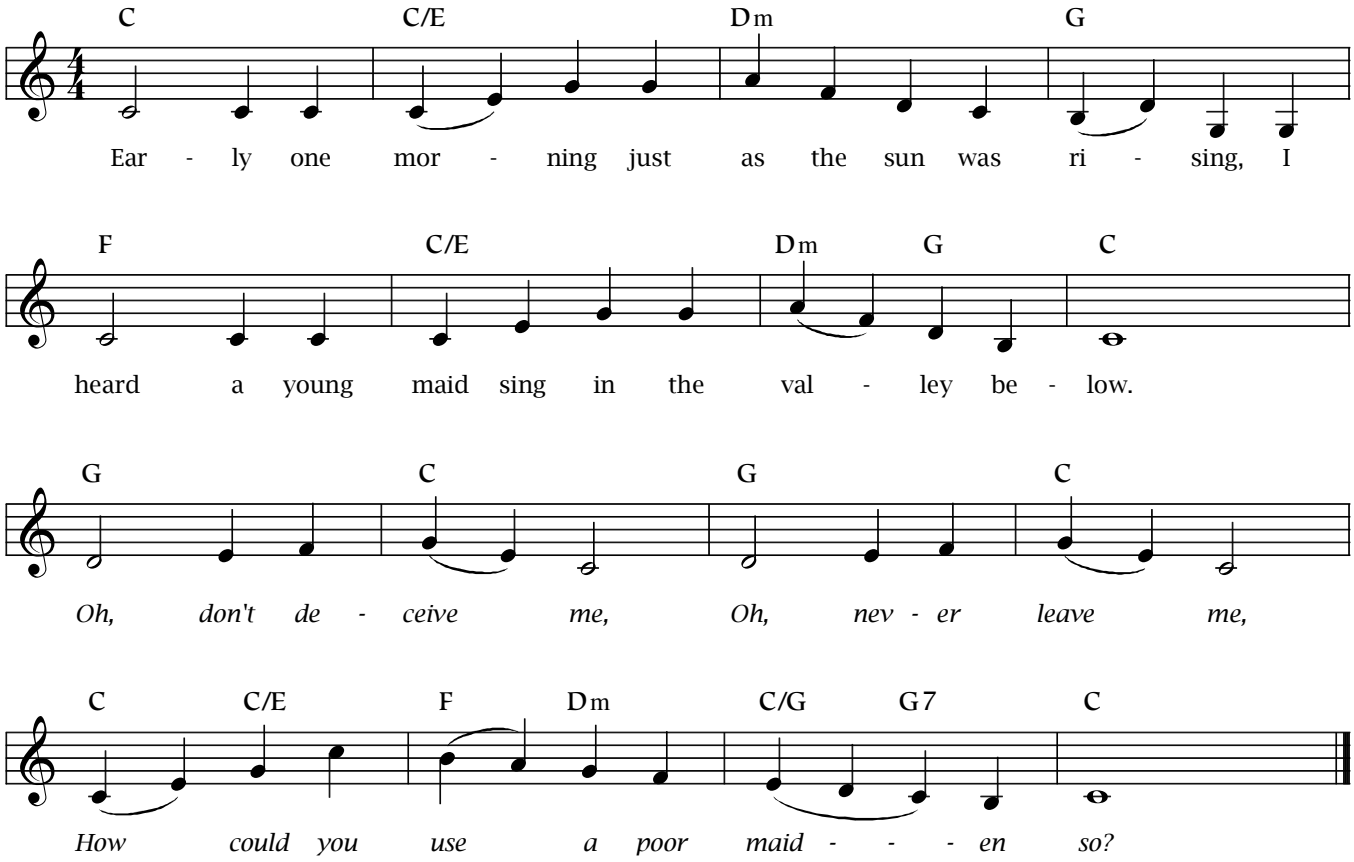
Early One Morning

Traditional English (Roud #V9617)
Melody first published c.1855 in "National English Airs" by William Chappell
Lyrics first published before 1828



This well-known English folk song was featured as the instrumental theme for the Canadian-American children's television series *The Friendly Giant*. The program was created for and broadcast by WHA-AM radio and WHA-TV television from 1953-1958 (both stations at the University of Wisconsin, Madison); from 1958-1985 *Giant* was produced and televised by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

The Friendly Giant theme was arranged and played by harpist John Duncan (b. 1904 Derbyshire, England; d. 1998 Toronto). Duncan composed and performed music for *Giant* for over 25 years, played for numerous other CBC productions, and for ten years also taught harp at The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Along with the harp, Duncan's *Friendly Giant* theme featured recorder soloist and *Giant* creator and actor Bob Homme (b. 1919, Stoughton, Wisconsin; d. 2000, Grafton, Ontario).

In addition to numerous settings and musical references by classical composers including Benjamin Britten and Percy Grainger, and recordings by Sarah Brightman, Nana Mouskouri, and others, "Early One Morning" has been featured in television shows as diverse as *The Adventures of Robin Hood, Bonanza, Bewitched, Pride and Prejudice, Murder She Wrote, Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* and *Will & Grace.*

The lyrics appear in many different versions, some with ten or more verses, though all center on the theme of a maiden lamenting the departure of her love.