

DOLCE FAR NIENTE

[From Aguilar]

Is life worth loafing? Come, recline with me
And lazily this fragrant afternoon
We'll weigh the idle theme. I often think,
If with protean versatility
I might luxuriously loaf my days,
I would no longer quarrel with the powers
That called me forth. I would not be a man,
Nor god, nor beast, nor bird, nor anything;
Yet each whene'er I listed.

I would rise
And, as an eagle, float in circles slow,
That swing too wide and high for mortal ken,
Or as a flesh-gorged leopard, in the sun
Bask by a rocky den, or as a god
Of some hushed sea lie sweltering on the sand,
While crawled the servile waves to kiss my feet.
Yet with environment I would not keep
Strict correspondence, but with every whim
Would loll where'er, whene'er I pleased.

Before Jove's throne, upon Olympus stretched
With hands beneath my head, with careless eyes
Exploring the vasty, vaulted heavens, I'd munch