

Death and the Lady

Words: Trad
Music: Trad/Nigel Harbron

As I walked out one morn in May, The birds did sing and the la-mbs did play, The
birds did sing and the la-mbs did play, I met an old man, I
met an old man, I met an old man - , by the way.

As I walked out one morn in May,
The birds did sing and the lambs did play,
The birds did sing and the lambs did play,
I met an old man, I met an old man,
I met an old man by the way.

His head it was bald, his beard was grey,
His coat was of a myrtle shade.
I asked him what strange countryman,
Or what strange place, or what strange place,
Or what strange place he did belong.

‘My name is Death, cannot you see?
Lords, dukes and ladies bow down to me,
And you are one of those branches three,
And you fair maid, and you fair maid,
And you fair maid must come with me.’

‘I’ll give you gold and jewels rare,
I’ll give you costly robes to wear.
I’ll give you all my wealth in store
If you’ll let me live, if you’ll let me live,
If you’ll let me live a few years more.’

‘Fair lady, lay your jewels aside
No longer glory in their pride.
And now, sweet maid, make no delay,
Your time has come, your time has come,
Your time has come and you must away.’

And not long after this fair maid died.
'Write on my tomb,' the lady cried,
'Here lies a poor distressed maid,
Whom Death now lately, whom Death now lately,
Whom Death now lately hath betrayed.'

As I walked out one morn in May,
The birds did sing and the lambs did play,
The birds did sing and the lambs did play,
I met an old man, I met an old man,
I met an old man by the way.



If this song had been written in today's 'politically correct' times, it would probably have been entitled D'Eath and the Lady! It strikes me as a quintessential English song - deeply gloomy, but ever so polite!!

P.S. Is that really a fluffy little white rabbit about to meet its maker in the picture above?