

## Chapter 4: Lotus-Eaters

**The action:** It's 10am in the city, and Bloom is walking vaguely towards Irishtown, where the funeral will start. He picks up a letter at Westland Row Post Office, using the pseudonym Henry Flowers. Pay careful attention to the letter, which he reads a little later. He bumps into Mr McCoy, whose wife is singer like Molly. Walking past All Hallow's Eve church he hears a Mass in progress, goes in, and observes the goings on as an outsider. Pay careful attention to how he analyzes the Catholic church's rites. He buys a bar of soap from a chemist and asks to have a formula for Molly made up (the soap will become a motif throughout the whole novel). Finally, he meets Bantam Lyons, who asks to borrow Bloom's newspaper. Pay careful attention to that exchange also. Why does Lyons say, "I'll risk it"?

*Mrs. Bandmann Palmer--in Leah and Hamlet*

Check out John McCormack's version of "Love's Old Sweet Song" on YouTube. You'll get a feel for the kind of singing that was popular in Dublin culture circa 1904, and the song itself is really important to the novel.



*Westland Row Station, Dublin*



The theme for the chapter follows the Odyssean adventure pretty closely. Look for flower motifs throughout; look for images of enervation.

**Odyssey parallel:** The Lotus-Eaters are drug addicts: the danger they pose is temptation. Odysseus's sailors don't want to continue their journey. They want to lie on the beach stoned all day long. See Tennyson's poem, "The Lotus-Eaters"