

May Day Carol

CAPO 3

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb) and a common time signature (C). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff has a key signature change to one flat (B) and a common time signature. The second staff has a key signature change to two flats (Bb) and a common time signature. The third staff has a key signature change to one flat (B) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "I've been a - - ramb - ling all the night And the best part of the day. And now re - turn - ing home a - - gain I bring you a branch of May". The chords are: Bb(G), F7(D7), Bb(G), Gm(Em), Bb(G), F7(D7), Bb(G).

B \flat (G) **F7(D7)**

I've been a - - ramb - ling all the night And the

B \flat (G) **Gm(Em)**

best part of the day. And now re - turn - ing

B \flat (G) **F7(D7)** **B \flat (G)**

home a - - gain I bring you a branch of May

A Revels Garland of Song, page 86

<http://www.mudcat.org/@displaysong.cfm?SongID=3917>

<http://www.joe-offer.com/folkinfo/songs/383.html>

A bunch of flowers at the end of a stick was carried about by children. It was customary in England for a lover on May morning to take a green bough to the house of the beloved. If she opened the door and took it in, this was a token of acceptance. At the Puritan epoch this custom was altered, and the song was converted into a carol with a moral to it.

The melody is a very early one in the Dorian mode, and resembles that of the carol "The moon shines bright," Broadwood's "County Songs" p. 108. The carol is still sung in Cornwall.

B \flat (G) **F7(D7)**

1. A branch of May I brought you here And
 2. A - - - wake, a - wake, O pretty, pretty maid Out
 3. If not a bowl of yel - - low cream A
 4. Through - - out the night, be - - fore the light, There
 5. The heav'n - ly gates are op - - en wide To
 6. The life of man is but a span, He
 7. My song is done and I must be gone I

B \flat (G) **F7(D7)** **B \flat (G)** **Gm(Em)**

at your door I stand. There's not a sprout un - -
 of your drow - sy dream, And haste to dair - y
 cup to bring us cheer. For who knows when we shall
 fell the dew or rain, It twin - - kles bright on
 let es - cape the dew, And heav'n - ly grace falls
 blos - soms as a flower. We come to stay, here
 can no long - er stay. O bless you all both

B \flat (G) **Gm(Em)** **E \flat (C)** **B \flat (G)**

- bud - ded out And of - fered__ by my hand.
 house and fetch for us a__ bowl of cream.
 meet a - gain To go May - ing a - noth - er year.
(chorus)
 May bush white, It spar - kles__ on the plain.
 on each place. It drops on__ me and you.
(chorus)
 for a day, and van - ished__ in an hour.
 great and small I wish you a joy - ful May.
(chorus)