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The Midnight Visitor

I was born of night, when round the Pole
The sullen Bear is seen to roll,
And mortals wearied with the day
Are slumbering all their cares away;
An infant, at that dreary hour,
Came weeping to my silent bower,
And waked me with a piteous prayer
To save him from the chill wet air.

"And who art thou?" I starting cry,
"That mock smit my blissful dreams to fly?"

"O gentle sir," the young one said,
"In pity take me to thy shed;
Nor fear deceit — a lonely child,
Faint lost, I wander o'er the wild,
Mute with the rain, while not a ray
Illumes the dream and unknown way."

I hear the baby's tale of woe,
While sharp the bitter night winds blow,
And eager to relieve his fate

Whitman's manuscript of lines 1–20 of Anacreon's "The Midnight Visitor." See pp. 91–94.