



RUY BELO

(Portugal, 1933-1978)

[Thursday 29 September 2005]

Born in a small town in central Portugal, Ruy Belo received a law degree at the University of Lisbon, in 1956, and a PhD in Canonical Law at the St. Thomas Aquinas University in Rome, in 1958. A devout Roman Catholic as a young man, he was a member of Opus Dei for ten years, quitting the organization in 1961. In that same year he published his first collection of poems and began studying Romance Languages and Literature at the University of Lisbon. He finished the course in 1967 and worked in Madrid as a Lecturer in Portuguese from 1971 to 1977. Ruy Belo also wrote literary criticism and translated: Montesquieu, Saint-Exupéry, Cendrars, Lorca and Borges. He died at his home in Queluz, outside Lisbon.

Although some of his statements and subsequent poems suggest he became an agnostic, Ruy Belo's first book (from which 'Anniversary Mass' is taken) reflects the Catholicism of his early adulthood. It earned him the title of 'religious poet', a designation he tried to shake off with only partial success, so that it lingers on a bit even today. Perhaps it's just as well. Far from being literary expressions of a doctrinaire creed, those initial poems already revealed a man for whom faith in God was a complex position accompanied by metaphysical reflection and self-examination. Although the faith disappeared, the reflection and examination persisted. So did the melancholy, quasi-religious tone of the poems, as if the poet were still searching for the Adamically lost paradise – now doubly lost, since he had lost his faith.

Ruy Belo treats with a certain reverence the themes he takes up, and those themes are universal, or he makes them so: impermanence, childhood, ocean, woman, death. They are all inextricably tied together, ocean and woman embodying the infinite embrace sought by the poet who mourns the lost omnipotence of his infant imagination (see *And Everything was Possible*) and the lostness of all his rapidly passing life, which will ultimately embrace, or be embraced, by death. The awareness of death – not merely as an inevitable conclusion but as a gradual existential expropriation ("in everything we die a little," he writes in the last verse of *Flower of Solitude*) – runs throughout Belo's poetry, which attempts to confer transcendence and

immortality on at least some of that life which is draining away. I don't mean immortality by way of posthumous fame but by the Proustian method of objectifying a life's critical, intimately richest moments so as to rescue them from oblivion.

In a poem published in 1970 Ruy Belo revealed that "Pessoa is the living poet who interests me most", and certain of Belo's verses recall those of Fernando Pessoa's liveliest heteronym, Álvaro de Campos. The thematic influence is not especially great, but Belo clearly learned his run-on, breathless rhythmic style from the poems of Campos – a style dubbed 'paragraphic rhythm' by Pessoa, who in turn received lessons in prosody from Walt Whitman.

As for the excruciating awareness, in Pessoa as well as in Belo, of death's real presence in life, this was surely a matter of affinity rather than of influence, and the two poets responded to it in different ways. "When I write," wrote Ruy Belo in a preface to one of his books, "I give to the earth, which for me is everything, a little of what belongs to the earth. In that sense, writing for me is to die a little, to anticipate a definitive return to the earth. I write the way I live, the way I love, destroying myself. I commit suicide in words." This recalls, curiously, a passage from *The Book of Disquiet* published for the first time in 1982, four years after Belo's death (Text 193 in the Portuguese Assírio & Alvim edition). After stating "I am, in large measure, the selfsame prose I write", Pessoa's alter ego elaborates further on in the passage: "Whatever I think is promptly put into words, mixed with images that undo it, cast into rhythms that are something else altogether. From so much self-revising, I've destroyed myself." For Pessoa, who abhorred death, that slow suicide in words was connected to "the gradual collapse of my life". Ruy Belo, in contrast, wistfully but peacefully accepted that he was restoring to the earth what rightfully belonged to it. It was as if he did after all have some sort of faith or assurance that Pessoa was lacking. As if, after having seen as much as one can see of the universe and his own small place in it, he had arrived at the conviction that it was all good.

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POEMS

**A FEW PROPOSITIONS WITH BIRDS AND TREES THAT THE POET CONCLUDES
WITH A REFERENCE TO THE HEART
AND EVERYTHING WAS POSSIBLE
ANNIVERSARY MASS
FLOWER OF SOLITUDE
HAND TO THE PLOW
MY WAY OF SAYING FAREWELL
OH HOUSES HOUSES HOUSES
ON THE HILL OF THIS MOMENT
THE GAME OF QUILTS
THREE OR FOUR CHILDREN**

**A FEW PROPOSITIONS WITH BIRDS
AND TREES THAT
THE POET CONCLUDES WITH A
REFERENCE TO THE HEART**

Birds are born on the tips of trees
The trees I see yield birds instead of fruit
Birds are the liveliest fruit of trees
Birds begin where trees end
Birds make the trees sing
On reaching the height of birds the trees swell
and stir
passing from the vegetable to the animal
kingdom
Like birds their leaves alight on the ground
when autumn quietly falls over the fields
I feel like saying that birds emanate from the
trees
but I'll leave that manner of speaking to the
novelist
it's complicated and doesn't work in poetry
it still hasn't been isolated from philosophy
I love trees especially those that yield birds
Who hangs them there on the branches?
Whose hand is it whose myriad hand?
I pass by and my heart's not the same

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AND EVERYTHING WAS POSSIBLE

When I was still young before I left home
ready to travel around in the world
I already knew about the waves' breaking
from the pages of all the books I'd read

When may rolled around everything was
flowers
the morning turtledove flew here flew there
and to hear the dreamer just speak of life
was like it having actually happened

**Algumas Proposições com Pássaros e
Árvores que
o Poeta Remata com uma Referência ao
Coração**

Os pássaros nascem na ponta das árvores
As árvores que eu vejo em vez de fruto dão
pássaros
Os pássaros são o fruto mais vivo das árvores
Os pássaros começam onde as árvores acabam
Os pássaros fazem cantar as árvores
Ao chegar aos pássaros as árvores engrossam
movimentam-se
deixam o reino vegetal para passar a pertencer
ao reino animal
Como pássaros poisam as folhas na terra
quando o outono desce veladamente sobre os
campos
Gostaria de dizer que os pássaros emanam das
árvores
mas deixo essa forma de dizer ao romancista
é complicada e não se dá bem na poesia
não foi ainda isolada da filosofia
Eu amo as árvores principalmente as que dão
pássaros
Quem é que lá os pendura nos ramos?
De quem é a mão a inúmera mão?
Eu passo e muda-se-me o coração

© 1970, Ruy Belo
From: *Todos os Poemas*
Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

E Tudo Era Possível

Na minha juventude antes de ter saído
da casa de meus pais disposto a viajar
eu conhecia já o rebentar do mar
das páginas dos livros que já tinha lido

Chegava o mês de maio era tudo florido
o rolo das manhãs punha-se a circular
e era só ouvir o sonhador falar
da vida como se ela houvesse acontecido

Everything took place in another life
and there was always a way out when needed
When was all this? Not even I can say

I know only that I had a child's power
all things were close to me and everything
was possible I only had to want it

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E tudo se passava numa outra vida
e havia para as coisas sempre uma saída
Quando foi isso? Eu próprio não o sei dizer

Só sei que tinha o poder duma criança
entre as coisas e mim havia vizinhança
e tudo era possível era só querer

© 1970, Ruy Belo

From: *Todos os Poemas*

Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

ANNIVERSARY MASS

It's been one year since your steps
last walked in our parish
Where do you who belonged to these fields
whose wheat is again turning ripe
belong now?
What's your new name?
Can there be a more unusual weekend
than a saturday like this one that never ends?
How do you fill your time
now that all the time ahead of you is free?
What sort of steps might take you
behind the cooing of a dove in our skies?
Why have you never again had a birthday
even though the table is set and waiting for you
and the mulberry trees along the road are in
bloom again?

That's what his voice was like that's how he
talked
says the yellow-flowered broom that grows here
and that saw him walk on the pathways of
childhood
next to his first flight of partridges

Now only in our neckties do we take you who
are dead
to those paths where you left the mark of your
feet
Only in our neckties. Your death
has stopped dressing us up completely

Missa de Aniversário

Há um ano que os teus gestos andam
ausentes da nossa freguesia
Tu que eras deste campos
onde de novo a seara amadurece
donde és hoje?
Que nome novo tens?
Haverá mais singular fim de semana
do que um sábado assim que nunca mais tem
fim?
Que ocupação é agora a tua
que tens todo o tempo livre à tua frente?
Que passos te levarão atrás
do arrulhar da pomba em nossos céus?
Que te acontece que não mais fizeste anos
embora a mesa posta continue à tua espera
e lá fora na estrada as amoreiras tenham outra
vez florido?

Era esta a voz dele assim é que falava
dizem agora as giestas desta
sua terra
que o viram passar nos caminhos da infância
junto ao primeiro voo das perdizes

Já só na gravata te levamos morto àqueles
caminhos
onde deixaste a marca dos teus pés
Apenas na gravata. A tua morte
deixou de nos vestir completamente
No verão em que partiste bem me lembro

The summer you departed I clearly remember
thinking profound things
It's summer again. You have ever less place
in this corner of us where every year
we will piously unearth you
Until the death of your death

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FLOWER OF SOLITUDE

We lived we conversed we resisted
we crossed paths on the street under the trees
we perhaps made a little stir
we traced timid gestures in the air
but what words can explain
that ours was a solitary and silent
profoundly silent heart
and in the end our eyes watched
like eyes that watch in forests
In the midst of the tumultuous city
in the visible angle of its countless edges
the flower of solitude grew lush each day
We had a name for this
but the ruthless time of men
killed in us the one who was dying
And in this ambitious heart
alone like a man christ dies
What shall we call the void that flows
relentless as a river?
It is born it swells it will empty
and in all of this it's finally a sea
We lived we conversed we resisted
without realizing that in everything we die a
little

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pensei coisas profundas
É de novo verão. Cada vez tens menos lugar
neste canto de nós donde anualmente
te havemos piedosamente de desenterrar
Até à morte da morte

© 1961, Ruy Belo

From: *Todos os Poemas*

Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

A Flor da Solidão

Vivemos convivemos resistimos
cruzámo-nos nas ruas sob as árvores
fizemos porventura algum ruído
traçámos pelo ar tímidos gestos
e no entanto por que palavras dizer
que nosso era um coração solitário
silencioso profundamente silencioso
e afinal o nosso olhar olhava
como os olhos que olham nas florestas
No centro da cidade tumultuosa
no ângulo visível das múltiplas arestas
a flor da solidão crescia dia a dia mais viçosa
Nós tínhamos um nome para isto
mas o tempo dos homens impiedoso
matou-nos quem morria até aqui
E neste coração ambicioso
sozinho como um homem morre cristo
Que nome dar agora ao vazio
que mana irresistível como um rio?
Ele nasce engrossa e vai desaguar
e entre tantos gestos é um mar
Vivemos convivemos resistimos
sem bem saber que em tudo um pouco nós
morremos

© 1973, Ruy Belo

From: *Todos os Poemas*

Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

HAND TO THE PLOW

Happy the man who manages sadness wisely
and learns to divide it among the days
Though months and years pass it will never
leave him

How sad it is to grow old on the doorstep
while weaving in our hands a belated heart
How sad to risk against human returns
the blue equilibrium of summer's sheer
mornings
by the ocean that overflows with us
in the long farewell of our condition
It is sad to see in the garden the sun's solitude
reaching from the city's houses and din
to a distant hint of river
and the meager life meted out to us
It is sadder to have to be born and to die
and to have trees at the end of the street

It is sad to go through life as if
returning and to enter humbly into death by
mistake
It is sad in autumn to conclude that summer
was the only season
The wind passed by in solidarity and we didn't
see it
and we didn't know to go to the green depths
like rivers that know where to find the sea
and know which bridges which streets which
people which hills to talk with
through the words of a forever uttered water
But what's saddest is to remember tomorrow's
acts

It is sad to buy chestnuts after the bullfight
between Sunday and the smoke on a November
afternoon
and to have asphalt and many people for your
future
and behind you a life with no childhood
looking back at all of this some time later
Day by day the afternoon dies
It is very sad to walk among God and be absent

But manage, poet, your sadness wisely

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A Mão no Arado

Feliz aquele que administra sabiamente
a tristeza e aprende a reparti-la pelos dias
Podem passar os meses e os anos nunca lhe
faltará

Oh! como é triste envelhecer à porta
entretecer nas mãos um coração tardio
Oh! como é triste arriscar em humanos
regressos
o equilíbrio azul das extremas manhãs do verão
ao longo do mar transbordante de nós
no demorado adeus da nossa condição
É triste no jardim a solidão do sol
vê-lo desde o rumor e as casas da cidade
até uma vaga promessa de rio
e a pequenina vida que se concede às unhas
Mais triste é termos de nascer e morrer
e haver árvores ao fim da rua

É triste ir pela vida como quem
regressa e entrar humildemente por engano pela
morte dentro
É triste no outono concluir
que era o verão a única estação
Passou o solidário vento e não o conhecemos
e não soubemos ir até ao fundo da verdura
como rios que sabem onde encontrar o mar
e com que pontes com que ruas com que gentes
com que montes conviver
através de palavras de uma água para sempre
dita
Mas o mais triste é recordar os gestos de
amanhã

Triste é comprar castanhas depois da tourada
entre o fumo e o domingo na tarde de novembro
e ter como futuro o asfalto e muita gente
e atrás a vida sem nenhuma infância
revendo tudo isto algum tempo depois
A tarde morre pelos dias fora
É muito triste andar por entre Deus ausente

Mas, ó poeta, administra a tristeza sabiamente

© 1962, Ruy Belo
From: *Todos os Poemas*
Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

MY WAY OF SAYING FAREWELL

There's ocean there's woman
and both of them reach me in amiable bays
opening up for example in the churchyard of
sunday afternoons
I hear them call but not just any old way
they call in a particular manner
perhaps as a petition or a presence or a suffering
The fact is that basically
and despite all the words in all the pages of
dictionaries
I really only have since the world's first
morning
two words at my disposal
to name just two things
whatever two I choose
I'm not sure which I like more
whether ocean or woman
I know I like ocean I know I like woman
and when I say ocean when I say woman
I don't say ocean or woman just to say it
When I say ocean when I say woman
there's a certain tone in my voice a certain taste
in my mouth
which seem to me to clearly show that ocean
and woman
as I say ocean as I say woman
pronounced ocean pronounced woman
are not just words used for speaking
but are perhaps a way of liking
and the awareness of liking
and a pleasure in saying so
a liking of the fact of liking
Woman-ocean is after all
close to womb-emotion
if we forget the letters
and obey the sense of sound
There are waves in the ocean
the ocean breaks in waves that spread in the
woman's long hair
and she makes it wave better now and then
in the month of september when the tide is
highest
Probably the best part of woman namely her
gaze
is for me the woman's ocean
and the woman I meet only once in life
crossing her path for just a moment wherever it
may be

Uma Forma de Me Despedir

Há o mar há a mulher
quer um quer o outro me chegam em acessíveis
baías
abertas talvez no adro amplo das tardes dos
domingos
Oiço chamar mas não de uma forma qualquer
chamar mas de uma certa maneira
talvez um apelo ou uma presença ou um
sofrimento
Ora eu que no fundo
apesar das muitas palavras vindas nas muitas
páginas dos dicionários
bem vistas as coisas disponho somente de duas
palavras
desde a primeira manhã do mundo
para nomear só duas coisas
apenas preciso de as atribuir
Não sei se gosto mais do mar
se gosto mais da mulher
Sei que gosto do mar sei que gosto da mulher
e quando digo o mar a mulher
não digo mar ou mulher só por dizer
Ao dizer o mar a mulher
há penso eu um certo tom na minha voz sinto
um certo travo na boca
que mostram que mais que palavras usadas para
falar
dizer como eu digo a mulher o mar
mar mulher assim ditos
são uma maneira talvez de gostar
e a consciência de que se gosta
e um prazer em o dizer
um gosto afinal em gostar
Enfim o mar a mulher
pode num dos casos ser a/mar a mulher
mera forma talvez de uniformizar o artigo
definido do singular
Há ondas no mar
o mar rebenta em ondas espaiadas nos
compridos cabelos da mulher
que ela faz ondular melhor de tarde em tarde
no mês de setembro nas marés vivas
O melhor da mulher talvez o olhar
é para mim o mar da mulher
e à mulher que um só dia encontro na vida
de passagem um simples momento num sítio
qualquer
talvez a muitos quilómetros do mar

perhaps many miles from the ocean
but a woman I can't ever forget
no matter how awash I am in sorrows or worries
is the woman whatever woman
I call the woman from the ocean
In that late september when I depart
from a city whatever city
when I can feel that someone is dying
that something lingers forever in the days
and I sincerely fear I might sink
into some eyes or into water
into a little or a lot of water
an ocean wave a tear or a glassy gaze
I'll say loudly or softly however I'm able
with wide-open mouth or already choking
the words ocean or woman
slowly and ever slower almost in slow motion
woman ocean
then almost as just a vague notion
ocean woman
I don't know but maybe it will be
more than anything else
my way of saying farewell

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mas mulher que não mais consigo esquecer
mesmo imerso na dor ou submerso em cuidados
a essa mulher qualquer
eu chamo mulher do mar
Nos fins de setembro quando eu partir
de uma cidade seja ela qual for
quando eu pressentir que alguém morre
que alguma coisa fica para sempre nos dias
e ou nuns olhos ou numa água
num pouco de água ou em muita água
onda do mar lágrima ou brilho do olhar
eu recear seriamente vir-me a submergir
direi alto ou baixo conforme puder
com a boca toda ou já a custar-me a engolir
as palavras mar ou mulher
com certo vagar e cada vez mais devagar
mulher mar
depois quase já só a pensar
o mar a mulher
Não sei mas será
talvez mais que outra coisa qualquer
uma forma de me despedir

© 1976, Ruy Belo

From: *Todos os Poemas*

Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

OH HOUSES HOUSES HOUSES

Oh houses houses houses
houses are born and live and die
While alive they stand out from each other
they stand out namely by their smell
they differ even from room to room
Ah the houses I built in my childhood
where might I be today in my childhood?
Where might I be in a little while from these
verses?
Will I have a house to store all of this in
or will I always be just this instability?
Unlike me houses seem stable
but they're so fragile poor houses
Oh houses houses houses
silent witnesses of life
they die not only when demolished
they die with the death of people

Oh as Casas as Casas as Casas

Oh as casas as casas as casas
as casas nascem vivem e morrem
Enquanto vivas distinguem-se umas das outras
distinguem-se designadamente pelo cheiro
variam até de sala pra sala
As casas que eu fazia em pequeno
onde estarei eu hoje em pequeno?
Onde estarei aliás eu dos versos daqui a pouco?
Terei eu casa onde reter tudo isto
ou serei sempre somente esta instabilidade?
As casas essas parecem estáveis
mas são tão frágeis as pobres casas
Oh as casas as casas as casas
mudas testemunhas da vida
elas morrem não só ao ser demolidas
elas morrem com a morte das pessoas
As casas de fora olham-nos pelas janelas

Houses look at us through their windows
Builders landlords and real estate agents
know nothing about houses
Rich people have their palaces
but the house of the poor is the whole world
it's the poor who know about houses
the poor know everything
I loved houses their nooks and corners
I visited houses I fondled houses
Only houses can explain
why a word like intimacy exists
Without houses there would be no streets
the streets where we cross paths with others
and especially with ourselves
In a house I was born and I'll die
in a house I suffered I lived with others I loved
in a house I went through the seasons
I breathed – O life simple problem of
respiration
Oh houses houses houses

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Não sabem nada de casas os construtores
os senhorios os procuradores
Os ricos vivem nos seus palácios
mas a casa dos pobres é todo o mundo
os pobres sim têm o conhecimento das casas
os pobres esses conhecem tudo
Eu amei as casas os recantos das casas
Visitei casas apalpei casas
Só as casas explicam que exista
uma palavra como intimidade
Sem casas não haveria ruas
as ruas onde passamos pelos outros
mas passamos principalmente por nós
Na casa nasci e hei-de morrer
na casa sofri convivi amei
na casa atravessei as estações
respirei – ó vida simples problema de respiração
Oh as casas as casas as casas

© 1973, Ruy Belo

From: *Todos os Poemas*

Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

ON THE HILL OF THIS MOMENT

A hint of absinthe fills the air when the beetles
emerging from the rotten bark of the old oaks
begin their flight in the month of June
Picking hazelnuts we walk through the garden
where the lindens' aroma wafts in the breeze
The coolness of the fruit defeats the declining
sun
We are who we used to be walking so softly
with so much childlike dignity
that here not even death would remember us
nor would the monstrous flower of other
destinies
or any other of the republics of hatred
stir up the calm sea of this late afternoon
It is to the sacred celebration of chance
to the feast of the world's mineral essence
that the sun is proceeding in this temple's inner
sanctum
The afternoon is everything and everything is
pathways

Na Colina do Instante

Há um cheiro de absinto quando os capricórnios
da casca apodrecida dos carvalhos velhos
iniciam seu voo pelo mês de junho
Colhemos avelãs ao longo do jardim
onde as tílias ao vento espalham o aroma
A frescura da fruta vence o sol rasante
Somos quem fomos caminhamos tão de leve
temos tamanha dignidade de crianças
que nem a morte aqui de nós se lembraria
nem mesmo a monstruosa flor de outros
destinos
nem qualquer outra das repúblicas do ódio
encresparia o calmo mar do fim da tarde
É à celebração sagrada do acaso
à festa da essência mineral do mundo
que o sol procede no segredo deste templo
A tarde é tudo e tudo são caminhos
Somos eleitos cúmplices da hora
Aqui não chega o desatino do verão
esqueço a aversão dos meus antepassados

We are the chosen assistants to this hour
Here summer's insanity doesn't arrive
and I quit loathing my ancestors
and I rise as the last light flickers
For a moment I am I and here no one died
O my life that process I left behind

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THE GAME OF QUILTS

In this square my childhood resurrects
here my life suddenly has a new wellspring
and surges with the force it had when it started
The time hasn't passed only my consciousness
which I feel temporarily transported back a few
years
only my familiar sensation of reflecting on that
time
of being a spectator of the succession of
succeeding days
of not just living of not living without even
knowing I live
in a delimited space where things and people
evidently were because they simply were
only that consciousness and sensation make me
suspect
that the time that never passed has passed
The churchyard in late afternoon the game of
quoits
the clatter of the quoits the iron stakes
the sun setting on itself and round like a simple
quoit tossed by someone through the space of
the day
and ready to fall into the sea as onto a stake
the extravagant and thoughtless act of tossing
the quoit as if in that act life itself were at stake
the stock-still profiles of those who look on
with caps on their heads and hands in their
pockets
it all happened it happens here thirty-five years
ago
as if here no one had gotten old
or suffered or died or endured
the enormous hunger needed to produce one
rich man
as if no one here had gone in search of his

e levanto-me sobre a derradeira luz
Por instantes sou eu ninguém morreu aqui
ó minha vida esse processo que perdi

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From: *Todos os Poemas*
Publisher: Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon

O Jogo do Chinquinho

Renasce neste largo a minha infância
a minha vida tem aqui nova nascente
e jorra de repente com o ímpeto do início
O tempo não passou ou só a consciência
que provisoriamente sinto de voltar alguns anos
atrás
a sensação que sei de reflectir sobre esse tempo
de ser um espectador de sucessivos sucedidos
dias
de não viver apenas não viver sem sequer saber
que vivo
num espaço demarcado onde as coisas e os
homens
eram tanto que eram simplesmente
só essa consciência e sensação me fazem
suspeitar
de que passou o tempo que nunca passou
O adro o fim da tarde o jogo do chinquinho
o ruído das malhas os paulitos
o sol poente sobre si redondo como simples
malha atirada por alguém pelo espaço do dia
e prestes a cair no mar como nas tábuas
o gesto perdulário e impensado de jogar
a malha como quem num gesto joga a vida
as silhuetas hirtas dos que assistem
de boné ou barrete na cabeça e mãos nos bolsos
tudo se passa aqui ali há trinta e cinco anos
como se aqui ninguém houvesse envelhecido
nem sofrido ou morrido ou suportado
toda a imensa fome requerida para produzir um
rico
como se aqui ninguém tivesse demandado
longe de aqui o seu país noutros países
Tudo é o mesmo adro a mesma tarde o mesmo
jogo
Até este café onde sentado olho e penso por

country
in countries far far away from here
It's the very same churchyard same afternoon
same quoits
Even this café where I sit watching and watch
with my thinking
is the same café where I split my first beer
with my father a beer that resisted
the heat of the summer day
in that wicker basket submerged in that well
It's the same taste I've had in my mouth
for many years now chewing wine and bread
and life
the taste of women the taste of girls
forever inaccessible like any absolute
forever impossible yet pursued as if possible
the taste of defeat or the taste of palpable
earth day by day running through my fingers
and one day bound to fill my mouth forever
I've aged I know and all I've gained
is what I lost. I'm a grown-up now.
Meanwhile night has engulfed everything the
game is over
and across the sky of time there was a man who
passed
or a certain quoit that by chance was hurled into
life
and that lives in the precarious trajectory before
the fall

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THREE OR FOUR CHILDREN

More or less here not long ago there were some
children
three or four children more or less right there
There must have been children there's so much
sun
here where the wind sometimes flagellates the
summer
and children in the summer here on the hill
children who are the wind's victims
and sometimes my virtual victims
victims right now of my eyes that don't see
them now
children in crisis all covered with dust
pure dust stirred up for a moment by the wind
children who can be led by a single thought

olhar
é afinal o mesmo onde bebi a meias com meu
pai
a primeira cerveja uma cerveja vinda
através do calor do dia de verão
nesse cesto de vime nesse poço mergulhado
É o mesmo o sabor que sempre sinto nesta boca
há muitos anos já mordendo o vinho o pão a
vida
o sabor das mulheres das raparigas
inacessíveis sempre como um absoluto
sempre impossível tido no entanto por possível
o sabor da derrota ou o sabor da terra
sensível dia a dia nos meus dedos
e um dia susceptível de me encher a boca para
sempre
Envelheci eu sei e só ganhei
o que perdi. Sou de uma adulta idade
E entretanto tudo a noite rodeou e o jogo
acabou
e pelo céu do tempo houve um homem que
passou
ou uma certa malha arremessada por acaso à
vida
e viva na precária trajetória antes de caída

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Três ou Quatro Crianças

Mais ou menos aqui havia há pouco umas
crianças
três ou quatro crianças mais ou menos ali
Devia haver crianças há este sítio do sol
aqui onde o vento vitima às vezes o verão
e crianças no verão no montículo aqui
crianças que o vento vitima
minhas vítimas virtuais outras vezes
vítimas agora dos meus olhos que agora as não
vêm
crianças em crise polvilhadas de pó
puro pó ao vento revoltado um momento
crianças que um só pensamento pode levar
crianças que se definem pelo crescimento
que no contentamento por vezes de todo se

children who are defined by their growth
who sometimes completely consist in
contentment
children like reeds that lightly bend in the wind
of the moment children now concentrated here
now springing up over there forever self-
detached
almost weightless almost footless children
swaying on stalks in the wind
and sometimes wrapped in its cloak as if by
magic
children things we almost only think of
things we sometimes doubt
things we're not quite sure exist
seeming to be one moment seeming not to be
the next
being perhaps living victims of doubt
children scarcely more than doubts
who were here who aren't here
who weren't here even when they were here
who at most may perhaps have been here
in the wind within this summer
children things that fly things that take flight
birds with lightish eyes three or four voices
three or four notes from the time the wind blew
children three or four moments in all
three or four houses in the wind
houses raised on high that promptly fall
whitewashed fallen-down houses
three or four nothings in all
reeds I just now saw bending in their fragile
lives
already vanished from my sight
three or four children absorbed in their lives
each one hardly anything three
or four children three or four times life
Here's this mound here there were there must
have been
three or four who were there three or four
whom I saw I heard
things I saw things I perhaps saw
scarcely more than a gesture
scarcely more than a moment in this month of
august
I'm no longer sure if I saw them if I didn't seem
them
it seems there were some children more or less
here

contêm
crianças canas que vergam leves ao vento
do instante crianças que ora aqui se concentram
ora se erguem ali sempre alheias a si
crianças quase sem peso quase até sem pés
oscilando nas hastes ao vento
como por encanto por vezes envoltas no seu
manto
crianças coisas quase apenas pensadas
coisas das quais se duvida às vezes
que a gente quase não sabe se são ou não são
que ora nos parece que são ora que não são
que são vivas vítimas talvez da dúvida
crianças pouco mais do que dúvidas
que estavam que não estão aqui
que mesmo quando aqui estavam não estavam
aqui
que quando muito podem talvez ter aqui estado
ao vento dentro deste verão
crianças coisas que voam coisas que se evolvem
aves de olhos leves três ou quatro vezes
três ou quatro notas do tempo do vento
crianças três ou quatro momentos ao todo
três ou quatro casas ao vento
casas ao alto erguidas e logo caídas
casas caídas caiadas
três ou quatro nadas
canas vistas vergar há pouco nas frágeis vidas
agora fugidas da minha vista
três ou quatro crianças absortas nas suas vidas
cada uma bem pouco três
ou quatro crianças três ou quatro vezes a vida
Há aqui este cabeça estavam estariam aqui
três ou quatro que havia três ou quatro que eu
via que ouvia
coisas que eu vi que talvez tenha visto
pouco mais que um gesto
pouco mais que um instante neste mês de agosto
já não sei se as vi já não sei se as não vi
haveria umas crianças mais ou menos aqui

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