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August 2019

## A Lady Found in a Cave

Author Unknown

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### Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "A Lady Found in a Cave" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 193.  
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# A Lady FOUND IN A CAVE

The inhabitants of Essex, were startled in the highest degree on its being known that a female about 20 years of age, was found living in a cave in Epping Forest. We copy the following from the Chemford Journal— The following will be read with great interest and may be relied upon as authentic. As two gentlemen whose names we elsewhere mention, were out shooting with dogs and guns, they were greatly surprised by the dogs making a sudden stop, with no apparent object in view. On approaching the dogs they could not see anything on account of their actions, they tried to call them off but in vain they, let them follow their own instinct when they began barking with great violence, the two gentlemen approached the spot & discovered a rude trap door, partly concealed from observation by a quantity of brushwood on clearing which they forced open the door. When they discovered some steps and on descending they came into a cave and were surprised to find that this solitary abode was occupied by a female form sitting on a sort of bench holding in her hand a sheet of paper which she seemed to be perusing over with the most intense interest, she was dressed in a faded gown & a pair of old shoes on her feet she had no covering on her head, a quantity of leaves sewed up in a large bag an old blanket for a covering formed her bed a few utensils for culinary purposes, completed this obscure retreat & seated in an attitude of the deepest sorrow was the poor unfortunate, who not observing the entrance of the gentlemen until she was roused by them, she seemed disposed to retreat from their gaze however by the kindest persuasion she was induced to remain & at their request she stated that she was the daughter of respectable parents, that she had resided in that dreary abode for 18 months but refused at present to relate any more of her history. She was persuaded to leave her wretched abode, and by those kind gentlemen was respectably attired and conveyed her to her friends who had long mourned her as dead.

She was received with great joy by her parents who expressed their gratitude to those humane gentlemen who had been the means of restoring a long lost beloved daughter to their arms. Her father and mother at her most earnest request invited her to spend a few days with them and they cheerfully complied for they were anxious to hear from own lips the eventful story after a few days rest, and when she had properly composed herself she made known to her friends that it was her wish they should hear the narrative of her misfortunes.

When little more than 15 years of age, she attracted the attention of a gentleman of fortune who was visiting in her own locality, and it was while enjoying an evening's walk she first met her destroyer who in the most insinuating manner forced his attention upon her in an evil hour she listened to his deluding tongue he swore that he would make her his wedded wife he persuaded her to conceal from her parents until after they were secretly married. She was quite over by his venomous eloquence and at his request to leave her home in a clandestine manner. The heartless villain had every thing prepared a chaise and pair soon conveyed to town he placed her in lodgings reiterated his solemn promise and soon became less frequent and finally he abandoned all together, leaving her in arrears with the landlord, who seized upon her clothing and turning her into the streets ashamed to write or return home owing to the disgrace she has brought upon her name & family she wandered an outcast about the country many times sleeping in fields and by hedge with no other than heavens broad canopy it was while wandering in the shades of Epping forest gathering herbs which she used to sell in the neighbourhood and which rendered her a precarious subsistence she discovered a cave where she had lived so long and where she had determined to die had she not so opportunely delivered by Mr. Cole and Mr. Seymour.

It was in a forest dark and in Essex has been found  
 A lady in the prime of life that live beneath the ground  
 A spacious cave that was unknown to the rustics there  
 Within its silent walls contained a form surprising fair  
 Some gentlemen on pleasure bent with dogs and gun  
 did stray  
 Into the forest but they could not call their dogs away.  
 They barked aloud the earth they scratched away  
 We will examine what is wrong perhaps some is slain  
 But soon their terror passed away they saw no human  
 grave  
 But with surprise beheld a path that led them to a cave  
 A human form within they saw in pensive mood reclined  
 She heard them not as they approached so trouble was  
 her mind.  
 As soon as she beheld their forms she seemed to suppose  
 They kindly spoke and did assure no danger there was  
 nigh.

Reluctantly at length she yields to tell her father  
 name,  
 (whence she came  
 And on being pressed she likewise the place from  
 In proper clothing she was dressed and to her  
 parents brought,  
 (has sought,  
 Who through the country far and near their only  
 With pleasure they beheld she who they thought  
 was dead,  
 (them was shed  
 They clasped to their aged breast and tears by  
 The home of my childhood she sobbing said to  
 thee I am restored,  
 adore  
 And to my parents I disgrace by whom I was born  
 I listened to a villain's voice who did my hopes destroy  
 For him I left a happy home a mother tender care  
 The scenes of youth fathers love, true love with  
 him to share.

STEVEN PRINTER CHEMFORD ESSEX

1850