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When I Heard at the Close of the Day

Walt Whitman

When I heard at the close of the day how my name had been receiv'd with
plaudits in the capitol, still it was not a happy night for me that follow'd,
And else when I carous'd, or when my plans were accomplish'd, still I was not
happy,
But the day when I rose at dawn from the bed of perfect health, refresh'd,
singing, inhaling the ripe breath of autumn,
When I saw the full moon in the west grow pale and disappear in the morning
light,
When I wander'd alone over the beach, and undressing bathed, laughing with
the cool waters, and saw the sun rise,
And when I thought how my dear friend my lover was on his way coming, O then
I was happy,
O then each breath tasted sweeter, and all that day my food nourish'd me more,
and the beautiful day pass'd well,
And the next came with equal joy, and with the next at evening came my friend,
And that night, while all was still I heard the waters roll slowly continually up the
shores,
I heard the hissing rustle of the liquid and sands as directed to me whispering to
congratulate me,
For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the same cover in the cool
night,
In the stillness in the autumn moonbeams his face was inclined toward me,
And his arm lay lightly around my breast—and that night I was happy.



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