**Walt Whitman – Song of Myself**

**24**

Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son,

Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating, drinking and breeding,

No sentimentalist, no stander above men and women or apart from them,

No more modest than immodest.

Unscrew the locks from the doors!

Unscrew the doors themselves from their jambs!

Whoever degrades another degrades me,

And whatever is done or said returns at last to me.

Through me the afflatus surging and surging, through me the current and index.

I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy,

By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms.

Through me many long dumb voices,

Voices of the interminable generations of prisoners and slaves,

Voices of the diseas’d and despairing and of thieves and dwarfs,

Voices of cycles of preparation and accretion,

And of the threads that connect the stars, and of wombs and of the father-stuff,

And of the rights of them the others are down upon,

Of the deform’d, trivial, flat, foolish, despised,

Fog in the air, beetles rolling balls of dung.

Through me forbidden voices,

Voices of sexes and lusts, voices veil’d and I remove the veil,

Voices indecent by me clarified and transfigur’d.

I do not press my fingers across my mouth,

I keep as delicate around the bowels as around the head and heart,

Copulation is no more rank to me than death is.

I believe in the flesh and the appetites,

Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles, and each part and tag of me is a miracle.

Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch’d from,

The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer,

This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds.

If I worship one thing more than another it shall be the spread of my own body, or any part of it,

Translucent mould of me it shall be you!

Shaded ledges and rests it shall be you!

Firm masculine colter it shall be you!

Whatever goes to the tilth of me it shall be you!

You my rich blood! your milky stream pale strippings of my life!

Breast that presses against other breasts it shall be you!

My brain it shall be your occult convolutions!

Root of wash’d sweet-flag! timorous pond-snipe! nest of guarded duplicate eggs! it shall be you!

Mix’d tussled hay of head, beard, brawn, it shall be you!

Trickling sap of maple, fibre of manly wheat, it shall be you!

Sun so generous it shall be you!

Vapors lighting and shading my face it shall be you!

You sweaty brooks and dews it shall be you!

Winds whose soft-tickling genitals rub against me it shall be you!

Broad muscular fields, branches of live oak, loving lounger in my winding paths, it shall be you!

Hands I have taken, face I have kiss’d, mortal I have ever touch’d, it shall be you.

I dote on myself, there is that lot of me and all so luscious,

Each moment and whatever happens thrills me with joy,

I cannot tell how my ankles bend, nor whence the cause of my faintest wish,

Nor the cause of the friendship I emit, nor the cause of the friendship I take again.

That I walk up my stoop, I pause to consider if it really be,

A morning-glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.

To behold the day-break!

The little light fades the immense and diaphanous shadows,

The air tastes good to my palate.

Hefts of the moving world at innocent gambols silently rising freshly exuding,

Scooting obliquely high and low.

Something I cannot see puts upward libidinous prongs,

Seas of bright juice suffuse heaven.

The earth by the sky staid with, the daily close of their junction,

The heav’d challenge from the east that moment over my head,

The mocking taunt, See then whether you shall be master!