

April 6, 2020

Hello, Everyone. I hope you are all feeling well and staying safe during this challenging time. Although we must be socially isolated right now, what can really help to lift our spirits is the arrival of spring. The new green leaves and colorful pink and white blossoms decking the trees, and the green shoots and perennial flowers poking out of the earth are enacting before our eyes the cycle of nature and the miracle of rebirth. What better symbol can there be for hope? May this beautiful season uplift our spirits.

Today I am happy to share with you two of the most beloved classic English poems about spring. Enjoy!

### **"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by William Wordsworth**

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

*(Commentary on next page)*

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:*

**"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud"** (also commonly known as "**Daffodils**") is a lyric poem by William Wordsworth (1770-1850). A classic of English Romantic poetry, the poem is Wordsworth's best-known work. Written some time between 1804 and 1807 (in 1804 by Wordsworth's own account), it was first published in 1807 in *Poems, in Two Volumes*, and a revised version (*printed here*) was published in 1815.

## **Background**

At the time he wrote the poem, Wordsworth was living with his wife, Mary Hutchinson, and sister Dorothy at Town End, in Grasmere in the Lake District. The inspiration for the poem came from a walk Wordsworth took with his sister Dorothy on April 15, 1802, around Glencoyne Bay, Ullswater, in the Lake District of England. He would draw on this to compose "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" in 1804, inspired by Dorothy's journal entry describing the walk:



Ullswater in the English Lake District. *Ullswater from Gobarrow Park*, J.M.W. Turner, watercolor, 1819

"When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side, we fancied that the lake had floated the seed ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up – But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful they grew among the mossy stones about and about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the Lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway – We rested again and again. "

—*Dorothy Wordsworth, The Grasmere Journal, Thursday, 15 April 1802*