

A WHITMAN ECHO

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Poets to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not today is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new breed, native, athletic, continental, greater than
before known,
Arouse! for you must justify me.

I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness.

I am a man who, sauntering along without fully stopping, turns a
casual look upon you and then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you.

Walt Whitman

Is it One I am from, or Two?
Brood a moment, but, before you answer,
You and I must justify it,
For I myself am leaving you.

The athletic man turns his wheel to advance upon the casual main,
And then but averts you --
You sauntering native singers without the continental look --
To come back to things known;

But I who face a fully indicative darkness,
Stopping not for what orators prove to me,
Expecting only today to come along new,
Hurry -- and write a poet's words
For a future (greater than musicians arouse and define in me!)
To justify.

Howard Bergerson