**Urban Affection**

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for Walt Whitman

Besides the obvious technological and architectural advances, only one thing has really changed between our generations:

We now live in an America where blacks are not only allowed the right to vote but can become the Redeemer President of the United States

Otherwise, we still live in an America where the audacity to openly enjoy the pleasures of sex and being respected for wisdom are contradictions without reconciliation

We still live in an America where the economy collapses while the masses are consumed with preventing the rights of anyone with a fancy for anything out of the ordinary

We still live in an America where rotting leaves, tufts of straw, and debris are found in more homes than poetry books

We still live in an America where Christ and Dracula provide both excitement and fear for restless lives longing for a simple touch

We still live in an America where the impact of urbanization reaches out to the common person more than the obscene nature of poetry

We still live in an America where writing about prostitution is considered trashy and profane

We still live in an America where poets have to work while publishing to survive financial difficulty unless they are fashioned like Shakespeare

We still live in an America where, unless you belong to a church, you are a religious skeptic believing in nothing

We still live in an America where overt sexuality, siding with the barnburners, and authoring disreputable books limit poets to a vagabond lifestyle

We still live in an America where breaking tradition and the boundaries of poetic form are considered the trademarks of a pretentious ass

We still live in an America where everything from thieves to dwarfs to fog to beetles deserve validity

We still live in an America where books cannot prevent war and the sick and wounded need healing

We still live in an America where not everyone can appreciate the beauty of immigration, crowded streets, brutal differences, urban affection

We still live in an America where the same sun that once invigorated your passion continues to provide us with the beauty of life worth fighting for

We still live in an America where America still lives in us