



Poems By Walt Whitman

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Excerpt: ...shall Liberty be discharged from that part of the earth, And the infidel and the tyrant come into possession. 4. Then courage! revolter! revoltress! For till all ceases neither must you cease. 5. I do not know what you are for, (I do not know what I am for myself, nor what anything is for,) But I will search carefully for it even in being foiled, In defeat, poverty, imprisonment-for they too are great. Did we think victory great? So it is-But now it seems to me, when it cannot be helped, that defeat is great, And that death and dismay are great. DRUM TAPS. MANHATTAN ARMING. 1. First, O songs, for a prelude, Lightly strike on the stretched tympanum, pride and joy in my city, How she led the rest to arms-how she gave the cue, How at once with lithe limbs, unawaiting a moment, she sprang; O superb! O Manhattan, my own, my peerless! O strongest you in the hour of danger, in crisis! O truer than steel! How you sprang! how you threw off the costumes of peace with indifferent hand; How your soft opera-music changed, and the drum and fife were heard in their stead; How you led to the war, (that shall serve for our prelude, songs of soldiers,) How Manhattan drum-taps led. 2. Forty years had I in my city seen soldiers parading; Forty years as a pageant-till unawares, the Lady of this teeming and turbulent city, Sleepless, amid her ships, her houses, her incalculable wealth, With her million children around her-suddenly, At dead of night, at news from the South, Incensed, struck with clenched hand the pavement. A shock electric-the night sustained it; Till, with ominous hum, our hive at daybreak poured out its myriads. From the houses then, and the workshops, and through all the doorways, Leaped they tumultuous-and lo! Manhattan arming. 3. To the drum-taps prompt, The young men falling in and arming; The mechanics arming, the trowel, the jack-plane, the...

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