

# August Meditations

**HARIS  
VLAVIANOS**

*translated from Greek by Mina Karavanta with the author*

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1. If a man in his forties  
is still drawing seas and dovecotes,  
if in his thoughts a sun is reflected,  
more transparent,  
more lucid than the sun of reality,  
if the word 'Amorgos' is not just  
the mask of a fleeting, adolescent memory,  
then between the poem of desire  
and the poem of necessity  
is real loss.
2. Prologues have been consumed.  
They cannot always substitute the topic.  
He must decide whether he can  
hold on to this absolute idea  
even if he has ceased to believe in its power.  
It is a question of faith from now on.
3. The poem begins to invent itself  
at the moment when the man turns his face to the light.  
(The moment when imagination  
freed from the specific sensation of blazing light  
vertically rises in the sky.)  
Successive metamorphoses of paradise.  
The eye tries to interpret the enigma of beauty  
while Delos emerges slowly on the horizon.  
Summer feels like an eternity.

4. Not one sail in the horizon  
tears the canvas apart.  
The image of a tree  
with its wind-swept boughs scavenging the ground  
is not a part of the scenery today.  
Yet, the old lady creeping uphill on her knees  
tightly holding her icon is.
5. The man is walking on the beach alone.  
He is still touched by the whisper of the waves,  
the way the water persistently lulls the rock to sleep.  
Cedars, rotten fishing boats, shingles  
have a melancholic, unaffected brightness.  
If he were to die at this moment  
he would want to be here, for now,  
in this place where he has been  
if only for a while.