

Fernando Pessoa

**This feeling of the bad in me I have not the power to explain;**

This feeling of the bad in me I have not the power to explain; to me, at the time I speak of, it was a source of dread inexpressible. Men form strange theories to themselves of good and evil and of rewards and punishments; the truth they in life cannot know.

Very good was it for me and for all mine that up to the age of 15 I was ever home-ridden and kept without effort in my old quiet ways. But at this age I was sent to a school far from home, and here the inner being I so dreaded sprang into action and into human life.

When I say that I felt within me much ill, I do not mean that I was foredoomed to a life of infamy or of vice. This, however, do I mean — that there was in me a great inclination to all things that are damnable in man: this I could control or indulge, but once indulged, to some excess, might never perhaps be controlled. I chose to indulge; and from that time forward I took the greatest pleasure in the following of new evil ways.

s. d.

**Pessoa por Conhecer — Textos para um Novo Mapa** . Teresa Rita Lopes. Lisboa: Estampa, 1990: 7.