

GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN.

1

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling,  
Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,  
Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,  
Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,  
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving animals teaching  
    content,  
Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of the  
    Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars,  
Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can  
    walk undisturb'd,  
Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I should never  
    tire,  
Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise of the  
    world a rural domestic life,  
Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for my own  
    ears only,  
Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again O Nature your primal  
    sanities!

These demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless excitement, and  
    rack'd by the war-strife,)

These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my heart,  
While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,  
Day upon day and year upon year O city, walking your streets,  
Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to give me up,  
Yet giving to make me glutted, enrich'd of soul, you give me forever  
faces;

(O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing my cries,  
I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

2

Keep your splendid silent sun,  
Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places by the woods,  
Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-fields and  
orchards,  
Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the Ninth-month bees hum;  
Give me faces and streets--give me these phantoms incessant and  
endless along the trottoirs!  
Give me interminable eyes--give me women--give me comrades and lovers  
by the thousand!  
Let me see new ones every day--let me hold new ones by the hand every  
day!  
Give me such shows--give me the streets of Manhattan!  
Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching--give me the sound of  
the trumpets and drums!  
(The soldiers in companies or regiments--some starting away, flush'd

and reckless,  
Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young, yet very  
old, worn, marching, noticing nothing;)  
Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with black ships!  
O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion and varied!  
The life of the theatre, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!  
The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for me! the  
torchlight procession!  
The dense brigade bound for the war, with high piled military wagons  
following;  
People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions, pageants,  
Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with beating drums as  
now,  
The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of muskets, (even  
the sight of the wounded,)  
Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!  
Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.