



February 2026 Come Singing newsletter

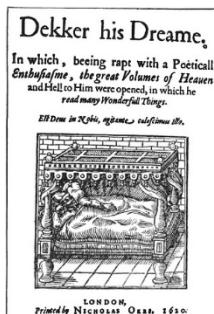
Dear Everyone,

After the excitement of beginning another New Year, and all the opportunities it brings (even seeing snow again for some of us!) we are settling into the second month of 2026. February can make us feel a bit gloomy; winter continues and it is still cold with less daylight. At least it's a short month!

Last month's Keyhole mentioned the fascinating subject of hibernation and made me think of the benefits and solaces of our own sleep. Many of us share a reluctance to leave our warm and cosy beds on a chilly and gloomy morning!

We spend about one third of our lives asleep and sleep is necessary for our bodies to work at their best. To live and function at our optimum we need three things; food (which includes water), sleep and exercise. It all sounds so simple! "Sleep is essential for growth, heart health, weight management, boosting our immune systems, memory and learning."

This has been recognised for a long time. Thomas Dekker (1572 – 1632) wrote this about sleep: "Sleep is that golden chain that ties health and our bodies together" [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Dekker_\(writer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Dekker_(writer))



Occasionally we all experience difficulty in going to sleep. Roger McGough's poem "Catching up on sleep" seems to express this wittily and very well.

i go to bed early
to catch up on my sleep
but my sleep
is a slippery customer
it bobs and weaves
and leaves
me exhausted. It
side steps my clumsy tackles.
with ease. Bed
ragged I drag
myself to my knees.

The sheep are countless
I pretend to snore
yearn for chloroform
or a sock on the jaw
body sweats heart beats
there is Panic in the Sheets
until
as dawn slopes up the stairs
to set me free
unawares
sleep catches up on me.

Of course, the actual amount of sleep needed to maintain health is a very individual thing and varies from day to day depending on the circumstances. A general guide for most of us is for about eight hours sleep a night, although babies require the most sleep. The lullaby is designed for their benefit.

Traditional lullaby Golden Slumbers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxjyLx1N2jU>

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes
Smiles await you when you rise.
Sleep, Pretty baby, Do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.
Cares you know not, Therefore sleep,
While over you a watch I'll keep.
Sleep, Pretty darling, Do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.

To sleep well a bedtime routine is helpful. Some people find a glass of warm milk or gentle heat from a hot water bottle or electric blanket useful.

Bedrooms should be mildly warm and darkened. Your ritual might include some bedtime reading or counting sheep, but ideally not looking at the blue light from a TV or I phone which can be too stimulating.

We wish someone a “good night” because that is exactly how we would wish them to sleep!

Goodnight Sweetheart by Al Bowly https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWexuHVh9W8&list=RDTWexuHVh9W8&start_radio=1

Goodnight Irene by Nat King Cole https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iz3iDUFCXuA&list=RDlz3iDUFCXuA&start_radio=1

Research has shown that sleep follows a pattern. At first light sleep, then a deep, restorative phase, then Rapid Eye Movement sleep or REM during which we dream, and our bodies are temporarily paralysed so we can't harm ourselves. This whole cycle takes about 90 minutes and is repeated several times during the night.

The dreams we may remember at night are mental images and stories created by our brains during the process of clearing and working through events of the day. They are unique to each person. Day dreaming is absent-mindedly thinking or fantasising while awake.

Shakespeare famously wrote “We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep.”

Much is still to be discovered, but we know sleep helps to restore and repair our bodies and gives our brains the opportunity to clear and process events of the day. Hence the origin of “beauty sleep”!

The Sleeping Beauty waltz by Tchaikovsky <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2q4aCMEaja4>

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MUSIC QUIZ All these songs have the word “dream” in them. Can you identify them?

1. This was a hit in 1955 for Alma Cogan and mentioned a “boat”?
2. “I can make you mine, taste your lips of wine” A song sung by two brothers.
3. Where will Doris Day see the man she loves?
4. What event is Bing Crosby dreaming about?
5. “Stars shining bright above you” sang the Mamas and Papas in this song.
6. In this very old and well known song, who did John McCormakd dream of? She had light brown hair!
7. Who was asked to “bring me a dream” in this 1950s song?
8. The lyrics of this song are “Cheer up sleepy Jean, oh what can it mean?”
9. Who is “dreaming ‘bout my bundle of joy” in this song?
10. From the film Singing in the Rain, what did she do “the whole day through?”

Petula Clark has been in the news lately because at 93 she has been celebrating her 85-year career in the entertainment industry!!



Born in Surrey in 1932 she was brought up in South Wales and first broadcast on radio at the young age of nine. Her early singing was to entertain the troops during the war and she was called “Britain’s Shirley Temple.” She toured

Britain extensively during this period. It wasn't long before she was "discovered" and began to appear in films and on the stage. Petula Clark was becoming a well-known entertainer.

By the late '40s she was established in her singing career and had even appeared in her own regular television programme. Recordings followed and her first release in 1947 was

Put your shoes on Lucy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnL-0Y8M6ew&list=RDwnL-0Y8M6ew&start_radio=1

Pet's career continued its success in the 1950s with several major hits in the UK. Around this time, she began recording internationally with French, German, Italian and Spanish hits and even wrote music for films.

Perhaps her greatest record was "Downtown" in the '60s which became an international best seller and opened up her career in America. She married Claude Wolff who helped to further her success and to whom she was married for over sixty years.

All through the following decades Petula Clark continued to consolidate her fame in music, film, stage and television, making live appearances as well as recordings and earning critical acclaim.

She lives in Switzerland and published her autobiography “Is that you Petula?” last year.

Quiz: How well do you know Petula Clark's hits?

10. In one of her earliest recordings Lucy didn't know where she was or that she was a "big girl now". What is the song called?

Everybody recognises a molehill but few of us will have seen a mole. They are busy digging their underground chambers most of the year round. Although the mole is not popular with gardeners it does help to aerate soil and eats pests such as slugs and insects that attack plant roots. The piles of soil they dig up can safely be removed and used again and they can be controlled humanely.



The old name for a mole was a mouldywarp meaning one who throws soil. The mole's short powerful forelimbs are perfectly adapted for digging as they have six digits which include an extra thumb. Their eyes and ears are tiny but the large pink nose is also helpful in digging their network of underground tunnels.

I am a mole and I live in a hole.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTvpKkIdPIs>

Another interesting feature of moles is their velvety pelt or skin which helps them move easily in the soil.

The famous book for children "The Wind in the Willows" by Kenneth Graham (first published 1908) tells the story of Mole, Ratty and Badger and their adventures with Mr Toad. Moley is described as thoughtful, timid, genial and independent.

"[The little gentleman in the black velvet waistcoat](#)" is a Jacobite toast to a **mole**, that inadvertently caused the death of [King William III](#) (William of Orange) in 1702 after his horse stumbled on a [molehill](#), leading to a fatal fall. Jacobites, supporters of the deposed Stuart monarchy, used this phrase to honour the tiny creature that led to the downfall of their rival, turning a tragic accident into a symbol of their cause.

And so, we wish you good sleep, sweet dreams, long life, songs to sing and problems which are never bigger than molehills!

We love hearing your news, so if there's anything you'd like to share in the newsletter, do please let us know. We look forward to seeing you soon at singing...

With best wishes and love from all at Come Singing

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Answers to music quiz.

- 1 Dreamboat Alma Cogan https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHtLPjKnrYs&list=RDpHtLPjKnrYs&start_radio=1
- 2 All I have to do is dream Everly Brothers
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ki-W-TdJ0Uw&list=RDKi-W-TdJ0Uw&start_radio=1
- 3 I'll see you in my dreams Doris Day https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0H3oa-T8gQg&list=RD0H3oa-T8gQg&start_radio=1
- 4 I'm dreaming of a white Christmas https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3ZC45Q82pg&list=RD_3ZC45Q82pg&start_radio=1
- 5 Dream a little dream of me https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJwjLYRPxJY&list=RDfJwjLYRPxJY&start_radio=1
- 6 I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKPXkVf5zdl&list=RDeKPXkVf5zdl&start_radio=1
- 7 Mr Sandman bring me a dream https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNUGsbKisp8&list=RDVNUGsbKisp8&start_radio=1
- 8 Day dream believer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvqeSJlgaNk&list=RDxvqeSJlgaNk&start_radio=1
- 9 What a day for a daydream https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgifEMvUwWs&list=RDHgifEMvUwWs&start_radio=1
- 10 All I do the whole day through is dream of you https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=all+i+do+the+whole+day+through+is+dream+of+you

Petula Clark quiz answers

I know a place https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7MKaq-MQ4g&list=RDu7MKaq-MQ4g&start_radio=1

Music, music, music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYxXQvesPyY>

The Little Shoemaker

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O50ZH9LWFw&list=RDO50ZH9LWFw&start_radio=1

Downtown

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_m4Qb0iW-o&list=RDz_m4Qb0iW-o&start_radio=1

Don't sleep in the subway

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRY6I2RIUmo&list=RDCRY6I2RIUmo&start_radio=1

6. They're changing guard at Buckingham Palace https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etwkqrKIMkA&list=RDetwkqrKIMkA&start_radio=1

7. I couldn't live without your love

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWTun8B1IHg&list=RDYWTun8B1IHg&start_radio=1

8. Call me

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UNdwWavzVc0&list=RDUNdwWavzVc0&start_radio=1

9. My Love is....

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFXZIXMB5r4&list=RDpFXZIXMB5r4&start_radio=1

10. Put your shoes on Lucy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnL-0Y8M6ew&list=RDwnL-0Y8M6ew&start_radio=1