

Fernando Pessoa

## **I became a man of the crowd.**

I became a man of the crowd. I never trusted myself alone. From night unto morn, and from morn unto night I elbowed speedily through crowds, clinging affrightedly to whom I could. Many thought me a thief. But I pressed my body against their bodies as a child clings to its mother during a thunderstorm. I tried to close up my mind's eye as a child seeks to escape the sight of the lightning; I strove to close my mental ears, as a child seeks by burying its head in its mother's lap to hear not the crash of the thunderbolt. And if there were a short gap in the walkers, I would hurry, run, my arms outstretched, eager for the touch of somebody's frame, my own body eager for a shrinking contact. And always, always, amid the shuffle and the tramp of all footfalls, I shivered to hear that firm, inexorable tread.

s. d.

**Pessoa por Conhecer — Textos para um Novo Mapa** . Teresa Rita Lopes. Lisboa: Estampa, 1990: 10.