

Fernando Pessoa

ON AN ANKLE

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A sonnet bearing the imprimatur of the inquisitor-general and other people of distinction and decency

I had a revelation not from high.
But from below, when thy skirt awhile lifted
Betrayed such *promise* that I am not gifted
With words that may that view well signify.

And even if my verse that thing would try,
Hard were it, if that work came to be sifted,
To find a word that rude would not have shifted
There from the cold hand of Morality.

To gaze is nought; mere sight no mind hath wrecked.
But oh! sweet lady, beyond what is seen
What things may guess or hint at Disrespect?!

Sacred is not the beauty of a queen. . .
I from thine ankle did as much suspect
As you from this may suspect what I mean.

1907?

Poemas Ingleses . Fernando Pessoa. (Edição bilingue, com prefácio, traduções, variantes e notas de Jorge de Sena e traduções também de Adolfo Casais Monteiro e José Blanc de Portugal.) Lisboa: Ática, 1974: 200.

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