

Fernando Pessoa

Oh for a less meaningless horizon than the land and the sea!

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Oh for a rest from places and a lapse from the sense of times!
Waves, ever waves, to and fro . . . Ever waves roll, and we
What do we wait, what do we seek, what do we pause for and flee?
What in us lusts for more round us than the stretch of minutes and climes?

Ah, and no bark to bear us towards Impossible, and that a real place,
An attainable place, full of the depths and rests of the Unattainable!
But ever the sea, the sea, like the passing of many a face. . .
Ever the sea, and the sea runs a restless and half-hearted race
Towards not the shore, nor the land, but what? Who can measure or tell?

No ship to bear us homeward, past earth and sea and the sky!
None to spread sails to a breeze blowing but not with a whither!
And ever, like a lost meaning, the sea never passing by,
Ever the measurable sea, sad as a formless cry,
And the most hearts can be is (to) be two and sorrow together!

To-morrow will tire us of all! But we lack heart to be tired indeed
The purpose our souls came for is lost and never stared at. . .
Let us at least by the shore construe our aches for a deed
Into a meaningless ache and a desolate and purposeless greed. . .
Become we one with the sea's lost purpose and dream and wish nothing
but that. . .

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Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1993: 77.