

The Lily of the Vale

C em G am
O, as I was all a-walking in my valley so sweet,
C am dm em
The sun, it kissed my hair, and the grass, it kissed my feet.
am C G
And the birds were sweetly singing, and my heart was full of glee:
am C G em
For the unicorn was dancing, and the unicorn was me.
am C D am
O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
C D am
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

Lovely maiden lay a-sleeping, o a princess she was born,
Fairer than the fairest flower, in her lap, I laid my horn,
And I fell asleep beside her to protect her from the night
And was sleeping when the hunters to my valley they did ride.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

O I knew not much of hatred, and I knew not much of greed,
all I knew I was in danger, so I stumbled to my feet.
But their weapons were cold iron, cold and black as was their heart,
and they'd come for naught but killing: From my horn, they wished me part.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

I was never made for fighting, and could not defend my life,
But my lady turned a fury, stabbed one hunter with her knife.
Through the vale we then were running with the hunters close behind,
Ran until we met the sorcerer, and his help we hoped to find.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

»Hurry, Sorcerer!« cried the maiden, »can't you see he's almost dead,
and the riders are approaching!« And the sorcerer scratched his head:
»I know but one thing to help you, but I'll do the best I can.«
And he wove his powers round me, and he turned me to a man.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

O my hooves were no more cloven, and my horn had disappeared.
so the hunters couldn't tell me, they rode on, but I felt weird:
I could feel my life drain from me, all my powers I did lack,
and I waited, shivering, aching, for the spell to turn me back.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

»I am sorry«, said the sorcerer, »but you'll have to live a man:
I could turn you to a human, but can't turn you back again.«
»There's just one thing!« said the lady, and her voice to sweet did ring:
»I you cannot make him unicorn, then I'll make him my king.«

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.

I am father of the three children, and my wife, she loves me well.
All the world thinks that I'm happy, but my heart I cannot tell.
And the willows they are weeping as the brook rolls on and on,
and my vale is bound to wither since the unicorn is gone.

O gone is the fairest flower, the lily of the vale:
Don't ye weep, but come ye closer and listen to my tale.