

# Teixeira de Pascoaes

## SOME POEMS

### TO MY MUSE

My Muse is now a wretched woman  
Who, famished and barefoot, I see everywhere.  
In the night I want to find the light of the sun, risen  
And a work of art in the rags of a beggar.

In your lips, Muse, there is the murmur of fountains  
And in your green body are aching branches.  
Your eyebrows are vast horizons  
And the fog makes up your humid dresses...

Symbolic woman, I find in your features  
The traces of Misery... undoubtedly your mother...  
In your eyes the fire of the setting sun crackles,  
In them is a pained vastness, the desert's!

Your hair is whipped by the wind of injustice,  
You furrow your brow at God's anger!  
But on your lips I hear the voice of the seven sisters,  
The moonlight's prayer and the skies' cantor...

The lament that blossoms under the light of your glance,  
Like the worlds of space in the light of sunny days,  
Invaded my soul, like a sinister sea  
That skips, gushing, the coarse rocks!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> T.N. Free translation - *Towards the light*

## WINTER

A pale glow invades the night...  
From the roofs, sleek, stands a tower in height,  
Like a cypress near the graves so humble.  
Light is undecided and you, rain, you mumble...  
Streets go to die, over there, in the dark abyss,  
Where the light of the lamps, in agony, weeps,  
Recalling the night when it showed its glow...  
The wind came to a halt. It begins to snow.  
A dreadful cold numbs the fingers...  
And as it rises, winced, it lingers,  
A trembling sun of purple tone, shivering.  
Behind the thick, damp fog, hiding.

It was under this sun that I found by a door,  
On the snow, a child lying dead on the floor.  
Eyes still open, hands in cross, above the chest  
Sighting chimerical deserts, in her rest.  
Such as those she had just crossed...  
And I then envisioned a world so mad, so lost.  
A world so criminal, unfair and torn.  
With mouths to feed, bodies unworn.  
With homes lacking fire and souls without beam,  
Where Caiaphas is the judge and Jesus can't redeem;  
Where bandits live wealthy and content.

Where Kindness endures the greatest torment!  
A world giving the Blue the impression of a shout,  
Where the human spirit is damned and cast out,  
A Messiah walking in endless ordeal,  
Under a lone, silent sky, with no appeal,  
A path endlessly sterile and rough  
Where Buddha fell and you drank enough  
Of that poisonous hemlock, Socrates divine;  
Where you were, Horace, a lyrical libertine.  
Where you, Victor Hugo, were in a cell, arrested

And where love got Ovid expatriated!  
I envisioned this world of madness,  
For evil there's joy, for kindness there's sadness;  
An altar for crime and the cross for what's True...  
A world of bloodshed, made of fallacy too.  
For your heated flames, Satan, come and flourish right after  
And where I hear the Light weep, I see Darkness in laughter!...  
As I stumbled across that child lying dead on the floor,  
Naked, ice-cold, poor child, this is the world I saw.  
Dead of hunger; dead of cold...

And hunger for justice, António, took away your soul!  
You departed, brother of mine, from a world wicked and vile  
Taking by the hand the poor soul of that child.  
With her you left, and here we stand alone,  
Grey, like the angry ocean to a storm prone.  
In endless pain of silent roar  
Of the rocks the flaming lava tore,  
By the black, wide-open mouth of a crater...  
We shiver, we convulse, our torment is greater,  
An immense, powerful hatred living within us  
Making our chests a sea so tempestuous,  
A lightning sky with no stars of splendour,  
An infinite abyss where Pain is tormentor...  
Of a hate so great, hate to no end, hate all about.  
And rage will always claim the never-ending shout! . . .

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **AT RANDOM**

At the hour that the cold darkness is seen to grow,  
Like a sombre sinister sea of a violent storm,  
On a bed of light that from the waves flows,  
Here and there, the islands of the stars form...

It is where I, alone next to that infinite sea.  
On the rock of the world where it comes to die,  
And where, at times, the moonlight foam can be seen.  
In a sob that leaves souls quaking,

I dream of this adventure, tragic and extraordinary  
Of departing across this sea of darkness,  
To disembark in a land of gleaming  
Sap which feeds the tree of Light!

In the vessel of the Dream, I go, like a seafarer.  
On the waves of the night. O far-off lighthouse.  
Green light peeking out from inside the fog  
Of which the sempiternal sun is but a ray!...

When is it that you, my all-probing gaze,  
Will see this ideal world that seduces me...  
When will I cross your dark waves,  
Where storms of light rage, O Night's sea!...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **IN AN ALLEY**

The cobblestones of a filthy and muddy alley  
Exhale an obscure and imperceptible groan,  
As the rain falls and the storm worsens  
And the wind bellows, such an untranslatable moan!  
It is mirrored in the mud, shivering with cold,  
Like a blood stain in the glow of a lamp...  
And the infinite expansion of a murky river  
The whole city drowns in mournful fog!  
And in a humble home next to this alley,  
An unhappy woman agonizes in hunger.

Sinister, in contemplation, next to her rests  
A man who envisions an old world burning...  
A world in flames, like a tenebrous forest,  
Populated by lions, tigers and panthers;  
A planet on fire, while the angry wind  
Carries a wave of light to all spheres!...  
At the bedside, small children cry  
Reminding us, oh pain, of wilted lilies.  
They tremble with cold like shadows in the moonlight  
With vertigos and deliria filling their eyes.  
The fire in the hearth has long gone out...  
Among muddled murmurings of the miseries...  
And a merciless and treacherous gust,  
In a cruel smile, slams the windowpanes,  
While the relentless rain of Injustice  
Invades that misfortunate and sad home...  
While the immense, noble, steadfast night,  
Is like the soul, oh, pain, of all that exists!...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

## **STORM**

My soul made a nest next to a large chasm,  
Where, shaking, emerges the glacial paroxysm  
    From a death rattle, immense.  
Dewdrops of blood wet my cheeks,  
And the lily of Blue loses its petals over me  
    The gale of pain!

In my heart I feel that terrible cold  
That freezes a river over and covers mountains with snow  
    And provokes a shiver in the world.  
My brain, with dreams of sorrow, delirious...  
And the voice of Nature my ears reaches

In a deep sob!

And a tragic voice made of bile and sadness.  
Where Joy weeps in pale weariness  
    And where the wind is a groan.  
It is a distressing and sad voice, where murmurs  
A universal pain, a human woe,  
    The eternal suffering!

A voice which has the exceptional timbre  
Of the voice of a lily that, in a solitary vale, withers  
    Of the voice of what I suffered,  
Of the voice of the light that the wind will kill...  
It was that voice that makes the trees wail  
    That spoke of you to me,

When, one day, I passed, at sundown.  
Near the grave where you dream sweetly,  
    In a vision of light  
That now reveals to you the Ideal for which you longed,  
That ideal that on earth you did not find,  
    Like Jesus!

Sleep peacefully, my brother. Oh victim sublime  
Of the bleak folly, of the injustice and crime  
    That still insult God!  
Sleep peacefully; may your great dream of Truth  
Be the new light of the earth  
    And the new blue of the skies.

Your dream did not die with you. It is sempiternal.  
And a hallowed flower without April, without winter.  
    That you sowed, brother.  
And there will always be a sun, chimerical,  
Shining on the souls that, one day, the Good will feel,  
    Your forgiveness!

Great event and thing extraordinary!  
When your soul, sad, coarse and solitary  
    Like Jesus, forgave.

Oh forgiveness sublime ! Immaculate day  
That allows us to see the wings of harmony,  
Where your soul flew...

Forgiveness that made a bandit quake in fear  
And that dressed the undefined space in light...

Oh word of love  
Which the stars of God, singing, repeated  
The word that the lilies also uttered,  
Smiling at your pain.

Oh Forgiveness divine ! Oh sacrosanct example,  
Deserving of an altar, Truth, in your temple.

Superhuman word!  
Like the essence that gives life to the trees and the granite,  
May your forgiveness of light, that sun, infinite.  
Give courage to the human soul!...

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Who can be happy, while evil exists?  
Who can be happy while there is sadness?  
Smile, whilst universal pain weeps?  
Sing, whilst Nature is a deep groan?  
Who can be serene, whilst whirlwinds  
Cause shipwrecks, perdition and carnage,  
And whilst men are unjust, unequal,  
And whilst on earth there are only calamities?...  
So, you, my soul, oh sad visionary,  
Descend from your moon to the horrible darkness  
And keep, in you, oh great solitary,  
The never ending tears of beings and things...  
Descend from the ethereal blue, kind strong soul!  
You are needed in the world and not in the heavens above.  
May you know the night, evil and death,  
Dens where the glory of God cannot reach!...  
Leave the heavens, Love, and descend to the quagmires.  
Remove the golden tunic, and may your beautiful face  
Whiten with pain, wet with groans.

One tear is larger than the seven sisters!...

## **THE FACTORY**

As an appalling mouth, the darkened chimney  
Spits into the blue pestilent, dark flurries  
And anxious lands fill up of smoke and toxicity  
Bringing grey and fog into formerly lucid skies...

The factory operates, and striking hisses  
Cut through the tragic air like a sword.  
Wheels spinning, ovens in flaming pieces  
As terrible as Chimera's look of blood!

Livid faces mist, as tears,  
Those vapours that make the gears run.  
Vultures working, blackened, outraged peers.  
As the outdoors glow with light from the sun.

Come visit, oh Dante, this horrific hell,  
This black den of Work and Misery...  
These caves of eternal woe do tell  
Of the skinny faces with a paleness most deadly!

Come and see, oh Poet, the den of plight,  
The modern Titans who will rise to the sky...  
While in the forges, fire and flames in full height,  
Awaken God's anger to soar and to fly!...

And in the anvil Pain forges the bolt to burn  
Which will strike the world, imperfect, unfair!  
Thou in dark times I see the tides turn  
And the mystical moonlight awakening with care...

And from the cruel Factory filled with smoke and doom,



Rising from hearts, suffering and bitter,  
A greater dream, Almighty, emerges from the gloom  
Embracing the trade in odd light and glitter! . . .

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **A SHADOW**

Funereal paleness descending from Heaven...  
From a corpse appear the strangest emanations.  
Amid the blue, the shape of the wind, running.  
Gazing at livid mountains, at pale oceans!  
A nightly shout of hurtful sounds  
Covers the city, awakening fearful  
The Shadow's eyes in flames out of bounds  
Ready to throw at it all, oh Life, your fire eternal!  
Do you see the Misery, Love? Let us walk by it...  
It's a skeleton scorched by hunger.  
Brought by the storm its dark, foggy spirit.  
A flash of pain comes from the fire haunting her!  
And a silent, cold despair, as the snow  
That, relentless, burns the final leaves,  
When the mist kisses things, nice and slow,  
And fingers take away the sight, as thieves,  
Startling, contracting, the melancholic face,  
Terrible as a scream, unrestful as the shadow  
That by sundown, hearing the whisper of the wind in haze  
Livid, rose above the trees of sorrow!...  
Fought for justice and was defeated. Loved.  
Was hated. Gone mad... Such sorrow!  
Laughter never again dazzled her lips so sad.  
In her eyes whispers a wind most delusional!  
In her hair, flames are crackling,

Preludes of a fire universal and saint...  
And in her rude, harsh chest, unloving,  
Wrath awakens a terrifying chant!  
In utter madness, she sings. She won't even look at us.  
Her whole self sobs, an outcry of rage  
Where our frail voice dies and turns to dust.  
As a ray of light in the infinity so vague!  
Today's Ophelia by Injustice maddened.  
Lying, shaking, over the immense abyss!  
A cosmic tear in the pupil of heaven,  
A cry of Creation suspended from a single gaze  
That tear evaporates, oh sun of love...  
Turns her into nebula, a creator, ethereal.  
Cristalises her pain into an ideal world above,  
Condenses in her soul that flesh so dreadful...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **A DONKEY**

One day, I found, grazing in a meadow  
A thin donkey, lean and sad and alone...  
He had something of the anchorite about him, ascetic  
And in his sad face a sweet look, prophetic...  
An inspired look, profound and visionary  
That sees everything through the night of the Calvary  
Which, besides reality, glimpses the Ideal!  
Unconscious gaze, irrational gaze  
Or like the light of the moon or the light of day  
That catch sight of a perfume and see the entire harmony...  
A gaze which only discovers what the Universe feels;  
A gaze made to see the Spirit only...  
That in a tear only sees hallowed pain,  
A soul in a stone and love in a lily.

Divine gaze that to us seems deadened.  
Like a remote star reduced to nothing.  
As it shines in the Beyond, in the blue distance,  
Where everything is passion, beauty and feeling!...  
Its body was tall, human and very bony.  
The body of a wiseman wasted away during long hours of study.  
And its beautiful profile, in the air, drew itself  
And the Dream, like the light, formed a hallow around its body...  
And upon seeing it I meditated, oh Lord, in a sad soul  
That suffers from the eternal pain of everything in existence...  
In a mysterious, hidden and misunderstood soul,  
That knows the beginning and the vague end of Life...  
That achieved the Absolute and pure consciousness  
Of everything – from Form to the glory of Essence...  
That lives in the eternal vision of the Truth,  
And who proceeds full of love, of peace and humility  
Under cruel lashes and hard whippings,  
By the horrendous hand of Stupidity,  
In search of the Martyr, on the way to the cross,  
To die as saviour, as Jesus did!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

## SEA LIFE

### I

So many days I find myself walking by  
Alongside the misty sea and its sobbing tide...  
And I see, as the sun falls into golden waves.  
Among the foam crowning cliffs and caves,  
Sad homes of poor fishermen...  
Roofs to shelter the cries, the woes, the pain.  
In these sheds, through shutters and windows,  
Sadness watching white sails as far as the eye goes,  
Yearning at the helm within the ships faraway...  
The wind blows, to the widow and the orphan, news of dismay...

### II

Within the Ocean's chest, the heart beats bright  
Of a great human love for earth's satellite.  
The waves tremble, maddened, hysterical.  
The abyss is temptation for seagulls, unthoughtful.  
So high they go, in mysterious flight...  
And blowing, dishevelled, a wind of plight...  
And the air currents, the waves chilling,  
Bring the sensations of a shaky, nervous feeling...  
Sensations that shall be images unforeseen  
Made for exploring the ocean's brain.  
As a black wing, a blinding fog, so thick  
Descends from above, afflictive, horrific!  
Tormenting, out of fear, the moving waves  
Till' the sands of the beach become their graves.  
The promontories reveal a foamy halo.  
Bolts of sorrow set the breeze in flaming yellow,  
And in a firing flare it loses its light...  
Then much darker becomes the night.  
And the waters the small boats devour.  
Shouts of pain rip the air in the darkest hour!  
Final hugs and kisses of goodbye,  
On the way to Peace, crossing to the other side.  
Hands with terror hackled through the foam,

And bodies afloat, from which Pain is now gone.  
And as a ghost amid the waves so hideous.  
Livid, vested in darkness, mischievous,  
A ship sinking, huge, ebony.  
Invaded, in sour roar, by the ocean in fury!...

### III

A narrow figure, in black, a woman,  
Holding, in the beach, an ill-fated skeleton  
Into her arms by waves lovingly thrown,  
Under the moonlight, in a gesture of the mild white foam...  
And the vague dusk upon the waters resting,  
Felt the Paleness and began fading...  
And a quiver of pain, in the air, in bloom.  
Suddenly turned the whole sea into gloom.  
So intense, then, became darkness.  
I was given the impression of a strange brightness  
That, instead of blinding, my eyes dazzled.  
And the sea's hoarse voice from deep down grumbled.  
And the breeze, in agonising, freezing sweat, flies.  
As it climbs, majestic, towards cavernous skies...  
As the sea kissed the sheer cliffs in rapture  
As the desire of the wind to be by trees captured.  
And the dark clouds by the skyline flying  
Its wrath against the ships fearlessly sailing!  
And the vulture hiding in the densest darkness  
That, with love, embraces the greatest sadness...  
For a night's shout trespassed the light, frail and raw  
And expanded 'till God Infinity's shadow!...

### IV

Ol' men of sea, oh rude sailors,  
Children of storms, of fog brothers.  
The love lit by waves in them confides.  
Decoders of the strange language of fog and tides...  
Oh, readers of Firmament's book of blue.  
Interpreters of clouds, the winds, the moon!...

Rude souls invigorated by the sea.  
Moonlit hair of silver waving bright and free...  
Oh, brows, hit by lights from the north-east!  
Whose vague eyes in the vast firmament were lost...  
Oh faces, where the sundown's glare succumbs  
As pain emerges from the waves, it numbs!  
Sailors of Ancient Greece, what you have seen  
Anxious and sad, from the ships where you've been,  
Sappho's suicide and Phrynes' song  
And great commotions angering tides yearlong!...  
You've witnessed the birth, in a day most exceptional,  
Of Venus - with her smile of eternity, universal -  
From a wave touched by the dawn emerging.  
As the waters and the light kissed, urging.  
In a desire of love that will always suffice  
For the tree that blossoms before comes sacrifice.  
In ideal desire, a chimera, unforeseen,  
The father of Christ and grandfather of Pan!...  
O' men of sea from all parts  
Oh, poor scarred rough hearts,  
Wounded by Nostalgia's cruel hand...  
As melancholy and darkness within the mind expand.  
Restless souls, staring at a cataclysm  
Trembling in great, eternal paroxysm,  
Over the abyss wanders Virginia's shadow,  
Light as the wisteria's perfume, ethereal.  
White as the winter's gelid camellia,  
Aside is the pale shadow of Ophelia;  
Bitter soul, loose hair out.  
Phenomenal eyes singing Madness aloud!...  
And both shadows, they sing, they cry.  
As did Christ over sea waters, in His time.  
Amid the storms, men who fall asleep!  
(Anxieties unnoticed, passions mysterious and bleak...)  
I hear the voice of Nature within my soul  
Speaking of your bitter, tragic woe  
And I sense that great solitude in me  
That takes your hearts in those years at sea.

I live, as yourselves, within infinity and the vague  
Of the woeful gaze or of the misty lake;  
In the wave transforming into droplets and haze,  
In the animals who, as people, suffer and faze...  
I live, as yourselves, the life most extraordinary  
Of a sail, under the moonlight, distant, lonely...  
The subtle ways of the fading foam,  
Its eyes, oh breeze, is your soul's home.  
And I feel, as yourselves, the despair most insane  
Lifting 'till the moon the angry waves of the Ocean!  
And the sacred wrath, the blessed anger  
Luring, above waters and land, the clouds in thunder  
Making the wind, tousled, shout in space.  
A reprobate, perhaps, a lunatic, displaced.  
I am too the son of a storm of great allure  
Where the lightning of truth and love also endure.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

## **NEW LIGHT**

The crackle of the fire emanates a soul's smoke  
The fire of a flower provides the ash of the perfume.  
And the body of a wave is a mystical hearth  
That exhales, longingly, the white fog...  
It is the supreme and saintly fire of Matter,  
From which a spiritual and sidereal light is emitted...  
All that is matter, like the solitary, calm rock.  
Wanting and longing, is light, is dreaming, is soul!  
The soul is the exterior, the body the interior.  
Where the heart ends, love begins...

Therefore, each inanimate and heavy body  
Is bathed in a halo of endless light.  
And, like this, an unknown anxiety, a chimera.  
Placed lucid atmosphere around the earth!...  
The light envelops the flame and the flame envelops the firewood...  
Sensitive moss covers an insensitive cliff,  
And above the moss the spiritual aroma hovers...  
Mystery... In an aroma the stone is immaterial!  
And yet they are the same pure life  
The clear aroma, the green moss, the hard cliff!...  
The earth is the mother of the soul, the earth gave birth  
To the perfume of the flower and the soul of Jesus!...  
The sludge is Mercy, and Love is infinite.  
It is but emotion this rock of granite...  
In the moved Poet there is the madness of the wind;  
The cloud is a delirium, the water an emotion...  
The spring lost across the sand,  
Its shores dressed in green,  
Putting forth in this sterile, dry land,  
In an eternal kiss, the seed of Life.  
A dewdrop is dreaming, anxiety,  
Whether it descends to the dust, or ascends to the light...  
Any earth that touches it awakens dazzled,  
It is a herb, a perfume, a soul in love!  
And it is a water droplet, oh heavenly body, blessed,  
Amplified by the light, you embrace the infinite...  
You are the transcendent ether, the great transmitter  
Of the voice of worlds and their strange love!...

All the oak trees emit the same light when on fire...  
A tree trunk on a home is a Christ on a cross!  
And it is the heat that muffles and the torch that illuminates  
What in Christ is love, mercy, harmony...  
And everything that in the poet is emotion and delirium  
Is the light of the sun, song of the birds, colour of the lily!...  
And everything that in us is Goodness is in a rock  
Lush moss and in the trees saintly shadow!...  
And, while I give a poor man a piece of bread,  
The sun fills the bag of immensity with light!



And, like a Samaritan, the religious cloud  
Lets the parched earth drink...  
The murmur of a spring is a Sermon of the Mountain  
And the afternoon mist a strange ascension!...  
And while I am death, oh ancient cold winter,  
Before the sun – Jesus, you are an eternal Lazarus.  
A promontory is a lofty Christ, sad and alone,  
And the divine sea an immense puddle of Jacob!...  
And the green herbs are sacred versicles  
That the streams and sun write on the meadows...  
And a stone contains the true story  
Of Genesis, Light and the first Woman!...  
Still today, the Deluge, the old grandfather of springs,  
Wanders in the mouth of forests and mountains!...  
And the most sterile land still remembers and bemoans  
The time when it kissed your golden lips, dawn,  
For the first time, burning with passion!  
Still to this day the sensation strikes the earth  
That its body diluted in mystic tenderness,  
Upon conceiving the first creature!  
And in the earth's eyes the image still shines  
Of all that she saw, in that great voyage  
Through Mystery's infinite gloom,  
Until it blossoms into an ethereal heart!  
In the earth's eyes is the image of the gaze  
Which longing, at times, transforms into moonlight...

God revealed the secret of Life to the sunlight.  
Let us unveil the beloved and preferred Light!...  
Let us see the supreme reason for existence  
And what it has of love, of spirit and of essence,  
What is real, eternal and unmistakable in it...  
May our gaze penetrate the world of the invisible.  
The heights of the Dream, the vastness of the Chimera,  
Where ethereal Spring is already discovered,  
A subtle nebula composed of a perfume.  
Of an ether, of love, of a light that sums up  
The new Creation that is about to arise  
From the chaos of Tomorrow, from the kiss of the Hereafter!...

The dust we see on the fields, scattered,  
Is chaos; in it dreams a mystical Universe!  
A star is extinguished and in it rises  
Its feeble light, in an infinite light...  
If a man closes his frozen red eyes  
He becomes a constellation of eternal eyes!  
From ears turned to dust,  
Sprouts full hearing, immense and true....  
All that ends and to ash is reduced  
Will awaken in soul and rouse in light!  
An auroral, chimeric world germinates  
In every sand, in every crystalline drop  
And the new Life, on a glowing wave,  
Emerges from the ideal surface of the new being.  
A new Apollo will play the new lyre...  
And in the water you drink and the air you respire,  
In the clouds where the clear light of the heavens sleeps,  
A new love palpitates, a new God murmurs...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

## LAUGHTER

Oh, laughter, gaze of Apollo, father of day!  
Burning light dressing virgin bodies...  
Oh laughter, ethereal font of harmony!

Oh, mysterious laughter of the origins,  
Oh, perennial laughter of the god Pan,  
Oh, delirious, vertiginous laughter!

Oh, laughter, sister of the holy light.  
Whenever pure lips prepare to smile,  
The morning star shimmers upon them.

To be joyful is to be light. To laugh is to flourish.  
Budding carnations, tiny roses,  
These are smiles of love unfurling.

Golden rains of crystalline laughter,  
Drawing, in rumorous forests,  
Angels of light, divine apparitions!

Laughs of gold in the vacant, misty skies,  
Laughs of dawn, morning dew,  
Laughs of flower on voluptuous trunks.

Laughter of the waves, laughter of the crystals,  
Flecks of foam, laughing, bluntly forged,  
Oh, intense and cold laughter of the metals!

Laughter of the sun that gilds our sorrow;  
The lips of night ignited upon a star,  
The lips of a cloud on a smile of water...

Laughter of death, frozen in the moonlight;  
Laughter etched by fire in dark mist,  
Kiss, beaming, in the eyes of a maiden.

Laughter of the white snow, what dazzle...

Oh, mystic smile of Mercy!  
Shadowy laughter in a tragic figure...

Laughs of spring! New age!  
Lilies you are, in the valleys, the first  
Envoys of divine clarity.

Laughter warming the sinister fogs...  
Oh, solitary laughter at daybreak,  
Laughter older than fleeting worlds.

Or in the wildflowers of the Calvary,  
Or in the flowers of the countryside, I see in all  
The primitive and primary laughter,

The precursor of dawn and of desire,  
Of hope and of the pained tear...  
Nebulous, in the Blue, on lips, kiss!...  
Eternal laughter of God creating Life!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea<sup>2</sup>*

## **CHANT OF MAY**

Bright in light are the rivers,  
Of gold are the fountains,  
The blue ocean gold delivers  
Reaching the faraway horizons.

The shrub in blossom is ethereal,  
Like Lazarus ascending  
From the deep, dark burial  
As he hears the sun's chanting!

The odour, so intense

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<sup>2</sup> T.N. Free translation - *Ethereal Life*

In May, up the hills.  
Clouding the clear horizons  
As the hazy fog falls.

The light from the sun, it blasts.  
Joyful, over town,  
And once there, on fire it sets  
The water and the pebbles on the ground.

The livid, white face of the marble  
Turns to gold;  
And the colours sparkle and wobble  
Painting the trees once nude and cold.

Growing feast, the colour embraces  
The valley, the country, the mountain.  
And from below one barely distinguishes  
The vivid blue of the welkin.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## **JOY**

Woodlands of gold, of joy from the sun,  
Sparkling in the crystal-clear fountain;  
Translucence in the eyes of little lambs so gentle,  
Singing in the voice of birds so brittle!

Do see the bliss of the flower,  
Flourishing within us, in laughter...  
In the thickets of green, the trees,  
Twinkling from the morning cries.

In the lucent sap, in the logs swirling along,  
The eternal laughter of Apollo's song!  
It is the music of flowers,

Melodies of spring in vivid colours.

For joy never is lonely,  
Finding its kindred in light and harmony...  
Golden commotion, indefinite.  
Throbbing heartbeats to life's spirit.

Joy is damsel;  
It's light of star, it's light of soul;  
A bolt of light never-ending,  
Dazzling my whole self as I'm meditating!

Woodlands of gold, of joy from the sun,  
Sparkling in the crystal-clear fountain.  
Translucence in the eyes of little lambs so gentle.  
Singing in the voice of birds so brittle...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## **ECSTASY**

Stars, like you, I burn and consume myself.  
I am flame and smoke,  
In dreams, I scatter  
And flee with the wind.  
I am ecstasy, moonlight, dazzle.  
The sacred morning brightened my cradle;  
And spring, laughing its colours,  
Bound me in a flower-lit embrace.  
Kiss me [with] ethereal grace.  
The lark, perched on me, sings.  
Eternal butterfly of joy,  
In the enchantment of my eyes it flutters.  
And everything intoxicates and seduces me!  
I fly away in a song of light,

In a prayer to God  
And to the clear sun that [animates] Nature  
And describes, in a gesture of beauty  
The musical curve that embraces the blue of the skies.

I live in that splendorous height,  
There, where everything is grace, rapture, infinite love,  
The morning emotion of a falling tear  
On a rosebud...

When a glow of divine apparition,  
Which bathes the black hills.  
Dissipates the cold mists and illuminates.  
With lilies of gold, the mountain bust.  
Through my being,  
Angels pass flying, stars shining [forth],

The moon, the dark night,  
Floods of tenderness.  
Shadows of souls that appear portrayed  
In the restless pallor of the dawns...  
Perfumes, anxieties,  
Visions of love, far-off glimmers...  
And, by a miracle, I reach within  
Indefinite radiant worlds;  
And all of me heroically vibrates and sings.  
Under astral influences and mysterious kisses...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## **THE FOG**

Morning mists of the north,  
Oh enchanted mists,  
You create legends of dreams,  
Fairy apparitions;

Moonlight castles  
And ivory towers,  
Where Viviana hears  
The flute of Merlin.

You mists that dampen  
The day's hymns,  
And in my eyes leave  
Stains of cold gray;  
And sketch, in the Blue,  
Outlines of ethereal sorrow,  
And landscapes of snow,  
In black, watery depths.

Oh, you mists that hover  
In the craggy mountains...  
Oh, hands of dawn and foam,  
Caressing the things...  
Oh, ghosts of mothers  
Dressed in splendors  
That, on summer mornings,  
You nurse the flowers!

The white fog that you are  
Such intense moonlight,  
Which actually darkens  
Instead of brightens.  
And makes lost, on the mountain,  
Isolated travelers,  
When the wolves, hungry,  
Are howling, wandering.

Oh, mists dilating  
Sound, vague matter,  
On a wave that spreads  
Until the sidereal light;  
And, in the muteness of the night,  
Inundates the deep sky



With prayers, with songs  
And shouts of this world.

Morning mists of the North,  
Oh, enchanted mists,  
You create legends of dreams,  
Fairy apparitions,  
Moonlight castles  
And ivory towers,  
Where Viviana hears  
The flute of Merlin.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

### **THE BOULDERS**

There are boulders that are mysterious statues.  
We see them, yonder, in the sandy mountains,  
Painted on canvas by the fiery setting sun...  
Oh, brows that it furrowed and set pain in stone!  
There are boulders that are extraordinary profiles.  
Some, as the moon rises, evoke the calvaries.  
This one recalls the mutilated torso of a God;  
That one, at night, opens remorseful eyes.  
Others have the ideal attitude of someone in meditation.  
The faces of some take on a pained expression  
As they betray a gesture of madness.  
The shadow of some, in the afternoon, is a shadow of tenderness.  
Others pray, to the wind, the sorrows of the moonlight...

Others, from a hilltop, look to the sky and the sea.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

### **THE SOULS**

I see passing by, in everlasting solitude,  
Forms of souls, figures of emotion;  
The poets of silence that don't sing,  
The foolish ones that suddenly startle,  
Those that freeze as the moonlight grows,  
Those that stare at the same star, eternally;  
Those that luck lost,  
Those who call, in screams, for death!  
Those who follow, unknowingly, paths,  
Those who walk at night, always talking, alone;  
Those who live married to pain  
And hide it, jealous;  
The tragic ones of Love,  
Those who feel astral enchantments,  
Those who kill and sing, by destiny;  
The night thief, the divine poet.  
The sad vagabonds,  
On a perpetual and fantastic journey...  
Those who love the scenery  
And hold in their eyes the vastness of the worlds...  
Forms of souls, figures of emotion,  
Wandering, in infinite solitude.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## TO A SHEEP

Among the poor, gentle sheep  
That I guard about the hills, there is one  
Bleating, blue, away, alone  
Living of dry grasses others won't keep.

What feel you, in your soul? What think you, in your steep?  
Might you've heard an ethereal voice of sorrow?  
What is it that the clouds told you?  
You are no sister to the other sheep!

In the cliffs, as ladders, you climb the highest  
And stare at the sun; it's fading;  
And at the waking stars, the very first...

Now you gaze at the sky as dark as the black pearl,  
Famine for that grass of green never-ending  
That colours the hills and valleys of the Outer World.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## THE HUMAN SHADOW

As I stroll the paths ahead,  
Fearful birds with wings widespread;  
Reptiles hiding in the flowering gorse.

I am the figure of a tragic curse  
To these poor hidden creatures  
Who need darkness to survive their worldly ventures.

Little bird flying over the sound of my steps,  
Should you know how I wish you were free  
To my arms you'd heap and build your nests...

Should you hear me, oh rock, you'd come to me!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## ETERNAL GAZE

That gaze of sadness,  
Encasing the gloom of all my soul  
And all that there is,  
In when it lands, with a blow,  
That bolt from Beyond  
Over your face, loving, angelical  
Lying in bed, so sick, so frail,  
That gaze becomes eternal;  
Surrounded by your mother's pain  
And my gaze now is forever insane.  
A fire of agony,  
A crimson light of a hellish reign...

Is now, for me, the light of every day.

Teixeira de Pascoaes | *Elegias*<sup>3</sup>  
**ON THE STREET**

Midnight. The city is a somber ghost  
In the mystery of darkness, afflicted and anguishing...  
In the unlit angles, a mute and cold figure  
Has a sinister profile and an empty, misty gaze...

The city is an immobile ghost... In the spaces,  
Where the stars closed the eyelids of God,  
Its towers rise up, lofty, like arms  
Petrified in an infernal gesture of pain.

For over all things hovers a profound mystery  
That makes souls shiver and shadows tremble.  
The heart of the world beats bewilderedly,  
A growing season of darkness can be felt!

Light reflects off the glass of the windows,  
Flying through the darkness, sparkling,  
Unmistakable as the whiteness of the candles  
On the waves that enliven the blood of the moonlight...

The night is a black abyss. And the mad poet  
Hunches over himself gazing, white with pain,  
Upon the mystery, where buried in darkness exists,  
The heart of light beating with love!

An uneasy peace rests over the city,  
Like that of the sea encircling islands with morning foam.  
And upon the black streets, where the gas light dies,  
The mysterious mist descends, like a wing...

The tears of the fog drip from the eaves  
Where my soul feels the pain of the oppressed...  
Tears that give a chill to the cold of January  
In the wan profile of the withered trunks.

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<sup>3</sup> T.N. Free translation – *Elegies*

Down there, next to the docks, dormant vessels  
Recall emigration and harsh exiles,  
Terrible storms, the igneous continents,  
Lions' caverns, strange groves!

The air inhaled is venomous and bitter...  
It is made of cries of despair and torment.  
Which is why, a feverish human chest, raving,  
Finds mystic sustenance in the pain of others.

And an aching breeze agitates shadows of trees  
That are, inside, maiden and virginal light.  
In the faces of passersby is the whiteness of marble,  
So apparent it exhales a glacial cold.

Oh, high cathedrals cut against the sky,  
Oh, specters of the night in absorbed meditation!  
Oh, high homes! Oh, whitened walls,  
Where the lime is as pale as the dead!

Oh, plants of the fantastic, somber gardens.  
In a murmur of pain carried by a solitary wind...  
Aromas that you kill, funereal harmonies,  
Lakes made of mud where the darkness is thicker!

Sad city where silence is an enormous shout!  
Oh, affliction of the night! Soul that despairs!  
Ruins made by shadow. Great chaos that sleeps,  
Abyss where the pale Chimera wanders!

It is a tragic scene, where a figure shrouded  
In a fog of the soul where there are flickers,  
Follows a black road, tattered,  
Carrying in its gaze the splendor of the visions!

It continues through the streets and the squares,  
In an immense dream of outrage and truth,

Hearing that sinister clamor of the misfortunes  
That floats in the air, lost at the foot of clarity...

A clamor similar to the voice of this Planet,  
Where Delirium ignites the sharpest notes.  
It is a clamor that inspires the brow of the poet  
And that on the rope of remorse, Judas hung!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **CHANT OF MAY**

Bright in light are the rivers,  
Of gold are the fountains,  
The blue ocean gold delivers  
Reaching the faraway horizons.

The shrub in blossom is ethereal,  
Like Lazarus ascending  
From the deep, dark burial  
As he hears the sun's chanting!

The odour, so intense  
In May, up the hills.  
Clouding the clear horizons  
As the hazy fog falls.

The light from the sun, it blasts.  
Joyful, over town,  
And once there, on fire it sets  
The water and the pebbles on the ground.

The livid, white face of the marble  
Turns to gold;  
And the colours sparkle and wobble  
Painting the trees once nude and cold.

Growing feast, the colour embraces

The valley, the country, the mountain.  
And from below one barely distinguishes  
The vivid blue of the welkin.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Eetérea*

### **WANDERING SONG**

From a small corner of this earth,  
Deserted and sad, by the shore,  
My vagabond heart  
Wanders, across the world, crying.

Wander through the dark night,  
Heart, light of the moonlight...  
Lily ignited by bitterness  
That shall never go out.

Kiss the painful wound,  
Your love will make it heal.  
Kiss the lifeless lips  
And they shall speak once again.

Adore, shelter, console;  
Be a cradle, cavern and home.  
Be a kiss, tear, alms  
And a beggar in prayer.

From a small corner of this earth,  
Deserted and sad, by the shore,  
My vagabond heart  
Wanders, across the world, crying.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Eetérea*



## THE TREES

Maternal trees,  
Under the sunlight of summer days,  
The rustic beggar,  
Beside you, finding in you blissful shelter...

He lies resting  
From his heavy, hurtful, endless walking.  
Under flowered branches,  
Whose colour and aroma are to him new chances.

Because human plight.  
Before Nature, before light,  
Feeding of birdy chants and thriving on the blue,  
Steps away from our souls much paler and smooth.

Oh, trees of mercy.  
In those mornings of beauty.  
Ethereal glow that slowly emerges.  
Into bundles of joy transforms your tears!

Blissful is your body untarnished,  
In sacred housing, ignited.  
Blissful fruit and flower, sent from above.  
My sisters in God, almighty God of love.

Such immense kindness  
Detains me in your angelical presence,  
Where crystals echo the voice of the nightingale  
And curdles of green and sun are the set of a fairytale!

But such is this great sorrow  
I feel, as time flows like water into tomorrow,  
As a ghost that flutters in fast pace  
Stripping them of their green and grace.

And in their voices, they weep,

Calling on Zephyrus' omen, branches shaking in a heap;  
Whispers and cries of pain, in doldrums;  
Here's the elegy of autumn.

And with that ideal song  
Of spiritual breeze, I despond  
Diluted in never-ending night  
I live for it all and I let my soul take flight...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## **DEATH**

The world was a star  
That one day burned out,  
Cooled, and the immense  
Darkness suffocated it!  
And in that hour of mourning,  
Horrendous and painful,  
Among the ashes of the Earth,  
The light of life arose!  
When a sun is snuffed out,  
One thousand hearts ignite...  
The stars give light,  
But the planets love!  
And it is thus that the sun's light  
Dies, in a collapse,  
To be a gaze  
Or beautiful May flower...  
Our body is as well  
A star that burns out;  
A sun that the inundation  
Of darkness floods,  
So that in it may arise  
Conscious life,

Absolute existence,  
Omnipotent life!  
From the dead night is born  
Vivid clarity...  
From what is fragile and vain  
Eternity rises.

Our body must  
Topple into dust,  
To become soul and life  
Eternal and true!  
Lower we must  
Into the horrendous grave  
So that our life,  
In flights of light, may ascend  
To the endless regions  
Of everlasting love!  
To give the final gasp  
Is something we must:  
The sublime tragedy,  
Men, is a must  
That the criminal and  
Grim body redeems!  
The drama of agony,  
Men, is a must!  
Oh, splendid death,  
Dawn, Glory, Day!...

*2<sup>nd</sup> version (1924 version):*

Our body is a star that ages  
And, suddenly, darkens!  
And, in the wind, dissolves into cooled ash,  
So that true life may spring from it!  
We must lower into the horrendous grave,  
So that our soul, in flights of light, may ascend  
To everlasting love!  
Men, give our final gasp we must!

The final, already unearthly, tear must be shed!

Oh death, redemption, dawn, glory, day!

*Definitive version (Complete Works edition, undated):*

Our body is a star,  
That gradually cools  
And darkens,  
So that a more beautiful light may emerge from it,  
The spiritual light.

We must lower into the black grave,  
So that the poor and human creature  
May achieve eternal love.

We must suffer the last gasp,  
Cry the final tear...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

## **THE POET**

### **I**

Nobody contemplates anything in admiration.  
It would seem that everything is simple and ordinary...  
And if I look at a flower, a star, the golden sky,

What endless commotion do they cause me to dream!

To me, everything is extraordinary!  
A stone is fantastic! A high mount  
Living earth, bleeding, like a Calvary  
And a white specter in the moonlight, my font!

Everything is light and voice! Everything speaks to me!  
I hear souls lamenting, in the grove,  
When the afternoon, so languid, quiets,  
Because it foresees the night and fears it.

I cannot open my eyes without opening  
My heart to pain and joy.  
Each thing knows how to transmit to us  
A strange and chimeric harmony!

It is quite certain that you, my heart,  
Contain all of Nature.  
You have mountains, in your solitude,  
And dark sunsets of sadness!

The things that surround me, silent,  
Are souls, crying, looking for me.  
How many vacant, mysterious words,  
In this air I breathe, tremulous, they murmur!

Voices of enchantment reach my ears,  
Shadows of mystery kiss my eyes.  
I feel I lose, at times, my senses  
And that I will float in an aerial river...

I feel as a dream, aspiration, longing,  
And flying tear and winged cross...  
And crawling shadow of humility,  
Which is, to God, the true light.

I am a blessed alms, oh beggars!  
My heart is a joyful fountain...  
Come drink, blinded ones;  
Quench the dark thirst!

I am an old trunk, burning, frozen men!  
Oh, darkness, come to me: I am clear day.  
I am forgiveness: come to me, oh, condemned!  
Oh, mournful ones, come to me: I am joy!

My weeping is sweet dew, wilted flowers.  
I am the light of the moon, oh, dark night!  
I am a smooth balm, oh, dark pains!  
Oh, stones, come to me! I am tenderness!

Trees, come to me: I am spring!  
And I am a nest of love, birds of the air!  
And I am a den of love, oh, feral beast!  
And I am a beach of love, waves of the sea!

### III

The fire that sets me ablaze  
Is the fire of passion.  
My body tumbles into ashes  
And dust, carried by the wind...  
And eternal life is reached,  
In mystic ascension,  
By everything that, in me, is pain, fragility and darkness.

I see, beneath my feet,  
Stars, shining...  
I see turning into light  
The icy penumbra.  
This meat, which is earth,  
Shall flourish once again.  
My whole being a dazzling vision of God.

There goes my heart,  
Chimeric, dreaming,  
What infinite murmuring  
Or breath of pain  
Or perfume of lily  
Or wing of moonlight,  
For a new life and a new love.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Vida Etérea*

### **MAN AND THE OTHER BEINGS**

When, sometimes, I leave on an afternoon walk,  
The birds and the reptiles and other animals,  
All run from me when they see me pass  
And tremors of fright shake the brambles...

My being fills deserted valleys with fear...  
I inundate the hedges along the paths with panic.  
And, whenever I sit in the shade of the grove,  
Chills of terror fill the nests...

And I, one who dreams of Mercy and desires Love,  
Who sees Creation and is moved,  
Feel great dismay and profound pain,  
To see myself, oh, Nature, so misunderstood.

For all that I love eternally,  
The stars, the blue, the clouds and the moonlight...  
Of what use is consciousness in the face of the unconscious?  
If there is only darkness, there is no need to gaze upon it...

You would come to me, oh, rock, if you could hear me,  
And you, waves of the sea, and you, lofty spaces!  
If you could sense, oh, bird, what I feel for you,  
You would certainly make your nest in my arms!...

But, in my sadness, I have this vision  
Of the love that must reign over all creatures,  
Of the tie that must unite the human heart  
With the boulder that dreams and the cloud that whispers...

I imagine I am ascending a hillside  
And that the moonlight of Mercy flashes in the trees...  
And that the birds of the sky and the animals of the land  
Cast eyes of kindness upon me...

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Para a luz*

### **IN THE DARKNESS**

Oh sadness of things, when it is night  
In our hearts! Oh what sadness  
To my terrible eyes it unfolds,  
And they are worn out trees, in the twilight,  
And fierce winds, passing by  
In the gloomy paleness of the sky!  
Darkness, dread, desolation!  
A fantastic infernal landscape,  
All sketched in moribund paints  
And funereal foreboding reliefs.  
Deserted black night! Not even a light  
Vague laugh of a star can be made out...  
Only the frightful tears of the rain  
Run down the face of silence.  
Mercy, dark night! Do not kiss me  
With that livid, dead mouth!



O sun, come and illuminate my pain  
Which, hidden in the shadow, expands  
And takes root even deeper  
In this bleeding flesh that is my soul!  
Lighten up, O night! O wind, be still!  
Dense southern clouds, sharpen the eyes,  
Lighten up the tanned face!  
But, alas, the night remains dark;  
Dark from your absence, your being  
Lost to us forever!  
Dark from your muted voice  
And your laughter forever extinguished!  
Dark from my anguish!

Oh dark night,  
How they suffer, hidden in your bosom,  
Even the brute things of Nature!  
And how the great trees shake  
Their branches of tears and shadows!  
The wind sobs on the verges, or remains  
Frozen in a murmuring silence...  
And over the old granite courtyard  
It will be said that the old house, abandoned  
Of the child's divine presence,  
Falls to the earth in bursts of tears!  
Outside, in the yard where you played  
I know not what spectre moans... Someone  
Who seems to creep into my body  
And clutches my heart in his hands!  
And, choking, I cry! I'll scream!  
I scream! I flee from myself! I disappear!

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Elegias*

**ALONE**

Afternoon. I wander alone, along a hill.  
Its image, chimerical, fluctuates  
Ahead of me, in the space: it is fog  
Dressing the naked earth with emotion.  
And as it instils itself in my soul  
That ethereal figure... first love!  
I hear it speaking, out there, in the moonlight,  
I see it playing in the shadow of the yard.  
They only see my eyes, in this world,  
Their angelic profile, their depth,  
Mysterious, dark green gaze...  
Do I see a star? It is it. Do I see a lily?  
It is it. Everything is it. And my delirium  
Is it, it is its spirit singing.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Elegias*

### **IN ITS TOMB**

Upon its deep, sepulchral cradle  
My spirit prays, kneeling,  
And feels more beautiful and virginal,  
In its divine, concentrated pain.

Fall, morning drops of dew!  
Stars, fall from the starry sky!  
Dry leaves of the autumn breeze,  
Come decorate the sacred tomb!

Oh, midnight moonlight, enchantment  
Of the shadow, come cover it! Oh, mad wind,  
Do not shout, lower your wailing voice!

Silence, nocturnal trees of the grove!  
Because he is small and must be afraid,  
Over there in the breast of the tenebrous earth.

*Teixeira de Pascoaes | Elegias*