

WHITMAN RETRANPOSED

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"Vocabularyclept poetry" is the term Howard Bergerson coined to describe a poem created by a rearrangement of the words of another poem. In the May 1971 *Word Ways*, and subsequently in his landmark 1973 book *Palindromes and Anagrams*, Bergerson illustrated the concept with his word-unit transposal of a 100-word Walt Whitman poem, "Poets to Come." With its convenient length and versatile vocabulary, this poem seems an excellent choice for transposal--so much so that Bergerson's reordering of it inspires emulation. The twenty-fifth anniversary of *Palindromes and Anagrams's* publication may be a meet time to offer a new vocabularyclept rendering of "Poets to Come":

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

I myself write but 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.

--W. Whitman

THE DAY THEY STOPPED THE GLACIER COLD

--Look! Orators arouse, and singers come sauntering along, and
athletic musicians wheel without stopping!
For today Man, his face casual, turns back the continental advance--
and averts a darkness!
Poets hurry to define a new future from it--one greater than before!--
Fully expecting to answer for things not known...

But I. for the moment, only brood upon you leaving me!
...Am I to write indicative words?
Then...am I, to you, but a...a "native"? (Come, you must prove it to me!)
And who--or what--is to justify you? (In the main, I justify myself...
but you two??...)

--Whitman/Puder