



Fernando Pessoa


Fernando Pessoa and heteronyms



Alberto Caeiro

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Heteronyms

If, After I Die

If, after I die, they should want to write my biography,
There's nothing simpler.
I've just two dates - of my birth, and of my death.
In between the one thing and the other all the days are
mine.

I am easy to describe.
I lived like mad.
I loved things without any sentimentality.
I never had a desire I could not fulfil, because
I never went blind.
Even hearing was to me never more than an
accompaniment of seeing.
I understood that things are real and all different from
each other;
I understood it with the eyes, never with thinking.
To understand it with thinking would be to find them
all equal.

One day I felt sleepy like a child.
I closed my eyes and slept.
And by the way, I was only Nature poet.

(?)

'Selected Poems' translated from Fernando Pessoa by J.Griffin.

 Heteronyms

Heteronyms

Poems from *The Keeper of Sheep*

1-

I never kept sheep,
But it is as I did watch over them.
My soul is like a shepherd,
Knows the wind and the sun,
And goes hand in hand with the Seasons
To follow and to listen.
All peace of Nature without people
Comes to sit by my side.
But I remain sad like a sunset
As our imagining shows it,
When a chill falls at the side of the valley
And you feel night has come in
Like a butterfly through a window.

But my sadness is calm
Because it is natural and right
And is what there should be in the soul
When it is thinking it exists
And the hands are picking flowers without noticing
which.

At a jangle of sheep-bells
Beyond the bend of the road,
My thoughts are contented.
Only, I am sorry I know they are contented,
Because, if I did not know it,
Instead of being contented and sad,
They would be cheerful and contented.
To think is uncomfortable like walking in the rain
When the wind is rising and it looks like raining more.

I have no ambitions or wants.
To be a poet is not ambition of mine.
It is way of staying alone.

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 Heteronyms

Heteronyms

Poems from *The Keeper of Sheep*

5-

There is ample metaphysics in not thinking at all.

What do I think about the world?
How should I know what I think about the world?
If I were ill I would think about it.

What idea have I about things?
What opinion do I have on causes and effects?
What meditations have I had upon God and the soul
And upon the creation of the World?
I don't know. For me, to think about that is to shut
me eyes.
And not think. It is to draw the curtains
Of my window (but it has no curtains).

The mystery of things? How should I know I know what
mystery is?
The only mystery is there being somebody who might
think about mystery.
A man who stands in the sun and shuts his eyes
Begins not to know what the sun is
And to think many things full of heat.

But he opens his eyes and sees the sun,
And now he cannot think of anything,
Because the light of the sun is worth more than the
thoughts
Of all the philosophers and all the poets.
The light of the sun does not know what it is doing
And so does stray and is common and good.

Metaphysics? What metaphysics do those trees have?
That of being green and having crowns and branches
And that of giving fruit at their hours, - which is not
what makes us think,
Us, who don't know to be aware of them.
But what better metaphysics than theirs,
Which is not knowing why they live
And not knowing they don't know?

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 Heteronyms