when they are from different social classes.

Romantic literature was a literary movement that had arisen to counter the theories of the Age of Enlightenment to bring back imagination, beauty, and art to a culture that had become science-based, theoretical, and realist. Romantic writers saw the violence of the French Revolution as proof of the failure of science and reason, and the suffocation of human spirit. His works focus on a return to beauty: This article contains two analytical interpretations of this poem. At this point, Keats was already aware that he would die, likely from tuberculosis, which had killed his brother earlier on in his life. Their neighbours at Wentworth Palace were Fanny Brawne and her mother, and because they lived in the other half of Wentworth Palace, they saw each other daily. After a while, Keats fell in love with Fanny Brawne, though being poor, he could not marry her. 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? I see a lily on thy brow, With anguish moist and fever-dew, And on thy cheeks a fading rose Fast withereth too. The first three stanzas introduce the character of the Unidentified Speaker, and the knight. The cold has chased away the birds, and yet the Unidentified Speaker notices that the Knight is suffering from a fever. In the very same year, Keats began exhibiting symptoms of the disease, and thus impending death was heavy on his mind. 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. It is important to point out the traditional form of this poem: Keats wrote this in the style of a ballad, an outdated form of poetry that capitalizes on simple language and imagery to bring across its story. By utilizing the ballad form, it lends the poem an air of timelessness, and of an almost novelistic approach to imagery. Even the story itself is evocative of the ballad tradition. Ballads were used as entertainment, and their length was supposed to keep listeners engaged, as the ballad was a form of oral poetry. The first three stanzas of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* were bitter and devoid of emotion, but the introduction of the Lady in the Meads produces softness in the language of the Knight. The Knight talks about his sweet memories of the Lady: With the introduction of the eight stanza, the Lady weeps for she knows that they cannot be together she is a fairy, and he is a mortal and lulls him to a sleep out of which he does not immediately wake. Scholars are divided on the precise motives of the Lady: For the purposes of this analysis, I would say that it is the latter: And this is why I sojourn here, Alone and palely loitering, Though the sedge is withered from the lake, And no birds sing. In his dream, the Knight sees pale people kings, princes, and warriors who tell him that he has been enthralled by the Woman without Merci *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*. The Knight wakes up from the nightmare alone, on the cold hill side. He tells the Unidentified Speaker that that is why he stays there: Although the language used is simple, Keats manages to create two parallel universes: The other world, where the Lady lives, seems exotic and beautiful, with such glorious foods as honey wild and manna-dew. The end of the stanza leaves the fate of the Knight ambiguous. Historical Background John Keats was born in London in He returned to poetry in His brother Tom died of TB in Keats was looking after him through the process, contracted the illness himself, and wrote *Endymion*, which was harshly criticized. He met Fanny Brawne in and had an affair, but he was too poor to marry her.

Chapter 7 : La Belle Dame sans Merci Summary - racedaydvl.com

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The sedge, a grasslike plant that thrives in wetlands, has dried up, and the knight, as if in sympathy with this arid setting, appears depleted both physically and emotionally. Enchanted by this beautiful figure, the knight describes her graceful movement, her alluring long hair, and her lively appearance, apparent in her wild eyes. In stanza five, he makes a garland a wreath of intertwined flowers for her head and bracelets that enhance her natural perfume. She is responsive to his loving tribute, and her sweet moaning signals that she is falling in love with him. In stanza six, enraptured with his newfound love, the knight places her on his horse and follows her all day as she looks down at him and sings a fairy song, while in stanza seven she gathers and feeds him sweet roots and delectable foods to express her true love for him. In stanza eight, the mood of the poem shifts back toward melancholy, when the knight relates how the woman took him to a grotto, a sort of magical space the knight associates with fairy creatures such as elves. It is the lady who lulls the knight to sleep, however. In stanzas nine to eleven, he is engulfed in a dream of kings and princes who are pale as he is at the beginning of the poem and who warn him that he has become enslaved by the beautiful lady without mercy. When he awakes, the knight finds himself on the cold hillside, feeling the deathlike cold of his dream and looking like the sad figure the speaker first encountered. Coming full circle in stanza twelve, the knight notes that his experience with the lady is why he remains in this bleak setting, alone and feeling that he has lost the love of this beautiful figure that haunts and blights not only his life but also the world in which he finds himself. This deceptively simple tale written in a ballad style, featuring short lines and romantic longings, evokes the human yearning for an eternal, imperishable love, a bond that outlasts death and that conquers mortality. To lose the lady is tantamount to a kind of death for the knight. Thus, John Keats uses the medieval setting as a kind of allegory, a symbolic representation of what love represents. To the lover, the beloved is a fairy creature usually associated with perfection and with the desire to do good and to protect the loved one. When she withdraws her love, she is portrayed as without mercy. The heat of passion vanishes, and this is why the knight feels cold and why the world itself seems frigid. Like many of his contemporaries—Romantic poets such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Sir Walter Scott—Keats was drawn to medieval poems, romances, and stories because he believed this literature expressed an emotional truth that needed to be recovered and cherished rather than diminished by those who saw the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as the Age of Reason. To Keats, the older forms of poetry such as the ballad should be resurrected so as not to ignore the vital—indeed inescapable—role that human emotions play in human affairs. Keats, who would die of tuberculosis in agony over his unfulfilled love for Fanny Brawne, found a way, Gittings implies, of projecting his own anguish into this antique form of poetry. After all, the knight is warned by princes and kings who are deathly pale and who appear with the gaping visages of corpses.

Chapter 8 : John Keats Forum – View topic - La belle Dame Sans Merci

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" is in the form of a dialogue between two speakers. The first is the unnamed speaker who comes across a sick, sad knight and pesters him with questions for the first three.

Chapter 9 : La Belle Dame sans Merci - Wikipedia

John Keats poem read by Ben Whishaw.. featured in the film Bright Star and also available on the Bright Star soundtrack. Images are stills taken from the film.