

The Calling On

Fay Hield

Good people I pray give attention
Come hear all we have for to say
And if you're inclined, come to listen
With your eyes open wide now we pray
You'll hear of our lowly commission
We're gathered together by chance
To tell tales of dark deeds and romancing
And to lead you a song and a dance

In days of old, long past and gone now
Of which we sing with great regard
The country was woven with fairies
The elf-queen and her spritely elf hoard
To roam o'er high hills and deep valleys
To dance in the meadows so green
Rejoice in the glitch in the forest
Find the cracks, fall betwixt and between

But this was long years past and gone now
We hear no more high elven song
For the prayers of old priests and bold friars
Cast out all our thoughts of the throng
Blessing hall, chamber, kitchen and bower
They overran rivers and streams
Worn paths gone, old stories forgotten
Gold flecks turned to dust in sunbeams

But never were we wholly ridden
They found a new path, slipped aside
And from places they've lately been hidden
Called to arms, they're now ready to ride
To take back built up city and skyline
Cast shadows down snicket and street
At dawn, falling dusk and in starlight
Glance sideways, you'll glimpse in your dreams

So now that you hear our intention
Draw near, step inside, take a seat

And if you're inclined, come to listen
Feel the scratch of their breath as we speak
Come twist all your thoughts to our story
The unhidden do call us to come
'Hear the tune and strike up the fiddle
We'll dance on to the beat of the drum'

Adapted from Chaucer's *The Wife of Bath* and bookended with lines inspired by the traditional 'Calling on Song', a tune to which the words can be sung.