*1. Overtakeless* is a term Emily Dickinson used to describe the sublime and/or terrible nature of certain forces—those things that cannot be reduced, substituted, or examined on any side but *inside*, because their all-encompassing nature has already swallowed you whole. Perhaps Walt Whitman's vocabulary would have defined overtakelessness as the untranslatable: that which defies an easy transfer from one language system to another. It could be said Whitman's contradictions are meant to acknowledge that power, encountering it within distress, death, and Godliness. In reckoning with these topics from my own experiences, I feel slightly foolish. I don’t think that I have illuminated anything. But perhaps that’s Whitman’s broader design: for us to feel like we have the space to reflect without needing our reflections to feel useful. Maybe reflection is simply nourishing.

2. Reflecting on my own religious upbringing, as a prior Catholic, I was taught by the Jesuits that God was in all things. As I moved away from Catholicism's dogmas, for lack of a better word, and away from God as I was taught to perceive Him, I still maintained that sense of spiritual omnipresence. Oftentimes, walking through my uncle’s farm, I’m struck with a deep sense of beauty—much like how the narrator examines the blade of grass. For both Whitman and myself, I think we both see things—with nature especially—with a kind of overtakelessness.

3. Perhaps the greatest moments of placidness and/or exultation in “Song of Myself” is how the narrator discusses nature. Whitman, it seems, has a deep sense that nature is imbued with an absolute Godliness. In describing a piece of grass, Whitman calls it “the handkerchief of the Lord, / A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropped, / Bearing the owner’s name somewhere in the corners” (lines 92-94). In Whitman’s almost pantheistic views, earthly things are not so far removed from the divine. In fact, to some extent, they offer access to it. Though the narrator uses “Lord” as the container to describe his spiritual views, the way those views are articulated appears nearer to Transcendentalism than Christianity.