

Wildwood Flower

Carter Family



1. I'll twine 'mid the ringlets of my raven black hair,
The lilies so pale and the roses so fair,
The myrtle so bright with an emerald hue,
And the pale aronatus with eyes of bright blue.
2. I'll sing, and I'll dance, my laugh shall be gay,
I'll cease this wild weeping drive sorrow away,
Tho' my heart is now breaking, he never shall know,
That his name made me tremble and my pale cheek to glow.
3. I'll think of him never I'll be wildly gay,
I'll charm ev'ry heart and the crowd I will sway,
I'll live yet to see him regret the dark hour
When he won, then neglected, the frail wildwood flower.
4. He told me he loved me, and promis'd to love,
Through ill and misfortune, all others above,
Another has won him, ah! misery to tell;
He left me in silence, no word of farewell!
5. He taught me to love him, he call'd me his flower
That blossom'd for him all the brighter each hour;
But I woke from my dreaming, my idol was clay;
My visions of love have all faded away.

"Wildwood Flower" is a variant of the song "I'll Twine 'Mid the Ringlets", published in 1860 by composer Joseph Philbrick Webster, who wrote the music, with lyrics attributed to Maud Irving. Other versions of the song have evolved, including "The Pale Amaranthus" (collected in Kentucky and North Carolina, reported in 1911), "Raven Black Hair" and "The Pale Wildwood Flower" (collected 1915-1919), and "The Frail Wildwood Flower".

The original Carter Family first recorded "Wildwood Flower" in 1928 on the Victor label.

Maybelle Carter leads a rendition of the song on the 1972 album **Will the Circle be Unbroken**.

It has also been recorded by many others including Hank Thompson, Merle Travis and Joan Baez. The tune plays well on guitar with Maybelle's thumb lead and scratch technique.

Woody Guthrie used the melody for "The Sinking of the Reuben James" and added a chorus.