

La belle dame sans merci argumentative



**ASSIGN
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Analysis of “ La Belle Dame Sans Merci” The poem “ La Belle Dame Sans Merci” by John Keats is a poem full of imagination, dreams, romanticism, and mystery. It tells us of a knight wandering about the cold bare countryside, where he meets a mystical woman. It is hard to tell from the poem whether or not she is real, or simply a figment of his imagination. This poem is very easy to read, with a consistent structure and straightforward language.

It imitates the ballad, yet still maintains simplicity in the best sense. Keats evokes our curiosity while reading this poem by creating vivid scenarios to invigorate our senses, keeping us wanting more by the end of the poem. The form of this poem is very consistent. It mimics the common ballad in form, yet uses simple language and tangible words.

The poem consists of 12 stanzas, each one having four feet. Was the knight with really with the fairy? Or was he merely dreaming? These are questions we might ask ourselves. The form helps create the mystery of the poem. The last stanza recalls the first one, and so gives us the feeling of being in a circle of captivation, much like the knight. Just like the poems form, its sound is very consistent. We can also detect its subtle cryptic aura from the rhyme scheme.

We do not see couplets, or other obvious similar sounding words. There are few actual rhyming words, however the rich rhythm and repetition makes up for it. The line which reads “ What can ail thee, wretched wight” is the closest thing to an alliteration I could find. The moderate and uniform rhythm throughout leads us into the dazed trance similar to that of the knight. The

imagery Keats creates in this poem is the main thing that makes it so enjoyable.

It arouses our senses of sight, hearing, and taste. Keats creates a vivid, morbid picture with " I saw their starved lips in the gloam, with horrid warning gaping wide. " We can almost hear the fairy's mystical voice in this line " She looked at me and she did love, and made sweet moan. " Keats even tempts us with delicious wild food " She found me roots of relish sweet, and honey wild, and manna dew. " This makes us wonder if the knight really was dreaming, because everything he experienced was so graphic and clear. There is not obvious usage of figurative language such as similes, metaphors, and personification.

The line " on thy cheek a fading rose fast withereth too" could refer to more than one thing. Keats could be comparing the rose to the color of the knight's cheeks, and because it is cold outside he is growing pale. Another way you could look at it is that the knight is dying, and the color fading from his cheeks is the last bit of life he has left. Or, he could be disheartened and so his happiness isn't reflecting on his face. In a way Keats is comparing a rose to something, so in a roundabout way this could be considered a metaphor.

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" by John Keats is a fantastical poem which takes the reader into another realm. One cannot be sure if the knight has really met the fairy before, or if he is merely dreaming. Though this poem seems plain and easily understood at first, we are stuck deeply in muddled enjoyment by the time we are halfway through it. This short mysterious

romance leaves us thinking, wondering, and longing for more by the time it ends.

When we finish reading the poem, we like the knight, find ourselves wanting to return to that sweet resting place of the fairy.