

And light enough to keep from frightening
The girl I saw less than a minute's time,
A month ago, three thousand miles away.
Whoever she is, I would have her know
All that my heart gained from knowing her.



Kaviraj George Dowden

I LAY IN WHITMAN'S DEATHBED

*The smallest sprout shows there is really
no death,
And if ever there was it led forward life,
and does not wait at the end to arrest it
And ceased the moment life appeared.*

Through the eternal black slum byways of Camden America,
330 Mickle Street my pilgrimage

Walt's house, his hat he doffed to no man, his cane, his knap-
sack, his rocking chair, his books, his letters, his photos, his
dictionary, his parrot (stuffed) who pecked the berries of the
clock, his outhouse, his bathtub, the very bed in which he
lay in poverty and stroke and died to live deathless in his
Leaves, *I will make the poems of materials, for I think they
are to be the most spiritual poems*

A billion Suns and Moons and stars and galaxies, skies, trees,
seas, savannahs, sierras, pioneers, workers, captains,
heroes, trolleyman, mothers, fathers, young girls,
whitehaired grandmothers, grandfathers, prostitutes,
madmen, criminals, swimmers, buffaloes, eagles, ants,
insects, everything, everybody, and the grass — such a
small bed to hold Walt's myriad and luscious body!

Soul is also flesh and bone and blood, only through the finite
does Man step into infinity, from between the corpse's eyes
there springs a tiny bud, a flower, a blade of grass, a demi-
god, a poet

My imagination riveted to the bed — the bed of a poet's (and
such a poet's!) naked body, conversation, pain, dreams,
sweet dying, death and ecstasy. And love, and love! I saw
me twined beard to beard with Walt, a camerado's chaste
kiss, embrace, good word and smile, a benediction

The doorbell rings, my guide descends the narrow stairs to an-
swer it, Shiva's gift, my chance! I lay in Whitman's
deathbed, on my back, eyes closed twenty seconds to feel his
touch, to merge, my father and my love, to hold him in my
heart in memory forever, to vow to rise from death and
bloom for him, new leaves green and shining in all the holy
Earth he sanctified

I rose, I smiled, a mischievous gleeful poet-child again, I em-
braced the guide (a pretty black girl) in my heart, enrap-
tured!

Ginsberg, Lawrence, Borges, Bucke, Carpenter, all his sons
have clasped his hand and strode boldly into life and poetry
— but O Kaviraj, who else *lay* in Whitman's deathbed!

Om!

night at home
a
flying
dream!

my astral body
soared
in
cosmos

and then
I knew
who
Whitman
was

and
I knew
what
destiny
the
Leaves
the
Flowers
of
Consciousness



David J. Feela

THE HERO

Friday night. Exhausted! Flip off
My shoes, flop down in front of the
Television. A man steps from the
Blue-grey screen into my living room
But I pay no attention. He makes a
Sandwich, takes off his shoes and
Shoulder holster, tosses them on the
Floor, sits down. He must be a cop.
When he grabs for my beer I pull it
Away. "Get your own" I tell him.
He snarls a bit, reaches for the gun
But my foot flashes out and pins his
Wrist to the cheap shag carpet. He
Whimpers, explains to me how he is
The Star of this show I am watching,
How he always wins. 'Not this time'
I tell him and boot him back through
The screen. I have found my hero
And he is me.