

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second staff begins at measure 6. The third staff begins at measure 11. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. Chord symbols (Dm, Am, F, G) are placed above the notes to indicate accompaniment.

When first I came to Louis-ville some pleasure there to find, a damsel fair from  
 Lexing-ton was plea-sing to my mind. Her cher-ry cheeks and ru - by lips, like  
 arrows pierced my breast, they called her Handsome Ma-ry, the Li-ly of the West.

When first I came to Louisville  
 some pleasure there to find,  
 A damsel fair from Lexington  
 was pleasing to my mind.  
 Her cherry cheeks and ruby lips,  
 like arrows pierced my breast,  
 They called her Handsome Mary,  
 the Lily of the West.

One evening as I rambled,  
 down by a shady grove,  
 I saw a man of low degree  
 conversing with my love.  
 They were singing songs of melody,  
 while I was sore distressed,  
 O faithless, faithless Mary,  
 the Lily of the West!

I courted her awhile,  
 in hopes her love to gain,  
 But she proved false to me  
 which caused me much pain.  
 She robbed me of my liberty,  
 deprived me of my rest,  
 They called her Handsome Mary,  
 the Lily of the West.

I stepped up to my rival,  
 my dagger in my hand.  
 I caught him by the collar,  
 and boldly bade him stand ;  
 Being driven to desperation,  
 I stabbed him in the breast,  
 But was betrayed by Mary,  
 the Lily of the West!

At length the day of trial came,  
 I boldly made my plea,  
 But the judge and jury  
 they soon convicted me.  
 To deceive both judge and jury  
 so modestly she dressed,  
 And there she swore my life away,  
 the Lily of the West.