

Fernando Pessoa

When shall we rest?

When shall we rest?
The ceaseless waves
They have no quest.
The trees peace-rife.
Their lifeless life
From sorrow saves.

When shall we go?
Whither? We care
Nothing to know.
Sorrow is here.
Aught may us cheer
Now of dim there.

What in us shall
Cease and leave peace?
Life holds in thrall
Our joy like pain,
Our loss-like gain,
Our stayed release.

Love cannot bless.
Bliss cannot live.
Joy's short caress
Passes like wind
Suddenly thinned
We dream and grieve.

Outward from us
There lies the land
Less luminous,

Where we may rest,
Leaving all quest.
Wishing no strand.

Ready the bark
For our repose.
Let us embark.
The sea is lone?
We are alone,
Pain but pain shows.

Remember nought.
Cease like a light
Suddenly not.
Merge like a dream
Into the stream
Of its own night.

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