

## Lily in the Wilderness

As an everlasting theme among poets and scholars, lily has been known as The Fairy of Charming Gown. Yan Chen, a Song dynasty poet, once wrote the following tribute to lily,

*Mountain Flowers Enlightened by the Sunset,  
Diffusing fragrances, Albeit short of Nurturing.  
With A Gentle Breeze from the Forest Tip,  
The Scent of the Lily is Blown around the World!*

There are numerous lily species, ranging from about a foot to towering 6 feet tall. Their petals vary from oval shape to slender contour, some are single stem while others are multiple! Some flowers upturn gazing the sky, yet some droop towards the ground. Among the 120 odd species that have been identified, every single one of them is elegant and noble, bearing sparkling and graceful flowers, with verdant leaves. Their stems are upright and undiluted, with flowers of abundant hues. There is the white Easter Lily normally seen around Easter. There are the yellow Bell Lily (*Lilium Euxathum*), the Sacred Blue Lily, the red Pine Lily (*lilium catesbaei*), and the spotted-petal Tiger Lily (*Lilium lancifolium*), etc. The most enchanted one would undeniably be the black pearl lily, with dark purple petals, gleaming leaves and buttery shade core. At just one glance, you would have to stop and stay!

In addition to being elegant, lily is also sweet smelling (though there are scentless species)! No wonder we heard couplet like

*“Deep in the Night, House Saturated with Aroma,  
Appearing to be Awakened from Drunk!”*

Once, I passed by a lily bouquet in a shadowed room, I was attracted to its lush smell instantly. I was intoxicated by that aroma for a good few minutes, reviving my mind and soul! Another time I sensed traces of fragrances while walking in the rural area. Passing by a babbling brook and a shallow shoal, with sparse saplings and dense weeds or thorns around, I spotted a cobalt blossom in the distance. The closer I got, the more intense was the fragrance. I finally caught a glimpse of over 100 tall lilies after a turn of the path. Pastel blue, joined up with pale purple and matched with golden stamen, you will just get inebriated without the breezes, the music and even the delightful bird songs! These wild lilies just stood there without being humble or overbearing, asking people to enjoy and appreciate them. You only needed to experience one episode to have this unforgettable feeling of being fully blessed.

Paul talked about “the pleasing aroma” in 2 Corinthians 2:15, which might be the aroma of sacrifice to God. Yet the aroma in 2:14 might be the scent of sweet balm. Though unable to confirm, we might still try to relate it to the sweet fragrance of the lily. In any case, when we get among people, would people be able to experience this sensation of being amidst the lily bush? Though there are thorns around, people can still get revived. When we get among our fellow brothers and sisters, would they feel like amid blooming lilies, yearning for elegance and purity with this drowning fragrance!

*“(He is) The Lily of the Valley and in Him alone I See,  
All I Need to Cleanse and Make me Fully Whole.  
In Sorrow He's my Comfort, in Trouble He's my Stay,  
He Tells me Every Care on Him to Roll...”*

May our lives carry the fragrance of the Lord always, as the lily of the valley!

### 野地百合

素有「雲裳仙子」之稱的百合花是千百年來詩人學者當用的題材。陳岩就曾以詩稱頌百合：「幾許山花照夕陽，不栽不植自芬芳。林梢一點風微起，吹作人間百合香。」

百合花的種類繁多，有的只高尺許，也有長至六尺的。百合花瓣有的呈橢圓狀，有的則是細而且長，有單莖的，也有多莖的，有花開朝天的，也有低垂向地的。今天，已知的百合品種超過 120 種。但無論那一品種，都是花形典雅高貴，花朵晶瑩雅致，葉子青翠娟秀，莖幹亭亭玉立又落落大方。百合花的顏色也多不勝數。有在復活節時最常見白色的麝香百合 (Easter Lily)，有黃色的鐘花百合 (Lilium Euxathum)，有藍色的尼羅百合 (Sacred Blue Lily)，有紅色的松樹百合 (Lilium Catesbaei)，也有花瓣有斑點的老虎百合 (Tiger Lily, Lilium lancifolium) 等。而最幻麗的莫過於黑色的黑珍珠百合，紫黑色的花瓣，油綠的葉子，暗黃的花蕊。只一眼望去就足以吸引你停下來，不願離開。

百合花不但雅致，更是蘊含醉人的香氣 (雖然有些品種並無氣味)，以致詩人以「夜深香滿屋，疑是酒醒時」。有一次，我在一處幽暗的房間無意間經過一束百合，就被它那濃烈的花香吸引住了。那香氣，讓我沉醉了二刻鐘，心靈復甦不少。曾遇過這景象：在郊野的路上走，有一陣的、淡淡的香氣傳來，沿路走去，只見淺溪流水，旁邊淺灘，樹木稀疏，雜草叢生，偶有荊棘，遠處隱隱見一花卉，呈淺藍色。走近時，香氣漸濃，走過一灣，只見一地上百株盛開的高身百合展現眼前。淺淺的藍，配上淡淡的紫，插上鮮黃的花蕊，令人神往陶醉。這環境，和風是不需要的，音樂是多餘的，就連小鳥美妙歌聲也不必要了。這一地的野百合，只寧靜地站着，不卑不亢，讓人仔細的欣賞，盡情的享受。只要身在其中只一次，就足以令任何人感到祝福滿滿，一生難忘。

保羅在哥林多後書 2.15 中論及的“馨香之氣”想是獻祭物與神的香氣。但在 2.14 中的“香氣”則可指香膏之芬香。雖則不能肯定，但以百合花的芬香作理解也未必不可。總意是當我們走進人群之中，是否能帶給他人身在百合叢中的感受，縱然有荊棘，也能讓人身心復甦；當人走進我們這信徒群體之中，是否好像被盛開的百合花所包圍，令人嚮往的純潔高雅，叫人迷醉的芬芳馥郁！

「恩主是谷中百合花，我唯一需要祂，祂能洗淨我，使我聖潔無瑕。悲傷時祂來解憂，患難時祂保佑，一切憂慮全放在主肩頭...」

願你我生命，好像谷中百合，常帶着恩主的香氣。