

Alexander Search

THE SEPULCHRE

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Mystery, mystery is here
That brings a joy with a fear.

Oh, that Death should greater be
Than Time and Space and all we see,
That Change should deeper be than thought
And Time, like a portentous tomb,
Should feel corruption in its womb
 Yet itself crumble like its rot!

For e'en the sepulchre's cold stones
Shall have a death like the dead bones
They shut in.
 (What coffer can lock
Corruption out? or rottenness
What wit with cell and bolt can mock?)

Ay, even marble shall like bodies die
A death, shall have an end. The passer-by
 Shall tread the dust of the stone
 That on the grave did lie,
 In dust now like each bone.
For to Corruption all must go,
The difference in this alone:
 That some things rot quick and some slow.

Ay, the hard stone will wear away
Making the day when it was rock
Unreal as a distant day.

Only a Shadow none do know,
By the lock'd door of Time and Space,
With obscure and peculiar grace
Keeps watch never to go.

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Poesia Inglesa. Fernando Pessoa. (Organização e tradução de Luísa Freire. Prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes.) Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995: 112.

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