

# [“Broadway and Ferry” Camden, NJ](#)

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Camden is a city, is a metaphor, is a filter, is a fear collector, is a stereotype, is a once upon a time maybe some day, is a nightly news story, is a nightmare, is a dream. The motto of the city of Camden was adopted from a line of a Walt Whitman poem from his Leaves of Grass.

“I dream’d in a dream I saw a city invincible.”



Camden is not invincible, far from it. Instead, it remains only a dream, an etched expectation in the stone of the city hall and the city itself. While the people Whitman loved still live their very real lives, in its neighborhoods and streets, in its tenement buildings and churches, in its playgrounds and backyards.

We went to Camden and spent the day in what has become known as Waterfront South, a former shipbuilding neighborhood, anchored on the corner of Broadway & Ferry by Sacred Heart Church. We spoke with three members of the community, a reluctant landlord storyteller, an urban farmer activist and a firebrand poet priest proclaiming a message of common sense for the common man. And despite the darkness, all three still believe in the dream, invincibility? Nah, survival, restoration, a future...the future.

[“Leaves of Grass”](#)

<http://whitmanarchive.org/published/books/other/rhys.html>