

Fernando Pessoa, "Discontinuous Poems"

The frightful reality of things  
Is my everyday discovery.  
Each thing is what it is.  
How can I explain to anyone how much  
I rejoice over this, and find it enough?

To be whole, it is enough to exist.

I have written quite a number of poems  
And may write many more, of course.  
Each poem of mine explains it,  
Though all my poems are different,  
Because each thing that exists is always proclaiming it.

Sometimes I busy myself with watching a stone,  
I don't begin thinking whether it feels.  
I don't force myself to call it my sister,

But I enjoy it because of its being a stone,  
I enjoy it because it feels nothing,  
I enjoy it because it is not at all related to me.

At times I also hear the wind blow by  
And find that merely to hear the wind blow makes  
it worth having been born.

I don't know what others will think who read this;  
But I find it must be good because I think it  
without effort,  
And without the idea of others hearing me think,  
Because I think it without thoughts,  
Because I say it as my words say it.

Once they called me a materialist poet  
And I admired myself because I never thought  
That I might be called by any name at all.  
I am not even a poet: I see.  
If what I write has any value, it is not I who am  
valuable.  
The value is there, in my verses.  
All this has nothing whatever to do with any will  
of mine.

(Translated by Eduard Roditi)