

Fernando Pessoa

42 — THE FORESELF

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I had a self and life
 Before this life and self.
When the moon makes woods rife
 With possible fay or elf,
There comes in me a dreaming
That is like a light gleaming
 Somewhere in me away,
On seas that I have known
And placeless lands that own
 Another kind of day.

I dream, and as a blast
 Fans into fire an ember,
My heart gleams with a past
 That I cannot remember.
And as the ember's glowing
Is not fire but fire's showing,
 I waste the empty pelf
Of my mute sense of me.
As rain within the sea
 I fade within myself.

There are mazes of I.
 I am my unknown being.
I have, I know not why,
 Another kind of seeing
(Other than this vain vision
That is my soul's division
 From what girds sight about)

Where to see is to know,
Whose life is faith, and woe
 Fled by the hand of Doubt.

My life has happy hours:
 'Tis when I feel not living;
And, as the scent of flowers
 Round flowers a flower-soul weaving
That is a corporate spirit,
From myself I inherit,
 My soul's blood's spirit-air,
A foreself and inself
Which is the being-pelf
 That with God's loss I share.

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«The Mad Fiddler». in **Poesia Inglesa**. Fernando Pessoa. (Organização e tradução de Luísa Freire. Prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes.) Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995: 406.