

Fernando Pessoa

VIII — How many masks wear we, and undermasks,

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How many masks wear we, and undermasks,
Upon our countenance of soul, and when,
If for self-sport the soul itself unmask,
Knows it the last mask off and the face plain?
The true mask feels no inside to the mask
But looks out of the mask by co-masked eyes.
Whatever consciousness begins the task
The task's accepted use to sleepness ties.
Like a child frightened by its mirrored faces,
Our souls, that children are, being thought-losing,
Foist otherness upon their seen grimaces
And get a whole world on their forgot causing;
And, when a thought would unmask our soul's masking,
Itself goes not unmasked to the unmasking.

s. d.

«35 Sonnets». in **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.

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