

WISE AND OTHERWISE

By Kent A. Stock



The Great Debate

No this is not about Lincoln vs. Douglas, Nixon vs. Kennedy or Coke vs. Pepsi; this debate is about the pretty, early blooming yellow flowers that show up early each spring. There are at least four names you can call them you know. One is always wrong, one is always right, and the other two are interchangeable depending on your mood or preference.

The technically correct term is Narcissus as that is the family to which most of the others belong. It is a big family with lots of kids so it is understandable how you get names confused. However, most people save the Narcissus designation for the white flowers which are also known as paperwhites.

Then you get into the yellow or yellow/white varieties, the most common term here and the one you hear used frequently is daffodil. These are the yellow or white flowers with the trumpet shape. You can call a paperwhite a daffodil if you so desire. It is much easier calling it a daffodil than Narcissus pseudonarcissus. Daffodil just rolls off the tongue a wee bit easier.

Then you have the jonquils, the yellow sheep of the family. There are actually jonquils that are jonquils and they look pretty much the same as their daffodil sisters. However, the term jonquil is regionally popular for all daffodils and is acceptable if not technically correct except if you have the one type of nar-

cissus that is really a jonquil. I am from a family that uses the term jonquil and we will fight you over it. Have you not heard of the Great Jonquil vs. Daffodil battles of the last century? Google it!

There are heathens out there that call these narcissus-daffodiljonquil flowers buttercups. I am shaking my head because a buttercup is a different flower entirely. They are not from the same family as the others but are pretty yellow or white they just aren't Narcissi.

To sum things up, a narcissus can be a daffodil or a jonquil. A daffodil is actually a narcissus as is a jonquil. A jonquil is actually a jonquil but can be a daffodil, too, according to your preference and a jonquil is always a narcissus.

A buttercup is NEVER any of the above so buttercups quit calling the real ones buttercups as a buttercup is in another family of its own. Sort of like the Hatfields vs. the McCoy's if they had been flowers instead of moonshining hillbillies.

There is your spring class in Botany be it wise or otherwise.

Holding It All Together

by Amy McCollom



Spring: Out With The Old, In With The New

Spring means renewal, fresh awakening, new life. I think of baby birds, and squirrels, and bunnies, and goslings exploring the world for the first time. Each day learning something new. It can be an awakening time, a learning time for us too, if we let it. Maybe spring (Mother Nature, if you will) by its very essence teaches us all, "this too shall pass" as well as many other lessons.

Spring is the time of colorful Easter dresses, sleeveless lace frocks, pastel plaid shorts for young fellows, and white sandals for girls. Who ever decided those skimpy thin dresses were great Spring attire surely didn't live north of St. Louis. Here in Central Illinois, March and April can range in temperature from 20 degrees to 80 degrees. I can't tell you the number of times I just about froze on Easter Sunday. Sometimes it even snowed on Easter. Once there was even an ice storm.

When I was a kid, I didn't have much meat on my bones anyway, but put me in a thin cotton sundress with flutter sleeves on a 50 degree day and I'm sure the preacher heard my knees knocking all the way to the platform.

Then after service, we all had to go out behind the

church for an egg hunt. The grass had been mowed the day before, and was still damp with dew. I'm sure the adults didn't think this through; I was a kid and knew this was a really bad idea. I had seen what damp grass did to my dad's socks and shoes when he mowed the yard on Saturday morning. 14 little girls in white sandals and bare legs and 12 little boys in plaid shorts and white tennis shoes lined up at the edge of the grass. On the word GO the stampede began. I took a step back and just watched for a minute as kids screamed, fought over plastic eggs, and some slipped in the wet grass and fell on their bellies.

One of the Sunday School teachers saw me standing there and pretty much forced me to join the other kids in the chaotic egg-hunting frenzy. I reluctantly stepped into the wet grass and walked around a little. Some of the cut grass was sticking to the tops of my feet and getting in between my toes, which felt gross. I found a couple of eggs, but I was shivering so much from the cold that I could barely put them in my basket.

I walked around the corner of the church where the adults couldn't see me, and I stood in the sun, and it felt wonderful! I turned around to let it warm my back, and as I stood there, I noticed something shiny on the ground next to the church building. Walking closer, I saw that it was an Easter egg, only not pastel like the others. This one was gold. I quickly snatched it up and put it in my basket, as I knew this was the Grand Prize egg. But, afraid one of the other kids would try and take it from me, I gathered handfuls of loose grass and filled my basket, covering the eggs.

I was so glad when the teacher blew the whistle and called time. My hands were aching they were so cold, and I tried to wrap the bottom of my dress around them to get them to stop hurting, but my sister frowned at me, and smacked me on the head, and whispered gruffly, "Put your dress down, Dork!"

There were 3 golden eggs, and inside each egg was a number 1, 2, or 3. There were 3 grand prizes to go along with the golden eggs; there was a kite, a green Frisbee, and a purple Original Duncan yo yo. I was really, really wanting the yo yo. I had a kite like that one before, and the plastic tore after the first time I flew it. I already had a Frisbee and no one ever wanted to play with me. You can't play Frisbee by yourself; I had tried, and you get too tired doing all of that running. So the yo yo looked really fun AND purple was one of my favorite colors. I said a little prayer, reminding God of all the good things that

I had done lately, in case he had forgot.

The 3 of us who found golden eggs were called to the front, and a teacher opened each egg; they were taped shut with lots of tape so she had to use a knife to cut them open. The first kid had a number 2 in his egg, so he got 2nd pick. The second kid handed his egg over to be opened, and he had a number 1 in his egg. My heart sank, as I knew I had a number 3 in mine, and probably little chance to get the yo yo. Still the teacher opened my egg and handed me the slip of paper with a number 3 on it.

By this time, the scene resembled a Price Is Right bidding war; the group of kids watching were all shouting out what the first kid should pick as his prize. "Pick the yo yo!" "Get the kite! You can come to my house!" "Take the Frisbee!" "Frisbee! Frisbee!" And the first kid chose the Frisbee. Whew.

The second kid walked up to the prize table and was taking longer mulling it over, as the crowd continued shouting. "Kite! Kite! Kite!" "Yo yo! Yo yo! Yo yo!" "Kite!" "Yo yo!"

He picked up the yo yo in his hands and started to turn around, but then quickly put it down and grabbed the kite and went back to his seat. Jubilation! I was going to get the yo yo!

I walked proudly up to the prize table, laid my number 3 paper down, and took hold of my new Sparkle Purple Original Duncan Yo Yo. Now with faster ball bearings! I was smiling ear to ear, and I don't remember being cold any more. The sun must have come from behind a cloud because my head and face got really warm.

When we got home, my sister still thought I was a dork, but it didn't matter so much. My dad taught me how to tie the finger loop in the yo yo string, and how to do a couple of tricks. Turns out, my dad was pretty good at it back in his day. As much as he liked to test mine out, I was hoping he would buy one for himself.

So what did that Spring teach me?

Dress appropriately for the weather.

White sandals get dirty too easy, opt for brown ones.

Always have a sweater or jacket with you.

It's best to leave Easter Egg Hunts to the professionals.

When giving out prizes for equal merit, give the same prize.

Dads are just little boys trapped in a man's body.

Your sister may always think you are a dork, but if you play your cards right, you just might have your own column someday and get to shame her publicly. Who's the dork now, Tammy?

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