

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY, INC.

Also Publishes

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

edited by Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Nellie Y. McKay et al.

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

edited by Nina Baym et al.

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY FICTION

edited by R. V. Cassill and Joyce Carol Oates

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

edited by M. H. Abrams and Stephen Greenblatt et al.

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF LITERATURE BY WOMEN

edited by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN POETRY

edited by Richard Ellmann and Robert O'Clair

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY

edited by Margaret Ferguson, Mary Jo Salter, and Jon Stallworthy

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF SHORT FICTION

edited by R. V. Cassill and Richard Bausch

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF THEORY AND CRITICISM

edited by Vincent B. Leitch et al.

THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF WORLD LITERATURE

edited by Sarah Lavall et al.

THE NORTON FACSIMILE OF THE FIRST FOLIO OF SHAKESPEARE

prepared by Charlton Hinman

THE NORTON INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

edited by Alison Booth, J. Paul Hunter, and Kelly J. Mays

THE NORTON INTRODUCTION TO THE SHORT NOVEL

edited by Jerome Beaty

THE NORTON READER

edited by Linda H. Peterson, John C. Brereton, and Joan E. Hartman

THE NORTON SAMPLER

edited by Thomas Cooley

THE NORTON SHAKESPEARE, BASED ON THE OXFORD EDITION

edited by Stephen Greenblatt et al.

For a complete list of Norton Critical Editions, visit us at

www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nce/welcome.htm

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Walt Whitman
LEAVES OF GRASS
AND OTHER WRITINGS



AUTHORITATIVE TEXTS

OTHER POETRY AND PROSE

CRITICISM

Edited by

MICHAEL MOON

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

*An expanded and revised edition based on the
Norton Critical Edition of Leaves of Grass, edited by*

SCULLEY BRADLEY

and

HAROLD W. BLODGETT

LATE OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF PENNSYLVANIA

LATE OF UNION COLLEGE



W • W • NORTON & COMPANY • New York • London

2002

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.

190

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.

195

No husband, no wife, no friend, trusted to hear the confession,
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
bedroom, 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.

200

205

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.

210

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!

215

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?

220

1856

1881

Crossing Brooklyn Ferry¹

I

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.

5

2

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all hours
of the day,

1. This was the "Sun-Down Poem" of the second edition, the most distinguished of the new poems of 1856, taking its present title in 1860. It is possible that WW began its composition even before the first edition went to press, for many of its lines are entered into one of his notebooks of the period. See *An 1855-56 Notebook Toward the Second Edition of Leaves of Grass*, ed. by Harold W. Blodgett (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1959). The revisions through the various editions—some fourteen lines were dropped and quite a number of phrases amended—reveal the constant improvement in a composition whose first version evidenced mastery of artistic power. With exalted and sustained inspiration the poet presents a transcendent reality unlimited by the tyranny of time or person or space, a poetic demonstration of the power of appearances—"dumb, beautiful ministers"—to affirm the soul. Philosophical in theme, the poem is yet profoundly personal—his own daily experience made illustrious—and its strength lies in its aesthetic vision. For a detailed analysis, see Stanley K. Coffman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry: A Note on the Catalogue Technique in Whitman's Poetry," *MP* 51: 225-32. Also helpful are M. Wynn Thomas, *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 92-123; and James Dougherty, *Walt Whitman and the Citizen's Eye* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 143-54.

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,² 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,

2. WW's use of the Quaker designation for the days and months often produced a more musical phrase.

Look'd at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the shape
 of my head in the sunlit water,³
 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,

3. An aureole available to anyone.

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 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?⁴

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
highest 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;

4. For lines 89-91, cf. endings of "Song of Myself" and "So Long."

Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it till
 all downcast eyes have time to take it from you! 115
 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, 120
 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. 125

 You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful
 ministers,
 We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate hence-
 forward,
 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, 130
 You furnish your parts toward eternity,
 Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.
 1856 1881

Song of the Answerer¹

I

Now list to my morning's romanza,² 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. 5

 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. 10

 Beautiful women, the haughtiest nations, laws, the landscape,
 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 unavoidably
 reaps,
 The noblest and costliest cities, others grading and building
 and he domiciles there, 15
 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.

1. For the 1881 edition this poem was created from what had been two separate poems, the first section having originally been one of the twelve untitled poems of the first edition, becoming "Poem of the Poet" in the second edition, "Leaves of Grass" No. 3 in the third, and in the fourth "Now List to My Morning Romanza," a title taken from the then added two-line opening passage, and retained until the second section and present title were added in 1881. The second section began in 1856 as "Poem of The Singers and of The Words of Poems" became "Leaves of Grass" No. 6 in the third edition, and "The Indications" in the fourth, fifth, and sixth editions, until in 1881 it took its present position. The joining of the two poems is obviously appropriate, for the Poet of the second section is the Answerer of the first; and in fact the two were consecutive in the editions of 1871 and 1876. As it now stands, the composition is the result of not a little revision. From the first section the last four lines were dropped in 1867; and some lines of the second section were adapted from the 1855 Preface.

2. Italian: ballad or air.