

Fernando Pessoa

1 — THE MAD FIDDLER

THE MAD FIDDLER

Not from the northern road,
 Not from the southern way,
First his wild music flowed
 Into the village that day.

He suddenly was in the lane,
 The people came out to hear,
He suddenly went, and in vain
 Their hopes wished him to appear.

His music strange did fret
 Each heart to wish 'twas free.
It was not a melody, yet
 It was not no melody.

Somewhere far away,
 Somewhere far outside
Being forced to live, they
 Felt this tune replied.

Replied to that longing
 All have in their breasts,
To lost sense belonging
 To forgotten quests.

The happy wife now knew
 That she had married ill,
The glad fond lover grew
 Weary of loving still,

The maid and the boy felt glad
That they had dreaming only,
The lone hearts that were sad
Felt somewhere less lonely.

In each soul woke the flower
Whose touch leaves earthless dust,
The soul's husband's first hour,
The thing completing us,

The shadow that comes to bless
From kissed depths unexpressed,
The luminous restlessness
That is better than rest.

As he came, he went.
They felt him but half-be.
Then he was quietly blent
With silence and memory.

Sleep left again their laughter,
Their tranced hope ceased to last,
And but a small time after
They knew not he had passed.

Yet when the sorrow of living,
Because life is not willed,
Comes back in dreams' hours, giving
A sense of life being chilled,

Suddenly each remembers —
It glows like a coming moon
On where their dream-life embers —
The mad fiddler's tune.

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