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<lines 1 – 12>

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.

<lines 25 – 29>

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.

15<lines 306 – 321>

The floor-men are laying the floor—the tanners are tanning the roof—the masons are calling  
for mortar;  
In single file, each shouldering his hod, pass onward the laborers;  
Seasons pursuing each other, the indescribable crowd is gather'd—it is the Fourth of  
[Seventh-month](#)—(What salutes of cannon and small arms!)  
Seasons pursuing each other, the plougher ploughs, the mower mows, and the winter-gr  
falls in the ground;  
Off on the lakes the pike-fisher watches and waits by the hole in the frozen surface;  
The stumps stand thick round the clearing, the squatter strikes deep with his axe;  
Flatboatmen make fast, towards dusk, near the cottonwood or pekan-trees;  
Coon-seekers [go](#) through the regions of the Red river, or through those drain'd by the  
Tennessee, or through those of the Arkansas;  
Torches shine in the dark that hangs on the Chattahoochee or Altamahaw;  
Patriarchs sit at supper with sons and grandsons and great-grandsons around them;  
In walls of adobie, in canvas tents, rest hunters and trappers after their day's sport;

The city sleeps, and the country sleeps;  
The living sleep for their time, the dead sleep for their time;  
The old husband sleeps by his wife, and the young husband sleeps by his wife;  
And these one and all tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them;  
And such as it is to be of these, more or less, I am.

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<lines 394 – 414>

In all people I see myself—none more, and not one a barleycorn less;  
And the good or bad I say of myself, I say of them.

And I know I am solid and sound;  
To me the converging objects of the universe perpetually flow;  
All are written to me, and I must get what the writing means.

I know I am deathless;  
I know this orbit of mine cannot be swept by the carpenter's compass;  
I know I shall not pass like a child's carlacue cut with a burnt stick at night.

I know I am august;  
I do not trouble my spirit to vindicate itself or be understood;  
I see that the elementary laws never apologize;  
(I reckon I behave no prouder than the level I plant my house by, after all.)

I exist as I am—that is enough;  
If no other in the world be aware, I sit content;  
And if each and all be aware, I sit content.

One world is aware, and by far the largest to me, and that is myself;  
And whether I come to my own to-day, or in ten thousand or ten million years,  
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait.

My foothold is tenon'd and mortis'd in granite;  
I laugh at what you call dissolution;  
And I know the amplitude of time.

26

<lines 580 – 592>

I think I will do nothing now but listen,  
To accrue what I hear into myself—to let sounds contribute toward me.

I hear bravuras of birds, bustle of growing wheat, gossip of flames, clack of sticks cooking  
my meals;

I hear the sound I love, the sound of the human voice;

I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following;

Sounds of the city, and sounds out of the city—sounds of the day and night;

Talkative young ones to those that like them—the loud laugh of work-people at their meals;

The angry base of disjointed friendship—the faint tones of the sick;

The judge with hands tight to the desk, his pallid lips pronouncing a death-sentence;

The heave'e'yo of stevedores unlading ships by the wharves—the refrain of the anchor-  
lifters;

The ring of alarm-bells—the cry of fire—the whirr of swift-streaking engines and hose-cars  
with premonitory tinkles, and color'd lights;

The steam-whistle—the solid roll of the train of approaching cars;

The slow-march play'd at the head of the association, marching two and two,  
(They go to guard some corpse—the flag-tops are draped with black muslin.)

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<lines 1328 -1343>

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 bequeathe 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.