

# Lotophagoi & Lovers No More

by [Jack D. Harvey](#) (November 2024)



Sea at Dusk (Emil Nolde)

Lotophagoi

In our dreams,  
longing for nothing  
wanting nothing,  
waking in the same frame  
are we lotus eaters all,  
too lazy to desire  
in the lazy curve  
of days and nights

a certain point of inflection?

Lounging in the same  
eternal summer seaside  
is that where we really want to be?

Eat of that unforbidden fruit,  
eat to your heart's content  
and forget it all,  
pass a life  
in drowsy relief,  
locked in an unmoving  
fostering landscape.

Homer's lotophagoi  
come to enlist us  
and no Odysseus to harry us,  
hurry us back  
to the ship, our duty  
and the hard impatient sea,  
death waiting  
in every passage, every plunge  
of the sea-drenched bow.

Is it worth it?  
Forsaking the ease  
and certainty  
of same day after day,  
leaving the summer resort behind,  
where every line is drawn  
and permanently etched.

Yes, it is, by any measure.

Let's get underway,  
drag the good old black boat  
off the shingle,

down to the waves  
ship the oars,  
throw caution and safety  
to the winds.

Long days, long nights await,  
faraway seas and lands  
we will face in a fury  
of defiance, refusing  
the comfort of being at rest,  
remaining in the close embrace  
of certain security;  
not easy, but we freely pay the price  
for the grace to live freely,  
to enter a world  
exploding with life and death,  
ready and waiting for us,  
ready and waiting at the drop of a hat  
to murder us  
or by a better fate  
make us burn with life.

### Lovers No More

With the pertinacity  
of an English archbishop,  
bulldozing his way into  
God's parlor,  
she hammered the fact  
of regret, etcetera  
(hurt feelings and remorse)  
into my blunt noddle;  
honey we're done, you know.

Didn't she love me anymore?

Taking off in the rain  
with the steely unconcern  
of a taxi driver  
she left me  
standing on the pavement,  
my burnt heart heavily freighted,  
the beginnings of a great loss,  
so I thought, grounded  
in prior extravagance;  
I would have died for love of her  
so I said one time or another  
or forever mourned her going,  
but was any of that  
any more real  
any less facile  
than her parting speech  
dismissing me,  
her disappearing shape,  
high heels clicking,  
her stylish behind going  
off in the distance?

So I'll find  
another one twice as good  
here or someplace else  
and get rid of her  
when the moon is full  
and the gin mills are jumping.

At the end of the day  
it's all the same.  
The necessary will come  
when you need it  
and go when you don't.

Pretty and satisfying you were  
and with you I spent some time

and I'm happy about it,  
happy it happened.

I miss you but I don't care;  
in the Janus temple of despair  
close the gates of grief;  
I'm done mourning your loss.

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Jack D. Harvey lives in a small town near Albany, New York and has been writing poetry since he was sixteen. His poetry has appeared in *Scrivener*, *The Comstock Review*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *Typishly Literary Magazine*, *The Antioch Review*, *The Piedmont Poetry Journal* and elsewhere. Jack has been a Pushcart nominee and, over the years, has been published in several anthologies.

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