

Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 110 Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
 Or like a man from some far region sent,
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

17

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills;
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
 115 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
 —Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 “How is it that you live, and what is it you do?”

18

He with a smile did then his words repeat;
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools where they abide.
 “Once I could meet with them on every side;
 125 But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

19

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me:
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 130 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

20

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 135 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
 But stately in the main; and when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 “God,” said I, “be my help and stay⁷ secure;
 140 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!”

May 3–July 4, 1802

1807

I wandered lonely as a cloud¹

I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,

7. Support (a noun).

1. For the original experience, two years earlier,

see Dorothy Wordsworth's *Grasmere Journals*,
 April 15, 1802 (p. 396).

5 A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

10 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.

15 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;

20 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.

1804

My heart leaps up

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;

5 So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.¹

Mar. 26, 1802

1807

Ode: Intimations of Immortality In 1843 Wordsworth said about this *Ode* to Isabella Fenwick:

This was composed during my residence at Town End, Grasmere; two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but

1. Perhaps as distinguished from piety based on the Bible, in which the rainbow is the token of God's promise to Noah and his descendants never again to send a flood to destroy the earth.