



Song of Myself. Excerpt I: *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1855 edition)

I CELEBRATE myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

I loafe and invite my soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease . . . observing a spear of summer grass.

Houses and rooms are full of perfumes . . . the shelves are crowded with
perfumes,
I breathe the fragrance myself, and know it and like it,
The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

The atmosphere is not a perfume . . . it has no taste of the distillation . . . it is
odorless,

It is for my mouth forever . . . I am in love with it,
I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked,
I am mad for it to be in contact with me.

The smoke of my own breath,
Echos, ripples, and buzzed whispers . . . loveroot, silkthread, crotch and vine,
My respiration and inspiration . . . the beating of my heart . . . the passing of
blood and air through my lungs,
The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and darkcolored sea-
rocks, and of hay in the barn,

The sound of the belched words of my voice . . . words loosed to the eddies of
the wind,

A few light kisses . . . a few embraces . . . a reaching around of arms,
The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,

The delight alone or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hillsides,
The feeling of health . . . the full-noon trill . . . the song of me rising from bed
and meeting the sun.

Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? Have you reckoned the earth
much?

Have you practiced so long to learn to read?

Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun . . . there are millions of suns left,
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand . . . nor look through the
eyes of the dead . . . nor feed on the spectres in books,
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.

Whitman on Brooklyn I From *Walt Whitman's New York*

The name given to our city in old times spells in different modes. "Breukleyn" was a very common style still to have found in the old records. "Brookland" is another. Some have traced the etymology of the first of those terms to the broken land (namely the mixture of hill and dale), which characterizes the topography of our region of the island. Others have formed the cause of the record in the brooks of fresh water that used to ripple along the surface. As to these, and all other such explanations, we give them for the reader's amusement, without much reliance ourselves on any of them (WWNY 25).



Song of Myself. Excerpt II: *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1855 edition)

The runaway slave came to my house and stopped outside,
I heard his motions crackling the twigs of the woodpile,
Through the swung half-door of the kitchen I saw him limpsey and weak,
And went where he sat on a log, and led him in and assured him,
And brought water and filled a tub for his sweated body and bruised feet,
And gave him a room that entered from my own, and gave him some coarse
clean clothes,
And remember perfectly well his revolving eyes and his awkwardness,
And remember putting plasters on the galls of his neck and ankles;
He staid with me a week before he was recuperated and passed north,
I had him sit next me at table . . . my firelock leaned in the corner.



MANNAHATTA *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1881-82 edition)

I WAS asking for something specific and perfect for my city,
Whereupon lo! upsprang the aboriginal name.

Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane,
unruly, musical, self-sufficient,

I see that the word of my city is that word from of old,
Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays,
superb,

Rich, hemm'd thick all around with sailships and
steamships, an island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,

Numberless crowded streets, high growths of iron, slender,
strong, light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies,

Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, toward sundown,
The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, larger adjoining
islands, the heights, the villas,

The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters,
the ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers well-model'd,

The down-town streets, the jobbers' houses of business, the
houses of business of the ship-merchants and money-
brokers, the river-streets,

Immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week,
The carts hauling goods, the manly race of drivers of horses, the
brown-faced sailors,

The summer air, the bright sun shining, and the sailing
clouds aloft,

The winter snows, the sleigh-bells, the broken ice in the
river, passing along up or down with the flood-tide or
ebb-tide,

The mechanics of the city, the masters, well-form'd,
beautiful-faced, looking you straight in the eyes,

Trottoirs throng'd, vehicles, Broadway, the women, the
shops and shows,

A million people—manners free and superb—open voices—
hospitality—the most courageous and friendly young men,

City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and masts!

City nested in bays! my city!



Philosophy of Ferries. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Aug 13, 1847

Our Brooklyn ferries teach some sage lessons in philosophy, gentle reader, (we like that time-honored phrase!) whether you ever knew it or not. There is the Fulton, now, which takes precedence by age, and by a sort of aristocratic seniority of wealth and business too. It moves on like iron-willed destiny. Passionless and fixed, at the six-stroke the boats come in; and at the three-stroke, succeeded by a single tap, they depart again, with the steadiness of nature herself. Perhaps a man, prompted by the hell-like delirium tremens, has jumped over-board and been drowned: still the trips go on as before. Perhaps some one has been crushed between the landing and the prow—(ah! That most horrible thing of all!) still, no matter, for the great business of the mass must be helped forward as before. A moment's pause—the quick gathering of a curious crowd, (how strange that they can look so unshudderingly on the scene!)—the paleness of the more chicken hearted—and all subsides, and the current sweeps as it did the moment previously. How it deadens one's sympathies, this living city!

But the most 'moral' part of the ferry sights, is to see the conduct of the people, old and young, fat and lean, gentle and simple, when the bell sounds three taps. Then follows a spectacle, indeed- particularly on the Brooklyn side, at from seven o'clock to nine in the morning. At the very first moment of sound, perhaps some sixty or eighty gentlemen are plodding along the side walks, adjacent to the ferry boat—likewise some score or so of lads—with brisk pace which bespeaks the 'business individual.' Now see them as the said three-tap is heard! Apparently moved by an electric impulse, two-thirds of the whole number start off on the wings of the wind! Coat tails fly high and wide! You get a swift view of the phantom-like semblance of humanity, as it is sometimes seen in dreams—but nothing more—unless it may be you are on the walk yourself, when the chances are in favor of a breath-destroying punch in the stomach. In their insane fury, the rushing crowd spare neither age nor sex. Then the single stroke of the bell is heard; and straightway what was rage before comes to be a sort of extatic fury! Aware of his danger, the man that takes the toll has ensconced himself behind a stout oaken partition, which seems only to be entered through a little window-looking place: but we think he must have more than ordinary courage, to stand even there. We seriously recommend the ferry superintendent to have this place as strong as iron bars can make it.

This rushing and raging is not inconsistent, however, with other items of the American character. Perhaps it is a development of the 'indomitable energy' and 'chainless enterprise' which we get so much praise for. But it is a very ludicrous thing, nevertheless. If the trait is remembered down to posterity, and put in the annals, it will be bad for us. Posterity surely cannot attach any thing of the dignified or august to a people who run after steamboats, with hats flying off and skirts streaming behind!



CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1881-82 edition)

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 disintegrated,
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 knotted 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 highest 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 highest 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
unknown 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
out 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.

Whitman on Brooklyn II From *Walt Whitman's New York*

The Child is already born, and is now living, stout and hearty, who will see Brooklyn numbering one million inhabitants! Its situation for grandeur, beauty and salubrity is unsurpassed probably on the whole surface of the globe; and its destiny is to be among the most famed and choice of the half dozen leading cities of the world. And all this, doubtless, before the close of the present century.

And while we give a prospective glance twenty-five or thirty years ahead, to a period which will "take care of itself," we will occupy this paper of our series with a retrospective glance at certain matters, little or large (as the reader may choose to consider them), which involve the condition of Brooklyn twenty-five and thirty years ago. Our city grows so fast that there is some danger of the events and incidents of more than ten years gone being totally forgotten. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, who would have expected such a mighty increase as has already come upon us— with the prospect, nay the certainty of the million population just alluded to?

Around the Ferries, thirty years ago, the scene presented was of course a very different one, from now. There were only three, the Old Ferry (the present Fulton), the New Ferry (at the foot of Main Street), and the remaining one at the foot of Jackson Street (now Hudson Avenue).

Fulton Street below Henry Street was considerably narrower than it is now. It was widened to its present size somewhere about the year 1835. Previous to that period, it presented much the appearance of a bustling country town—and partially "alive," most of the time, with market and fish wagons, and their proprietors, come in from miles up the island, with their produce, intended for the New York or Brooklyn markets. But we must reserve a more particular description of this lower and important part of our city, for another article of our series. (137)



Manhattan from the Bay From *Specimen Days*

June 25.— Returned to New York last night. Out to-day on the waters for a sail in the wide bay, southeast of Staten Island— a rough tossing ride, and a free sight—the long stretch of Sandy Hook, the highlands of Navesink, and the many vessels outward and inward bound. We came up through the midst of all, in the sun. I especially enjoy'd the last hour or two. A moderate sea-breeze had set in; yet over the city, and the waters adjacent, was a thin haze, concealing nothing, only adding to the beauty. From my point of view, as I write amid the soft breeze with a sea-temperature, surely nothing on earth of its kind can go beyond this show. To the left the North river with its far vista— nearer, three or four war-ships, anchor'd peacefully—the Jersey side, the banks of Weehawken, the Palisades, and the gradually receding blue, lost in the distance—to the right the East river—the mast-hemm'd shores—the grand obelisk-like towers of the bridge, one on either side, in haze, yet plainly defin'd, giant brothers twain, throwing free gracefully interlinking loops high across the tumbled tumultuous current below—(the tide is just changing to its ebb)— the broad water-spread everywhere crowded—no, not crowded, but thick as stars in the sky—with all sorts of sizes of sail and steam vessels, playing ferry-boats, arriving and departing coasters, great ocean Dons, iron-black, modern, magnificent in size and power, fille'd with their incalculable value of human life and precious merchandise—with here and there, above all, those daring, careening things of grace and wonder, those white and shaded swift-darting fish-birds, (I wonder if shore or sea elsewhere can outvie them,) ever with their slanting spars, and fierce, pure, hawk-like beauty and motion—first-class New York sloop or schooner yachts, sailing, this fine day, the free sea in a good wind. And rising out of the midst, tall topt, shim-hemm'd, modern, American, yet strangely oriental V-shaped Manhattan, with its compact mass, its spires, its cloud-touching edifices group'd at the centre—the green of the trees and all the white, brown and gray of the architecture well blended, as I see it, under a miracle of limpid sky, delicious light of heaven above and June haze on the surface below.

My Passion for Ferries from *Specimen Days*

Living in Brooklyn or New York city from this time forward, my life, then, and still more the following years, was curiously identified with Fulton ferry, already becoming the greatest of its sort in the world for the general importance, volume, variety, rapidity, and picturesqueness. Almost daily, later, ('50 to '60,) I cross'd on the boats, often up in the pilot-houses where I could get a full sweep, absorbing shows, accompaniments, surroundings. What oceanic currents, eddies, underneath—the great tides of humanity also, with ever-shifting movements. Indeed, I have always had a passion for ferries; to me they afford inimitable streaming, never-failing, living poems. The river and bay scenery, all about New York island, and time of a fine day—the hurrying, splashing sea-tides—the changing panorama of steamers, all sizes, often a string of big ones outward bound to distant ports—the myriads of white-sail'd schooners, sloops, skiffs, and the marvelously beautiful yachts—the majestic sound boats as they rounded the Battery and came along towards 5, afternoon, eastward bound—the prospect off towards Staten island, or down the Narrows, or the other way up the Hudson—what refreshment of spirit such sights and experiences gave me years ago (and many a time since.) My old pilot friends, the Balsirs, Johnny Cole, Ira Smith, William White, and my young ferry friend, Tom Gere—how well I remember them all (16-17).



Manhattan from the bay From *Specimen Days*

June 25.— Returned to New York last night. Out to-day on the waters for a sail in the wide bay, southeast of Staten Island— a rough tossing ride, and a free sight—the long stretch of Sandy Hook, the highlands of Navesink, and the many vessels outward and inward bound. We came up through the midst of all, in the sun. I especially enjoy'd the last hour or two. A moderate sea-breeze had set in; yet over the city, and the waters adjacent, was a thin haze, concealing nothing, only adding to the beauty. From my point of view, as I write amid the soft breeze with a sea-temperature, surely nothing on earth of its kind can go beyond this show. To the left the North river with its far vista— nearer, three or four war-ships, anchor'd peacefully—the Jersey side, the banks of Weehawken, the Palisades, and the gradually receding blue, lost in the distance—to the right the East river—the mast-hemm'd shores—the grand obelisk-like towers of the bridge, one on either side, in haze, yet plainly defin'd, giant brothers twain, throwing free gracefully interlinking loops high across the tumbled tumultuous current below—(the tide is just changing to its ebb)— the broad water-spread everywhere crowded—no, not crowded, but thick as stars in the sky—with all sorts of sizes of sail and steam vessels, playing ferry-boats, arriving and departing coasters, great ocean Dons, iron-black, modern, magnificent in size and power, fille'd with their incalculable value of human life and precious merchandise—with here and there, above all, those daring, careening things of grace and wonder, those white and shaded swift-darting fish-birds, (I wonder if shore or sea elsewhere can outvie them,) ever with their slanting spars, and fierce, pure, hawk-like beauty and motion—first-class New York sloop or schooner yachts, sailing, this fine day, the free sea in a good wind. And rising out of the midst, tall topt, shim-hemm'd, modern, American, yet strangely oriental V-shaped Manhattan, with its compact mass, its spires, its cloud-touching edifices group'd at the centre—the green of the trees and all the white, brown and gray of the architecture well blended, as I see it, under a miracle of limpid sky, delicious light of heaven above and June haze on the surface below.



Human and Heroic New York From *Specimen Days*

The general subjective view of New York and Brooklyn—(will not the time hasten when the two shall be municipally united in one, and named Manhattan?)—what I may call the human interior and exterior of these great seething oceanic populations, as I get it in the visit, is to me best of all. After an absence of many years, (I went away at the outbreak of the secession war, and have never been back to stay since,) again I resume with curiosity the crowds, the streets I knew so well, Broadway, the ferries, the west side of the city, democratic Bowery, human appearances and manners as seen in all these, and along the wharves, and in the perpetual travel of the horse-cars, or the crowded excursion steamers, or in Wall and Nassau streets by day—in the places of amusement at night—bubbling and whirling and moving like its own environment of waters—endless humanity in all phases—Brooklyn also—taken in for the last three weeks. No need to specify minutely—enough to say that (making all allowances for the shadows and side-streaks of a million-headed-city) the brief total of the impressions, the human qualities, of these vast cities, is to me comforting, even heroic, beyond statement. Alertness, generally fine physique, clear eyes that look straight at you, a singular combination of reticence and self-possession, with good nature and friendliness—a prevailing range of according manners, taste and intellect, surely beyond any elsewhere upon earth—and a palpable outcropping of that personal comradeship I look forward to as the subtlest, strongest future hold of this many-item'd Union—are not only constantly visible here in these mighty channels of men, but they form the rule and average To-day, I should say —defiant of cynics and pessimists, and with a full knowledge of all their exceptions—an appreciative and perceptive study of the current humanity of New York gives the directest proof yet of successful Democracy, and of the solution of that paradox, the eligibility of the free and fully developed individual with the paramount aggregate. In old age, lame and sick, pondering for years on many a doubt and danger for this republic of ours—fully of all that can be said on the other side—I find this visit to New York, and the daily contact and rapport with its myriad people, on the scale of the oceans and tides the best, most effective medicine my soul has yet partaken—the grandest physical habitat and surrounding of land and water the globe affords—namely, Manhattan island and Brooklyn, which the future shall join in one city—city of superb democracy, amid superb surroundings.

KOSMOS *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1881-82 edition)

WHO includes diversity and is Nature,
Who is the amplitude of the earth, and the coarseness and
 sexuality of the earth, and the great charity of the earth,
 and the equilibrium also,
Who has not look'd forth from the windows the eyes for
 nothing, or whose brain held audience with messengers
 for nothing,
Who contains believers and disbelievers, who is the most
 majestic lover,
Who holds duly his or her triune proportion of realism,
 spiritualism, and of the aesthetic or intellectual,

Who having consider'd the body finds all its organs and
parts good,
Who, out of the theory of the earth and of his or her body
understands by subtle analogies all other theories,
The theory of a city, a poem, and of the large politics of
these States;
Who believes not only in our globe with its sun and moon,
but in other globes with their suns and moons,
Who, constructing the house of himself or herself, not for a
day but for all time, sees races, eras, dates, generations,
The past, the future, dwelling there, like space, inseparable
together.



Omnibus Jaunts and Drivers from *Specimen Days*

One phase of those days must by no means go unrecorded—namely, the Broadway omnibuses, with their drivers. The vehicles still (I write this paragraph in 1881) give a portion of the character of Broadway – the Fifth avenue, Madison avenue, and Twenty-third street lines yet running. But the flush days of the old Broadway stages, characteristic and copious, are over. The Yellow-birds, the Red-birds, the original Broadway, the Fourth avenue, the Knickerbocker, and a dozen other of twenty or thirty years ago, are all gone. And the men specially identified with them, and giving vitality and meaning to them—the drivers—a strange, natural, quick-eyed and wondrous race—(not only Rabelais and Cervantes would have gloated upon them Homer and Shakespeare would)—how well I remember them, and must here give a word about them. How many hours, forenoons and afternoons—how many exhilarating night-times I have had—perhaps June or July, in cooler air—riding the whole length of Broadway, listening to some yarn, (and the most vivid yarns ever spun, and the rarest mimicry)—or perhaps I declaiming some stormy passage from Julius Caesar or Richard, (you could roar as loudly as you chose in that heavy, dense, uninterrupted street-bass.) Yes, I knew all the drivers then, Broadway Jack, Dressmaker, Balky Bill, George Storms, Old Elephant, his brother Young Elephant (who came afterward,) Tippy, Pop Rice, Big Frank, Yellow Joe, Pete Callahan, Patsy Dee, and dozens more; for there were hundreds. They had immense qualities, largely animal—eating, drinking, women—great personal pride, in their way—perhaps a few slouches here and there, but I should have trusted the general run of them, in their simple good-will and honor, under all circumstances. Not only for comradeship and sometimes affection—great studies I found them also. (I suppose the critics will laugh heartily, but the influence of those Broadway omnibus jaunts and drivers and declamations and escapades undoubtedly entr'd into the gestation of "Leaves of Grass.")(18).

TO A STRANGER *Leaves of Grass* (Text from 1881-82 edition)

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.

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