**I wandered lonely as a cloud”**

**Summary**

The speaker says that, wandering like a cloud floating above hills and valleys, he encountered a field of daffodils beside a lake. The dancing, fluttering flowers stretched endlessly along the shore, and though the waves of the lake danced beside the flowers, the daffodils outdid the water in glee. The speaker says that a poet could not help but be happy in such a joyful company of flowers. He says that he stared and stared, but did not realize what wealth the scene would bring him. For now, whenever he feels “vacant” or “pensive,” the memory flashes upon “that inward eye / That is the bliss of solitude,” and his heart fills with pleasure, “and dances with the daffodils.”

Form

The four six-line stanzas of this poem follow a quatrain-couplet rhyme scheme: ABABCC.

**Commentary**

This simple poem, one of the loveliest and most famous in the Wordsworth canon, revisits the familiar subjects of nature and memory, this time with a particularly (simple) spare, musical eloquence. The plot is extremely simple, depicting the poet’s wandering and his discovery of a field of daffodils by a lake, the memory of which pleases him and comforts him when he is lonely, bored, or restless. The characterization of the sudden occurrence of a memory—the daffodils “flash upon the inward eye / Which is the bliss of solitude”—is psychologically acute, but the poem’s main brilliance lies in the reverse personification of its early stanzas. The speaker is metaphorically compared to a natural object, a cloud—“I wandered lonely as a cloud / That floats on high...”, and the daffodils are continually personified as human beings, dancing and “tossing their heads “in “a crowd, a host.” This technique implies an inherent unity between man and nature, making it one of Wordsworth’s most basic and effective methods for instilling in the reader the feeling the poet so often describes himself as experiencing.