

Lovers Until the End

I open the drawer to find part of myself: shoes from another time, green knee-length boots, amidst books. The objects scare me. Remembering petrifies me – the passage of time haunting. I cannot control my feelings. Before any resistance, the past arrives into the present. I remember when my father gave me all the books from the Vaga-Lume collection. It was a Birthday Gift. With tremendous anxiety, a mixture of excitement and fear, I wanted to read them all at once. Obviously, I couldn't; the stack of books representing what already at that age, no more than ten years old, overflowed in me: the complexity of human emotions, the tragedy of such material. My child tried to control time obsessively. Under such young skin, frustration grew with the impossibility of holding time in one's hands, the lived minutes not returning. This rhythm, worth saying, lasting a lifetime. Or just a second. Today, again, time surprises me with its presence, embodied in the old boots and books. Looking me sideways, as though asking: are you still afraid of me?

I smile at the question, for the shoes aren't even that important. But, considering my hesitation, I recognize I have harvested certain traumas, among them the emotional fear of finding old smells and memories. In short, a generalized paralysis for knowing that, soon after such encounter, emptiness may surge, along with the experience of what is impermanent. Avoiding such constitutive lack of daily life is even worse, I know. Within these gaps are born the necessary and structuring silences. Those one only encounters after strong emotional events, the death of something important, be it real or symbolic, for example. The end of anything brings quietude and a certain interior lament. A wait, god knows for what. On the other hand, a greater opportunity to reset one's subjective gaze.

Starting with anything: the unexpected visit of a hummingbird in a cold autumn morning, imperceptible before, searching for a sweet summer taste. The trees, the seasons, the ongoing conversations in the markets. And of course, the ghosts. Because in the middle of the road there is always a shoe, a book, or even a rock, as Carlos Drummond de Andrade used to say. These, filled with joy, pain and sadness – a coming and going of emotions and hurting; because there is always a bit of them. Memories, bits of unrealized dreams, expectations, disappointments, revived in the present and making us who we are.

I am all that. I am also saudade, of mother specially. Of her loving and affectionate way. And that, throughout her life, thought me what today I cultivate in myself. To believe in what you can't see. To have faith. In dreams, even if they don't realize the way you imagine, but are in themselves a life force. For that reason, I won't excuse myself before I put my old boots and reread the teen book of old times. Take a walk around my past. Meet my mother once more, holding me in her lap. See in that child's eyes a bit of myself but also my niece. Become emotional with this mystery without being ashamed by my tears. Walk freely, cradled by every arm that has touched me with love. Will do. Throw the seeds. So that in the daily harvest, I can find the necessary affection, come sad or happy days. In this agreement that I and you, time, have signed – lovers until the end.