

## The Lotus Eaters · *Jonathan Holden*

Where they stay now, sun-bathe outside the hotel,  
the resort pool is pure as a new playing card.

The air, straight off the glacier's anaesthetic height,  
seems newly minted, the light unsullied

as the first light that ever was.  
If they still bear the bruised tattoo

of the years they were married, you will not see it,  
nor will they find yours. Everyone is pretty.

They recognize a traveler, their smiles approve you.  
And as their lotus gaze tours you, you can let it

perform whatever surgery you need—  
excise the landmarks in your face, delete

all the reasons held custody in your eyes, remove  
your badges, undress you quickly, expertly, by seeing

nothing, by denying the damage—making less of you  
and less, mending you in the only way there is left.