

He most honors my style who learns under it to destroy
the teacher.

The boy I love, the same becomes a man not through
derived power, but in his own right,
Wicked rather than virtuous out of conformity or fear,
Fond of his sweetheart, relishing well his steak,
Unrequited love or a slight cutting him worse than sharp
steel cuts,

First-rate to ride, to fight, to hit the bull's eye, to sail a
skiff, to sing a song or play on the banjo,
Preferring scars and the beard and faces pitted with
small-pox over all latherers,
And those well-tann'd to those that keep out of the sun.

I teach straying from me, yet who can stray from me?
I follow you whoever you are from the present hour,
My words itch at your ears till you understand them.

I do not say these things for a dollar or to fill up the time
while I wait for a boat,
(It is you talking just as much as myself, I act as the
tongue of you,
Tied in your mouth, in mine it begins to be loosen'd.)

I swear I will never again mention love or death inside a
house,
And I swear I will never translate myself at all, only to him
or her who privately stays with me in the open air.

If you would understand me go to the heights or water-
shore,
The nearest gnat is an explanation, and a drop or motion
of waves a key,
The maul, the oar, the hand-saw, second my words.

No shutter'd room or school can commune with me,
But roughs and little children better than they.

The young mechanic is closest to me, he knows me well,
The woodman that takes his axe and jug with him shall
take me with him all day,

The farm-boy ploughing in the field feels good at the
sound of my voice,
In vessels that sail my words sail, I go with fishermen
and seamen and love them.

The soldier camp'd or upon the march is mine,
On the night ere the pending battle many seek me, and I
do not fail them,
On that solemn night (it may be their last) those that know
me seek me.
My face rubs to the hunter's face when he lies down alone
in his blanket,
The driver thinking of me does not mind the jolt of his
wagon,
The young mother and old mother comprehend me,
The girl and the wife rest the needle a moment and forget
where they are,
They and all would resume what I have told them.

48

I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
And I have said that the body is not more than the soul,
And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's-
self is,
And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to
his own funeral drest in his shroud,
And I or you pocketless of a dime may purchase the pick
of the earth,
And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its pod con-
founds the learning of all times,
And there is no trade or employment but the young man
following it may become a hero,
And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for the
wheel'd universe,
And I say to any man or woman, Let your soul stand
cool and composed before a million universes.
And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,
For I who am curious about each am not curious about
God,
(No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about
God and about death.)

I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand
 God not in the least,
 Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful
 than myself.

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
 I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four,
 and each moment then,
 In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own
 face in the glass,
 I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one
 is sign'd by God's name,
 And I leave them where they are, for I know that where-
 soe'er I go,
 Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

49

And as to you Death, and you bitter hug of mortality, it
 is idle to try to alarm me.

To his work without flinching the accoucheur comes,
 I see the elder-hand pressing receiving supporting,
 I recline by the sills of the exquisite flexible doors,
 And mark the outlet, and mark the relief and escape.

And as to you Corpse I think you are good manure, but
 that does not offend me,
 I smell the white roses sweet-scented and growing,
 I reach to the leafy lips, I reach to the polish'd breasts of
 melons.

And as to you Life I reckon you are the leavings of many
 deaths,
 (No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times
 before.)

I hear you whispering there O stars of heaven,
 O suns—O grass of graves—O perpetual transfers and
 promotions,

If you do not say anything how can I say anything?

Of the turbid pool that lies in the autumn forest,

Of the moon that descends the steeps of the soughing
 twilight,
 Toss, sparkles of day and dusk—toss on the black stems that
 decay in the muck,
 Toss to the moaning gibberish of the dry limbs.

I ascend from the moon, I ascend from the night,
 I perceive that the ghastly glimmer is noonday sunbeams
 reflected,
 And debouch to the steady and central from the offspring
 great or small.

50

There is that in me—I do not know what it is—but I know
 it is in me.

Wrench'd and sweaty—calm and cool then my body
 becomes,
 I sleep—I sleep long.

I do not know it—it is without name—it is a word unsaid,
 It is not in any dictionary, utterance, symbol.

Something it swings on more than the earth I swing on,
 To it the creation is the friend whose embracing awakes me.
 Perhaps I might tell more. Outlines! I plead for my
 brothers and sisters.

Do you see O my brothers and sisters?
 It is not chaos or death—it is form, union, plan—it is
 eternal life—it is Happiness.

51

The past and present wilt—I have fill'd them, emptied
 them.

And proceed to fill my next fold of the future.

Listener up there! what have you to confide to me?
 Look in my face while I snuff the sidle of evening,
 (Talk honestly, no one else hears you, and I stay **only**
 a minute longer.)

Do I contradict myself?
 Very well then I contradict myself,
 (I am large, I contain multitudes.)

I concentrate toward them that are nigh, I wait on the
door-slab.

Who has done his day's work ? who will soonest be through
with his supper ?

Who wishes to walk with me ?

Will you speak before I am gone ? will you prove already
too late ?

52

The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains
of my gab and my loitering.

I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.

The last scud of day holds back for me,
It flings my likeness after the rest and true as any on the
shadow'd wilds,
It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk.

I depart as air, I shake my white locks at the runaway sun,
I effuse my flesh in eddies, and drift it in lacy jags.

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,
If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,
And filter and fibre your blood.

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,
Missing me one place search another,
I stop somewhere waiting for you.

CHILDREN OF ADAM

TO THE GARDEN THE WORLD

To the garden the world anew ascending,
Potent mates, daughters, sons, preluding,
The love, the life of their bodies, meaning and being,
Curious here behold my resurrection after slumber,
The revolving cycles in their wide sweep having brought
me again,

Amorous, mature, all beautiful to me, all wondrous,
My limbs and the quivering fire that ever plays through
them, for reasons, most wondrous,
Existing I peer and penetrate still,
Content with the present, content with the past,
By my side or back of me Eve following,
Or in front, and I following her just the same.

FROM PENT-UP ACHING RIVERS

FROM pent-up aching rivers,
From that of myself without which I were nothing,
From what I am determin'd to make illustrious, even if I
stand sole among men,
From my own voice resonant, singing the phallus,
Singing the song of procreation.
Singing the need of superb children and therein superb
grown people,
Singing the muscular urge and the blending,
Singing the bedfellow's song, (O resistless yearning !
O for any and each the body correlative attracting !
O for you whoever you are your correlative body ! O it,
more than all else, you delighting !)

From the hungry gnaw that eats me night and day,
From native moments, from bashful pains, singing them,

Seeking something yet unfound though I have diligently
sought it many a long year,
Singing the true song of the soul fitful at random,
Renascent with grossest Nature or among animals,
Of that, of them and what goes with them my poems
informing,
Of the smell of apples and lemons, of the pairing of birds,
Of the wet of woods, of the lapping of waves,
Of the mad pushes of waves upon the land, I them chanting,
The overture lightly sounding, the strain anticipating,
The welcome nearness, the sight of the perfect body,
The swimmer swimming naked in the bath, or motionless
on his back lying and floating,
The female form approaching, I pensive, love-flesh tremu-
lous aching,
The divine list for myself or you or for any one making,
The face, the limbs, the index from head to foot, and
what it arouses,
The mystic deliria, the madness amorous, the utter
abandonment,
(Hark close and still what I now whisper to you,
I love you, O you entirely possess me,
O that you and I escape from the rest and go utterly off,
free and lawless,
Two hawks in the air, two fishes swimming in the sea
not more lawless than we ;)
The furious storm through me careering, I passionately
trembling,
The oath of the inseparableness of two together, of the
woman that loves me and whom I love more than my
life, that oath swearing,
(O I willingly stake all for you,
O let me be lost if it must be so !
O you and I ! what is it to us what the rest do or think ?
What is all else to us ? only that we enjoy each other and
exhaust each other if it must be so ;)
From the master, the pilot I yield the vessel to,
The general commanding me, commanding all, from him
permission taking,
From time the programme hastening, (I have loiter'd too
long as it is,)
From sex, from the warp and from the woof,
From privacy, from frequent repinings alone,

From plenty of persons near and yet the right person not
near,
From the soft sliding of hands over me and thrusting of
fingers through my hair and beard,
From the long sustain'd kiss upon the mouth or bosom,
From the close pressure that makes me or any man drunk,
fainting with excess,
From what the divine husband knows, from the work of
fatherhood,
From exultation, victory and relief, from the bedfellow's
embrace in the night,
From the act-poems of eyes, hands, hips and bosoms,
From the cling of the trembling arm,
From the bending curve and the clinch,
From side by side the pliant coverlet off-throwing,
From the one so unwilling to have me leave, and me just
as unwilling to leave,
(Yet a moment O tender waiter, and I return,)
From the hour of shining stars and dropping dews,
From the night a moment I emerging flitting out,
Celebrate you act divine and you children prepared for,
And you stalwart loins.

I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC

1

I SING the body electric,
The armies of those I love engirth me and I engirth
them,
They will not let me off till I go with them, respond to
them,
And dis corrupt them, and charge them full with the charge
of the soul.

Was it doubted that those who corrupt their own bodies
conceal themselves ?
And if those who defile the living are as bad as they who
defile the dead ?
And if the body does not do fully as much as the
soul ?
And if the body were not the soul, what is the soul ?

2

The love of the body of man or woman balks account,
the body itself balks account,
That of the male is perfect, and that of the female is
perfect.

The expression of the face balks account,
But the expression of a well-made man appears not only in
his face,
It is in his limbs and joints also, it is curiously in the
joints of his hips and wrists,
It is in his walk, the carriage of his neck, the flex of his waist
and knees, dress does not hide him,
The strong sweet quality he has strikes through the cotton
and broadcloth,
To see him pass conveys as much as the best poem, perhaps
more,
You linger to see his back, and the back of his neck and
shoulder-side.

The sprawl and fulness of babes, the bosoms and heads of
women, the folds of their dress, their style as we pass
in the street, the contour of their shape downwards,
The swimmer naked in the swimming-bath, seen as he
swims through the transparent green-shine, or lies
with his face up and rolls silently to and fro in the heave
of the water,
The bending forward and backward of rowers in row-boats,
the horseman in his saddle,
Girls, mothers, house-keepers, in all their performances,
The group of laborers seated at noon-time with their open
dinner-kettles, and their wives waiting,
The female soothing a child, the farmer's daughter in the
garden or cow-yard,
The young fellow hoeing corn, the sleigh-driver driving his
six horses through the crowd,
The wrestle of wrestlers, two apprentice-boys, quite grown,
lusty, good-natured, native-born, out on the vacant
lot at sundown after work,
The coats and caps thrown down, the embrace of love and
resistance,
The upper-hold and under-hold, the hair rumpled over
and blinding the eyes ;

The march of firemen in their own costumes, the play of
masculine muscle through clean-setting trowsers and
waist-straps,
The slow return from the fire, the pause when the bell
strikes suddenly again, and the listening on the alert,
The natural, perfect, varied attitudes, the bent head,
the curv'd neck and the counting ;
Such-like I love—I loosen myself, pass freely, am at the
mother's breast with the little child,
Swim with the swimmers, wrestle with wrestlers, march
in line with the firemen, and pause, listen, count.

3

I knew a man, a common farmer, the father of five sons,
And in them the fathers of sons, and in them the fathers of
sons.
This man was of wonderful vigor, calmness, beauty of person,
The shape of his head, the pale yellow and white of his hair
and beard, the immeasurable meaning of his black
eyes, the richness and breadth of his manners,
These I used to go and visit him to see, he was wise also,
He was six feet tall, he was over eighty years old, his sons
were massive, clean, bearded, tan-faced, handsome,
They and his daughters loved him, all who saw him loved
him,
They did not love him by allowance, they loved him with
personal love,
He drank water only, the blood show'd like scarlet through
the clear-brown skin of his face,
He was a frequent gunner and fisher, he sail'd his boat
himself, he had a fine one presented to him by a ship-
joiner, he had fowling-pieces presented to him by men
that loved him,
When he went with his five sons and many grandsons to
hunt or fish, you would pick him out as the most
beautiful and vigorous of the gang,
You would wish long and long to be with him, you would
wish to sit by him in the boat that you and he might
touch each other.

4

I have perceiv'd that to be with those I like is enough,
To stop in company with the rest at evening is enough,

To be surrounded by beautiful, curious, breathing,
 laughing flesh is enough,
 To pass among them or touch any one, or rest my arm ever
 so lightly round his or her neck for a moment, what
 is this then?
 I do not ask any more delight, I swim in it as in a sea.

There is something in staying close to men and women
 and looking on them, and in the contact and odor of
 them, that pleases the soul well,
 All things please the soul, but these please the soul well.

5

This is the female form,
 A divine nimbus exhales from it from head to foot,
 It attracts with fierce undeniable attraction,
 I am drawn by its breath as if I were no more than a
 helpless vapor, all falls aside but myself and it,
 Books, art, religion, time, the visible and solid earth, and
 what was expected of heaven or fear'd of hell, are now
 consumed,
 Mad filaments, ungovernable shoots play out of it, the
 response likewise ungovernable,
 Hair, bosom, hips, bend of legs, negligent falling hands
 all diffused, mine too diffused,
 Ebb stung by the flow and flow stung by the ebb, love
 flesh swelling and deliciously aching,
 Limitless limpid jets of love hot and enormous, quivering
 jelly of love, white-blow and delirious juice,
 Bridegroom night of love working surely and softly into
 the prostrate dawn,
 Undulating into the willing and yielding day,
 Lost in the cleave of the clasping and sweet-flesh'd day.

This the nucleus—after the child is born of woman, man
 is born of woman,
 This the bath of birth, this the merge of small and large,
 and the outlet again.

Be not ashamed women, your privilege encloses the rest,
 and is the exit of the rest,
 You are the gates of the body, and you are the gates of the
 soul.

The female contains all qualities and tempers them,
She is in her place and moves with perfect balance,
She is all things duly veil'd, she is both passive and active,
She is to conceive daughters as well as sons, and sons as
well as daughters.

As I see my soul reflected in Nature,
As I see through a mist, One with inexpressible complete-
ness, sanity, beauty,
See the bent head and arms folded over the breast, the
Female I see.

6

The male is not less the soul nor more, he too is in his place,
He too is all qualities, he is action and power,
The flush of the known universe is in him,
Scorn becomes him well, and appetite and defiance become
him well,
The wildest largest passions, bliss that is utmost, sorrow
that is utmost become him well, pride is for him,
The full-spread pride of man is calming and excellent to
the soul,
Knowledge becomes him, he likes it always, he brings
everything to the test of himself,
Whatever the survey, whatever the sea and the sail he
strikes soundings at last only here,
(Where else does he strike soundings except here?)

The man's body is sacred and the woman's body is sacred,
No matter who it is, it is sacred—is it the meanest one
in the laborers' gang?
Is it one of the dull-faced immigrants just landed on the
wharf?
Each belongs here or anywhere just as much as the well-off,
just as much as you,
Each has his or her place in the procession.

(All is a procession,
The universe is a procession with measured and perfect
motion.)

Do you know so much yourself that you call the meanest
ignorant?

Do you suppose you have a right to a good sight, and he
or she has no right to a sight ?
Do you think matter has cohered together from its diffuse
float, and the soil is on the surface, and water runs
and vegetation sprouts,
For you only, and not for him and her ?

7

A man's body at auction,
(For before the war I often go to the slave-mart and watch
the sale,)
I help the auctioneer, the sloven does not half know his
business.

Gentlemen look on this wonder,
Whatever the bids of the bidders they cannot be high
enough for it,
For it the globe lay preparing quintillions of years without
one animal or plant,
For it the revolving cycles truly and steadily roll'd.

In this head the all-baffling brain,
In it and below it the makings of heroes.

Examine these limbs, red, black, or white, they are cunning
in tendon and nerve,
They shall be stript that you may see them.

Exquisite senses, life-lit eyes, pluck, volition,
Flakes of breast-muscle, pliant backbone and neck, flesh
not flabby, good-sized arms and legs,
And wonders within there yet.
Within there runs blood,
The same old blood ! the same red-running blood !
There swells and jets a heart, there all passions, desires,
reachings, aspirations,
(Do you think they are not there because they are not
express'd in parlors and lecture-rooms ?)

This is not only one man, this the father of those who shall
be fathers in their turns,
In him the start of populous states and rich republics,
Of him countless immortal lives with countless embodi-
ments and enjoyments.

How do you know who shall come from the offspring of his offspring through the centuries ?

(Who might you find you have come from yourself, if you could trace back through the centuries ?)

8

A woman's body at auction,
She too is not only herself, she is the teeming mother of mothers,
She is the bearer of them that shall grow and be mates to the mothers.

Have you ever loved the body of a woman ?

Have you ever loved the body of a man ?

Do you not see that these are exactly the same to all in all nations and times all over the earth ?

If anything is sacred the human body is sacred,
And the glory and sweet of a man is the token of manhood untainted,

And in man or woman a clean, strong, firm-fibred body is more beautiful than the most beautiful face.

Have you seen the fool that corrupted his own live body ?
or the fool that corrupted her own live body ?

For they do not conceal themselves, and cannot conceal themselves.

9

O my body ! I dare not desert the likes of you in other men and women, nor the likes of the parts of you,

I believe the likes of you are to stand or fall with the likes of the soul, (and that they are the soul,)

I believe the likes of you shall stand or fall with my poems, and that they are my poems,

Man's, woman's, child's, youth's, wife's, husband's, mother's, father's, young man's, young woman's poems,

Head, neck, hair, ears, drop and tympan of the ears,

Eyes, eye-fringes, iris of the eye, eyebrows, and the waking or sleeping of the lids,

Mouth, tongue, lips, teeth, roof of the mouth, jaws, and the jaw-hinges,

Nose, nostrils of the nose, and the partition,

Cheeks, temples, forehead, chin, throat, back of the neck,
 neck-slue,
 Strong shoulders, manly beard, scapula, hind-shoulders,
 and the ample side-round of the chest,
 Upper-arm, armpit, elbow-socket, lower-arm, arm-sinews,
 arm-bones,
 Wrist and wrist-joints, hand, palm, knuckles, thumb, fore-
 finger, finger-joints, finger-nails,
 Broad breast-front, curling hair of the breast, breast-bone,
 breast-side,
 Ribs, belly, backbone, joints of the backbone,
 Hips, hip-sockets, hip-strength, inward and outward
 round, man-balls, man-root,
 Strong set of thighs, well carrying the trunk above,
 Leg-fibres, knee, knee-pan, upper-leg, under-leg,
 Ankles, instep, foot-ball, toes, toe-joints, the heel;
 All attitudes, all the shapeliness, all the belongings of my
 or your body or of any one's body, male or female,
 The lung-sponges, the stomach-sac, the bowels sweet and
 clean,
 The brain in its folds inside the skull-frame,
 Sympathies, heart-valves, palate-valves, sexuality, mater-
 nity,
 Womanhood, and all that is a woman, and the man that
 comes from woman,
 The womb, the teats, nipples, breast-milk, tears, laughter,
 weeping, love-looks, love-perturbations and risings,
 The voice, articulation, language, whispering, shouting
 aloud,
 Food, drink, pulse, digestion, sweat, sleep, walking, swim-
 ming,
 Poise on the hips, leaping, reclining, embracing, arm-curv-
 ing and tightening,
 The continual changes of the flex of the mouth, and around
 the eyes,
 The skin, the sunburnt shade, freckles, hair,
The curious sympathy one feels when feeling with the
hand the naked meat of the body,
 The circling rivers the breath, and breathing it in and out,
 The beauty of the waist, and thence of the hips, and thence
 downward toward the knees,
 The thin red jellies within you or within me, the bones and
 the marrow in the bones,

The exquisite realization of health ;
O I say these are not the parts and poems of the body only,
but of the soul,
O I say now these are the soul !

A WOMAN WAITS FOR ME

A WOMAN waits for me, she contains all, nothing is
lacking,
Yet all were lacking if sex were lacking, or if the moisture
of the right man were lacking.
Sex contains all, bodies, souls,
Meanings, proofs, purities, delicacies, results, promulga-
tions,
Songs, commands, health, pride, the maternal mystery, the
seminal milk,
All hopes, benefactions, bestowals, all the passions, loves,
beauties, delights of the earth,
All the governments, judges, gods, follow'd persons of the
earth,
These are contain'd in sex as parts of itself and justifications
of itself.
Without shame the man I like knows and avows the
deliciousness of his sex,
Without shame the woman I like knows and avows hers.
Now I will dismiss myself from impassive women,
I will go stay with her who waits for me, and with those
women that are warm-blooded and sufficient for me,
I see that they understand me and do not deny me,
I see that they are worthy of me, I will be the robust hus-
band of those women.

They are not one jot less than I am,
They are tann'd in the face by shining suns and blowing
winds,
Their flesh has the old divine suppleness and strength,
They know how to swim, row, ride, wrestle, shoot, run,
strike, retreat, advance, resist, defend themselves,

They are ultimate in their own right—they are calm, clear,
well-possess'd of themselves.

I draw you close to me, you women,
I cannot let you go, I would do you good,
I am for you, and you are for me, not only for our own
sake, but for others' sakes,

Envelop'd in you sleep greater heroes and bards,
They refuse to awake at the touch of any man but me.

It is I, you women, I make my way,
I am stern, acrid, large, undissuadable, but I love you,
I do not hurt you any more than is necessary for you,
I pour the stuff to start sons and daughters fit for these
States, I press with slow rude muscle,
I brace myself effectually, I listen to no entreaties,
I dare not withdraw till I deposit what has so long accumu-
lated within me.

Through you I drain the pent-up rivers of myself,
In you I wrap a thousand onward years,
On you I graft the grafts of the best-beloved of me and
America,

The drops I distil upon you shall grow fierce and athletic
girls, new artists, musicians, and singers,
The babes I beget upon you are to beget babes in their
turn,
I shall demand perfect men and women out of my love-
spendings,
I shall expect them to interpenetrate with others, as I and
you interpenetrate now,
I shall count on the fruits of the gushing showers of them,
as I count on the fruits of the gushing showers I give
now,
I shall look for loving crops from the birth, life, death,
immortality, I plant so lovingly now.

SPONTANEOUS ME

SPONTANEOUS me, Nature,
The loving day, the mounting sun, the friend I am happy
with,
The arm of my friend hanging idly over my shoulder,
The hillside whiten'd with blossoms of the mountain ash,
The same late in autumn, the hues of red, yellow, drab,
purple, and light and dark green,
The rich coverlet of the grass, animals and birds, the
private untrimm'd bank, the primitive apples, the
pebble-stones,
Beautiful dripping fragments, the negligent list of one
after another as I happen to call them to me or think
of them,
The real poems, (what we call poems being merely pictures,)
The poems of the privacy of the night, and of men
like me,
This poem drooping shy and unseen that I always carry,
and that all men carry,
(Know once for all, avow'd on purpose, wherever are men
like me, are our lusty lurking masculine poems,)
Love-thoughts, love-juice, love-odor, love-yielding, love-
climbers, and the climbing sap,
Arms and hands of love, lips of love, phallic thumb of love,
breasts of love, bellies press'd and glued together
with love,
Earth of chaste love, life that is only life after love,
The body of my love, the body of the woman I love, the
body of the man, the body of the earth,
Soft forenoon airs that blow from the south-west,
The hairy wild-bee that murmurs and hankers up and
down, that gripes the full-grown lady-flower, curves
upon her with amorous firm legs, takes his will of her,
and holds himself tremulous and tight till he is satis-
fied ;
The wet of woods through the early hours,
Two sleepers at night lying close together as they sleep,
one with an arm slanting down across and below the
waist of the other,
The smell of apples, aromas from crush'd sage-plant, mint,
birch-bark,

The boy's longings, the glow and pressure as he confides
to me what he was dreaming,
The dead leaf whirling its spiral whirl and falling still and
content to the ground,
The no-form'd stings that sights, people, objects, sting me
with,
The hubb'd sting of myself, stinging me as much as it ever
can any one,
The sensitive, orbic, underlapp'd brothers, that only privi-
leged feelers may be intimate where they are,
The curious roamer the hand roaming all over the body, the
bashful withdrawing of flesh where the fingers sooth-
ingly pause and edge themselves,
The limpid liquid within the young man,
The vex'd corrosion so pensive and so painful,
The torment, the irritable tide that will not be at
rest,
The like of the same I feel, the like of the same in
others,
The young man that flushes and flushes, and the young
woman that flushes and flushes,
The young man that wakes deep at night, the hot hand
seeking to repress what would master him,
The mystic amorous night, the strange half-welcome pangs,
visions, sweats,
The pulse pounding through palms and trembling encircling
fingers, the young man all color'd, red, ashamed,
angry ;
The souse upon me of my lover the sea, as I lie willing and
naked,
The merriment of the twin babes that crawl over the grass
in the sun, the mother never turning her vigilant
eyes from them,
The walnut-trunk, the walnut-husks, and the ripening
or ripen'd long-round walnuts,
The continence of vegetables, birds, animals,
The consequent meanness of me should I skulk or find
myself indecent, while birds and animals never once
skulk or find themselves indecent,
The great chastity of paternity, to match the great chastity
of maternity,
The oath of procreation I have sworn, my Adamic and fresh
daughters,

The greed that eats me day and night with hungry gnaw,
till I saturate what shall produce boys to fill my place
when I am through,

The wholesome relief, repose, content,
And this bunch pluck'd at random from myself,
It has done its work—I toss it carelessly to fall where it may.

ONE HOUR TO MADNESS AND JOY

ONE hour to madness and joy! O furious! O confine me
not!

(What is this that frees me so in storms?

What do my shouts amid lightnings and raging winds
mean?)

O to drink the mystic deliria deeper than any other man!
O savage and tender achings! (I bequeath them to you
my children,

I tell them to you, for reasons, O bridegroom and bride.)

O to be yielded to you whoever you are, and you to be
yielded to me in defiance of the world!

O to return to Paradise! O bashful and feminine!

O to draw you to me, to plant on you for the first time the
lips of a determin'd man.

O the puzzle, the thrice-tied knot, the deep and dark pool,
all untied and illumin'd!

O to speed where there is space enough and air enough
at last!

To be absolv'd from previous ties and conventions, I from
mine and you from yours!

To find a new unthought-of nonchalance with the best of
Nature!

To have the gag remov'd from one's mouth!

To have the feeling to-day or any day I am sufficient as I
am.

O something unprov'd! something in a trance!

To escape utterly from others' anchors and holds!

To drive free! to love free! to dash reckless and dangerous!

To court destruction with taunts, with invitations !
 To ascend, to leap to the heavens of the love indicated to
 me !
 To rise thither with my inebriate soul !
 To be lost if it must be so !
 To feed the remainder of life with one hour of fulness and
 freedom !
 With one brief hour of madness and joy.

OUT OF THE ROLLING OCEAN THE CROWD

Out of the rolling ocean the crowd came a drop gently to
 me,
 Whispering *I love you, before long I die,*
I have travel'd a long way merely to look on you to touch you,
For I could not die till I once look'd on you,
For I fear'd I might afterward lose you.
 Now we have met, we have look'd, we are safe,
 Return in peace to the ocean my love,
 I too am part of that ocean my love, we are not so much
 separated,
 Behold the great rondure, the cohesion of all, how perfect !
 But as for me, for you, the irresistible sea is to separate us,
 As for an hour carrying us diverse, yet cannot carry us
 diverse forever ;
 Be not impatient—a little space—know you I salute the
 air, the ocean and the land,
 Every day at sundown for your dear sake my love.

AGES AND AGES RETURNING AT INTERVALS

AGES and ages returning at intervals,
 Undestroy'd, wandering immortal,
 Lusty, phallic, with the potent original loins, perfectly
 sweet,
 I, chanter of Adamic songs,
 Through the new garden the West, the great cities calling,

Deliriate, thus prelude what is generated, offering these,
offering myself,
Bathing myself, bathing my songs in Sex,
Offspring of my loins.

WE TWO, HOW LONG WE WERE FOOL'D

We two, how long we were fool'd,
Now transmuted, we swiftly escape as Nature escapes,
We are Nature, long have we been absent, but now we
return,
We become plants, trunks, foliage, roots, bark,
We are bedded in the ground, we are rocks,
We are oaks, we grow in the openings side by side,
We browse, we are two among the wild herds spontaneous
as any,
We are two fishes swimming in the sea together,
We are what locusts blossoms are, we drop scent around
lanes mornings and evenings,
We are also the coarse smut of beasts, vegetables, minerals,
We are two predatory hawks, we soar above and look down,
We are two resplendent suns, we it is who balance ourselves
orbic and stellar, we are as two comets,
We prowl fang'd and four-footed in the woods, we spring
on prey,
We are two clouds forenoons and afternoons driving over-
head,
We are seas mingling, we are two of those cheerful waves
rolling over each other and interwetting each other,
We are what the atmosphere is, transparent, receptive,
pervious, impervious,
We are snow, rain, cold, darkness, we are each product and
influence of the globe,
We have circled and circled till we have arrived home again,
we two,
We have voided all but freedom and all but our own joy.

O HYMEN! O HYMENEE!

O HYMEN! O hymenees! why do you tantalize me thus?
 O why sting me for a swift moment only?
 Why can you not continue? O why do you now cease?
 Is it because if you continued beyond the swift moment
 you would soon certainly kill me?

I AM HE THAT ACHES WITH LOVE

I AM he that aches with amorous love;
 Does the earth gravitate? does not all matter, aching,
 attract all matter?
 So the body of me to all I meet or know.

NATIVE MOMENTS

NATIVE moments—when you come upon me—ah you are
 here now,
 Give me now libidinous joys only,
 Give me the drench of my passions, give me life coarse and
 rank,
 To-day I go consort with Nature's darlings, to-night too,
 I am for those who believe in loose delights, I share the
 midnight orgies of young men,
 I dance with the dancers and drink with the drinkers,
 The echoes ring with our indecent calls, I pick out some
 low person for my dearest friend,
 He shall be lawless, rude, illiterate, he shall be one con-
 demn'd by others for deeds done,
 I will play a part no longer, why should I exile myself from
 my companions?
 O you shunn'd persons, I at least do not shun you,
 I come forthwith in your midst, I will be your poet,
 I will be more to you than to any of the rest.

ONCE I PASS'D THROUGH A POPULOUS CITY

ONCE I pass'd through a populous city imprinting my brain
for future use with its shows, architecture, customs,
traditions,

Yet now of all that city I remember only a woman I
casually met there who detain'd me for love of me,
Day by day and night by night we were together—all else
has long been forgotten by me,
I remember I say only that woman who passionately clung
to me,

Again we wander, we love, we separate again,
Again she holds me by the hand, I must not go,
I see her close beside me with silent lips sad and
tremulous.

I HEARD YOU SOLEMN-SWEET PIPES OF
THE ORGAN

I HEARD you solemn-sweet pipes of the organ as last Sunday
morn I pass'd the church,
Winds of autumn, as I walk'd the woods at dusk I heard
your long-stretch'd sighs up above so mournful,
I heard the perfect Italian tenor singing at the opera, I
heard the soprano in the midst of the quartet singing ;
Heart of my love ! you too I heard murmuring low through
one of the wrists around my head,
Heard the pulse of you when all was still ringing little bells
last night under my ear.

FACING WEST FROM CALIFORNIA'S SHORES

FACING west from California's shores,
Inquiring, tireless, seeking what is yet unfound,
I, a child, very old, over waves, towards the house of
maternity, the land of migrations, look afar,
Look off the shores of my Western sea, the circle almost
circled ;

For starting westward from Hindustan, from the vales of
 Kashmere,
 From Asia, from the north, from the God, the sage, and
 the hero,
 From the south, from the flowery peninsulas and the spice
 islands,
 Long having wander'd since, round the earth having
 wander'd,
 Now I face home again, very pleas'd and joyous,
 (But where is what I started for so long ago?
 And why is it yet unfound?)

AS ADAM EARLY IN THE MORNING

As Adam early in the morning,
 Walking forth from the bower refresh'd with sleep,
 Behold me where I pass, hear my voice, approach,
 Touch me, touch the palm of your hand to my body as I
 pass,
 Be not afraid of my body.

CALAMUS

IN PATHS UNTRODDEN

In paths untrodden,
In the growth by margins of pond-waters,
Escaped from the life that exhibits itself,
From all the standards hitherto publish'd, from the pleasures,
 profits, conformities,
Which too long I was offering to feed my soul,
Clear to me now standards not yet publish'd, clear to me
 that my soul,
That the soul of the man I speak for rejoices in comrades,
Here by myself away from the clank of the world,
Tallying and talk'd to here by tongues aromatic,
No longer abash'd, (for in this secluded spot I can respond
 as I would not dare elsewhere,)
Strong upon me the life that does not exhibit itself, yet
 contains all the rest,
Resolv'd to sing no songs to-day but those of manly attachment,
Projecting them along that substantial life,
Bequeathing hence types of athletic love,
Afternoon this delicious Ninth-month in my forty-first year,
I proceed for all who are or have been young men,
To tell the secret of my nights and days,
To celebrate the need of comrades.

SCENTED HERBAGE OF MY BREAST

SCENTED herbage of my breast,
Leaves from you I glean, I write, to be perused best afterwards,
Tomb-leaves, body-leaves growing up above me above death,

Perennial roots, tall leaves, O the winter shall not freeze
you delicate leaves,
Every year shall you bloom again, out from where you
retired you shall emerge again ;
O I do not know whether many passing by will discover
you or inhale your faint odor, but I believe a few
will ;
O slender leaves ! O blossoms of my blood ! I permit you
to tell in your own way of the heart that is under you,
O I do not know what you mean there underneath your-
selves, you are not happiness,
You are often more bitter than I can bear, you burn and
sting me,
Yet you are beautiful to me you faint tinged roots, you
make me think of death,
Death is beautiful from you, (what indeed is finally beauti-
ful except death and love ?)
O I think it is not for life I am chanting here my chant of
lovers, I think it must be for death,
For how calm, how solemn it grows to ascend to the atmo-
sphere of lovers,
Death or life I am then indifferent, my soul declines to
prefer,
(I am not sure but the high soul of lovers welcomes death
most,)
Indeed O death, I think now these leaves mean precisely
the same as you mean,
Grow up taller sweet leaves that I may see ! grow up out,
of my breast !
Spring away from the conceal'd heart there !
Do not fold yourself so in your pink-tinged roots timid
leaves !
Do not remain down there so ashamed, herbage of my
breast !
Come I am determin'd to unbare this broad breast of mine,
I have long enough stifled and choked ;
Emblematic and capricious blades I leave you, now you
serve me not,
I will say what I have to say by itself,
I will sound myself and comrades only, I will never again
utter a call only their call,
I will raise with it immortal reverberations through the
States,

I will give an example to lovers to take permanent shape
and will through the States,
Through me shall the words be said to make death exhilara-
ting,
Give me your tone therefore O death, that I may accord
with it,
Give me yourself, for I see that you belong to me now
above all, and are folded inseparably together, you love
and death are,
Nor will I allow you to balk me any more with what I was
calling life,
For now it is convey'd to me that you are the purports
essential,
That you hide in these shifting forms of life, for reasons,
and that they are mainly for you,
That you beyond them come forth to remain, the real
reality,
That behind the mask of materials you patiently wait,
no matter how long,
That you will one day perhaps take control of all,
That you will perhaps dissipate this entire show of appear-
ance,
That may-be you are what it is all for, but it does not last
so very long,
But you will last very long.

WHOEVER YOU ARE HOLDING ME NOW
IN HAND

WHOEVER you are holding me now in hand,
Without one thing all will be useless,
I give you fair warning before you attempt me further,
I am not what you supposed, but far different.
Who is he that would become my follower?
Who would sign himself a candidate for my affections?
The way is suspicious, the result uncertain, perhaps destruc-
tive,
You would have to give up all else, I alone would expect
to be your sole and exclusive standard,

Your novitiate would even then be long and exhausting,
The whole past theory of your life and all conformity to the
lives around you would have to be abandon'd,
Therefore release me now before troubling yourself any
further, let go your hand from my shoulders,
Put me down and depart on your way.

Or else by stealth in some wood for trial,
Or back of a rock in the open air,
(For in any roof'd room of a house I emerge not, nor in
company,
And in libraries I lie as one dumb, a gawk, or unborn, or
dead,)

But just possibly with you on a high hill, first watching
lest any person for miles around approach unawares,
Or possibly with you sailing at sea, or on the beach of the
sea or some quiet island,
Here to put your lips upon mine I permit you,
With the comrade's long-dwelling kiss or the new husband's
kiss,
For I am the new husband and I am the comrade.

Or if you will, thrusting me beneath your clothing,
Where I may feel the throbs of your heart or rest upon your
hip,
Carry me when you go forth over land or sea ;
For thus merely touching you is enough, is best,
And thus touching you would I silently sleep and be carried
eternally.

But these leaves conning you con at peril,
For these leaves and me you will not understand,
They will elude you at first and still more afterward, I will
certainly elude you,
Even while you should think you had unquestionably
caught me, behold !
Already you see I have escaped from you.

For it is not for what I have put into it that I have written
this book,
Nor is it by reading it you will acquire it,
Nor do those know me best who admire me and vauntingly
praise me,

Nor will the candidates for my love (unless at most a very few) prove victorious,
Nor will my poems do good only, they will do just as much evil, perhaps more,
For all is useless without that which you may guess at many times and not hit, that which I hinted at;
Therefore release me and depart on your way.

FOR YOU O DEMOCRACY

COME, I will make the continent indissoluble,
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,
I will make divine magnetic lands,
 With the love of comrades,
 With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies,
I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,
 By the love of comrades,
 By the manly love of comrades.

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!

For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

THESE I SINGING IN SPRING

THESE I singing in spring collect for lovers,
(For who but I should understand lovers and all their sorrow and joy?
And who but I should be the poet of comrades?)
Collecting I traverse the garden the world, but soon I pass the gates,
Now along the pond-side, now wading in a little, fearing not the wet,

Now by the post-and-rail fences where the old stones
thrown there, pick'd from the fields, have accumu-
lated,
(Wild-flowers and vines and weeds come up through the
stones and partly cover them, beyond these I pass,)
Far, far in the forest, or sauntering later in summer, before
I think where I go,
Solitary, smelling the earthy smell, stopping now and then
in the silence,
Alone I had thought, yet soon a troop gathers around me,
Some walk by my side and some behind, and some embrace
my arms or neck,
They the spirits of dear friends dead or alive, thicker they
come, a great crowd, and I in the middle,
Collecting, dispensing, singing, there I wander with them,
Plucking something for tokens, tossing toward whoever is
near me,
Here, lilac, with a branch of pine,
Here, out of my pocket, some moss which I pull'd off a live-
oak in Florida as it hung trailing down,
Here, some pinks and laurel leaves, and a handful of sage,
And here what I now draw from the water, wading in the
pond-side,
(O here I last saw him that tenderly loves me, and returns
again never to separate from me,
And this, O this shall henceforth be the token of comrades,
this calamus-root shall,
Interchange it youths with each other! let none render
it back!)

And twigs of maple and a bunch of wild orange and chestnut,
And stems of currants and plum-blows, and the aromatic
cedar,
These I compass'd around by a thick cloud of spirits,
Wandering, point to or touch as I pass, or throw them
loosely from me,
Indicating to each one what he shall have, giving something
to each;
But what I drew from the water by the pond-side, that I
reserve,
I will give of it, but only to them that love as I myself am
capable of loving.

NOT HEAVING FROM MY RIBB'D BREAST ONLY

Not heaving from my ribb'd breast only,
Not in sighs at night in rage dissatisfied with myself,
Not in those long-drawn, ill-supprest sighs,
Not in many an oath and promise broken,
Not in my wilful and savage soul's volition,
Not in the subtle nourishment of the air,
Not in this beating and pounding at my temples and wrists,
Not in the curious systole and diastole within which will
one day cease,
Not in many a hungry wish told to the skies only,
Not in cries, laughter, defiances, thrown from me when
alone far in the wilds,
Not in husky pantings through clinch'd teeth,
Not in sounded and resounded words, chattering words,
echoes, dead words,
Not in the murmurs of my dreams while I sleep,
Nor the other murmurs of these incredible dreams of every
day,
Nor in the limbs and senses of my body that take you and
dismiss you continually—not there,
Not in any or all of them O adhesiveness ! O pulse of my
life !
Need I that you exist and show yourself any more than in
these songs,

OF THE TERRIBLE DOUBT OF APPEARANCES

Of the terrible doubt of appearances,
Of the uncertainty after all, that we may be deluded,
That may-be reliance and hope are but speculations after
all,
That may-be identity beyond the grave is a beautiful fable
only,
May-be the things I perceive, the animals, plants, men,
hills, shining and flowing waters,
The skies of day and night, colors, densities, forms, may-be
these are (as doubtless they are) only apparitions, and
the real something has yet to be known,

(How often they dart out of themselves as if to confound
me and mock me !
How often I think neither I know, nor any man knows,
aught of them,)
May-be seeming to me what they are (as doubtless they
indeed but seem) as from my present point of view,
and might prove (as of course they would) nought of
what they appear, or nought anyhow, from entirely
changed points of view ;
To me these and the like of these are curiously answer'd
by my lovers, my dear friends,
When he whom I love travels with me or sits a long while
holding me by the hand,
When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words
and reason hold not, surround us and pervade us,
Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom,
I am silent, I require nothing further,
I cannot answer the question of appearances or that of
identity beyond the grave,
But I walk or sit indifferent, I am satisfied,
He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me.

THE BASE OF ALL METAPHYSICS

AND now gentlemen,
A word I give to remain in your memories and minds,
As base and finalè too for all metaphysics.

(So to the students the old professor,
At the close of his crowded course.)

Having studied the new and antique, the Greek and
Germanic systems,
Kant having studied and stated, Fichte and Schelling and
Hegel,
Stated the lore of Plato, and Socrates greater than Plato,
And greater than Socrates sought and stated, Christ divine
having studied long,
I see reminiscent to-day those Greek and Germanic systems,
See the philosophies all, Christian churches and tenets
see.

Yet underneath Socrates clearly see, and underneath
 Christ the divine I see,
 The dear love of man for his comrade, the attraction of
 friend to friend,
 Of the well-married husband and wife, of children and
 parents,
 Of city for city and land for land.

RECORDERS AGES HENCE

RECORDERS ages hence,
 Come, I will take you down underneath this impassive
 exterior, I will tell you what to say of me,
 Publish my name and hang up my picture as that of the
 tenderest lover,
 The friend the lover's portrait, of whom his friend his lover
 was fondest,
 Who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless
 ocean of love within him, and freely pour'd it forth,
 Who often walk'd lonesome walks thinking of his dear
 friends, his lovers,
 Who pensive away from one he lov'd often lay sleepless and
 dissatisfied at night,
 Who knew too well the sick, sick dread lest the one he
 lov'd might secretly be indifferent to him,
 Whose happiest days were far away through fields, in
 woods, on hills, he and another wandering hand in
 hand, they twain apart from other men,
 Who oft as he saunter'd the streets curv'd with his arm
 the shoulder of his friend, while the arm of his friend
 rested upon him also.

WHEN I HEARD AT THE CLOSE OF THE DAY

WHEN I heard at the close of the day how my name had
 been receiv'd with plaudits in the capitol, still it was
 not a happy night for me that follow'd,
 And else when I carous'd, or when my plans were accom-
 plish'd, still I was not happy,

But the day when I rose at dawn from the bed of perfect
health, refresh'd, singing, inhaling the ripe breath of
autumn,
When I saw the full moon in the west grow pale and dis-
appear in the morning light,
When I wander'd alone over the beach, and undressing
bathed, laughing with the cool waters, and saw the
sun rise,
And when I thought how my dear friend my lover was on
his way coming, O then I was happy,
O then each breath tasted sweeter, and all that day my
food nourish'd me more, and the beautiful day pass'd
well,
And the next came with equal joy, and with the next at
evening came my friend,
And that night while all was still I heard the waters roll
slowly continually up the shores,
I heard the hissing rustle of the liquid and sands as directed
to me whispering to congratulate me,
For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the same
cover in the cool night,
In the stillness in the autumn moonbeams his face was
inclined toward me,
And his arm lay lightly around my breast—and that night
I was happy.

ARE YOU THE NEW PERSON DRAWN TOWARD ME ?

ARE you the new person drawn toward me ?
To begin with take warning, I am surely far different from
what you suppose ;
Do you suppose you will find in me your ideal ?
Do you think it so easy to have me become your
lover ?
Do you think the friendship of me would be unalloy'd
satisfaction ?
Do you think I am trusty and faithful ?
Do you see no further than this façade, this smooth and
tolerant manner of me ?

Do you suppose yourself advancing on real ground toward
a real heroic man ?
Have you no thought O dreamer that it may be all maya,
illusion ?

ROOTS AND LEAVES THEMSELVES ALONE

Roots and leaves themselves alone are these,
Scents brought to men and women from the wild woods
and pond-side,
Breast-sorrel and pinks of love, fingers that wind around
tighter than vines,
Gushes from the throats of birds hid in the foliage of trees
as the sun is risen,
Breezes of land and love set from living shores to you on
the living sea, to you O sailors !
Frost-mellow'd berries and Third-month twigs offer'd fresh
to young persons wandering out in the fields when the
winter breaks up,
Love-buds put before you and within you whoever you are,
Buds to be unfolded on the old terms,
If you bring the warmth of the sun to them they will open
and bring form, color, perfume, to you,
If you become the aliment and the wet they will become
flowers, fruits, tall branches and trees.

NOT HEAT FLAMES UP AND CONSUMES

Not heat flames up and consumes,
Not sea-waves hurry in and out,
Not the air delicious and dry, the air of ripe summer, bears
lightly along white down-balls of myriads of seeds,
Wafted, sailing gracefully, to drop where they may ;
Not these, O none of these more than the flames of me, con-
suming, burning for his love whom I love,
O none more than I hurrying in and out ;
Does the tide hurry, seeking something, and never give
up ? O I the same,

O nor down-balls nor perfumes, nor the high rain-emitting
 clouds, are borne through the open air,
 Any more than my soul is borne through the open air,
 Wafted in all directions O love, for friendship, for you.

TRICKLE DROPS

TRICKLE drops! my blue veins leaving!
 O drops of me! trickle, slow drops,
 Candid from me falling, drip, bleeding drops,
 From wounds made to free you whence you were prison'd,
 From my face, from my forehead and lips,
 From my breast, from within where I was conceal'd, press
 forth red drops, confession drops,
 Stain every page, stain every song I sing, every word I say,
 bloody drops,
 Let them know your scarlet heat, let them glisten,
 Saturate them with yourself all ashamed and wet,
 Glow upon all I have written or shall write, bleeding drops,
 Let it all be seen in your light, blushing drops.

CITY OF ORGIES

CITY of orgies, walks and joys,
 City whom that I have lived and sung in your midst will
 one day make you illustrious,
 Not the pageants of you, not your shifting tableaux, your
 spectacles, repay me,
 Not the interminable rows of your houses, nor the ships
 at the wharves,
 Nor the processions in the streets, nor the bright windows
 with goods in them,
 Nor to converse with learn'd persons, or bear my share in
 the soiree or feast;
 Not those, but as I pass O Manhattan, your frequent and
 swift flash of eyes offering me love,
 Offering response to my own—these repay me,
 Lovers, continual lovers, only repay me.

BEHOLD THIS SWARTHY FACE

BEHOLD this swarthy face, these gray eyes,
This beard, the white wool unclipt upon my neck,
My brown hands and the silent manner of me without
charm ;
Yet comes one a Manhattanesse and ever at parting kisses
me lightly on the lips with robust love,
And I on the crossing of the street or on the ship's deck
give a kiss in return,
We observe that salute of American comrades land and sea,
We are those two natural and nonchalant persons.

I SAW IN LOUISIANA A LIVE-OAK GROWING

I SAW in Louisiana a live-oak growing,
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the
branches,
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous
leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of
myself,
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing
alone there without its friend near, for I knew I could
not,
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves upon
it, and twined around it a little moss,
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my
room,
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think
of manly love ;
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in
Louisiana solitary in a wide flat space,
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a lover
near,
I know very well I could not.

TO A STRANGER

PASSING stranger ! you do not know how longingly I look
upon you,
You must be he I was seeking, or she I was seeking, (it
comes to me as of a dream,)
I have somewhere surely lived a life of joy with you,
All is recall'd as we flit by each other, fluid, affectionate,
chaste, matured,
You grew up with me, were a boy with me or a girl with me,
I ate with you and slept with you, your body has become
not yours only nor left my body mine only,
You give me the pleasure of your eyes, face, flesh, as we
pass, you take of my beard, breast, hands, in return,
I am not to speak to you, I am to think of you when I sit
alone or wake at night alone,
I am to wait, I do not doubt I am to meet you again,
I am to see to it that I do not lose you.

THIS MOMENT YEARNING AND THOUGHTFUL

THIS moment yearning and thoughtful sitting alone,
It seems to me there are other men in other lands yearning
and thoughtful,
It seems to me I can look over and behold them in Germany,
Italy, France, Spain,
Or far, far away, in China, or in Russia or Japan, talking
other dialects,
And it seems to me if I could know those men I should
become attached to them as I do to men in my own
lands,
O I know we should be brethren and lovers,
I know I should be happy with them.

I HEAR IT WAS CHARGED AGAINST ME

I HEAR it was charged against me that I sought to destroy
institutions,
But really I am neither for nor against institutions,

(What indeed have I in common with them? or what with the destruction of them?)

Only I will establish in the Mannahatta and in every city of these States inland and seaboard,
And in the fields and woods, and above every keel little or large that dents the water,
Without edifices or rules or trustees or any argument,
The institution of the dear love of comrades.

THE PRAIRIE-GRASS DIVIDING

THE prairie-grass dividing, its special odor breathing,
I demand of it the spiritual corresponding,
Demand the most copious and close companionship of men,
Demand the blades to rise of words, acts, beings,
Those of the open atmosphere, coarse, sunlit, fresh, nutritious,
Those that go their own gait, erect, stepping with freedom and command, leading not following,
Those with a never-quell'd audacity, those with sweet and lusty flesh clear of taint,
Those that look carelessly in the faces of Presidents and governors, as to say *Who are you?*
Those of earth-born passion, simple, never constrain'd, never obedient,
Those of inland America.

WHEN I PERUSE THE CONQUER'D FAME

WHEN I peruse the conquer'd fame of heroes and the victories of mighty generals, I do not envy the generals, Nor the President in his Presidency, nor the rich in his great house,
But when I hear of the brotherhood of lovers, how it was with them,
How together through life, through dangers, odium, unchanging, long and long,
Through youth and through middle and old age, how unfaltering, how affectionate and faithful they were,
Then I am pensive—I hastily walk away fill'd with the bitterest envy.

WE TWO BOYS TOGETHER CLINGING

WE two boys together clinging,
 One the other never leaving,
 Up and down the roads going, North and South excursions
 making,
 Power enjoying, elbows stretching, fingers clutching,
 Arm'd and fearless, eating, drinking, sleeping, loving,
 No law less than ourselves owning, sailing, soldiering,
 thieving, threatening,
 Misers, menials, priests alarming, air breathing, water
 drinking, on the turf or the sea-beach dancing,
 Cities wrenching, ease scorning, statutes mocking, feeble-
 ness chasing,
 Fulfilling our foray.

A PROMISE TO CALIFORNIA

A PROMISE to California,
 Or inland to the great pastoral Plains, and on to Puget sound
 and Oregon ;
 Sojourning east a while longer, soon I travel toward you,
 to remain, to teach robust American love,
 For I know very well that I and robust love belong among
 you, inland, and along the Western sea ;
 For these States tend inland and toward the Western sea,
 and I will also.

HERE THE FRAILEST LEAVES OF ME

HERE the frailest leaves of me and yet my strongest lasting,
 Here I shade and hide my thoughts, I myself do not
 expose them,
 And yet they expose me more than all my other poems.

NO LABOR-SAVING MACHINE

No labor-saving machine,
Nor discovery have I made,
Nor will I be able to leave behind me any wealthy bequest
to found a hospital or library,
Nor reminiscence of any deed of courage for America,
Nor literary success nor intellect, nor book for the book-
shelf,
But a few carols vibrating through the air I leave,
For comrades and lovers.

A GLIMPSE

A GLIMPSE through an interstice caught,
Of a crowd of workmen and drivers in a bar-room around
the stove late of a winter night, and I unremark'd
seated in a corner,
Of a youth who loves me and whom I love, silently
approaching and seating himself near, that he may
hold me by the hand,
A long while amid the noises of coming and going, of
drinking and oath and smutty jest,
There we two, content, happy in being together, speaking
little, perhaps not a word.

A LEAF FOR HAND IN HAND

A LEAF for hand in hand ;
You natural persons old and young !
You on the Mississippi and on all the branches and bayous
of the Mississippi !
You friendly boatmen and mechanics ! you roughs !
You twain ! and all processions moving along the streets !
I wish to infuse myself among you till I see it common for
you to walk hand in hand.

EARTH, MY LIKENESS

EARTH, my likeness,
 Though you look so impassive, ample and spheric there,
 I now suspect that is not all ;
 I now suspect there is something fierce in you eligible to
 burst forth,
 For an athlete is enamour'd of me, and I of him,
 But toward him there is something fierce and terrible in
 me eligible to burst forth,
 I dare not tell it in words, not even in these songs.

I DREAM'D IN A DREAM

I DREAM'D in a dream I saw a city invincible to the attacks
 of the whole of the rest of the earth,
 I dream'd that was the new city of Friends,
 Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love,
 it led the rest,
 It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that
 city,
 And in all their looks and words.

WHAT THINK YOU I TAKE MY PEN IN
HAND ?

WHAT think you I take my pen in hand to record ?
 The battle-ship, perfect-model'd, majestic, that I saw pass
 the offing to-day under full sail ?
 The splendors of the past day ? or the splendor of the
 night that envelops me ?
 Or the vaunted glory and growth of the great city spread
 around me ?—no ;
 But merely of two simple men I saw to-day on the pier in
 the midst of the crowd, parting the parting of dear
 friends,
 The one to remain hung on the other's neck and passion-
 ately kiss'd him,
 While the one to depart tightly prest the one to remain in
 his arms.

TO THE EAST AND TO THE WEST

To the East and to the West,
 To the man of the Seaside State and of Pennsylvania,
 To the Kanadian of the north, to the Southerner I love,
 These with perfect trust to depict you as myself, the germs
 are in all men,
 I believe the main purport of these States is to found a
 superb friendship, exaltè, previously unknown,
 Because I perceive it waits, and has been always waiting,
 latent in all men.

SOMETIMES WITH ONE I LOVE

SOMETIMES with one I love I fill myself with rage for fear I
 effuse unreturn'd love,
 But now I think there is no unreturn'd love, the pay is
certain one way or another,
 (I loved a certain person ardently and my love was not
 return'd,
 Yet out of that I have written these songs.)

TO A WESTERN BOY

MANY things to absorb I teach to help you become eleve
 of mine ;
 Yet if blood like mine circle not in your veins,
 If you be not silently selected by lovers and do not silently
 select lovers,
 Of what use is it that you seek to become eleve of mine ?

FAST-ANCHOR'D ETERNAL O LOVE!

FAST-ANCHOR'D eternal O love ! O woman I love !
 O bride ! O wife ! more resistless than I can tell, the
 thought of you !
 Then separate, as disembodied or another born,
 Ethereal, the last athletic reality, my consolation,
 I ascend, I float in the regions of your love O man,
 O sharer of my roving life.

AMONG THE MULTITUDE

AMONG the men and women the multitude,
I perceive one picking me out by secret and divine signs,
Acknowledging none else, not parent, wife, husband,
brother, child, any nearer than I am,
Some are baffled, but that one is not—that one knows me.

Ah lover and perfect equal,
I meant that you should discover me so by faint in-
directions,
And I when I meet you mean to discover you by the
like in you.

O YOU WHOM I OFTEN AND SILENTLY COME

O you whom I often and silently come where you are that
I may be with you,
As I walk by your side or sit near, or remain in the same
room with you,
Little you know the subtle electric fire that for your sake
is playing within me.

THAT SHADOW MY LIKENESS

THAT shadow my likeness that goes to and fro seeking a
livelihood, chattering, chaffering,
How often I find myself standing and looking at it where
it flits,
How often I question and doubt whether that is really me ;
But among my lovers and caroling these songs,
O I never doubt whether that is really me.

FULL OF LIFE NOW

FULL of life now, compact, visible,
I, forty years old the eighty-third year of the States,
To one a century hence or any number of centuries hence,
To you yet unborn these, seeking you.

When you read these I that was visible am become invisible,
 Now it is you, compact, visible, realizing my poems,
 seeking me,
 Fancying how happy you were if I could be with you and
 become your comrade ;
 Be it as if I were with you. (Be not too certain but I am
 now with you.)

SALUT AU MONDE!

1

O TAKE my hand Walt Whitman !
Such gliding wonders ! such sights and sounds !
Such join'd unended links, each hook'd to the next,
Each answering all, each sharing the earth with all.

What widens within you Walt Whitman ?
What waves and soils exuding ?
What climes ? what persons and cities are here ?
Who are the infants, some playing, some slumbering ?
Who are the girls ? who are the married women ?
Who are the groups of old men going slowly with their
arms about each other's necks ?
What rivers are these ? what forests and fruits are these ?
What are the mountains call'd that rise so high in the
mists ?
What myriads of dwellings are they fill'd with dwellers ?

2

Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens,
Asia, Africa, Europe, are to the east—America is provided
for in the west,
Banding the bulge of the earth winds the hot equator,
Curiously north and south turn the axis-ends,
Within me is the longest day, the sun wheels in slanting
rings, it does not set for months,
Stretch'd in due time within me the midnight sun just rises
above the horizon and sinks again,
Within me zones, seas, cataracts, forests, volcanoes, groups,
Malaysia, Polynesia, and the great West Indian islands.

3

What do you hear Walt Whitman ?
I hear the workman singing and the farmer's wife singing,

I hear in the distance the sounds of children and of animals
early in the day,
I hear emulous shouts of Australians pursuing the wild
horse,
I hear the Spanish dance with castanets in the chestnut
shade, to the rebeck and guitar,
I hear continual echoes from the Thames,
I hear fierce French liberty songs,
I hear of the Italian boat-sculler the musical recitative of
old poems,
I hear the locusts in Syria as they strike the grain and grass
with the showers of their terrible clouds,
I hear the Coptic refrain toward sundown, pensively falling
on the breast of the black venerable vast mother the
Nile,
I hear the chirp of the Mexican muleteer, and the bells of
the mule,
I hear the Arab muezzin calling from the top of the mosque,
I hear the Christian priests at the altars of their churches,
I hear the responsive base and soprano,
I hear the cry of the Cossack, and the sailor's voice putting
to sea at Okotsk,
I hear the wheeze of the slave-coffe as the slaves march on,
as the husky gangs pass on by twos and threes,
fasten'd together with wrist-chains and ankle-chains,
I hear the Hebrew reading his records and psalms,
I hear the rhythmic myths of the Greeks, and the strong
legends of the Romans,
I hear the tale of the divine life and bloody death of the
beautiful God the Christ,
I hear the Hindoo teaching his favorite pupil the loves,
wars, adages, transmitted safely to this day from
poets who wrote three thousand years ago.

4

What do you see Walt Whitman?

Who are they you salute, and that one after another salute
you?

I see a great round wonder rolling through space,
I see diminute farms, hamlets, ruins, graveyards, jails,
factories, palaces, hovels, huts of barbarians, tents
of nomads upon the surface,

I see the shaded part on one side where the sleepers are
sleeping, and the sunlit part on the other side,
I see the curious rapid change of the light and shade,
I see distant lands, as real and near to the inhabitants of
them as my land is to me.

I see plenteous waters,
I see mountain peaks, I see the sierras of Andes where they
range,
I see plainly the Himalayas, Chian Shahs, Altays, Ghauts,
I see the giant pinnacles of Elbruz, Kazbek, Bazardjusi,
I see the Styrian Alps, and the Karnac Alps,
I see the Pyrenees, Balks, Carpathians, and to the north
the Dofrafields, and off at sea mount Hecla,
I see Vesuvius and Etna, the mountains of the Moon, and
the Red mountains of Madagascar,
I see the Lybian, Arabian, and Asiatic deserts,
I see huge dreadful Arctic and Antarctic icebergs,
I see the superior oceans and the inferior ones, the Atlantic
and Pacific, the sea of Mexico, the Brazilian sea, and
the sea of Peru,
The waters of Hindustan, the China sea, and the gulf of
Guinea,
The Japan waters, the beautiful bay of Nagasaki land-
lock'd in its mountains,
The spread of the Baltic, Caspian, Bothnia, the British
shores, and the bay of Biscay,
The clear-sunn'd Mediterranean, and from one to another
of its islands,
The White sea, and the sea around Greenland.

I behold the mariners of the world,
Some are in storms, some in the night with the watch on
the look-out,
Some drifting helplessly, some with contagious diseases.

I behold the sail and steamships of the world, some in
clusters in port, some on their voyages,
Some double the cape of Storms, some cape Verde, others
capes Guardafui, Bon, or Bajadore,
Others Dondra head, others pass the straits of Sunda, others
cape Lopatka, others Behring's straits,

Others cape Horn, others sail the gulf of Mexico or along
Cuba or Hayti, others Hudson's bay or Baffin's bay,
Others pass the straits of Dover, others enter the Wash,
others the firth of Solway, others round cape Clear,
others the Land's End,
Others traverse the Zuyder Zee or the Scheld,
Others as comers and goers at Gibraltar or the Dardanelles,
Others sternly push their way through the northern winter-
packs,
Others descend or ascend the Obi or the Lena,
Others the Niger or the Congo, others the Indus, the
Burampooter and Cambodia,
Others wait steam'd up ready to start in the ports of
Australia,
Wait at Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin, Marseilles, Lisbon,
Naples, Hamburg, Bremen, Bordeaux, the Hague,
Copenhagen,
Wait at Valparaiso, Rio Janeiro, Panama.

5

I see the tracks of the railroads of the earth,
I see them in Great Britain, I see them in Europe,
I see them in Asia and in Africa.

I see the electric telegraphs of the earth,
I see the filaments of the news of the wars, deaths, losses,
gains, passions, of my race.

I see the long river-stripes of the earth,
I see the Amazon and the Paraguay,
I see the four great rivers of China, the Amour, the Yellow
River, the Yiang-tse, and the Pearl,
I see where the Seine flows, and where the Danube, the
Loire, the Rhone, and the Guadalquiver flow,
I see the windings of the Volga, the Dnieper, the Oder,
I see the Tuscan going down the Arno, and the Venetian
along the Po,
I see the Greek seaman sailing out of Egina bay.

6

I see the site of the old empire of Assyria, and that of
Persia, and that of India,
I see the falling of the Ganges over the high rim of Saukara.

I see the place of the idea of the Deity incarnated by
 avatars in human forms,
 I see the spots of the successions of priests on the earth,
 oracles, sacrificers, brahmins, sabians, llamas, monks,
 muftis, exhorters,
 I see where druids walk'd the groves of Mona, I see the
 mistletoe and vervain,
I see the temples of the deaths of the bodies of Gods, I see
 the old signifiers.

I see Christ eating the bread of his last supper in the midst
 of youths and old persons,
 I see where the strong divine young man the Hercules toil'd
 faithfully and long and then died,
 I see the place of the innocent rich life and hapless fate of
 the beautiful nocturnal son, the full-limb'd Bacchus,
 I see Kneph, blooming, drest in blue, with the crown of
 feathers on his head,
 I see Hermes, unsuspected, dying, well-belov'd, saying to
 the people *Do not weep for me,*
This is not my true country, I have lived banish'd from my
true country, I now go back there,
I return to the celestial sphere where every one goes in his turn.

7

I see the battle-fields of the earth, grass grows upon them
 and blossoms and corn,
 I see the tracks of ancient and modern expeditions.
 I see the nameless masonries, venerable messages of the
 unknown events, heroes, records of the earth.
 I see the places of the sagas,
 I see pine-trees and fir-trees torn by northern blasts,
 I see granite boulders and cliffs, I see green meadows and
 lakes,
 I see the burial-cairns of Scandinavian warriors,
 I see them raised high with stones by the marge of restless
 oceans, that the dead men's spirits when they wearied
 of their quiet graves might rise up through the mounds
 and gaze on the tossing billows, and be refresh'd by
 storms, immensity, liberty, action.
 I see the steppes of Asia,

I see the tumuli of Mongolia, I see the tents of Kalmucks
and Baskirs,
I see the nomadic tribes with herds of oxen and cows,
I see the table-lands notch'd with ravines, I see the jungles
and deserts,
I see the camel, the wild steed, the bustard, the fat-tail'd
sheep, the antelope, and the burrowing wolf.
I see the highlands of Abyssinia,
I see flocks of goats feeding, and see the fig-tree, tamarind,
date,
And see fields of teff-wheat and places of verdure and gold.

I see the Brazilian vaquero,
I see the Bolivian ascending mount Sorata,
I see the Wacho crossing the plains, I see the incomparable
rider of horses with his lasso on his arm,
I see over the pampas the pursuit of wild cattle for their
hides.

8

I see the regions of snow and ice,
I see the sharp-eyed Samoiede and the Finn,
I see the seal-seeker in his boat poising his lance,
I see the Siberian on his slight-built sledge drawn by dogs,
I see the porpoise-hunters, I see the whale-crews of the
south Pacific and the north Atlantic,
I see the cliffs, glaciers, torrents, valleys, of Switzerland—I
mark the long winters and the isolation.

9

I see the cities of the earth and make myself at random a
part of them,
I am a real Parisian,
I am a habitan of Vienna, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Con-
stantinople,
I am of Adelaide, Sidney, Melbourne,
I am of London, Manchester, Bristol, Edinburgh, Limerick,
I am of Madrid, Cadiz, Barcelona, Oporto, Lyons, Brussels,
Berne, Frankfort, Stuttgart, Turin, Florence,
I belong in Moscow, Cracow, Warsaw, or northward in
Christiania or Stockholm, or in Siberian Irkutsk, or in
some street in Iceland,
I descend upon all those cities, and rise from them again.

10

I see vapors exhaling from unexplored countries,
I see the savage types, the bow and arrow, the poison'd
splint, the fetich, and the obi.

I see African and Asiatic towns,
I see Algiers, Tripoli, Derne, Mogadore, Timbuctoo,
Monrovia,
I see the swarms of Pekin, Canton, Benares, Delhi, Calcutta,
Tokio,
I see the Kruman in his hut, and the Dahoman and Ashan-
tee-man in their huts,
I see the Turk smoking opium in Aleppo,
I see the picturesque crowds at the fairs of Khiva and those
of Herat,
I see Teheran, I see Muscat and Medina and the intervening
sands, I see the caravans toiling onward,
I see Egypt and the Egyptians, I see the pyramids and
obelisks,
I look on chisell'd histories, records of conquering kings,
dynasties, cut in slabs of sand-stone, or on granite
blocks,
I see at Memphis mummy-pits containing mummies
embalm'd, swathed in linen cloth, lying there many
centuries,
I look on the fall'n Theban, the large-ball'd eyes, the side-
drooping neck, the hands folded across the breast.

I see all the menials of the earth, laboring,
I see all the prisoners in the prisons,
I see the defective human bodies of the earth,
The blind, the deaf and dumb, idiots, hunchbacks, lunatics,
The pirates, thieves, betrayers, murderers, slave-makers of
the earth,
The helpless infants, and the helpless old men and women.

I see male and female everywhere,
I see the serene brotherhood of philosophers,
I see the constructiveness of my race,
I see the results of the perseverance and industry of my
race,

I see ranks, colors, barbarisms, civilizations, I go among
them, I mix indiscriminately,
And I salute all the inhabitants of the earth.

11

You whoever you are !
You daughter or son of England !
You of the mighty Slavic tribes and empires ! you Russ
in Russia !
You dim-descended, black, divine-soul'd African, large,
fine-headed, nobly-form'd, superbly destin'd, on equal
terms with me !
You Norwegian ! Swede ! Dane ! Icelfander ! you Prus-
sian !
You Spaniard of Spain ! you Portuguese !
You Frenchwoman and Frenchman of France !
You Belge ! you liberty-lover of the Netherlands ! (you
stock whence I myself have descended ;)
You sturdy Austrian ! you Lombard ! Hun ! Bohemian !
farmer of Styria !
You neighbor of the Danube !
You working-man of the Rhine, the Elbe, or the Weser !
you working-woman too !
You Sardinian ! you Bavarian ! Swabian ! Saxon !
Wallachian ! Bulgarian !
You Roman ! Neapolitan ! you Greek !
You lithe matador in the arena at Seville !
You mountaineer living lawlessly on the Taurus or
Caucasus !
You Bokh horse-herd watching your mares and stallions
feeding !
You beautiful-bodied Persian at full speed in the saddle
shooting arrows to the mark !
You Chinaman and Chinawoman of China ! you Tartar of
Tartary !
You women of the earth subordinated at your tasks !
You Jew journeying in your old age through every risk
to stand once on Syrian ground !
You other Jews waiting in all lands for your Messiah !
You thoughtful Armenian pondering by some stream of the
Euphrates ! you peering amid the ruins of Nineveh !
you ascending mount Ararat !

You foot-worn pilgrim welcoming the far-away sparkle of
the minarets of Mecca !

You sheiks along the stretch from Suez to Bab-el-mandeb
ruling your families and tribes !

You olive-grower tending your fruit on fields of Nazareth,
Damascus, or lake Tiberias !

You Thibet trader on the wide inland or bargaining in the
shops of Lassa !

You Japanese man or woman ! you liver in Madagascar,
Ceylon, Sumatra, Borneo !

All you continentals of Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia,
indifferent of place !

All you on the numberless islands of the archipelagoes of
the sea !

And you of centuries hence when you listen to me !

And you each and everywhere whom I specify not, but
include just the same !

Health to you ! good will to you all, from me and America
sent !

Each of us inevitable,

Each of us limitless—each of us with his or her right upon
the earth,

Each of us allow'd the eternal purports of the earth,

Each of us here as divinely as any is here.

12

You Hottentot with clicking palate ! you woolly-hair'd
hordes !

You own'd persons dropping sweat-drops or blood-drops !

You human forms with the fathomless ever-impressive
countenances of brutes !

You poor koboo whom the meanest of the rest look down
upon for all your glimmering language and spirituality !

You dwarf'd Kamtschatkan, Greenlander, Lapp !

You Austral negro, naked, red, sooty, with protrusive lip,
groveling, seeking your food !

You Caffre, Berber, Soudanese !

You haggard, uncouth, untutor'd Bedowee !

You plague-swarms in Madras, Nankin, Kaubul, Cairo !

You benighted roamer of Amazonia ! you Patagonian ! you
Feejeeman !

I do not prefer others so very much before you either,
I do not say one word against you, away back there where
you stand,
(You will come forward in due time to my side.)

13

My spirit has pass'd in compassion and determination
around the whole earth,
I have look'd for equals and lovers and found them ready
for me in all lands,
I think some divine rapport has equalized me with them.

You vapors, I think I have risen with you, moved away to
distant continents, and fallen down there, for reasons,
I think I have blown with you you winds ;
You waters I have finger'd every shore with you,
I have run through what any river or strait of the globe has
run through,

I have taken my stand on the bases of peninsulas and on
the high embedded rocks, to cry thence :

Salut au monde !

What cities the light or warmth penetrates I penetrate
those cities myself,
All islands to which birds wing their way I wing my way
myself.

Toward you all, in America's name,
I raise high the perpendicular hand, I make the signal,
To remain after me in sight forever,
For all the haunts and homes of men.

SONG OF THE OPEN ROAD

1

Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before me,
The long brown path before me leading wherever I choose.

Henceforth I ask not good-fortune, I myself am good-
fortune,

Henceforth I whimper no more, postpone no more, need
nothing,

Done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms,
Strong and content I travel the open road.

The earth, that is sufficient,
I do not want the constellations any nearer,
I know they are very well where they are,
I know they suffice for those who belong to them.

(Still here I carry my old delicious burdens,
I carry them, men and women, I carry them with me
wherever I go,

I swear it is impossible for me to get rid of them,
I am fill'd with them, and I will fill them in return.)

2

You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you are
not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here.

Here the profound lesson of reception, nor preference nor
denial,

The black with his woolly head, the felon, the diseas'd, the
illiterate person, are not denied ;

The birth, the hasting after the physician, the beggar's
tramp, the drunkard's stagger, the laughing party of
mechanics,

The escaped youth, the rich person's carriage, the fop, the eloping couple,
The early market-man, the hearse, the moving of furniture into the town, the return back from the town,
They pass, I also pass, any thing passes, none can be interdicted,
None but are accepted, none but shall be dear to me.

3

You air that serves me with breath to speak !
You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and give them shape !
You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable showers !
You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides !
I believe you are latent with unseen existences, you are so dear to me.

You flagg'd walks of the cities ! you strong curbs at the edges !
You ferries ! you planks and posts of wharves ! you timber-lined sides ! you distant ships !
You rows of houses ! you window-pierc'd façades ! you roofs !
You porches and entrances ! you copings and iron guards !
You windows whose transparent shells might expose so much !
You doors and ascending steps ! you arches !
You gray stones of interminable pavements ! you trodden crossings !
From all that has touch'd you I believe you have imparted to yourselves, and now would impart the same secretly to me,
From the living and the dead you have peopled your impassive surfaces, and the spirits thereof would be evident and amicable with me.

4

The earth expanding right hand and left hand,
The picture alive, every part in its best light,
The music falling in where it is wanted, and stopping where it is not wanted,

The cheerful voice of the public road, the gay fresh sentiment of the road.

O highway I travel, do you say to me *Do not leave me?*
Do you say *Venture not—if you leave me you are lost?*
Do you say *I am already prepared, I am well-beaten and undenied, adhere to me?*

O public road, I say back I am not afraid to leave you, yet
I love you,
You express me better than I can express myself,
You shall be more to me than my poem.

I think heroic deeds were all conceiv'd in the open air, and
all free poems also,
I think I could stop here myself and do miracles,
I think whatever I shall meet on the road I shall like, and
whoever beholds me shall like me,
I think whoever I see must be happy.

5

From this hour I ordain myself loos'd of limits and
imaginary lines,
Going where I list, my own master total and absolute,
Listening to others, considering well what they say,
Pausing, searching, receiving, contemplating,
Gently, but with undeniable will, divesting myself of the
holds that would hold me.

I inhale great draughts of space,
The east and the west are mine, and the north and the south
are mine.

I am larger, better than I thought,
I did not know I held so much goodness.

All seems beautiful to me,
I can repeat over to men and women You have done such
good to me I would do the same to you,
I will recruit for myself and you as I go,
I will scatter myself among men and women as I go,
I will toss a new gladness and roughness among them,

Whoever denies me it shall not trouble me,
Whoever accepts me he or she shall be blessed and shall
bless me.

6

Now if a thousand perfect men were to appear it would not
amaze me,

Now if a thousand beautiful forms of women appear'd it
would not astonish me.

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons,
It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the
earth.

Here a great personal deed has room,
(Such a deed seizes upon the hearts of the whole race of men,
Its effusion of strength and will overwhelms law and mocks
all authority and all argument against it.)

Here is the test of wisdom,
Wisdom is not finally tested in schools,
Wisdom cannot be pass'd from one having it to another
not having it,
Wisdom is of the soul, is not susceptible of proof, is its own
proof,
Applies to all stages and objects and qualities and is content,
Is the certainty of the reality and immortality of things,
and the excellence of things ;
Something there is in the float of the sight of things that
provokes it out of the soul.

Now I re-examine philosophies and religions,
They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all
under the spacious clouds and along the landscape and
flowing currents.

Here is realization,
Here is a man tallied—he realizes here what he has in him,
The past, the future, majesty, love—if they are vacant of
you, you are vacant of them.

Only the kernel of every object nourishes ;
Where is he who tears off the husks for you and me ?
Where is he that undoes stratagems and envelopes for you
and me ?

Here is adhesiveness, it is not previously fashion'd, it is
apropos ;

Do you know what it is as you pass to be loved by
strangers ?

Do you know the talk of those turning eye-balls ?

7

Here is the efflux of the soul,
The efflux of the soul comes from within through embower'd
gates, ever provoking questions,

These yearnings why are they ? these thoughts in the
darkness why are they ?

Why are there men and women that while they are nigh
me the sunlight expands my blood ?

Why when they leave me do my pennants of joy sink flat
and lank ?

Why are there trees I never walk under but large and
melodious thoughts descend upon me ?

(I think they hang there winter and summer on those trees
and always drop fruit as I pass ;)

What is it I interchange so suddenly with strangers ?

What with some driver as I ride on the seat by his side ?

What with some fisherman drawing his seine by the shore
as I walk by and pause ?

What gives me to be free to a woman's and man's good-
will ? what gives them to be free to mine ?

8

The efflux of the soul is happiness, here is happiness,
I think it pervades the open air, waiting at all times,
Now it flows unto us, we are rightly charged.

Here rises the fluid and attaching character,
The fluid and attaching character is the freshness and
sweetness of man and woman,

(The herbs of the morning sprout no fresher and sweeter
every day out of the roots of themselves, than it sprouts
fresh and sweet continually out of itself.)

Toward the fluid and attaching character exudes the sweat
of the love of young and old,

From it falls distill'd the charm that mocks beauty and
attainments,
Toward it heaves the shuddering longing ache of contact.

9

Allons ! whoever you are come travel with me !
Traveling with me you find what never tires.

The earth never tires,
The earth is rude, silent, incomprehensible at first, Nature
is rude and incomprehensible at first,
Be not discouraged, keep on, there are divine things well
envelop'd,
I swear to you there are divine things more beautiful than
words can tell.

Allons ! we must not stop here,
However sweet these laid-up stores, however convenient
this dwelling we cannot remain here,
However shelter'd this port and however calm these waters
we must not anchor here,
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us we are
permitted to receive it but a little while.

10

Allons ! the inducements shall be greater,
We will sail pathless and wild seas,
We will go where winds blow, waves dash, and the Yankee
clipper speeds by under full sail.

Allons ! with power, liberty, the earth, the elements,
Health, defiance, gayety, self-esteem, curiosity ;
Allons ! from all formules !
From your formules, O bat-eyed and materialistic priests.

The stale cadaver blocks up the passage—the burial waits
no longer.

Allons ! yet take warning !
He traveling with me needs the best blood, thews, endurance,
None may come to the trial till he or she bring courage and
health,

Come not here if you have already spent the best of your-
self,
Only those may come who come in sweet and determin'd
bodies,
No diseas'd person, no rum-drinker or venereal taint is
permitted here.

(I and mine do not convince by arguments, similes, rhymes,
We convince by our presence.)

11

Listen ! I will be honest with you,
I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new
prizes,
These are the days that must happen to you :
You shall not heap up what is call'd riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or
achieve,
You but arrive at the city to which you were destin'd, you
hardly settle yourself to satisfaction before you are
call'd by an irresistible call to depart,
You shall be treated to the ironical smiles and mockings of
those who remain behind you,
What beckonings of love you receive you shall only answer
with passionate kisses of parting,
You shall not allow the hold of those who spread their
reach'd hands toward you.

12

Allons ! after the great Companions, and to belong to them !
They too are on the road—they are the swift and majestic
men—they are the greatest women,
Enjoyers of calms of seas and storms of seas,
Sailors of many a ship, walkers of many a mile of land,
Habitués of many distant countries, habitués of far-distant
dwellings,
Trusters of men and women, observers of cities, solitary
toilers,
Pausers and contemplators of tufts, blossoms, shells of the
shore,
Dancers at wedding-dances, kissers of brides, tender helpers
of children, bearers of children,

Soldiers of revolts, standers by gaping graves, lowerers-
down of coffins,
Journeyers over consecutive seasons, over the years, the
curious years each emerging from that which pre-
ceded it,
Journeyers as with companions, namely their own diverse
phases,
Forth-steppers from the latent unrealized baby-days,
Journeyers gayly with their own youth, journeyers with
their bearded and well-grain'd manhood,
Journeyers with their womanhood, ample, unsurpass'd,
content,
Journeyers with their own sublime old age of manhood or
womanhood,
Old age, calm, expanded, broad with the haughty breadth
of the universe,
Old age, flowing free with the delicious near-by freedom of
death.

13

Allons ! to that which is endless as it was beginningless,
To undergo much, tramps of days, rests of nights,
To merge all in the travel they tend to, and the days and
nights they tend to,
Again to merge them in the start of superior journeys,
To see nothing anywhere but what you may reach it and
pass it,
To conceive no time, however distant, but what you may
reach it and pass it,
To look up or down no road but it stretches and waits for
you, however long but it stretches and waits for you,
To see no being, not God's or any, but you also go thither,
To see no possession but you may possess it, enjoying all
without labor or purchase, abstracting the feast yet
not abstracting one particle of it,
To take the best of the farmer's farm and the rich man's
elegant villa, and the chaste blessings of the well-
married couple, and the fruits of orchards and flowers
of gardens,
To take to your use out of the compact cities as you pass
through,
To carry buildings and streets with you afterward wherever
you go,

To gather the minds of men out of their brains as you
encounter them, to gather the love out of their hearts,
To take your lovers on the road with you, for all that you
leave them behind you,
To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as
roads for traveling souls.

All parts away for the progress of souls,
All religion, all solid things, arts, governments—all that was
or is apparent upon this globe or any globe, falls into
niches and corners before the procession of souls along
the grand roads of the universe.

Of the progress of the souls of men and women along the
grand roads of the universe, all other progress is the
needed emblem and sustenance.

Forever alive, forever forward,
Stately, solemn, sad, withdrawn, baffled, mad, turbulent,
feeble, dissatisfied,
Desperate, proud, fond, sick, accepted by men, rejected by
men,
(They go ! they go ! I know that they go, but I know not
where they go,
But I know that they go toward the best—toward some-
thing great.

Whoever you are, come forth ! or man or woman come
forth !

You must not stay sleeping and dallying there in the house,
though you built it, or though it has been built for you.

Out of the dark confinement ! out from behind the screen !
It is useless to protest, I know all and expose it.

Behold through you as bad as the rest,
Through the laughter, dancing, dining, supping, of people,
Inside of dresses and ornaments, inside of those wash'd and
trimm'd faces,
Behold a secret silent loathing and despair.

No husband, no wife, no friend, trusted to hear the con-
fession,

Another self, a duplicate of every one, skulking and hiding
it goes,
Formless and wordless through the streets of the cities,
polite and bland in the parlors,
In the cars of railroads, in steamboats, in the public
assembly,
Home to the houses of men and women, at the table, in the
bed-room, everywhere,
Smartly attired, countenance smiling, form upright, death
under the breast-bones, hell under the skull-bones,
Under the broadcloth and gloves, under the ribbons and
artificial flowers,
Keeping fair with the customs, speaking not a syllable of
itself,
Speaking of any thing else but never of itself.

14

Allons ! through struggles and wars !
The goal that was named cannot be countermanded.

Have the past struggles succeeded ?
What has succeeded ? yourself ? your nation ? Nature ?
Now understand me well—it is provided in the essence of
things that from any fruition of success, no matter
what, shall come forth something to make a greater
struggle necessary.

My call is the call of battle, I nourish active rebellion,
He going with me must go well arm'd,
He going with me goes often with spare diet, poverty,
angry enemies, desertions.

15

Allons ! the road is before us !
It is safe—I have tried it—my own feet have tried it well
—be not detain'd !
Let the paper remain on the desk unwritten, and the book
on the shelf unopen'd !
Let the tools remain in the workshop ! let the money
remain unearn'd !
Let the school stand ! mind not the cry of the teacher !
Let the preacher preach in his pulpit ! let the lawyer plead
in the court, and the judge expound the law.

Camerado, I give you my hand !
 I give you my love more precious than money,
 I give you myself before preaching or law ;
 Will you give me yourself ? will you come travel with me ?
 Shall we stick by each other as long as we live ?

CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY

1

FLOOD-TIDE below me ! I see you face to face !
Clouds of the west—sun there half an hour high—I see you
also face to face.

Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes,
how curious you are to me !
On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that cross,
returning home, are more curious to me than you
suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence
are more to me, and more in my meditations, than you
might suppose.

2

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all
hours of the day,
The simple, compact, well-join'd scheme, myself disinte-
grated, every one disintegrated yet part of the scheme,
The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and
hearings, on the walk in the street and the passage over
the river,
The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far
away,
The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and
them,
The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of
others.

Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from shore
to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west,
and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east,

Others will see the islands large and small ;
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun
half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years
hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the
falling-back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

3

It avails not, time nor place—distance avails not,
I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or
ever so many generations hence,
Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I
felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a
crowd,
Just as you are refresh'd by the gladness of the river and
the bright flow, I was refresh'd,
Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the
swift current, I stood yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and the
thick-stemm'd pipes of steamboats, I look'd.

I too many and many a time cross'd the river of old,
Watched the Twelfth-month sea-gulls, saw them high in
the air floating with motionless wings, oscillating their
bodies,
Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies
and left the rest in strong shadow,
Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging
toward the south,
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
Look'd at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the
shape of my head in the sunlit water,
Look'd on the haze on the hills southward and south-
westward,
Look'd on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
Look'd toward the lower bay to notice the vessels arriving,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at
anchor,

The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the spars,
 The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the
 slender serpentine pennants,
 The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their
 pilot-houses,
 The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous
 whirl of the wheels,
 The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
 The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups,
 the frolicsome crests and glistening,
 The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray
 walls of the granite storehouses by the docks,
 On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely
 flank'd on each side by the barges, the hay-boat, the
 belated lighter,
 On the neighboring shore the fires from the foundry
 chimneys burning high and glaringly into the night,
 Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red and
 yellow light over the tops of houses, and down into
 the clefts of streets.

4

These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
 I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid
 river,
 The men and women I saw were all near to me,
 Others the same—others who look back on me because I
 look'd forward to them,
 (The time will come, though I stop here to-day and to-
 night.)

5

What is it then between us ?
 What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between
 us ?

Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place
 avails not,

I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
 I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed
 in the waters around it,
 I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me,
 In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came
 upon me,

In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed they
 came upon me,
 I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
 I too had receiv'd identity by my body,
 That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I
 knew I should be of my body.

-6

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
 The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
 The best I had done seem'd to me blank and suspicious,
 My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in
 reality meagre ?

Nor is it you alone who know what it is to be evil,
 I am he who knew what it was to be evil,
 I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,
 Blabb'd, blush'd, resented, lied, stole, grudg'd,
 Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
 Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly,
 malignant,

The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
 The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish,
 not wanting,

Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none
 of these wanting,

Was one with the rest, the days and haps of the rest,
 Was call'd by my nighest name by clear loud voices of
 young men as they saw me approaching or passing,
 Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent
 leaning of their flesh against me as I sat,

Saw many I loved in the street or ferry-boat or public
 assembly, yet never told them a word,

Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing,
 gnawing, sleeping,

Play'd the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
 The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great
 as we like,

Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

7

Closer yet I approach you,
 What thought you have of me now, I had as much of you—
 I laid in my stores in advance,
 I consider'd long and seriously of you before you were born.

Who was to know what should come home to me ?
 Who knows but I am enjoying this ?
 Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking
 at you now, for all you cannot see me ?

8

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me
 than mast-hemm'd Manhattan ?

River and sunset and scallop-edg'd waves of flood-tide ?
 The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the
 twilight, and the belated lighter ?

What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand,
 and with voices I love call me promptly and loudly
 by my nighest name as I approach ?

What is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman
 or man that looks in my face ?

Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning
 into you ?

We understand then do we not ?

What I promis'd without mentioning it, have you not
 accepted ?

What the study could not teach—what the preaching could
 not accomplish is accomplish'd, is it not ?

9

Flow on, river ! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the
 ebb-tide !

Frolic on, crested and scallop-edg'd waves !

Gorgeous clouds of the sunset ! drench with your splendor
 me, or the men and women generations after me !

Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers !

Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta ! stand up, beautiful
 hills of Brooklyn !

Throb, baffled and curious brain ! throw out questions and
 answers !

Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution !

Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street or
 public assembly !

Sound out, voices of young men ! loudly and musically call
 me by my nighest name !

Live, old life ! play the part that looks back on the actor or
 actress !

Play the old role, the role that is great or small according
as one makes it !
Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in un-
known ways be looking upon you ;
Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly,
yet haste with the hasting current ;
Fly on, sea-birds ! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles
high in the air ;
Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it
till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you !
Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or
any one's head, in the sunlit water !
Come on, ships from the lower bay ! pass up or down,
white-sail'd schooners, sloops, lighters !
Flaunt away, flags of all nations ! be duly lower'd at
sunset !
Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys ! cast black
shadows at nightfall ! cast red and yellow light over
the tops of the houses !
Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are,
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung
our divinest aromas,
Thrive, cities—bring your freight, bring your shows, ample
and sufficient rivers,
Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more
spiritual,
Keep your places, objects than which none else is more
lasting.
You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful
ministers,
We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate
henceforward,
Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold
yourselves from us,
We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you
permanently within us,
We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection in
you also,
You furnish your parts toward eternity,
Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.

SONG OF THE ANSWERER

1

Now list to my morning's romanza, I tell the signs of the
Answerer,
To the cities and farms I sing as they spread in the sunshine
before me.

A young man comes to me bearing a message from his
brother,
How shall the young man know the whether and when of
his brother?
Tell him to send me the signs.

And I stand before the young man face to face, and take
his right hand in my left hand and his left hand in my
right hand,
And I answer for his brother and for men, and I answer for
him that answers for all, and send these signs.

Him all wait for, him all yield up to, his word is decisive
and final,
Him they accept, in him lave, in him perceive themselves
as amid light,
Him they immerse and he immerses them.

Beautiful women, the haughtiest nations, laws, the land-
scape, people, animals,
The profound earth and its attributes and the unquiet ocean,
(so tell I my morning's romanza,)
All enjoyments and properties and money, and whatever
money will buy,
The best farms, others toiling and planting and he un-
avoidably reaps,
The noblest and costliest cities, others grading and building
and he domiciles there.

Nothing for any one but what is for him, near and far are
for him, the ships in the offing,
The perpetual shows and marches on land are for him if
they are for anybody.

He puts things in their attitudes,
He puts to-day out of himself with plasticity and love,
He places his own times, reminiscences, parents, brothers
and sisters, associations, employment, politics, so
that the rest never shame them afterward, nor assume
to command them.

He is the Answerer,
What can be answer'd he answers, and what cannot be
answer'd he shows how it cannot be answer'd.

A man is a summons and challenge,
(It is vain to skulk—do you hear that mocking and
laughter? do you hear the ironical echoes?)

Books, friendships, philosophers, priests, action, pleasure,
pride, beat up and down seeking to give satisfaction,
He indicates the satisfaction, and indicates them that beat
up and down also.

Whichever the sex, whatever the season or place, he may go
freshly and gently and safely by day or by night,
He has the pass-key of hearts, to him the response of the
prying of hands on the knobs.

His welcome is universal, the flow of beauty is not more
welcome or universal than he is,
The person he favors by day or sleeps with at night is
blessed.

Every existence has its idiom, every thing has an idiom and
tongue,
He resolves all tongues into his own and bestows it upon
men, and any man translates, and any man translates
himself also,
One part does not counteract another part, he is the joiner,
he sees how they join.

He says indifferently and alike *How are you friend?* to the
President at his levee,
And he says *Good-day my brother*, to Cudge that hoes in the
sugar-field,
And both understand him and know that his speech is
right.

He walks with perfect ease in the capitol,
He walks among the Congress, and one Representative
says to another, *Here is our equal appearing and new.*

Then the mechanics take him for a mechanic,
And the soldiers suppose him to be a soldier, and the
sailors that he has follow'd the sea,
And the authors take him for an author, and the artists for
an artist,
And the laborers perceive he could labor with them and
love them,
No matter what the work is, that he is the one to follow
it or has follow'd it,
No matter what the nation, that he might find his brothers
and sisters there.

The English believe he comes of their English stock,
A Jew to the Jew he seems, a Russ to the Russ, usual and
near, removed from none.

Whoever he looks at in the traveler's coffee-house claims
him,

The Italian or Frenchman is sure, the German is sure,
the Spaniard is sure, and the island Cuban is sure,
The engineer, the deck-hand on the great lakes, or on the
Mississippi or St. Lawrence or Sacramento, or Hudson
or Paumanok sound, claims him.

The gentleman of perfect blood acknowledges his perfect
blood,

The insulter, the prostitute, the angry person, the beggar,
see themselves in the ways of him, he strangely
transmutes them,

They are not vile any more, they hardly know themselves
they are so grown.

2

The indications and tally of time,
Perfect sanity shows the master among philosophers,
Time, always without break, indicates itself in parts,
What always indicates the poet is the crowd of the pleasant
company of singers, and their words,

The words of the singers are the hours or minutes of the light
or dark, but the words of the maker of poems are the
general light and dark,

The maker of poems settles justice, reality, immortality,
His insight and power encircle things and the human race,
He is the glory and extract thus far of things and of the
human race.

The singers do not beget, only the Poet begets,
The singers are welcom'd, understood, appear often enough,
but rare has the day been, likewise the spot, of the
birth of the maker of poems, the Answerer,
(Not every century nor every five centuries has contain'd
such a day, for all its names.)

The singers of successive hours of centuries may have
ostensible names, but the name of each of them is one
of the singers,

The name of each is, eye-singer, ear-singer, head-singer,
sweet-singer, night-singer, parlor-singer, love-singer,
weird-singer, or something else.

All this time and at all times wait the words of true poems,
The words of true poems do not merely please,
The true poets are not followers of beauty but the august
masters of beauty ;

The greatness of sons is the exuding of the greatness of
mothers and fathers,

The words of true poems are the tuft and final applause of
science.

Divine instinct, breadth of vision, the law of reason, health,
rudeness of body, withdrawnness,

Gayety, sun-tan, air-sweetness, such are some of the words
of poems.

The sailor and traveler underlie the maker of poems,
the Answerer,
The builder, geometer, chemist, anatomist, phrenologist,
artist, all these underlie the maker of poems, the
Answerer.

The words of the true poems give you more than poems,
They give you to form for yourself poems, religions, politics,
war, peace, behavior, histories, essays, daily life, and
every thing else,
They balance ranks, colors, races, creeds, and the sexes,
They do not seek beauty, they are sought,
Forever touching them or close upon them follows beauty,
longing, fain, love-sick.
They prepare for death, yet are they not the finish, but
rather the outset,
They bring none to his or her terminus or to be content
and full,
Whom they take they take into space to behold the birth
of stars, to learn one of the meanings,
To launch off with absolute faith, to sweep through the
ceaseless rings and never be quiet again.

OUR OLD FEUILLAGE

ALWAYS our old feuillage !

Always Florida's green peninsula—always the priceless
delta of Louisiana—always the cotton-fields of
Alabama and Texas,

Always California's golden hills and hollows, and the silver
mountains of New Mexico—always soft-breath'd Cuba,

Always the vast slope drain'd by the Southern sea, in-
separable with the slopes drain'd by the Eastern and
Western seas,

The area the eighty-third year of these States, the three and
a half millions of square miles,

The eighteen thousand miles of sea-coast and bay-coast on
the main, the thirty thousand miles of river navigation,

The seven millions of distinct families and the same number
of dwellings—always these, and more, branching forth
into numberless branches,

Always the free range and diversity—always the continent
of Democracy ;

Always the prairies, pastures, forests, vast cities, travelers,
Kanada, the snows ;

Always these compact lands tied at the hips with the belt
stringing the huge oval lakes ;

Always the West with strong native persons, the increasing
density there, the habitans, friendly, threatening,
ironical, scorning invaders ;

All sights, South, North, East—all deeds, promiscuously
done at all times,

All characters, movements, growths, a few noticed, myriads
unnoticed,

Through Mannahatta's streets I walking, these things
gathering,

On interior rivers by night in the glare of pine knots,
steamboats wooding up,

Sunlight by day on the valley of the Susquehanna, and on
the valleys of the Potomac and Rappahannock, and
the valleys of the Roanoke and Delaware,

In their northerly wilds beasts of prey haunting the Adirondacks the hills, or lapping the Saginaw waters to drink,
In a lonesome inlet a sheldrake lost from the flock, sitting
on the water rocking silently,
In farmers' barns oxen in the stable, their harvest labor
done, they rest standing, they are too tired,
Afar on arctic ice the she-walrus lying drowsily while her
cubs play around,
The hawk sailing where men have not yet sail'd, the farthest
polar sea, ripply, crystalline, open, beyond the floes,
White drift spooning ahead where the ship in the tempest
dashes,
On solid land what is done in cities as the bells strike mid-
night together,
In primitive woods the sounds there also sounding, the
howl of the wolf, the scream of the panther, and the
hoarse bellow of the elk,
In winter beneath the hard blue ice of Moosehead lake, in
summer visible through the clear waters, the great
trout swimming,
In lower latitudes in warmer air in the Carolinas the large
black buzzard floating slowly high beyond the tree
tops,
Below, the red cedar festoon'd with tylandria, the pines
and cypresses growing out of the white sand that
spreads far and flat,
Rude boats descending the big Pedee, climbing plants,
parasites with color'd flowers and berries enveloping
huge trees,
The waving drapery on the live-oak trailing long and low,
noiselessly waved by the wind,
The camp of Georgia wagoners just after dark, the supper-
fires and the cooking and eating by whites and negroes,
Thirty or forty great wagons, the mules, cattle, horses,
feeding from troughs,
The shadows, gleams, up under the leaves of the old
sycamore-trees, the flames with the black smoke from
the pitch-pine curling and rising ;
Southern fishermen fishing, the sounds and inlets of North
Carolina's coast, the shad-fishery and the herring-
fishery, the large sweep-seines, the windlasses on shore
work'd by horses, the clearing, curing, and packing-
houses ;

Deep in the forest in piney woods turpentine dropping from
the incisions in the trees, there are the turpentine
works,
There are the negroes at work in good health, the ground
in all directions is cover'd with pine straw ;
In Tennessee and Kentucky slaves busy in the coalings, at
the forge, by the furnace-blaze, or at the corn-shucking,
In Virginia, the planter's son returning after a long absence,
joyfully welcom'd and kiss'd by the aged mulatto
nurse,
On rivers boatmen safely moor'd at nightfall in their boats
under shelter of high banks,
Some of the younger men dance to the sound of the banjo
or fiddle, others sit on the gunwale smoking and
talking ;
Late in the afternoon the mocking-bird, the American
mimic, singing in the Great Dismal Swamp,
There are the greenish waters, the resinous odor, the plen-
teous moss, the cypress-tree, and the juniper-tree ;
Northward, young men of Mannahatta, the target company
from an excursion returning home at evening, the
musket-muzzles all bear bunches of flowers presented
by women ;
Children at play, or on his father's lap a young boy fallen
asleep, (how his lips move ! how he smiles in his sleep !)
The scout riding on horseback over the plains west of the
Mississippi, he ascends a knoll and sweeps his eyes
around ;
California life, the miner, bearded, dress'd in his rude
costume, the stanch California friendship, the sweet
air, the graves one in passing meets solitary just aside
the horse-path ;
Down in Texas the cotton-field, the negro-cabins, drivers
driving mules or oxen before rude carts, cotton bales
piled on banks and wharves ;
Encircling all, vast-darting up and wide, the American
Soul, with equal hemispheres, one Love, one Dilation
or Pride ;
In arriere the peace-talk with the Iroquois the aborigines,
the calumet, the pipe of good-will, arbitration, and
indorsement,
The sachem blowing the smoke first toward the sun and
then toward the earth,

The drama of the scalp-dance enacted with painted faces
and guttural exclamations,
The setting out of the war-party, the long and stealthy
march,
The single file, the swinging hatchets, the surprise and
slaughter of enemies ;
All the acts, scenes, ways, persons, attitudes of these
States, reminiscences, institutions,
All these States compact, every square mile of these States
without excepting a particle ;
Me pleas'd, rambling in lanes and country fields, Paumanok's
fields,
Observing the spiral flight of two little yellow butterflies
shuffling between each other, ascending high in the air,
The darting swallow, the destroyer of insects, the fall
traveler southward but returning northward early in
the spring,
The country boy at the close of the day driving the herd of
cows and shouting to them as they loiter to browse by
the roadside,
The city wharf, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charles-
ton, New Orleans, San Francisco,
The departing ships when the sailors heave at the
capstan ;
Evening—me in my room—the setting sun,
The setting summer sun shining in my open window, showing
the swarm of flies, suspended, balancing in the air in
the centre of the room, darting athwart, up and down,
casting swift shadows in specks on the opposite wall
where the shine is ;
The athletic American matron speaking in public to crowds
of listeners,
Males, females, immigrants, combinations, the copiousness,
the individuality of the States, each for itself—the
moneymakers,
Factories, machinery, the mechanical forces, the windlass,
lever, pulley, all certainties,
The certainty of space, increase, freedom, futurity,
In space the sporades, the scatter'd islands, the stars—on
the firm earth, the lands, my lands,
O lands ! all so dear to me—what you are, (whatever it is,)
I putting it at random in these songs, become a part
of that, whatever it is,

Southward there, I screaming, with wings slow flapping,
with the myriads of gulls wintering along the coasts
of Florida,

Otherways there atwixt the banks of the Arkansaw, the
Rio Grande, the Nueces, the Brazos, the Tombigbee,
the Red River, the Saskatchewan or the Osage, I with
the spring waters laughing and skipping and running,
Northward, on the sands, on some shallow bay of
Paumanok, I with parties of snowy herons wading in
the wet to seek worms and aquatic plants,

Retreating, triumphantly twittering, the king-bird, from
piercing the crow with its bill, for amusement—and I
triumphantly twittering,

The migrating flock of wild geese alighting in autumn to
refresh themselves, the body of the flock feed, the
sentinels outside move around with erect heads watch-
ing, and are from time to time reliev'd by other sen-
tinels—and I feeding and taking turns with the rest,

In Kanadian forests the moose, large as an ox, corner'd
by hunters, rising desperately on his hind-feet, and
plunging with his fore-feet, the hoofs as sharp as
knives—and I, plunging at the hunters, corner'd and
desperate,

In the Mannahatta, streets, piers, shipping, store-houses,
and the countless workmen working in the shops,

And I too of the Mannahatta, singing thereof—and no less
in myself than the whole of the Mannahatta in itself,

Singing the song of These, my ever-united lands—my body
no more inevitably united, part to part, and made out
of a thousand diverse contributions one identity, any
more than my lands are inevitably united and made
ONE IDENTITY ;

Nativities, climates, the grass of the great pastoral Plains,
Cities, labors, death, animals, products, war, good and evil
—these me,

These affording, in all their particulars, the old feuillage to
me and to America, how can I do less than pass the
clew of the union of them, to afford the like to you ?

Whoever you are ! how can I but offer you divine leaves,
that you also be eligible as I am ?

How can I but as here chanting, invite you for yourself to
collect bouquets of the incomparable feuillage of these
States ?

A SONG OF JOYS

O to make the most jubilant song !
Full of music—full of manhood, womanhood, infancy !
Full of common employments—full of grain and trees.

O for the voices of animals—O for the swiftness and balance
of fishes !

O for the dropping of raindrops in a song !

O for the sunshine and motion of waves in a song !

O the joy of my spirit—it is uncaged—it darts like lightning !
It is not enough to have this globe or a certain time,
I will have thousands of globes and all time.

O the engineer's joys ! to go with a locomotive !
To hear the hiss of steam, the merry shriek, the steam-
whistle, the laughing locomotive !
To push with resistless way and speed off in the distance.

O the gleesome saunter over fields and hillsides !
The leaves and flowers of the commonest weeds, the moist
fresh stillness of the woods,
The exquisite smell of the earth at daybreak, and all
through the forenoon.

O the horseman's and horsewoman's joys !
The saddle, the gallop, the pressure upon the seat, the cool
gurgling by the ears and hair.

O the fireman's joys !
I hear the alarm at dead of night,
I hear bells, shouts ! I pass the crowd, I run !
The sight of the flames maddens me with pleasure.

O the joy of the strong-brawn'd fighter, towering in the
arena in perfect condition, conscious of power, thirsting
to meet his opponent.

O the joy of that vast elemental sympathy which only the human soul is capable of generating and emitting in steady and limitless floods.

O the mother's joys !

The watching, the endurance, the precious love, the anguish, the patiently yielded life.

O the joy of increase, growth, recuperation,
The joy of soothing and pacifying, the joy of concord and harmony.

O to go back to the place where I was born,
To hear the birds sing once more,
To ramble about the house and barn and over the fields
once more,
And through the orchard and along the old lanes once more.

O to have been brought up on bays, lagoons, creeks, or along
the coast,
To continue and be employ'd there all my life,
The briny and damp smell, the shore, the salt weeds exposed
at low water,
The work of fishermen, the work of the eel-fisher and clam-fisher ;

I come with my clam-rake and spade, I come with my
eel-spear,
Is the tide out ? I join the group of clam-diggers on the
flats,

I laugh and work with them, I joke at my work like a
mettlesome young man ;

In winter I take my eel-basket and eel-spear and travel
out on foot on the ice—I have a small axe to cut holes
in the ice,

Behold me well-clothed going gayly or returning in the
afternoon, my brood of tough boys accompanying me,
My brood of grown and part-grown boys, who love to be
with no one else so well as they love to be with me,
By day to work with me, and by night to sleep with me.

Another time in warm weather out in a boat, to lift the
lobster-pots where they are sunk with heavy stones,
(I know the buoys,)

O the sweetness of the Fifth-month morning upon the
water as I row just before sunrise toward the buoys,
I pull the wicker pots up slantingly, the dark green lobsters
are desperate with their claws as I take them out, I
insert wooden pegs in the joints of their pincers,
I go to all the places one after another, and then row back
to the shore,
There in a huge kettle of boiling water the lobsters shall be
boil'd till their color becomes scarlet.

Another time mackerel-taking,
Voracious, mad for the hook, near the surface, they seem
to fill the water for miles;
Another time fishing for rock-fish in Chesapeake bay, I one
of the brown-faced crew;
Another time trailing for blue-fish off Paumanok, I stand
with braced body,
My left foot is on the gunwale, my right arm throws far
out the coils of slender rope,
In sight around me the quick veering and darting of fifty
skiffs, my companions.

O boating on the rivers,
The voyage down the St. Lawrence, the superb scenery,
the steamers.
The ships sailing, the Thousand Islands, the occasional
timber-raft and the raftsmen with long-reaching
sweep-oars,
The little huts on the rafts, and the stream of smoke when
they cook supper at evening.

(O something pernicious and dread!
Something far away from a puny and pious life!
Something unproved! something in a trance!
Something escaped from the anchorage and driving free.)

O to work in mines, or forging iron,
Foundry casting, the foundry itself, the rude high roof, the
ample and shadow'd space,
The furnace, the hot liquid pour'd out and running.

O to resume the joys of the soldier!
To feel the presence of a brave commanding officer—to feel
his sympathy!

To behold his calmness—to be warm'd in the rays of his smile !

To go to battle—to hear the bugles play and the drums beat !

To hear the crash of artillery—to see the glittering of the bayonets and musket-barrels in the sun !

To see men fall and die and not complain !

To taste the savage taste of blood—to be so devilish !

To gloat so over the wounds and deaths of the enemy.

O the whaleman's joys ! O I cruise my old cruise again !

I feel the ship's motion under me, I feel the Atlantic breezes fanning me,

I hear the cry again sent down from the mast-head, *There—she blows !*

Again I spring up the rigging to look with the rest—we descend, wild with excitement,

I leap in the lower'd boat, we row toward our prey where he lies,

We approach stealthy and silent, I see the mountainous mass, lethargic, basking,

I see the harpooneer standing up, I see the weapon dart from his vigorous arm ;

O swift again far out in the ocean the wounded whale, settling, running to windward, tows me,

Again I see him rise to breathe, we row close again,

I see a lance driven through his side, press'd deep, turn'd in the wound,

Again we back off, I see him settle again, the life is leaving him fast,

As he rises he spouts blood, I see him swim in circles narrower and narrower, swiftly cutting the water—I see him die,

He gives one convulsive leap in the centre of the circle, and then falls flat and still in the bloody foam.

O the old manhood of me, my noblest joy of all !

My children and grand-children, my white hair and beard, My largeness, calmness, majesty, out of the long stretch of my life.

O ripen'd joy of womanhood ! O happiness at last !

I am more than eighty years of age, I am the most venerable mother,

How clear is my mind—how all people draw nigh to me !
What attractions are these beyond any before ? what
bloom more than the bloom of youth ?
What beauty is this that descends upon me and rises out
of me ?

O the orator's joys !
To inflate the chest, to roll the thunder of the voice out
from the ribs and throat,
To make the people rage, weep, hate, desire, with yourself,
To lead America—to quell America with a great tongue.

O the joy of my soul leaning pois'd on itself, receiving
identity through materials and loving them, observing
characters and absorbing them,
My soul vibrated back to me from them, from sight, hearing,
touch, reason, articulation, comparison, memory, and
the like,

The real life of my senses and flesh transcending my
senses and flesh,

My body done with materials, my sight done with my
material eyes,

Proved to me this day beyond cavil that it is not my
material eyes which finally see,

Nor my material body which finally loves, walks, laughs,
shouts, embraces, procreates.

O the farmer's joys !

Ohioan's, Illinoisian's, Wisconsinese', Kanadian's, Iowan's,
Kansian's, Missourian's, Oregonese' joys !

To rise at peep of day and pass forth nimbly to work,
To plough land in the fall for winter-sown crops,
To plough land in the spring for maize,
To train orchards, to graft the trees, to gather apples in
the fall.

O to bathe in the swimming-bath, or in a good place along
shore,

To splash the water ! to walk ankle-deep, or race naked
along the shore.

O to realize space !

The plenteousness of all, that there are no bounds,

To emerge and be of the sky, of the sun and moon and
flying clouds, as one with them.

O the joy of a manly self-hood !
To be servile to none, to defer to none, not to any tyrant
known or unknown,

To walk with erect carriage, a step springy and elastic,
To look with calm gaze or with a flashing eye,
To speak with a full and sonorous voice out of a broad
chest,
To confront with your personality all the other personalities
of the earth.

Know'st thou the excellent joys of youth ?
Joys of the dear companions and of the merry word and
laughing face ?
Joy of the glad light-beaming day, joy of the wide-breath'd
games ?

Joy of sweet music, joy of the lighted ball-room and the
dancers ?

Joy of the plenteous dinner, strong carouse and drinking ?

Yet O my soul supreme !
Know'st thou the joys of pensive thought ?
Joys of the free and lonesome heart, the tender, gloomy
heart ?

Joys of the solitary walk, the spirit bow'd yet proud, the
suffering and the struggle ?

The agonistic throes, the ecstasies, joys of the solemn
musings day or night ?

Joys of the thought of Death, the great spheres Time and
Space ?

Prophetic joys of better, loftier love's ideals, the divine
wife, the sweet, eternal, perfect comrade ?

Joys all thine own undying one, joys worthy thee O soul.

O while I live to be the ruler of life, not a slave,
To meet life as a powerful conqueror,
No fumes, no ennui, no more complaints or scornful
criticisms,

To these proud laws of the air, the water and the ground,
proving my interior soul impregnable,
And nothing exterior shall ever take command of me.

For not life's joys alone I sing, repeating—the joy of death!

The beautiful touch of Death, soothing and benumbing a few moments, for reasons,

Myself discharging my excrementitious body to be burn'd, or render'd to powder, or buried,

My real body doubtless left to me for other spheres,

My voided body nothing more to me, returning to the purifications, further offices, eternal uses of the earth.

O to attract by more than attraction!

How it is I know not—yet behold! the something which obeys none of the rest,

It is offensive, never defensive—yet how magnetic it draws.

O to struggle against great odds, to meet enemies undaunted!

To be entirely alone with them, to find how much one can stand!

To look strife, torture, prison, popular odium, face to face!

To mount the scaffold, to advance to the muzzles of guns with perfect nonchalance!

To be indeed a God!

O to sail to sea in a ship!

To leave this steady unendurable land,

To leave the tiresome sameness of the streets, the sidewalks and the houses,

To leave you O you solid motionless land, and entering a ship,

To sail and sail and sail!

O to have life henceforth a poem of new joys!

To dance, clap hands, exult, shout, skip, leap, roll on, float on!

To be a sailor of the world bound for all ports,

A ship itself, (see indeed these sails I spread to the sun and air,)

A swift and swelling ship full of rich words, full of joys.

SONG OF THE BROAD-AXE

1

WEAPON shapely, naked, wan,
Head from the mother's bowels drawn,
Wooded flesh and metal bone, limb only one and lip only
one,
Gray-blue leaf by red-heat grown, helve produced from a
little seed sown,
Resting the grass amid and upon,
To be lean'd and to lean on.
Strong shapes and attributes of strong shapes, masculine
trades, sights and sounds,
Long varied train of an emblem, dabs of music,
Fingers of the organist skipping staccato over the keys of
the great organ.

2

Welcome are all earth's lands, each for its kind,
Welcome are lands of pine and oak,
Welcome are lands of the lemon and fig,
Welcome are lands of gold,
Welcome are lands of wheat and maize, welcome those of
the grape,
Welcome are lands of sugar and rice,
Welcome the cotton-lands, welcome those of the white
potato and sweet potato,
Welcome are mountains, flats, sands, forests, prairies,
Welcome the rich borders of rivers, table-lands, openings,
Welcome the measureless grazing-lands, welcome the
teeming soil of orchards, flax, honey, hemp ;
Welcome just as much the other more hard-faced lands,
Lands rich as lands of gold or wheat and fruit lands,
Lands of mines, lands of the manly and rugged ores,
Lands of coal, copper, lead, tin, zinc,
Lands of iron—lands of the make of the axe.

3

The log at the wood-pile, the axe supported by it,
The sylvan hut, the vine over the doorway, the space
clear'd for a garden,
The irregular tapping of rain down on the leaves after the
storm is lull'd,
The wailing and moaning at intervals, the thought of the
sea,
The thought of ships struck in the storm and put on their
beam ends, and the cutting away of masts,
The sentiment of the huge timbers of old-fashion'd houses
and barns,
The remember'd print or narrative, the voyage at a venture
of men, families, goods,
The disembarkation, the founding of a new city,
The voyage of those who sought a New England and
found it, the outset anywhere,
The settlements of the Arkansas, Colorado, Ottawa,
Willamette,
The slow progress, the scant fare, the axe, rifle, saddle-
bags ;
The beauty of all adventurous and daring persons,
The beauty of wood-boys and wood-men with their clear
untrimm'd faces,
The beauty of independence, departure, actions that rely
on themselves,
The American contempt for statutes and ceremonies, the
boundless impatience of restraint,
The loose drift of character, the inkling through random
types, the solidification ;
The butcher in the slaughter-house, the hands aboard
schooners and sloops, the raftsmen, the pioneer,
Lumbermen in their winter camp, daybreak in the woods,
stripes of snow on the limbs of trees, the occasional
snapping,
The glad clear sound of one's own voice, the merry song,
the natural life of the woods, the strong day's
work,
The blazing fire at night, the sweet taste of supper, the
talk, the bed of hemlock-boughs and the bear-skin ;
The house-builder at work in cities or anywhere,
The preparatory jointing, squaring, sawing, mortising,

The hoist-up of beams, the push of them in their places,
 laying them regular,
Setting the studs by their tenons in the mortises according
 as they were prepared,
The blows of mallets and hammers, the attitudes of the
 men, their curv'd limbs,
Bending, standing, astride the beams, driving in pins,
 holding on by posts and braces,
The hook'd arm over the plate, the other arm wielding the
 axe,
The floor-men forcing the planks close to be nail'd,
Their postures bringing their weapons downward on the
 bearers,
The echoes resounding through the vacant building ;
The huge storehouse carried up in the city well under way,
The six framing-men, two in the middle and two at each
 end, carefully bearing on their shoulders a heavy stick
 for a cross-beam,
The crowded line of masons with trowels in their right
 hands rapidly laying the long side-wall, two hundred
 feet from front to rear,
The flexible rise and fall of backs, the continual click of
 the trowels striking the bricks,
The bricks one after another each laid so workmanlike in
 its place, and set with a knock of the trowel-handle,
The piles of materials, the mortar on the mortar-boards,
 and the steady replenishing by the hod-men ;
Spar-makers in the spar-yard, the swarming row of well-
 grown apprentices,
The swing of their axes on the square-hew'd log shaping it
 toward the shape of a mast,
The brisk short crackle of the steel driven slantingly into
 the pine,
The butter-color'd chips flying off in great flakes and
 slivers,
The limber motion of brawny young arms and hips in easy
 costumes,
The constructor of wharves, bridges, piers, bulk-heads,
 floats, stays against the sea ;
The city fireman, the fire that suddenly bursts forth in the
 close-pack'd square,
The arriving engines, the hoarse shouts, the nimble stepping
 and daring,

The strong command through the fire-trumpets, the falling
in line, the rise and fall of the arms forcing the water,
The slender, spasmic, blue-white jets, the bringing to bear
of the hooks and ladders and their execution,
The crash and cut away of connecting wood-work, or
through floors if the fire smoulders under them,
The crowd with their lit faces watching, the glare and dense
shadows ;
The forger at his forge-furnace and the user of iron after
him,
The maker of the axe large and small, and the welder and
temperer,
The chooser breathing his breath on the cold steel and
trying the edge with his thumb,
The one who clean-shapes the handle and sets it firmly in
the socket ;
The shadowy processions of the portraits of the past users
also,
The primal patient mechanics, the architects and engineers,
The far-off Assyrian edifice and Mizra edifice,
The Roman lictors preceding the consuls,
The antique European warrior with his axe in combat,
The uplifted arm, the clatter of blows on the helmeted head,
The death-howl, the limpsy tumbling body, the rush of
friend and foe thither,
The siege of revolted lieges determin'd for liberty,
The summons to surrender, the battering at castle gates,
the truce and parley,
The sack of an old city in its time,
The bursting in of mercenaries and bigots tumultuously
and disorderly,
Roar, flames, blood, drunkenness, madness,
Goods freely rifled from houses and temples, screams of
women in the gripe of brigands,
Craft and thievery of camp-followers, men running, old
persons despairing,
The hell of war, the cruelties of creeds,
The list of all executive deeds and words just or unjust,
The power of personality just or unjust.

4

Muscle and pluck forever !
What invigorates life invigorates death,