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Dedico este trabalho ao Gualter pelo seu companheirismo de longos anos e pelo apoio incondicional.

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A toda a minha família, especialmente aos meus pais pelo apoio ao longo de toda esta caminhada e ao meu querido primo e poeta Helder Monteiro.

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À Julieta, minha companheira de mestrado e à Fátima Azevedo, a primeira leitora e crítica da minha obra.

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O Projeto: - O Mestrado

“Descobri que a leitura é uma forma servil de sonhar. Se tenho de sonhar, porque não sonhar os meus próprios sonhos?” [Fernando Pessoa]

A Escrita: - Autora e Tradutora

“Se és escritor, escreve como se tivesses os dias contados, porque, na verdade, eles estão-no quase todos.” [Henry Thoreau]

A Obra: - “Nunca te vi, mas posso sentir-te ...”

“A distância é como os ventos: apaga as velas e acende as grandes fogueiras.” [Machado de Assis]

INTRODUÇÃO

Desde a II Guerra Mundial que a língua inglesa é a língua mais traduzida em todo o mundo, mas a língua para a qual menos se traduz. Uma situação que identifica a tradução como um potencial local de variação.

‘Since World War II , English is the most translated language worldwide and one of the least translated into (Venuti 1995 a: 12-14), a situation that identifies translation as a potential site of variation.’ (The Scandals of Translation – Towards an ethics of difference, Lawrence Venuti, New York, 1998)

Com este trabalho de projeto quis mostrar que a tradução de literatura portuguesa para a língua inglesa pode tornar-se tão interessante e motivadora como o contrário.

Com este objetivo em mente, o meu trabalho baseou-se na tradução para a língua inglesa dos cinco capítulos finais de uma obra literária da minha autoria: ‘Nunca te vi, mas posso sentir-te...’

As metodologias encontradas para a elaboração do trabalho foram a pesquisa de autores portugueses que proferissem conceitos relacionados com o tipo de literatura da minha obra, assim como pesquisas *on line* do género de leitor que aprecia este tipo de literatura.

Ao nível da estrutura da tradução, apliquei técnicas e conceitos aprendidos ao longo do Curso de Mestrado e pesquisei autores estrangeiros de forma a poder fundamentar as minhas escolhas de tradução.

Dividi este trabalho pela Introdução, dois capítulos, a Conclusão e a Bibliografia.

Na Introdução faz-se uma apresentação muito breve do trabalho.

No primeiro capítulo temos a biografia da autora, o papel que a escrita tem na sua vida e é feita uma descrição pormenorizada da obra literária que foi traduzida. São caracterizadas também todas as personagens envolvidas na obra e todo o enredo que antecede a tradução. É focado também o mito da ascensão social pela qual passa a personagem principal da obra, bem como as diferenças existentes entre Norte e Sul, quer a nível do nosso país, quer a nível mundial que achei relevantes serem argumentados visto terem ligação com o enredo da obra.

No segundo capítulo temos a tradução em língua inglesa, inicia no capítulo XIII e termina no capítulo XVII, o último capítulo da obra.

Em todos os capítulos existem as notas de rodapé onde são explicadas as várias opções de tradução, quer de cariz linguístico, quer de cariz literário. As opções foram devidamente fundamentadas por autores/ críticos estudados durante a execução do trabalho e houve também o recurso a citações encontradas na Internet, recurso a dicionários *on line* e de papel.

Na Conclusão faz-se o balanço final do que foi feito, bem como todo o enriquecimento adquirido pela elaboração deste trabalho, assim como o seu contributo para o futuro.

A última parte deste trabalho é composta pela bibliografia. Em primeiro lugar foi colocada toda a bibliografia encontrada nos livros que foram alvo de estudo e dicionários de papel. De seguida a bibliografia encontrada na Internet, desde citações a dicionários *on line*.

Como anexos temos o livro com a história no original.

I CAPITULO

BIOGRAFIA DA AUTORA, Mónica Pinto da Silva

Nasceu na aldeia de Ribeirão, concelho de Vila Nova de Famalicão, distrito de Braga.

Uma aldeia onde todos se conheciam pelos nomes e que alguns anos mais tarde se transformou em Vila.

Frequentou a escola primária e foi com tenra idade que adquiriu o gosto pela leitura.

No ensino secundário, descobriu o prazer da escrita, inventava histórias de aventuras baseadas num herói televisivo da altura. Foi nesta altura também que despertou para o gosto pelas Línguas, especialmente pela língua inglesa.

Quando entrou para o Instituto de Línguas, decidiu que a melhor forma de praticar a língua inglesa seria fazendo a tradução de todas as suas histórias de aventuras para inglês, o que lhe deu ao longo destes anos um largo apoio na aprendizagem da língua, especialmente na tradução da língua portuguesa para a língua inglesa. Guarda ainda, dezenas de cadernos A4 com as suas histórias de ação e a respetiva tradução.

Os anos foram passando e quando decidiu ingressar no ensino superior, por vocação optou por uma área que estivesse ligada às línguas. Matriculou-se no curso de Línguas e Secretariado no Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto (I.S.C.A.P.), cujo nome foi posteriormente alterado para curso de Assessoria e Tradução, devido ao Acordo de Bolonha.

Durante a licenciatura, começou a escrever nos tempos livres, era uma história que falava de temas atuais e baseada em experiências vividas por pessoas conhecidas. À medida que ia escrevendo, ia ficando cada vez mais entusiasmada. Os amigos sugeriram-lhe que essa história poderia até ser tornada num livro.

Entretanto, acabada a licenciatura decidiu frequentar o Mestrado em Tradução e Interpretação Especializadas.

No segundo ano do curso, surgiu a dúvida de qual o tema da dissertação, no seu caso, trabalho de projeto. Decidiu usufruir de um trabalho já iniciado por si há quase três anos e utilizá-lo como base para o seu trabalho de projeto. Tomada a decisão, faltava apenas a opinião e a aprovação de professores responsáveis e da instituição.

Os professores acharam uma ótima ideia pelo que obteve também a aprovação da instituição.

O trabalho seria a tradução da história que estava ainda a escrever, para a língua inglesa.

Este seria um trabalho que lhe daria imenso prazer a realizar, pois consistiu em traduzir algo que tinha sido escrito por si.

OBRA LITERÁRIA

“Nunca te vi, mas posso sentir-te...”

Antes de ser efectuada qualquer apresentação da obra convém fazer uma descrição do conceito Literatura e de tudo que o envolve.

Sabe-se que Literatura é um conjunto de produção literária de uma época ou de uma região. É um conjunto de obras que se particularizam e ganham feição especial quer pela sua origem, quer pela sua temática ou pela sua intenção: literatura feminina, literatura de terror, literatura revolucionária, literatura de evasão, etc.

Literatura pode significar ainda conhecimento organizado do fenómeno literário.

Até meados do século XVIII, confere-se à literatura, quase sem excepção, ou uma finalidade hedonista ou uma finalidade pedagógico-moralista. E dizemos quase sem excepção, porque alguns casos se podem mencionar nos quais se patenteia com maior ou menor acuidade a consciência da autonomia da literatura. Calímaco, por exemplo, característico representante da cultura helenística, procura e cultiva uma poesia original, rica de belos efeitos sonoros, de ritmos novos e gráteis, alheia a motivações morais. (Vitor Manuel Aguiar e Silva, Teoria da Literatura, 5ª edição, Coimbra: Almedina, 1983)

Alguns séculos mais tarde, a poesia foi transformada num religião da arte por alguns trovadores provençais.

A evasão é uma das finalidades da literatura. A evasão significa a fuga do eu a certas condições de vida e do mundo, um mundo imaginário, diferente do que temos e funciona como compensação tendo como objetivos, sonhos e aspirações. Tudo isto verifica-se no escritor e no leitor.

O escritor pode ter muitos motivos para se evadir, um pode ser o conflito com a sociedade, uma sociedade medíocre, injusta. Para fugir a esta realidade, refugia-se na literatura.

Outros dos motivos são: os seus problemas e sofrimentos, recusa-se a aceitar o universo absurdo e imperfeito.

Na criação literária, o escritor pode transformar a literatura numa religião podendo até esquecer-se do mundo e da vida. Na evasão do tempo, o escritor busca épocas com beleza, grandiosas e com encanto. Na evasão do espaço, gosta de paisagens, de figuras e costumes exóticos.

Outra das evasões é a infância, para tentar esquecer os problemas, os tormentos, as decepções, os dissabores da idade adulta. A infância traz-lhe pureza e inocência.

As personagens são outra das evasões de um escritor. Cria personagens que tentem representar o que um dia ambicionara ser e não conseguiu.

Contemporaneamente, o reconhecimento da literatura tem preocupado a chamada estética simbólica ou semântica representada por Ernest Cassirer¹ e Susanne Langer² para os quais a literatura além de ser uma diversão ou uma atividade lúdica representa a revelação através de formas simbólicas da linguagem, das potencialidades escondidas na alma do homem.

A literatura tem sido o instrumento de análise ao longo dos tempos de compreensão do homem e das suas relações com o mundo.

Sófocles³, Shakespeare⁴, Cervantes⁵, Rousseau⁶, Dostoiévski⁷, Kafka⁸, etc, representam novos modos de compreender o homem e a vida e revelam verdades humanas que antes delas se desconheciam ou apenas eram pressentidas.

(Vitor Manuel Aguiar e Silva, Teoria da Literatura, 5ª edição, Coimbra: Almedina, 1983)

No que diz respeito ao texto literário, este tem as suas especificidades que um tradutor terá sempre que ter em conta. É um texto em que se regista a ausência de preocupação informativa, um campo de ação que pode ir buscar a outros campos os termos que hão-de ajudar a construir a sua especificidade. Existe o recurso a uma linguagem fortemente conotativa. Em relação ao leitor a especificidade do texto literário pode dizer respeito ao efeito catártico que conduz à crença de que a literatura pode purificar e reeducar a sociedade. Em relação aos autores, tal especificidade, pode traduzir-se no facto de o texto literário poder ser expressivo ou impessoal.

(Guia do Professor de Língua Portuguesa, I volume, 2º nível, Fundação Calouste Gulbekian Lisboa. 1991; Carlos Ceia, E-Dicionário de Termos Literários, 2005.)

¹ Ernst Cassirer (Breslau, 28 de julho de 1874 — Nova Iorque, 13 de abril de 1945) foi um filósofo judaico-alemão. Realizou estudos em direito, literatura e filosofia germânica.

² Susanne Langer (Susanne Katherina Knauth), (Nova Iorque, 20 de dezembro de 1895 — Nova Iorque, 17 de julho de 1985) foi uma grande especialista em filosofia da arte, seguidora de Ernst Cassirer.

³ Sófocles (em grego, Σοφοκλῆς – Sophoklēs, na transliteração) (496 a.C.-406 a.C.) foi um dramaturgo grego, um dos mais importantes escritores de tragédia.

⁴ William Shakespeare (baptizado em 26 de Abril de 1564 – 23 de Abril de 1616)^[1] foi um poeta e dramaturgo inglês, tido como o maior escritor do idioma inglês e o mais influente dramaturgo do mundo.¹

⁵ Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (Alcalá de Henares, 29 de setembro de 1547 — Madrid, 23 de abril de 1616), romancista, dramaturgo e poeta espanhol. Autor da mais importante obra em castelhano, *Don Quixote de La Mancha*.

⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Genebra, 28 de Junho de 1712 — Ermenonville, 2 de Julho de 1778) foi um filósofo suíço, escritor, teórico político e um compositor musical autodidata.

⁷ Fiódor Mikhaïlovich Dostoiévski (em russo Фёдор Михайлович Достоевский, AFI [fʲodər mʲɪˈxajləvʲɪtɕ dɐstɐˈjʲɛfskʲɪj]; Moscovo, 11 de Novembro de 1821 — São Petersburgo, 9 de Fevereiro de 1881) – ocasionalmente grafado como *Dostoiévsky* – foi um escritor russo, considerado um dos maiores romancistas da literatura russa e um dos mais inovadores artistas de todos os tempos

⁸ Franz Kafka (Praga, 3 de julho de 1883 — Klosterneuburg, 3 de junho de 1924) foi um dos maiores escritores de ficção da língua alemã do século XX.

Em relação ao tipo de literatura desta obra está inserida na literatura contemporânea do séc, XXI. A chamada Paraliteratura.

Paraliteratura é o termo com que se designam todas as formas não canónicas de literatura (auto-ajuda, folhetins romanescos, literatura cor de rosa, romance *ultra-light*, literatura de cordel, literatura oral e tradicional, banda desenhada, literatura marginal, pornográfica, policial e popular, etc.)

A vantagem da designação *paraliteratura* reside no tom não depreciativo que o prefixo **para** tem, uma vez que remete para tudo aquilo que fica na margem de e não necessariamente tudo aquilo que não entra na categoria de um *clássico*, por exemplo. Também não fica garantido que um género paraliterário não se torne numa dada época um género *maior* de literatura.

Nos dias de hoje existe a ideia de que todo o texto que se refugie numa categoria não convencional pertence a um género de literatura marginal, a *paraliteratura*.

Esta classificação muitas vezes resulta da aplicação arbitrária de um critério de qualidade que não corresponde ao rigor de uma classificação científica.

Um romance policial, por exemplo, pode ter grande qualidade, pode ser uma obra-prima e pode rivalizar com qualquer outro tipo de romance no que respeita ao domínio das mais apuradas técnicas literárias. Atribuir a todos os romances policiais a categoria de *paraliteratura* pode ser uma atitude redutora e ideologicamente reprovável. Esta designação corre os mesmos riscos de todas as sub-classificações do texto literário que estão à mercê do juízo de comunidades de leitores. Por outro lado, pode-se argumentar que o que faz a literatura ser maior ou menor não é o juízo do leitor, porque a obra em si mesma transporta uma literariedade que é incompatível com juízos de valor subjetivos. Qualquer adversário da estética da receção defenderá esta posição. Como a realidade nos mostra que muitas vezes a literatura existe enquanto for entendida como produto de difusão, desprezar o papel do leitor na decisão do que deve ser *literatura* e o que deve ser *paraliteratura* pode ser inconsequente.

(Carlos Ceia, E-Dicionário de Termos Literários. 2005)

A obra retrata um tema atual, onde a Internet é o tema central, tudo o que pode causar e influenciar nas pessoas, quer sejam jovens ou adultos.

Com esta obra tenta-se fazer ver, que nem todas as histórias que ocorrem na Internet são más e traumáticas.

A história foi baseada em experiências reais vividas por pessoas conhecidas da autora, juntamente com o seu toque pessoal, à qual adicionou um pouco de ação e romance.

Apresenta-se essencialmente no Discurso Direto. O Discurso Direto é marcado pela presença de verbos do tipo: dizer, afirmar, ponderar, sugerir, perguntar, indagar, responder e sinónimos, que podem introduzi-lo, arrematá-lo ou nele se inserir.

Quando falta um desses verbos, cabe ao contexto e a recursos gráficos, tais como os dois pontos, as aspas, o travessão e a mudança de linha, a função de indicar a fala da personagem.

O Discurso Direto dá força à narração, atualiza o episódio, torna a personagem viva para o ouvinte como numa cena teatral, em que o narrador apenas indica as falas. Estas tornam-se naturais e vivas, enriquecendo por elementos linguísticos tais como exclamações, interrogações, interjeições, vocativos e imperativos que marcam a emotividade da expressão oral.

Com os verbos introdutórios da língua portuguesa quem se serve do Discurso Direto pode caracterizar com precisão e colorido a atitude do personagem.

Esta é a forma de relatar preferentemente adoptada nos atos diários de comunicação e nos estilos literários narrativos em que os autores pretendem representar diante dos que os lêem “na comédia humana, com a maior naturalidade possível.”

(Nova Gramática do Português Contemporâneo, Celso Cunha, Lindley Cintra, Lisboa, 1997)

Após várias pesquisas pode-se constatar que o género de leitor deste tipo de literatura é composto essencialmente por mulheres. É uma literatura de fácil leitura que não necessita de muita atenção, pode ser efetuada em qualquer sítio, em frente à TV, no autocarro, entre uma actividade e outra. Procuram neste tipo de literatura a fuga de um quotidiano massacrante, é tudo uma questão de escape, tudo para sonhar.

A diegese da história.

Relativamente ao tempo diegético, o tempo em que decorre a ação, este é sugerido com referências cronológicas reveladas pelo narrador e também com o desenrolar da ação. A ação decorre no século XXI, em 2004 e acaba três anos depois.

O espaço diegético, o espaço onde decorre a ação, é passado em Portugal mais precisamente nas cidades de Braga, Caldas de Vizela, Porto, Lisboa e no Algarve. As características do espaço

físico são importantes pois levam-nos a concluir o modo de vida e as características das personagens.

Os espaços físicos apresentados ao longo da obra são os seguintes:

Braga

Cidade natal da protagonista que se chama Maria Helena. Capital da província do Minho e capital de distrito. Conhecida como a cidade dos Arcebispos é provavelmente o maior centro religioso do país. Considerada a cidade mais jovem do país, o que a torna uma cidade dinâmica e enérgica, Braga combina muito bem a sua importância religiosa com a prosperidade comercial e industrial dos dias de hoje. (<http://www.gri.uminho.pt>. Consulta: 05-02-2010)

Simboliza a juventude da protagonista da obra, a dedicação ao trabalho e à empresa onde trabalhava. Mas também os valores tradicionais imperam na sua família, a humildade, a inexperience com rapazes, não a deixavam sair à noite. “ (...) pois a educação rígida que o pai lhe deu nunca a permitiu conhecer muitos rapazes na sua adolescência, sair à noite nem pensar! (...)”.

Algumas das ações passaram-se num dos ex-líbris de Braga, a praça da República, onde Maria Helena e Pedro Vilas Boas se encontraram para dar o seu passeio noturno numa noite de Verão. Pedro também possuía uma casa luxuosa em Braga. “Era uma casa grande de construção moderna e muito bonita, tinha um jardim a toda a volta. Entraram numa garagem onde estavam mais três carros (...)”

Porto

Cidade natal das personagens Pedro Vilas Boas e da vilã Sofia Albuquerque.

Conhecida como a cidade Invicta. Centro de uma grande área metropolitana e a maior região económica de Portugal.

Algumas ações são passadas no Porto, o passeio no Parque da Cidade de Maria Helena e Pedro Vilas Boas, a festa no salão de eventos, a conversa entre Maria Helena e Pedro Vilas Boas no apartamento deste, onde esta lhe revela algo muito importante.

O encontro entre Maria Helena e Ricardo numa praia do Porto, a concepção do filho.

Caldas de Vizela

Vizela é uma das cidades mais recentes de Portugal, situada no Distrito de Braga.

Vizela está intimamente associada à prática do termalismo, tendo sido este um legado deixado pelos povos romanos. Mas para além das Termas, são inúmeras as atracções que Vizela possui, desde paisagens naturais, passando pelo património histórico construído. (<http://www.avedigital.pt/wiki>. Consulta: 06-02-2010)

Dessas paisagens naturais temos a Quinta, local onde mora a mãe de Pedro, Júlia Vilas Boas e local onde Maria Helena e a irmã Isabel passaram as férias de Verão a convite de Pedro.

Sítio requintado, bem tratado e com exhibições do luxo em que viviam, a piscina, as garagens com carros antigos, modernos e desportivos. Quedas de água naturais e rios com águas límpidas. É neste rio que Pedro, ao nadar com Maria Helena, bate com a cabeça numa pedra e fica amnésico.

Lisboa

Terra natal de Ricardo Mendes e da sua namorada Margarida. Filho de pais separados é na capital que mora com o pai e o irmão Luís Carlos. É biólogo, trabalha num laboratório no centro da cidade.

Lisboa, a capital de Portugal é a sua maior cidade. Considerada a região mais rica de Portugal. (<http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lisboa>. Consulta: 07-02-2010)

Simboliza o bem-estar social das personagens, o acesso a todas as comodidades características de pessoas que moram na capital, a mentalidade aberta e a educação sem preconceitos em relação a determinadas situações. Ricardo queria ver uma foto de Maria Helena na primeira conversa que tiveram na Internet e confiou nela enviando uma sua. Pretendia que ela lhe desse o número de telemóvel, desejava encontrar-se com Maria Helena pessoalmente, apesar de ter namorada. Iria viver junto com a namorada sem se casar.

Acontecimentos que não pareciam bem a Maria Helena, que tinha uma educação diferente da obtida na capital.

Margarida, namorada de Ricardo, com atitudes consideradas um pouco snobs, não trocava Lisboa para morar por nenhuma outra cidade do país. Só em Lisboa seria reconhecida pelo seu trabalho, possuía uma loja de roupa com a sua marca. Detestou a ideia de Ricardo aceitar uma proposta de ir trabalhar para o Porto, nem que fossem os dois. “- Ricardo, não me gozes... tudo o que sair aqui da capital está condenado ao insucesso (...)”

Das ações passadas em Lisboa, temos o café e o restaurante onde Ricardo e Margarida se encontravam. O apartamento de Ricardo e a igreja onde este e Margarida ir-se-iam casar.

Algarve

Constitui uma das regiões turísticas mais importantes de Portugal e da Europa. O seu clima temperado mediterrânico, caracterizado por Invernos amenos e curtos e Verões longos, quentes e secos, as águas tépidas e calmas que banham a sua costa sul, as suas paisagens naturais, o património histórico e etnográfico ou a sua deliciosa e saudável gastronomia são atributos que atraem milhões de turistas nacionais e estrangeiros todos os anos e que fazem do Algarve uma das províncias mais ricas e desenvolvidas do país.

(<http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algarve>. Consulta:06-02-2010)

Ricardo possuía um apartamento onde costumava passar todos os anos as férias. Indicativo de mais um sinal do bem-estar social do personagem.

Ações passadas no Algarve, a praia onde estavam Ricardo e Margarida e o apartamento dele.

Narrador

O narrador é heterodiegético, não participa na Obra.

Em relação à sua focalização, a perspectiva adotada pelo narrador em relação ao universo narrado, é uma focalização omnisciente, colocado numa posição de transcendência, o narrador mostra conhecer toda a história, manipula o tempo, devassa o interior das personagens. Faz também uma focalização neutra, não expõe o seu ponto de vista.

Personagens

De seguida irá ser feita uma descrição pormenorizada das personagens envolvidas no excerto que faz parte da tradução deste trabalho de projeto.

Primeiro a descrição das personagens principais e de seguida as personagens secundárias.

Principais

Maria Helena Silveira

No início da obra tem 26 anos. Oriunda de uma família humilde, mora com os pais e a irmã Isabel, na cidade de Braga.

Tem uma relação chegada com a irmã a quem conta todas as suas confidências, vivem as duas em constante sobressalto com as discussões quase diárias dos pais e sempre pelo mesmo motivo, a falta de dinheiro.

Solteira e inexperiente no amor, procura no seu íntimo um homem que a faça sentir feliz e que lhe desperte todas as emoções que tem escondidas.

Trabalha como secretária numa empresa de exportação na cidade de Braga e um dia, na ausência do chefe, conhece Ricardo num chat da Internet. A partir desse dia toda a sua vida se transforma. São sentimentos muito estranhos os que tem e para os quais não encontra respostas.

Como se não bastasse, o comportamento do seu chefe regressado de uma viagem começa a modificar-se. Sabe que desperta os desejos de muitos homens, mas nunca imaginou que um dia, o seu chefe, Pedro Vilas Boas, um dos homens mais ricos do país fosse um desses homens.

No início não sabe como enfrentar esta situação e tenta passar despercebida, mas tudo se modifica no dia em que ele se confessa apaixonado por si. Ela que tivera uma paixoneta por ele quando começou a trabalhar na sua empresa, mas que tinha a perfeita noção que um homem tão rico, apaixonado e prestes a casar nunca se iria interessar por uma pessoa como ela. Como é que agora as coisas tinham mudado? Ele, que depois da morte da noiva se tinha tornado num mulherengo, como iria agora lidar com aquela situação? Não seria difícil apaixonar-se por ele, mas ... tinha Ricardo... aquele que conhecera num chat da Internet e que era da sua idade e fazia anos no mesmo dia! Estava dividida entre o fascínio do bem-estar que lhe oferecia Pedro e o desejo pelo desconhecido, Ricardo.

Havia também as diferenças sociais, ela oriunda de uma família humilde com baixos recursos e Pedro Vilas Boas, um ricoço, bonitão e apaixonado por ela. Sentia-se tentada a não resistir aos seus encantos, mas o fantasma das diferenças sociais permanecia na sua cabeça.

Mas um dia por ironia do destino conhece Ricardo pessoalmente e juntos vivem uma longa e louca tarde de paixão. Pela primeira vez ela descobre o prazer de amar e ser amada e a partir desse dia toda a sua vida se transforma. Até que um dia ele lhe conta que vai morar com a namorada ... todos os seus desejos e fantasias se desmoronam ... e casa com Pedro Vilas Boas...

Ricardo Mendes

Tem 26 anos e mora em Lisboa.

Sofreu com a separação dos pais, o pai envolvia-se com outras mulheres e a mãe cansada da situação partiu para Espanha deixando-o juntamente com o irmão mais novo três anos, Luís Carlos, a encargo do pai. Os três tornaram-se os melhores amigos, parecendo três irmãos!

Namorava com Margarida há dois anos com quem tinha uma relação estável.

Margarida fazia parte do seu rol de amigos e aos poucos aperceberam-se que tinham algumas afinidades e resolveram começar um namoro. Só as atitudes um pouco snobs e pouco humildes de Margarida estragavam um pouco a relação.

Era Biólogo e trabalhava num laboratório no centro de Lisboa. Não se sentia realizado com o seu trabalho, era uma pessoa ambiciosa e queria sair de Lisboa. Queria sentir-se realizado noutra parte do país e quem sabe no estrangeiro, mas a única coisa que o prendia à capital era Margarida. Nos momentos de marasmo no trabalho perdia-se em conversas nos chats da Internet até ao dia em que conheceu Maria Helena, uma nortenha da sua idade e cujo dia de aniversário era no mesmo dia que o seu! Desde então nasceu uma grande empatia entre os dois.

Ao ver pela primeira vez a sua foto ficou fascinado com a sua beleza exótica, os seus longos cabelos negros e os seus maravilhosos olhos verdes faziam-no desejar conhecê-la pessoalmente pois além de ser muito bonita, gostava da sua forma tímida, humilde e frontal de dizer as coisas. Um dia recebeu uma proposta tentadora para ir trabalhar para o norte, para a cidade de Porto. Quem não aprovou a ideia foi Margarida, ela não queria deixar a capital e o seu negócio, na sua opinião todos os negócios fora da capital estariam condenados ao fracasso. Mais uma vez estas atitudes entristeciam Ricardo, embora também soubesse que no fundo o seu desejo de ir trabalhar para o norte estaria um pouco ligado a estar mais perto de Maria Helena.

A nortenha que conhecera na Internet e por quem tinha sentimentos muito especiais e que também ele próprio não sabia o que eram.

Para ele, a sua “mana nortenha” era uma flor, uma flor muito especial, diferente de todas as mulheres da capital, uma flor ainda a desabrochar. Sabia que ela nunca tinha sido amada e sentia que ela o queria conhecer tão intensamente como ele a ela.

Um dia e por teimosia sua vai ao Porto conhecer o tal emprego de perto, sente-se dividido e tem que tomar uma decisão. Decide ir até ao local que o inspira: o mar.

Ao ver uma mulher de longos cabelos negros sentada na areia teve um estranho pressentimento, de repente ela levantou-se e voltou-se para ele, era ela. A sua mana nortenha.

Ainda mais bonita do que nas fotos, sentiu-se fascinado com a sua beleza, teve um desejo imenso de estar com ela, de senti-la nos seus braços, de lhe beijar os lábios, de a fazer sentir mulher.

Ela era diferente das mulheres da capital, apesar da sua educação rígida e da província como ele por vezes a chamava, ele sentia-se cativado com a sua humildade. Acabou por viver uma das tardes mais intensas e felizes de que alguma vez se recordava. Foi suave e carinhoso como nunca tinha sido. Tinham sido momentos únicos os que tinham vivido naquele areal e que para sempre recordaria na sua memória.

Mas apesar de tudo era um covarde, não teve coragem de continuar o que tinha sentido e decidiu não aceitar a proposta do seu patrão para ir para o Porto trabalhar e ir morar junto com Margarida até ao dia em que convencido por ela decidiram casar. Na semana do casamento, Isabel, a irmã de Maria Helena, faz-lhe revelações bombásticas e fica sem saber o que fazer...

Pedro Vilas Boas

Tem 30 anos e nasceu no Porto no seio de uma das famílias mais ricas de Portugal.

É filho único e tem uma ligação muito forte com a mãe. Desde cedo aprendeu a ser independente e o melhor em tudo o que fazia.

Grande desportista, adorava carros e praticar esqui. Chegou até a ganhar prémios nacionais em corridas de Karts quando era criança. Tornou-se num grande empresário ainda muito jovem e conheceu Luísa, a sua eterna namorada numa festa de amigos. Apaixonaram-se perdidamente e logo decidiram casar. Mas algo correu mal numa chegada à casa de Luísa, foram abordados por um grupo de homens que agrediram Pedro e o tentaram matar, mas Luísa defendeu o seu amor e morreu no lugar dele. Toda a vida de Pedro acabou ali! Naquela berma de estrada com Luísa a sangrar sem vida nos seus braços.

A partir desse dia tornou-se num dos homens mais mulherengos do planeta!

Saía com todo o tipo de mulheres e o sexo tornou-se num vício.

Tinha conhecido Sofia Albuquerque, uma ricaça quarentona do Porto, num dos contratos da sua empresa e não conseguiu resistir às suas investidas. Acabaram por viver um caso louco de sexo para ele e paixão para ela.

Um dia decide pôr fim naquele caso que se estava a tornar doentio. Sofia tinha formas muito peculiares de conseguir os seus objetivos e Pedro não gostava disso.

Cansado da vida que levava viajou para a Suíça à procura da sua identidade.

No regresso a Portugal, começou a olhar para a sua secretária, Maria Helena, com outros olhos, ele que sempre a tinha respeitado e visto como a sua secretária competente, começou a vê-la como mulher. Começou a sentir-se muito atraído por aqueles olhos verdes que o enfeitiçavam e ela começou a ocupar um grande espaço no seu pensamento e também no seu coração. Sabia da sua fama de mulherengo e resistia a Sofia que não o largava.

Após várias tentativas conseguiu conquistar Maria Helena e tornou-se o seu namorado, sabia que ela não se sentia bem, sendo ele seu patrão e um homem muito rico e ela apenas uma secretária de origem humilde. Mas para ele o amor não escolhia raças, sexo ou estatuto social. Amava-a pela sua beleza e sensualidade, pela sua humildade, pela sua personalidade forte, pela sua sensibilidade. Queria ficar com ela para sempre! Até ao dia em que descobre que existe mais alguém entre os dois. Porém, nada o detém de alcançar os objetivos e casa-se com ela, mas no dia do casamento é assassinado... por Sofia!

Isabel Silveira

Irmã de Maria Helena, tem 23 anos e é enfermeira.

Muito tímida, escondia o corpo elegante com roupas largas. Tinha uns lindos olhos cor de mel, mas eram tristes, pareciam pedir por socorro. Quando era estudante refugiava-se nos livros e era uma aluna excelente. Nunca se interessou por nenhum rapaz, julgava-se muito feia e muito magra.

À medida que ia crescendo o desejo de se tornar Missionária foi aparecendo, queria fugir do ambiente de casa, queria sentir-se liberta das discussões dos pais. Não gostava muito do pai que tratava mal a mãe, que tinha o vício do jogo e que gastava o dinheiro mal gasto. O único senão de se tornar Missionária era o de ter de abandonar a casa e a terra que a viu nascer e deixar a mãe que adorava e a irmã que era a sua melhor amiga. Sabia de todos os segredos da irmã e apoiavam-se mutuamente. Tinham uma relação muito próxima e apesar da sua timidez Isabel era muito inteligente e dava conselhos a Maria Helena.

Foi ela quem deduziu que Pedro Vilas Boas estava apaixonado pela irmã e incentivou a relação dos dois apesar das diferenças sociais.

Uma vez viu num jornal uma proposta para ser Missionária e decidiu responder, passados uns tempos partiu para Moçambique deixando todos muito tristes. Apesar de lhe ter custado imenso, era aquele o seu desejo, o desejo de ir ajudar os outros.

Os tempos passados em África deram-lhe uma abertura que até então não tinha conseguido, ficou mais independente, mais solta, mais desinibida e tirou carta de automóvel.

Acompanhou a irmã num momento muito importante da sua vida e desempenhou um papel fundamental na ponte que uniu Maria Helena e Ricardo.

Sofia Albuquerque

Tem 40 anos, é oriunda de uma família rica do Porto. Desde cedo se tornou numa mulher de negócios. Mulher inteligente e com muitos luxos nunca olhou a meios para alcançar os fins, conseguia sempre tudo o que queria nos negócios e na vida pessoal, quer fosse pela sua inteligência, quer fosse pela sua elegância e persuasão.

Um dia conheceu Pedro Vila Boas num contrato com a empresa dele e logo se sentiu apaixonada por ele, o único senão é que ele estava noivo e prestes a casar. Mas como nunca gostava de perder, um dia, contratou uns homens para matarem a noiva de Pedro.

Quando a noiva de Pedro morreu, não perdeu a oportunidade para se aproximar dele e dar azo aos seus intuitos, Pedro estava vulnerável e não conseguiu resistir às suas investidas.

Juntos viveram um louco caso de paixão. Pedro era um homem muito bonito e muito rico o que oferecia a Sofia algum estatuto e segurança. Mas um dia o caso acabou e ela ficou inconsolável. Tentou de tudo para o reaver mas sem sucesso, até ao dia em que descobriu que ele se apaixonou pela secretária. Não consegue deter o ódio e a raiva que sente e faz de tudo para acabar com a relação dos dois. É uma mulher determinada e elimina todos os que se interferirem nos seus planos.

Começa a sentir-se desesperada, pois a fortuna que possuía começou a diminuir e tentava todos os meios para voltar a ter a vida de luxo que levava, nem que para isso tivesse de se aproveitar da amnésia temporária de Pedro para casar com ele e ficar com a sua fortuna. Só que os seus planos são descobertos e começa a ser investigada pela Polícia.

No dia do casamento de Pedro e Maria Helena tenta acabar com tudo, só que em vez de matar a sua rival, mata Pedro e ao sentir que o cerco se estava a fechar, suicida-se.

Margarida de Sá Oliveira

Tem 28 anos, é natural de Lisboa. Mora com os pais e teve uma educação liberal e aberta. Criada num ambiente de luxo e bem-estar, adorava passar férias no estrangeiro e deleitava-se a mostrar as fotos de todas as suas viagens ao seu rol de amigos.

Adorava moda e tornou-se muito cedo numa designer muito conhecida e criando a sua própria marca de roupa. Um dos amigos desse rol era Ricardo, tinham-se conhecido através de amigos comuns, mas nunca tinham demonstrado um interesse mais íntimo. Só uma vez numa ida a uma discoteca descobrem que têm aspectos em comum e passados uns meses iniciam um namoro.

Apesar de ter tido uma educação aberta, Margarida mostrava-se sempre um pouco preconceituosa em relação a pessoas com um nível inferior ao seu e tinha por vezes atitudes um pouco snobs. Quando Ricardo recebeu a proposta para ir trabalhar para o Porto e a tenta convencer ir com ele, ela detesta a ideia, pois na opinião dela, tudo o que saísse da capital estaria condenado ao fracasso. Sabia que estas suas atitudes magoavam Ricardo, mas não conseguia alterar a sua forma de estar na vida.

Notava que Ricardo por vezes se mostrava muito distraído e que parecia que o seu pensamento estava noutro lugar, desconfiava que ele tinha conhecido alguém na Internet, mas não insistia muito com o assunto e não desistia da ideia de realizar o seu sonho de morar junto com ele e até de casarem. Mas no dia do casamento ele deixa-a no altar e corre para os braços de uma desconhecida a quem ele chama de Maria Helena.

Júlia Vilas Boas

Tem 70 anos, é mãe de Pedro. Engravidar dele tinha sido uma bênção dos deuses, após vinte anos de tentativas e tratamentos. Morava numa Quinta em Vizela há alguns anos desde que Pedro saiu de casa para morar sozinho. Ficara viúva há dez anos e desde então dedicava-se ao filho e à Quinta. Era oriunda de uma família abastada e com posses. Casou com o pai de Pedro por quem se apaixonou ainda adolescente.

O pai de Pedro chamava-se Simão, não era rico, trabalhava numa fábrica têxtil do pai de Júlia. Tiveram que enfrentar uma batalha para conseguirem que o seu amor fosse reconhecido como verdadeiro. Casaram-se com a condição de Simão abdicar do seu apelido quando nascesse o primeiro filho. Quer fosse homem ou mulher teria de levar o apelido Vilas Boas. Como Simão amava demais Júlia não se importou com esse facto.

Júlia era uma mulher afável, bondosa e muito sábia. Para combater a solidão que sentia na Quinta passava horas a tratar das suas flores e gostava de dar festas. Era uma boa anfitriã e adorava ter a casa sempre cheia de gente. Quando o filho Pedro lhe falou que iria levar duas irmãs para passar as férias de Verão na Quinta ficou radiante. Preparou tudo ao pormenor para a chegada delas. Aos poucos começou a aperceber-se que o filho estava apaixonado por Maria Helena e adorou a ideia. Entristecia-a muito saber que o filho andava sempre envolvido com todo o tipo de mulheres desde a morte da noiva. Sabia que a morte dela estava envolta num mistério.

Apoiou a relação de Pedro com Maria Helena até ao dia em que os viu unirem os seus destinos no altar, só que aliada à felicidade veio a dor. Nesse mesmo dia sentiu uma perda enorme, perdeu o seu único e amado filho. Não conseguiu resistir a tanta dor e faleceu passados dois anos.

Secundárias

Cristina

No início era a recepcionista na empresa de Pedro Vilas Boas. Tinha uma boa relação com Maria Helena. Sabia que esta falava com alguém regularmente na Internet mas nunca revelou nada a ninguém.

Quando Maria Helena ficou viúva e passou a administradora da empresa, Cristina foi promovida a sua secretária pessoal.

Dra. Joana Mesquita

A médica de Maria Helena. É esta quem lhe faz as revelações que irão mudar a sua vida para sempre, que estava grávida.

Sr. Mendes

Pai de Ricardo, mora em Lisboa, dono de uma loja de artigos desportivos. Envolveu-se com outras mulheres o que fez com que a mulher o deixasse com os filhos. Morava com Ricardo e o irmão mais novo três anos. Tinham os três uma ótima relação.

Ao saber do segredo do filho Ricardo no dia do seu casamento aconselha-o a seguir o coração.

Luís Carlos Mendes

Jovem rebelde e irmão de Ricardo. Sofreu muito com a separação dos pais. Gostava de praticar surf e uma namorada não lhe chegava. Trabalhava com o pai na loja de artigos desportivos. Adorava o irmão Ricardo com quem mantinha uma relação excelente.

Nesta obra são salientados dois aspectos importantes que merecem ser referidos.

Um deles é o mito da ascensão social pelo qual passa a personagem principal, Maria Helena.

No início uma mulher de origem humilde, secretária numa empresa de exportação. Criada com uma educação rígida, teve poucos namorados e não podia sair à noite.

Para além disto e bem no fundo do seu ser sente-se fascinada por todo o bem-estar que o seu patrão lhe pode oferecer. Ela que durante toda a vida lidou com as dificuldades financeiras dos pais, via-se agora confrontada com uma oportunidade de sair de todas essas contrariedades.

Aceitou namorar com ele e quase descobriu o amor pela primeira vez, mas retornou à sua condição inicial devido a contratempos. Contudo, chega mais tarde a casar com ele e no dia do casamento, por ironia do destino fica viúva.

Ascende à condição de mulher da alta sociedade. Fica com todos os bens e propriedades dele e torna-se a administradora da empresa. Não é uma mulher ambiciosa, nem calculista, as coisas foram-lhe acontecendo naturalmente.

Outro dos aspectos a ser salientados ao longo da obra são as diferenças que existem no nosso país entre o norte e o sul e a dicotomia em relação ao resto do mundo.

Maria Helena é uma bracarense, Ricardo é um lisboeta. Apesar de ser uma terra evoluída tecnologicamente Braga é tida como uma cidade religiosa, com pessoas que cultivam a religião,

ligadas à igreja, com menos abertura a determinados aspectos da vida. O pai dela não a deixava sair à noite pode ser um dos exemplos.

Ricardo era lisboeta, da capital, com uma educação mais liberal, com outra mentalidade. Ele chamava-a de “rapariga da província”.

Desde sempre que houve uma divisão entre o Norte e o Sul em Portugal. Até em questões políticas, em 1975, os partidos mais conservadores concentravam-se a Norte, enquanto o Sul acolhia as forças situadas mais à esquerda.

Villaverde Cabral⁹, entendia que o Norte e Sul eram *duas culturas* substancialmente distintas”, isto devido a fatores geográficos, sociais e económicos.

Mas os contrastes entre Norte e Sul são muito anteriores. Maria Rattazzi, (1813-1883), que visitou Portugal nos inícios do último quartel de Oitocentos, escreveu um livro de recordações que o país se podia dividir em duas regiões distintas, a do Norte, muito produtiva e cultivada, e a do Sul, com alguma analogia com o deserto do Sara, acrescentado que os portugueses não morriam de amores pelos lisboenses (1997 [1879], pp 264 e 414).

Contrastes que também são lembrados na obra do grande etnólogo português José Leite de Vasconcellos. Assinalava que os “habitantes do Norte e da Beira são mais humildes do que os do Sul”, que havia mais religião a norte do que a sul ou que quanto a sentimento poético, havia duas zonas em Portugal, por um lado o Sul e por outro, o Norte e a Beira (Vasconcellos, 1982, pp. 503, 509-511 e 481). O contraste entre o Norte e o Sul em matéria de religiosidade era entretanto atribuído numa revista etnográfica do Sul ao contacto da gente desta região com o Islão. (Figueiredo, 1903. Pp 39-40).

Na figura da etnologia do pós-guerra, Jorge Dias¹⁰, constatava a existência de um contraste entre o Norte e o Sul, ligado às diferenças económico-sociais e patente na maior religiosidade do Norte e na importância da família extensa na mesma zona, em contraste com a mais fraca religiosidade e o domínio absoluto da família nuclear no Sul (Dias, 1961 [1955].-Pp 121-143). Na sua tentativa de caracterização da cultura portuguesa, evocaria a presença de “antinomias profundas” na «personalidade psicossocial do português» (...)

Em Portugal fizera-se sentir a norte o maior impacto de celtas e germanos, enquanto a sul predominavam os elementos étnicos do Sul da Europa e do Norte de África.

Outro historiador mais influente de Oitocentos, Oliveira Martins¹¹, pensava claramente em termos de divisão Norte-Sul e na sua correspondência com celtas (arianos) e semitas – embora

⁹ Manuel Villaverde Cabral (n. Ponta Delgada 1940) é um investigador, ensaísta e universitário português.

¹⁰ Jorge Dias (Porto, 1907-1973) foi um etnólogo português.

¹¹ Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martins (Lisboa, 30 de Abril de 1845 — Lisboa, 24 de Agosto de 1894) foi um político e cientista social português.

também visse como celta o Algarve. Tal transparece no *Portugal Contemporâneo*¹², ao tratar do papel da mulher na Maria da Fonte: «No Minho, como em todas as regiões de estirpe céltica a mulher governa a casa e o marido (...) Não é uma esposa, quase uma serva, que entra no poder do marido, à moda semita, que se infiltrou nos costumes do Sul do Reino ...» (Martins, 1979 [1881], II, Pp. 151-152).

Em o *Problema Agrícola* (1899) de Basílio Teles¹³, este caracteriza de modo seguinte o Norte e o Sul e a sua relação com a história portuguesa. O Norte, de matriz *galleciana*, de guerreiros e agricultores, é o verdadeiro agente histórico da formação de Portugal, e além disso, teve uma ação decisiva na formação do Brasil. O Sul, com populações arabizadas, é dominado pelo comércio, pela aventura marítima, pelo mercantilismo, à «maneira árabe e berbere».

Com efeito, os habitantes do Norte seriam *arianos*, povo agricultores e guerreiros, produtivos. Os do Sul, *semitas*, sem agricultura digna desse nome, pois árabes e berberes eram parasitas ociosos apenas interessados na atividade mercantil.

António Sérgio, a principal figura intelectual do campo político liberal-democrático em Portugal, afirmava que havia por certo uma divisão em Portugal entre dois países: o *Norte*, ou o *Aquém Tejo*, o *Sul* ou *Além Tejo*. E essa divisória fazia-se notar em três espécies de contrastes: humano (diferenças na maneira de ser); geográfico (território, clima); social (entre pequena e grande propriedade, nas relações entre classes, etc.)

De facto, o contraste que António Sérgio encontrava na história portuguesa não era rácico, mas psicológico e social. Era o contraste entre o homem do campo e o homem do litoral; o dualismo entre elites do interior (nobres, guerreiras, rurais, conservadoras) e as do litoral (comerciantes, progressivas).

Contudo, a ideia de uma divisão entre Norte e Sul não desapareceu, continua a ser evocada, no campo intelectual e científico.

(José Manuel Sobral, *Análise Social*, vol.XXXIX, (171), 2004, Pp.255-284)

No século XXI os acontecimentos a nível económico em Portugal têm vindo a alterar-se.

O Norte tem vindo a sofrer algumas mudanças, pois passou de uma das regiões mais industrializadas da Europa para uma das mais pobres. O Norte é uma região portuguesa onde a economia menos cresce e onde o desemprego mais aumenta. Teve sempre a sua base económica

¹² *Portugal Contemporâneo* – livro de 1881 da autoria de Oliveira Martins.

¹³ Basílio Teles (Porto, 14 de Fevereiro de 1856 - 10 de Março de 1923) foi um professor e ensaísta português.

na produção de bens transaccionáveis que sofrem, como resultado da globalização, de uma competitividade fortíssima por parte dos produtores doutros países.

Em Lisboa é muito diferente, especializou-se na produção de serviços: banca, seguros, administração pública, todos estes serviços têm os seus clientes em Lisboa. No Norte onde o mercado não é protegido, há que conquistar clientes, não basta estar à espera que eles surjam. Há que ir lá fora, conhecê-los, seduzi-los, convencê-los, conquistá-los, vender e, depois, muito importante, receber. Este é o real significado da globalização que tornou para o Norte as coisas mais difíceis. Em Lisboa onde o mercado está protegido, os efeitos da globalização não se fazem sentir e o esforço é incomparavelmente muito menor, porque os clientes já lá estão e não param de aumentar.

(Situação económica do Norte de Portugal, Arq.^a Isabel Saavedra. Guimarães (Discurso) Setembro, 2009)

A nível mundial acontece o contrário.

O Norte é desenvolvido, tem uma estrutura comercial completa de bens de consumo e de bens de capital, o que gera produção e consumo *per capita* de bens industrializados elevados.

As economias estão na vanguarda da pesquisa e da inovação tecnológica como: a informática, as telecomunicações, os novos materiais.

A população urbana é de 75%. O setor terciário (comércio e serviços – bancos, comunicações, energia, ensino, pesquisa) substituiu o setor secundário (indústrias).

Exportam produtos industrializados e tecnologia avançada, importando basicamente produtos primários (minérios e géneros agrícolas), sediam as principais firmas multinacionais do planeta, e os principais bancos internacionais.

As sociedades dos países capitalistas desenvolvidos são comumente chamadas de sociedades de consumo. Tal expressão é usada porque são usufruídos todos os bens e serviços existentes. Mais que em outros países, sejam os ex-socialistas ou os subdesenvolvidos.

Existem algumas dúvidas acerca do padrão de vida e de consumo da população dos países desenvolvidos estes historicamente exploraram os países subdesenvolvidos e beneficiaram com a exploração e transferência de riquezas do Terceiro Mundo.

Mas a explicação fundamental para esse padrão de vida relativamente elevado das classes trabalhadoras nos países desenvolvidos é a democracia, com intensas lutas populares, à custa de muitos choques com os patrões e a polícia. E a exploração económica, na realidade ocorre por grandes multinacionais e bancos.

O Sul e o subdesenvolvimento

Quase todas as nações do Sul foram colónias antes de se constituírem países independentes.

Nos países desenvolvidos o capitalismo resultou de um processo *endógeno* ou seja, desenvolveu-se a partir da própria sociedade. No Terceiro Mundo o capitalismo foi imposto de fora, resultou de um processo *exógeno*.

Essa é uma das principais diferenças entre os países desenvolvidos e os subdesenvolvidos. Os tipos de sociedade que existiam nos atuais países subdesenvolvidos acabaram por ser destruídos ou submetidos a um novo modelo social criado pelos europeus, visando o desenvolvimento do capitalismo.

A exploração colonial visava à expansão do comércio e à produção de minérios ou géneros agrícolas baratos para suprir o mercado mundial. Como consequência desse objetivo mercantil, o modelo social instituído nas áreas colonizadas foi marcado por extremas desigualdades: de um lado os poucos ricos, a minoria privilegiada ligada aos interesses metropolitanos; do outro, a imensa massa de trabalhadores mal remunerada, intensamente explorada (escravos). A partir do século XIX, a escravidão começou a atrapalhar o desenvolvimento da economia de mercado, pois o escravo não era comprador e consumidor. Com isso, uma massa de trabalhadores com baixíssimos salários substituiu os escravos. Dessa forma, a intensa exploração da força de trabalho constitui uma das características do subdesenvolvimento.

As colónias de exploração, como o México, Brasil, Peru e Bolívia, localizadas geralmente em áreas tropicais, serviram como fonte de enriquecimento de suas metrópoles, países da Europa ocidental. Não eram áreas a serem povoadas e sim fontes momentâneas de riquezas (ouro, prata, açúcar, fumo, algodão), verdadeiras colónias cujo futuro pouco importava aos colonizadores.

Como podemos verificar existe uma grande dicotomia entre o Norte e Sul de Portugal e o Norte e Sul do mundo.

(Vesentini, J. William. Sociedade e Espaço. Ed. Ática: São Paulo, 1997)

No caso do nosso país importa frisar que todos os argumentos evocados anteriormente pelos vários autores não puseram em questão um sentimento partilhado de «identidade nacional» entre os portugueses. Portugal, território relativamente pequeno, linguisticamente unificado, não viu crescer identidades regionais suficientemente fortes que pudessem rivalizar com a vinculada ao Estado – a de uma nação.

Todavia, importa é salientar que apesar de todas estas diferenças existentes no nosso país, os opostos continuam a atrair-se e continua a existir a união entre disparidades.

II CAPITULO

CHAPTER XIII

Finally... the discovery of love

September was ending.

Maria Helena¹⁴ couldn't speak to Pedro, Mrs. Vilas Boas¹⁵ had suffered an accident and had broken the two legs, things were going from bad to worse.

Mrs. Vilas Boas' run over seemed to have happened in very weird circumstances, a car coming from nowhere, ran the seventy year old woman over at the farm's entrance, nobody saw the car, as it disappeared leaving the old lady in the middle of the street without assistance.

Ricardo had to give an answer to his chief regarding the proposal, and he was very confused. Margarida didn't accept the idea of going to live in Oporto¹⁶, he didn't want to miss the opportunity to earn more money and get higher in his career. He was lost in his thoughts and distracted. He decided that going to Oporto to check the job closer would be a good idea.

¹⁴ Optou-se por não traduzir os nomes próprios. Nomes de pessoas são características de um país e nunca devem ser traduzidos. Os nomes de pessoas pertencem a enciclopédias e não a dicionários: «names of single object's or a person's name (...) belong, if at all, to the encyclopaedia not the dictionary» Vid. Peter Newmark, Approaches to Translation, p. 70.

Normalmente, os nomes e os sobrenomes não se traduzem, é preservada a sua nacionalidade: «Normally, people's first and surnames are transferred, thus preserving their nationality» Vid. Peter Newmark, A Textbook of Translation, p. 214.

¹⁵ Optou-se por substituir o nome próprio D. Júlia (no original) por Mrs. Vilas Boas, o sobrenome. Os sobrenomes são frequentemente mais usados quando nos referimos a um estranho ou quando estamos num campo mais formal. São usados em inglês com títulos tais como: "Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss, Dr". O nome próprio ou o primeiro nome é mais usado pelos amigos, família e outros conhecidos. «Family names are most often used to refer to a stranger or in a formal setting, and are often used with a title or honorific such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss, Dr., and so on. Generally the given name, Christian name, first name, forename, or personal name is the one used by friends, family, and other intimates.» (In: <http://www.clydelewis.com>, Consulta: 13-07-2009).

¹⁶ Optou-se por traduzir o nome da cidade do Porto para 'Oporto'. É uma das cidades mais antigas e com um dos nomes mais antigos em todo o mundo (...) (<http://www.babylon.com/definition/Oporto/Portuguese> Consulta: 01-02-2010) «Cities that change their names in translation are often old European towns, having been founded in antiquity or in the Middle Ages. This is the case of *Lisbon, Krakow, Brussels, Rome, Cologne*, among others» (In: <http://www.proz.com/translation-articles/articles/168/1/Navigating-through-Treacherous-Waters:-The-Translation-of-Geographical-Names>, Consulta: 05-10-2009).

Isabel had seen in a newspaper an advertisement for a job to go to Africa as a missionary and had applied to it, leaving her sister and her parents very sad.

To end up with all this bad mood, when Maria Helena was getting to the company, she noticed an envelope on her desk. As she opened it, she realized it was an invitation for Mrs. Sofia Albuquerque and Mr. Pedro Vila Boas wedding ceremony! She couldn't believe her eyes, they got full of tears, and she ran away from the office. When Cristina saw her running away, she didn't even understand what was happening.

Maria Helena left the office, went to the street, got in the car and left without destination. Rain was falling intensely, apparently joining the tears that fell down her face. She drove the streets randomly. She got in the motorway and overcame all the cars. She felt empty and weak. In front of the car the lightnings lit her way, the day was dark. She had been so happy during those holidays, she almost discovered love for the first time and a fall in the river had ended with all those extraordinary moments she had lived.

Then she realized she was in Oporto, on a beach. She parked the car and watched the high waves in a rough sea. The beach was empty; just a few seagulls flew next to the rocks. Her look was distant and sad, her eyes were red from crying, and she didn't care about having left her job without warning, nothing more mattered to her. She felt bad, it looked that all her dreams had become nightmares. The sea calmed her down; she didn't know how long she had been inside the car. She saw another car coming from the other side, but she didn't care, it was now drizzling and she decided to get out of the car. She went down to the sand. She was wearing a white dress that was waving with the wind. She took off her shoes and left them on a rock, she went barefoot on the sand. She sat in front of the sea, watching it.

Ricardo was the driver of the other car. He also got out of the car and went to the sand, he saw that woman sitting in front of the sea, her long, straight, black hair caught his attention. She got up and turned round, they both looked at each other, and suddenly a smile came off their lips.

'It can't be!' - Ricardo cried. She smiled, her heart started beating faster. 'Sis¹⁷? Is that you?'
'Ricardo?!'

¹⁷ Optou-se por traduzir a palavra "mana" por "sis". Como ambos fazem anos no mesmo dia tratavam-se como irmãos. O equivalente de "mana" em inglês é "sister", (<http://translito.com/pt/translators/Portuguese-English/>, Consulta: 20-10-09)

Existe o contexto cultural, palavras relacionadas com formas de pensamento e comportamento de uma comunidade particular e palavras que possam ser culturais, denotando um específico objeto cultural.

«there is the cultural context, words related to ways of thinking and behaving within a particular language community, and words which may be cultural...denoting a specific material cultural object» Vid. Peter Newmark, *A textbook of Translation*, p. 193.

‘Yes... it’s me.’

‘But... it’s not possible... am I dreaming? What are you doing here in Oporto?’

‘No... it’s not a dream... I’m here... yes, in Oporto... I came to work.’

A tear came off her eyes.

‘I can’t believe it...’

‘Yes, it’s me... you can touch me...’

He got closer, they looked deeply into each other’s eyes, and she couldn’t control her tears that kept rolling down her cheeks.

‘You are even prettier than in the photo... oh... come on... don’t cry...’

With his hand, he dried the tears of her eyes. For the first time she could feel his touch on her skin.

‘I cannot control myself, I’m too nervous.’

‘Take it easy... come here... give me a hug... this deserves a hug...’

He hugged her tight; she could finally feel the perfume of that man that made her feel strange, every time she saw his photo, the man who made her cry without reason. They were like that for a few seconds.

‘It looks like an angel brought you to me.’, she told him.

‘But ... What are you doing here? Shouldn’t you be at work?’

She looked down and watched the sea again.

‘Yes, I should...’

‘Do you want to talk?’

‘Yeah... I need to talk... if you are willing to hear me ...’

‘Nonsense! ... After all this time we’ve been chatting and now this casual meeting, how can I refuse to listen to you?’

They looked into each other’s eyes again, this time, she couldn’t take her eyes from him like she did with Pedro, she liked watching him.

‘You are just like the photo... but like this... in the flesh... much better...’ - He smiled. ‘That smile of yours...’ - They stared at each other again, he was serious. ‘What is it? Why are you looking at me like that?, she asked.

‘You are looking at me too.’

They both smiled.

‘Shall we sit down a bit?’, she suggested.

They sat on the sand side by side and they stayed there for hours without noticing the time. They became aware of each other's problems and spoke openly about everything; it seemed that they knew each other for ages.

'This is just the way I imagined you, pretty and nice.'

She smiled.

'I hope I'm not being a pain.'

'A pain? Don't be silly! You're sweet.'

He watched her again seriously, she also looked at him. He put his hands on her hair.

'Your hair is very beautiful.'

'Thanks... and your eyes are very beautiful.'

'Yours are lovely too. And... your mouth is very beautiful...'

His face came closer to hers, and then she thought « Does he want to kiss me? If he does, I'll let him, I want to know the taste of his kisses, I don't care about his girlfriend! »

'Do you know something?', he said with his face closer to hers.

'Yes?', she said with her face also closer to his.

'I feel like kissing you...'

She smiled, on that moment she didn't think about anything, she just let herself go, when she realized it, their lips had touched each other. His lips were smooth; they were different from Pedro's. It was a soft kiss, he was afraid of moving too fast; he was too attracted to her.

'I'm sorry...'

'For what?'

'For the kiss... I don't want you to think that I'm a cheeky Lisbon¹⁸ guy.'

She laughed.

'Silly! I know that you won't do anything that I don't want to. And I wanted this kiss as much as you did, and do you know what?'

'What?'

'I feel like kissing you again...'

¹⁸ Optou-se por traduzir o nome da capital "Lisboa" para "Lisbon". Lisboa é conhecida como uma velha cidade do continente europeu, uma cidade da Idade Média e como tal o seu nome foi traduzido. «Cities that change their names in translation are often old European towns, having been founded in antiquity or in the Middle Ages. This is the case of *Lisbon*, *Krakow*, *Brussels*, *Rome*, *Cologne*, among others» (In: <http://www.proz.com/translation-articles/articles/168/1/Navigating-through-Treacherous-Waters:-The-Translation-of-Geographical-Names>, Consulta: 05-10-2009).

They laughed out loud.

‘Well, well, who would say so? ... The shy northern girl...’

‘I feel good with you, I feel trust, I don’t know what it is...’

He came closer and asked:

‘What else do you feel?’

‘I feel that you are someone very special to me.’

He smiled and kissed her softly on her lips.

She touched his face, his nose, his mouth, she felt completely comfortable with him, on that moment, she didn’t think about anything else, she forgot what she had read inside that envelope, she forgot that Pedro didn’t speak to her, that her sister was going to Africa, she felt different, at ease, without fears.

They stared at each other once again and this time Ricardo was bolder with his kiss, he kissed her lips, grabbed her face and with his tongue he explored her mouth, he was getting even more attracted to her. They kissed intensely. Despite having liked Pedro’s kisses, those were different, she had dreamt of that moment, but she never thought it would become true, they hugged and he kissed her neck and ears. The rain started falling again but they didn’t even notice.

‘It’s so good being here, with you... it looks like a dream.’

He looked her and answered.

‘So... don’t wake up, and enjoy!’

They both smiled.

‘It seems that nothing happened in my life; it seems that I’ve known you from other lives... I can’t explain.’

‘Maria Helena?’

‘Yes?’

He kissed her again, this time he touched his legs softly to see her reaction, but she didn’t do a thing, she let herself go. They were even more attracted to each other and excited.

He suddenly stopped.

‘What?’, she asked.

‘I don’t want you to think that I’m cheeky, but I just can’t resist you...’

She smiled.

‘You’re not cheeky...’

‘So... may I go on?’

She smiled.

‘You’re silly asking me those things...’

‘I know... but all of this is so new to me. I never felt like this before. Nothing like that has ever happened to me. I never felt so attracted to someone I've never been with...’

She loved hearing that, she never thought he would show so attracted to her as she was for him.

‘And it all began... because our birthday is on the same day and we’re the same age’, she said.

‘And now that you’re talking about that ...’, he went to his jeans’ pocket and took his ID Card and gave it to her. She took a look at it, and saw the date “07-05-1978”.

‘Incredible!’, she said . ‘I even thought that you were pulling my leg’¹⁹, but this is the proof’.

They smiled and looked at each other. ‘It’s raining’, she said.

‘I don’t give a damn! I’m so fine here with you that I don’t feel a thing.’

Her dress was getting wet, becoming transparent showing her breasts. They were sitting on the sand and the rain was falling, the sky was lit by a lightning which scared her and he hugged her saying:

‘Relax... I’m here with you...’

Suddenly, a longer wave caught them, they got all wet and then they started laughing. They were completely wet. Her dress was stuck to her body showing all her shapes.

He watched all her beauty carefully and they kissed once again. One of the handle of the dress fell, showing one of her shoulders, with his hand he pet her shoulder and started kissing it, with the other hand he took the other handle of the dress and also kissed it. She let herself go with all those gestures, she felt marvelled with all that, he was very tender and knew how to please her.

With his hands he touched one of her breasts whispering:

‘You’re beautiful...’ - he pushed her dress down, showing her breasts. He watched them and slowly tried to lay her down on the sand. He took off his shirt and she could see a little of his body.

The rain had stopped and little sun shone on their semi-dressed bodies. With his hands he slowly touched her nipples, she moaned.

‘Ricardo...’

The moments they spent together were unique. Night had fallen down and their bodies hungry for passion and pleasure were as only one.

Maria Helena’s mobile phone rang endlessly inside her bag in the car. It was from the office, it was her home, nobody knew where she was.

¹⁹ Optou-se por traduzir a expressão “pensei que estivesse a gozar comigo” pelo *idiom* equivalente em inglês “pulling my leg”.

(To pull one’s leg. When you pull a person’s leg you are spoofing or making fun of him, usually in a good-humored way).

(In: Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms, Cambridge University Press, October, 1998)

Idiom: É uma forma natural de falar de um nativo de uma língua “a manner of speaking that is natural to native speakers of a language”

(In: <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=idiom> Consulta: 15-02-2010)

She had left the office running away without saying a single word to anyone, but on that moment she wasn't thinking about anything, she was thrilled with so much pleasure that Ricardo was giving her that she wanted to be there, forever.

They loved each other so intensely that they fell asleep in each other's arms.

When Maria Helena woke up, she looked at Ricardo and caressed his face.

'So handsome', she said. She looked at her watch and cried:

'Oh! My God! It's so late...'

When she said this, Ricardo woke up and asked:

'Honey... did you say something?'

'I'm in trouble...'

'Why?'

'Have you seen the time? They must be crazy looking for me.'

He looked at his watch:

'Jesus!'

She was trying to get up, he pushed her arm:

'Where are you going?'

'To fetch my dress...'

'No...let yourself be... you look so pretty like that ...'

'Ricardo...'

'Listen... stay a little longer.'

'But... have you seen the time?'

'Forget it... stay with me... I want to love you once more ...'

'What?'

'Yeah... let me love you once more... just once...'

'Ricardo...'

He shut her mouth with one more kiss and they started all over again.

Those moments were even better than the previous ones, she was more loosen up and took the initiative this time, not only him. Ricardo loved seeing her like that, she was in the command this time and he let himself being carried away.

It was very late at night when Maria Helena got home. They were all worried about her. They knew she had left the office running away and they knew the reason why, but she only told her parents she had just gone for a ride.

When she went to bed, her sister noticed she was different.

'Sis... what's wrong with you? What happened?'

‘You cannot imagine what...’, she sat on the bed, sighing. ‘You cannot imagine what...’

‘What is it? What happened? Your dress is still wet, were you in the rain? Tell me! I’m worried about you!’

She got up and sat on her sister’s bed, and answered:

‘Isabel... it was beautiful... it looked like a dream...’

‘A dream?! I don’t understand a thing! Cristina told me you got out of the office running away when you saw your boss and Sofia’s wedding invitation and now you’re telling me it looked like a dream? I swear I don’t understand anything!’

Maria Helena smiled and answered:

‘Yes... I got desperate when I saw the invitation! There was such a mess in my head, I just felt like disappearing. I ran away from there, I got in the car and I left without destination. When I realized it I was in Oporto.’

‘In Oporto?!’

‘Yeah ... on the beach. I was inside the car for some time and then I went to the sand. I was sitting watching the sea, when I got up I noticed a man looking at me.’

‘A man?’

‘You’re not going to believe it... it was Ricardo!’

‘Ricardo? Who? The Lisbon guy?’

‘That’s the one!’

‘Really?’

‘Yeap!’

‘Well... that’s a casual meeting... it only happens once in our lifetime!’

‘Yes... you’re right.’

‘And... what happened? You look so happy... what happened?’

‘Oh... Isabel! Everything happened...’

‘Everything?’

‘We talked for hours and...’

‘And?’

‘And... when I realized, he was kissing me.’

‘What? Kissing you? ... don’t tell me that...’

‘Yes, it happened, Isabel... it happened...’

‘You’re telling me that... you two made love? Is that it?’

‘Yes...’

‘Maria Helena!’

‘What? Did I kill someone? Are you going to criticize me? Are you being a moralist, now?’

‘No, nothing like that, sis! It’s just that... that boy really turned your head upside down... I don’t know... I’m sorry, sis... but you love that guy.’

Maria Helena was thoughtful and answered:

‘Yes... I do!’

‘And Pedro?’

‘Oh... Pedro... Pedro! I feel affection for him; I loved what happened to us, but...’

‘I know... I know you... you were always sighing for the Lisbon guy.’

‘Don’t treat him like that... it’s Ricardo... Ricardo.’

‘Ok, I’m sorry, sis... what can you expect from him? He lives in Lisbon... besides... what the hell is he doing here in the north?’

‘He received a proposal to come to work to Oporto.’

‘Oh, yeah? Has he accepted it yet?’

‘No... he doesn’t know what to do.’

‘And now? What are you going to do with Pedro? Are you going to let him get married to that snake?’

‘Tell me, what can I do? Who am I ? Mrs. Vilas Boas is the only person who can do anything about it and look how she is... I don’t know... I’m very confused.’

‘I can imagine... your life is upside down...’

‘Yes... and you didn’t help either... with your idea of wanting to go to Africa...’

‘It’s settled... I am just waiting to be called.’

‘Sis... are you going to leave me here, alone? With all these problems? You’re the only one to whom I tell these things.’

‘Easy... I’m not going now. Maybe in a few months.’

‘Months... they go by quickly...’, she laid down on the bed.

‘What?’

‘It was so good Isabel... so good... he’s so sweet and loving.’

‘I’m glad... taking into account what many people say about their first times...’

Maria Helena sat down:

‘But it was very good, he was very loving, I didn’t feel the pain they say we feel. I felt just a little... but it went by quickly... I was so happy...’

‘Sis... you are really in love with him. I never thought this could be possible.’

‘What?’

‘That someone could fall in love with someone he or she has never seen before...’

‘Yeah ... those are things no one can explain.’

‘Tell me one more thing.’

‘Yes?’

‘Did you guys protect yourselves?’

‘But of course!’

‘Good... But it’s time you go to the doctor and take care of you.’

‘I know... but Mum...’

‘Let mother be! She has got to understand that we are not baby girls anymore, damn it! Next week I’ll make you an appointment with Doctor Joana Mesquita, she’s great.

You make a couple of exams to see if everything is ok and then she’ll prescribe you what is more adequate.’

‘Ok, we’ll see that later. I just want to sleep now... I’m very tired... I mean... if I can fall asleep ... with all these emotions in just one day...’

CHAPTER XIV

The whole truth

Some weeks later at Sofia Albuquerque's house, Pedro's wedding with her was being prepared. Pedro still didn't remember anything, one day he heard a phone conversation from Sofia.

'Don't worry, everything is as I planned. The old lady is away from my sight, the secretary girl disappeared and he will be mine soon... yes, yes... nobody will ever find out, I'll be Mrs. Sofia Vilas Boas soon and I will have all his fortune! Ahahaha... we will mix work with pleasure²⁰... I told you that I would keep away everything and everybody from him. First that fiancée of his, Luísa, she really got on my nerves... I took her off my way... ahahahah ... ok , nobody will find out... a kiss for you, be well.'

She hang up and Pedro hid behind the door. He saw her passing by and then he sat down on the couch. That telephone conversation made him think, he couldn't remember anything but he was beginning to feel that he wasn't doing the right thing. He went upstairs to his room. He opened all drawers looking for something, then picked up the phone.

'Hello? Can you please call the waitress? Thanks.' Some minutes later the waitress got in his room. 'Yes, Mr. Vilas Boas, do you need something?'

'Yes, I do. Tell me one thing, where are my things? The things I brought from the hospital?'

'Miss Albuquerque told me to keep them.'

'Where?'

'They're in the attic... but she didn't want you to know that ...'

'Hum... she didn't want me to know that... ok... relax... no one will know it was you who told me, all right?'

'All right Mr. Vilas Boas, I don't want any trouble with Miss Albuquerque.'

'Forget that we had this conversation, is that ok?'

'Yes, thank you.'

'Thanks. You can go now.'

'If you'll excuse me.'

The waitress left and he was thoughtful.

²⁰ Optou-se pelo *Idiom* "To mix work with pleasure" (to combine work with social activities or enjoyment (usually negative)) para traduzir a expressão "juntar o útil ao agradável". (In: Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms, Cambridge University Press, October, 1998)
Idiom: É uma forma natural de falar de um nativo de uma língua "a manner of speaking that is natural to native speakers of a language"
(In: <http://wordnetweb.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=idiom> Consulta: 15-02-2010)

On that night, he let Sofia fall asleep first and then he got up, he left the bedroom silently and went to the attic. He opened the door, he looked everywhere and then he saw a box in a corner. He opened it and saw a mobile phone and some personal objects, a watch and a wallet. He opened the wallet and saw his ID card and read in a loud voice:

‘Pedro Miguel Vilas Boas, Filiation: Maria Júlia Vilas Boas and Simão Pedro Vasconcelos da Costa.’

He was thoughtful and repeated to himself: ‘Maria Júlia’, ‘Maria Júlia’, ‘Júlia’!

In that moment he had a flash in his memory, he remembered what had happened at the hospital and there was something he didn’t remember what it was. It looked like a river and a woman. He took the mobile phone and saw the names and numbers: ‘Ana, Anabela... he also saw ‘home’, ‘mum’ and at last ‘Maria Helena’.

‘Maria Helena... this name’, he sat down on a chair and suddenly he remembered the woman who was with him in the river and everything came to his memory like a sequence of scenes.

‘Now I remember! Now I remember! Maria Helena... my love!’, he was going to dial a number but he hesitated by saying:

‘No... I’ll have to think very well about what I’m going to do... Sofia has just to wait and see!’

On the wedding day nobody knew where Pedro was, Sofia was hysterical asking where he was to the waiters. The wedding would be starting in an hour and nobody knew where he had gone.

The house was full of guests and the priest was also already there, the wedding was going to take place in Sofia’s house, in the garden.

In the meantime Pedro arrived at the backyard and then Sofia saw him and she cried:

‘Pedro! Where have you been? Have you seen the time? You still have got to get dressed!’, Pedro gave her a cold look. ‘What is it? What’s that face? What’s wrong?’

‘Sofia... I need to talk to you in the bedroom, ok?’

‘Now?’

‘Yes, Sofia, now!’

They went upstairs and got in the bedroom.

‘What’s wrong, honey? What’s wrong with you?’

‘I remembered everything, Sofia! Everything! You are taking advantage of me!’

‘Ah? You remembered? You remembered what?’

‘I remembered who I am, who you are. This whole wedding was just a machiavellian plan!’

She looked at him with hatred and anger.

‘And what are you going to do?’

‘What do you think? The charade is over! The wedding is cancelled! Did you think that I would have amnesia for the rest of my life? It doesn’t seem like you! You were very naïve!’

‘No! You cannot end it all!’

‘No? Why not? You’re a wicked witch! You just want to marry me because of my money.’

‘That’s not true! I love you!’

‘Bullshit Sofia! You’re bankrupt! Do you think I don’t know? Who’s going to pay for this charade? It won’t be me, I assure you! You’re broke! Bankrupt!’

‘No! Shut up!’

She was going to slap him, but he grabbed her arm.

‘If I were you, I would stay still... it’s over, Sofia! Take off that dress and warn the guests that the party is over!’

Sofia sat down on the bed and started to cry.

‘You can’t do this to me, you can’t!’

‘Come on! Stop faking! Do you think you’ll soften me with your fake tears?’

‘Stop it, Pedro! Don’t be so insensitive! It’s bad enough to have lost all my fortune!’

‘And do you know why? Because instead of saving money, you spent it in travelling, clothes, parties and wasted all your money.’

‘Enough with that!’, she got up and got out of the bedroom.

Next day, at Maria Helena’s, somebody was ringing the bell, she was alone and went to the window to see who it was and she saw Pedro’s car.

‘Pedro?! Is this possible?’

She went downstairs running and she went to the gate; he had just got out of the car. They looked at each other and he screamed:

‘Maria Helena!’

‘Pedro! What are you doing here?’

He went to hug her; she didn’t know what to do.

‘My love... I remembered, I remembered!’

‘Don’t you have amnesia anymore?’, she smiled.

‘No! It’s over! I remembered everything!’

He was going to kiss her on the mouth, but she moved away.

‘Didn’t you get married, yesterday?’

‘No!’

‘No?’

‘No, I told you! I didn’t get married, I put Sofia in her place!’

‘Yesterday?’

‘Yes! There was no wedding! I came back home already. I’m here, my love, I’m back to you!’

He hugged her once more and once again she didn’t know what to do.

The latest weeks had been full of emotions, Pedro was going to get married to Sofia, Maria Helena met Ricardo and they made love, Pedro had his memory back.

Maria Helena got back to work but she hadn’t been able to speak to Ricardo in the Internet yet. She was sad because of that. What if he hadn’t liked what had happened between the two of them?

To make her even sadder, Isabel called her saying that she was going to Africa in two weeks.

When Pedro saw her so sad, he asked:

‘What’s the matter, honey? What’s wrong?’

‘It’s my sister...’

‘What’s wrong with Isabel?’

‘She’s going to Africa!’

‘Africa? To work?’

‘As a Missionary!’

‘Really?’

‘Yes...’

‘But... that’s being brave... that doesn’t look like her.’

‘Yes... but I’m very sad!’, a tear fell down her face.

‘Oh, my love ... don’t be like that’, he hugged her.

‘How do you want me to be? She’s my only friend. What will I do without her?!’

‘Come on!’, he looked at her saying: ‘I’m here, right by your side! You have me!’

‘That’s different... she’s my sister.’

‘I know, honey, but you’ve got to understand that people must carry on with their lives and if that was her option, you just have to accept it and support her. It’s the same as if she had got married and went to live in another place.’

‘But she’s going so far away...’

‘Come on... don’t be like that, maybe that’s something she always wanted. You just have to be happy for her, it mustn’t be easy for her to leave you, either.’

‘Yes... you’re right.’

‘Come on... I want that lovely face of yours without tears, all right?’

He kissed her on her lips, she smiled. ‘I’ve got to leave, but I’ll be back soon, do you want to have dinner with me later?’

‘Dinner?’

‘Yes, let’s go to a quiet restaurant, I want to be with you.’

She was thoughtful.

‘So? What do you say?’

‘Yes... all right.’

‘We’ll settle the time later.’

He got closer and kissed her once again.

‘I love you’, he said

He got out of the office and she sat down at the desk, suddenly she saw Ricardo on the Internet and let him start conversation first.

‘Psstt... lovely sis.’

She smiled and answered:

‘Hello.’

‘How are you?’

‘Sad.’

‘Sad? Oh! Why?’

‘My sister is going to Africa in two weeks.’

‘Already?’

‘Yes.’

‘Are you sad?’

‘Yes.’

‘You must take it easy and understand, that it was her option, and you have got to support her.’

‘Yes, I know.’

‘And how do you feel? Recovered from our date?’

She smiled and wrote:

‘So so. ☺.’

‘I loved our date.’

She felt very happy when she saw him writing that.

‘Me, too.’

‘I loved what happened between us.’, she felt very happy, her sad face turned into a happy one.

‘I must tell you something.’

‘What?’, she wrote.

‘I’m not going to work to Oporto anymore.’

‘No?’

‘No... the proposal was kept for some more time, but I’m not going for the time being.’

‘Ok’, she was a little disappointed. She was still hoping that he would come to Oporto to work, closer to her and he would probably forget his girlfriend.

How dumb she had been! That afternoon of love has just been a moment, nothing else.

‘My girlfriend and I, we’re going to live together.’

Well, that had been too much! After all that they had lived, she came to the conclusion that it hadn’t had the same meaning to him as it had had for her. She was just one more, after all, fame from the Lisbon guys was true! He loved his girlfriend and was going to live with her! He gave up the idea of going to live to Oporto because he couldn’t live without her! How dumb she had been! She had given herself to him and that it had just been a moment of sex for him!

She was in silence, her tears fell down her cheeks intensely, suddenly she began to feel bad, she felt dizzy, a pain in her chest and she fainted.

‘Maria Helena?! Maria Helena?! Are you there?’, he wrote, but he got no answer.

Some minutes later Pedro came back to the office. When he got in, he saw her laying down on the floor, fainted. He ran into her direction.

‘Maria Helena!’, he screamed.

He got close to her and slapped her face, but she was still unconscious.

‘Cristina! Cristina!’, he called out loud.

Cristina, the receptionist, dropped her work on her desk and got in his office.

‘Oh... Maria Helena, what happened?’

‘When I got in, she was already laying down! Go and get some water and alcohol, please!’

Cristina was looking at the computer and noticed that the program where Maria Helena talked to Ricardo was on, she wanted to turn it off but her boss’ screams were louder.

‘COME ON, CRISTINA! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?’

‘I’m sorry, Mr. Vilas Boas, I’ll be back in a minute!’

She rushed to the door and Pedro took Maria Helena in his arms. He laid her down on the sofa. He slapped her on her face, but she didn’t wake up. Some minutes later, Cristina came in with a glass of water and a first - aid box.

‘Here you have the alcohol...’

‘Give me some cotton too, please.’

Pedro soaked the cotton with alcohol and put it close to Maria Helena’s nose.

She started to cough.

‘Thank God she woke up!’ ,Cristina exclaimed.

‘Sweetheart! How do you feel?’ She opened her eyes slowly and began to moan. ‘What is it, honey? What’s wrong? Are you in pain?’

‘My back... what happened?’

‘You must have hurt yourself when you fainted’, Cristina answered.

‘Did I... did I faint?’

‘Yes, babe, what’s wrong with you?’

‘I don’t know ... I wasn’t feeling well and felt dizzy and then I can’t remember anything else.’

‘Here... have some water.’ She leaned a little, but she was still weak and laid down again. ‘What is it, honey?’

‘I’m still weak ...’

‘Do you want to go to the hospital? Do you want me to call your sister?’

‘No, it’s not necessary, I just need some rest.’

‘Let yourself be. Take a rest.’

‘Don’t you need anything else?’, Cristina asked.

‘No, thanks Cristina. You can go back to work now.’

‘If you’ll excuse me.’

Cristina left the office, and Pedro caressed Maria Helena.

‘How do you feel?’

‘So, so, I’m sleepy.’

‘Take a rest, if you feel like it, sleep a bit.’

‘Oh... I’m not going to sleep in here...’

‘Oh, why not? ... Have a rest.’

He kissed her forehead and got up.

She closed her eyes, Pedro went towards her computer and saw the program on, he knew what that was but he never imagined that Maria Helena knew that kind of programs.

He was curious about the conversation and decided to read it. He read the whole conversation and got puzzled. He looked at Maria Helena and noticed she had fallen asleep, he turned off the computer and was thoughtful. He got out of the office and went to the meeting room, he sat on a chair and thought about what he had read ‘I loved our date’ ‘I loved what happened between us’.

XV

Proof of Love

Two weeks later, Maria Helena, Isabel and their parents were saying goodbye at the airport. They were all very sad, because of Isabel's leaving to Mozambique.

Maria Helena was the last one to say goodbye. She hugged Isabel with her face full of tears and said: 'Sis... be careful, take care of yourself, as soon as you get there, call us or text us!' Isabel was also crying, and told her in a low voice: 'All right, take care of yourself too! Carry on with your life! Try to love Pedro since mum and dad have accepted your relationship so well.'

'Yes.'

'And go and see Doctor Joana Mesquita, don't forget!'

'Yes, don't worry. I'll make an appointment tomorrow.'

'Great... so... see you one of these days...'

'Oh sis... I'll miss you so much!' they hugged once again and Isabel finally turned away, saying goodbye.

Some weeks had passed and Maria Helena had never returned to the programme to chat with Ricardo, and she had also stopped answering his text messages.

She wanted to take him out of her head forever, she was dating Pedro now.

She didn't want to get upset with Ricardo's conversations; after all, he had chosen to live with his girlfriend. What had happened between them had no meaning to him.

On that day, she had an appointment with Doctor Mesquita, the Doctor indicated by her sister and she took her the results of the blood tests Maria Helena had made.

When the Doctor saw the results, she was thoughtful.

'So, Doctor Mesquita? What's wrong? Is everything ok?' The Doctor answered:

'Maria Helena, tell me something...'

'Yes?'

'You came here to make these blood tests, because you wanted to see if everything was ok with you, because you wanted to take the pill, is that right?'

'Yes... but, why? Is anything wrong? Do I have anything serious?'

'Well... I don't know how serious this is.'

'Come on Doctor! I'm getting really worried! Tell me, what's wrong?'

'Maria Helena ... I can't prescribe you the pill!'

'No? But, why not?'

The Doctor took a deep breath and answered:

‘I can’t prescribe you the pill, because you’re pregnant!’

Maria Helena opened her eyes wide open and exclaimed with her mouth open:

‘What??’

‘ Yes... you’re going to be a mother.’

‘But... it can’t be... it can’t be!’, Maria Helena exclaimed incredulous.

‘But, it’s true! Seven weeks pregnant, haven’t you been late with your period?’

‘Yes... but I didn’t care, I was never regular.’

‘Ok... haven’t you been sick or sleepy?’

‘Yes... now I recall... I fainted once and I’m very sleepy ... but... it’s not possible...I can’t be pregnant, I can’t!’

Maria Helena didn’t want to believe what was happening to her.

‘Take it easy! You’re not a teenager anymore.’

‘Oh! My God! ... my parents... they’re going to kill me!’

‘Take it easy, these things happen, it’s normal, nowadays.’

‘Doctor... I can’t understand. We wore a condom!’

‘Yes... but they are not 100% guaranteed... besides, no anti-conceptive is a hundred per cent guaranteed!’

‘It’s not possible, it’s not possible! I’m lost! I’m lost!’

‘Take it easy, Maria Helena, you can’t get nervous like that, your parents have got to understand.’

‘But, what happened to the condom?’

‘Well ... it could have a hole... some have defects, or maybe it wasn’t put on well, or it may have caught heat or water. Sometimes youngsters make love on the beach and they are not careful because the sand ruins the condom.’

“Sand and water”, Maria Helena thought.

‘But, tell me something, Maria Helena’.

‘Yes?’

‘Don’t you have a boyfriend?’

A tear came down her face.

‘Yes...’

‘Isn’t he your boss?’

‘Yes...’

‘Don’t be afraid... you’re not a teenage mother anymore... don’t cry, take it easy!’

You have got a life inside you that is growing and you see, it is already well grown up. Take it easy! Talk to your boyfriend first and then with your parents, it's always a chock at first but then they'll get over it.'

Maria Helena didn't answer anything. She got up with tears rolling down her face.

'Doctor, I'm leaving, thank you.'

'Calm down... you don't have to pay. I'll be here for you, anytime you need, ok? Call me if you need it ... and... good luck.'

'Thanks...'

She left the doctor's office closing the door. She felt lost, without direction, she couldn't believe what she had heard!

Was it a nightmare? No! It was real! She had heard well, she was pregnant! Pregnant from Ricardo! She got pregnant in an afternoon of passion when she had lost her virginity. She was dating Pedro and she was pregnant from another man! A man she had fallen in love with through the Internet and who lived miles away from her, a man who was living with another person.

Would she have the guts to tell Pedro and her parents?

Isabel was not with her anymore because she was in Mozambique. She felt she was the loneliest creature on earth! She felt like running away, disappearing! Her life had ended!

Some hours later she was at the same beach where Ricardo and her had seen each other for the first time and had made love for the first time. She looked depressed, her eyes were swollen from crying.

Her mobile phone started ringing, it was Pedro. She didn't know what to do, she felt lost, she didn't answer it.

Some minutes later, the mobile phone started ringing again, this time it was Isabel and she decided to answer it.

'Hello?... Hello, sis?... I'm awful... yes, I did... you cannot imagine ... yes, I'm crying... - she started sobbing - Isabel ... I'm pregnant! ... Yes, I'm pregnant, I'm dishonoured! ... Do you think it's Pedro's? I have never had anything with him! ...

...yes, it's his... yes, yes, we protected each other but the doctor said that the condom might be defected, Isabel... I'm lost! ... How can I be calm? ... What about our parents? And Pedro? What will I do? Tell me, what can I do? I feel like disappearing from the face of this earth! ... No, I won't do anything foolish, take it easy, after all, I have a new life inside of me, even if I'll have him all by myself! ... I don't know... Listen! He's calling me again... ok... ok... don't worry... ok, I promise. I love you too! Bye!' Maria Helena answered the mobile phone, it was Pedro.

‘Hello? ... Hi... Yes, I did... I need to talk to you... I’m in Oporto... in your flat here? ... Ok, see you soon.’ Maria Helena got up and she felt dizzy.

‘Oh no, just what I was missing - fainting!’

She put her hands on her belly, and said:

‘Take it easy, baby ...’

Half an hour later, she was with Pedro in his flat. He looked worried, she had told him she had gone to the doctor and needed to talk to him.

‘Honey, what is it? You look so sad, have you been crying? What’s the matter?’

‘Pedro, I have been thinking and... I think we should break up’.

‘What? What? Did I hear you well?’

‘Yes, you did.’

‘But, what is it? What’s the matter? Do you have any serious illness? Some cancer? Do you want to break up with me because of that?’

‘No! Nothing like that! Thank God! I have no serious illness.’

‘So, what is it?’

‘Pedro... I don’t know where to start...’

He took her hands, they were cold.

‘No matter what, trust me! But please, for God’s sake, don’t tell me that you want to break up with me, please! I love you too much! Don’t do this to me, please!’

She got up, crying:

‘Pedro! Please! As soon as you hear what I’ve got to say... I don’t know if you’ll still think like that.’

‘But tell me what it is, damn it! I cannot stand such a mystery!’

She put her hands on her face and sat down again.

‘Pedro... I ... I’m pregnant!’

Pedro looked at her astonished; he watched her for some seconds and then he got up in silence. He didn’t say anything for a while, until she exclaimed:

‘Why don’t you say something?! You’re killing me with your silence! Forgive me, Pedro! But it happened ... you have all right to think badly of me! I’m a loser! I let this happen to me... I was a fool!’ , she started crying. I’m disgraced! My parents will kick me out of home!

At last, he said: ‘Stop it!’, he sat down and asked her: ‘It was the boy from the Internet, wasn’t it? He’s the father of your baby, isn’t he?’

She got astonished, she had no idea that he knew all her story, maybe it was her sister who told him? No, she wouldn’t have done that... she wouldn’t have betrayed her.

‘But... how do you know?’

‘I’ve always suspected that there was someone between us, Maria Helena! Since the beginning of our relationship, but... I never thought that... when you fainted, you let your programme on. I was too curious and I read the chat²¹. You’ve met, haven’t you? He’s not from here, is he?’ Maria Helena was surprised with all she had heard.

‘You had read the chat and you haven’t said anything to me, all this time?’

He came closer to her, put his hand on her face saying:

‘Silly! Can’t you see that I love you too much?! If you were with me, that was because you had decided to stay with me. I saw you refusing phone calls and deleting text messages, a lot of times.’

‘Pedro... I don’t know what to say...’

‘Where does he live?’

‘In Lisbon...’

‘What are you intending to do with that child that you’re carrying? Are you going to tell him?’

‘NO!’, she cried. ‘He’s got his life there! To him, I was just one more affaire, just one more girl, a country girl that believed his story! This child will be mine! Just mine!’

‘So... are you keeping your baby?! You have already decided.’

‘Of course! I have never thought about making an abortion... I just fear my parents... I know that they’ll kick me out of home, but I’m willing to face them! I will support my child all by myself!’

‘Don’t say foolish things! It is not easy to support a child alone nowadays’

Maria Helena was nervous and at the same time happy. She was going to get married to a wonderful man and she was decided to spend the rest of her life with him.

She entered the garden arm in arm with her father. All guests were waiting her, Mrs. Vilas Boas was emotional. The best man was Miguel, Pedro’s partner, and the bridesmaid was Isabel. It was a religious wedding, they promised eternal love to each other. Suddenly they heard loud noises, coming from the front of the house.

Everybody started looking to see what was happening. Sofia had got in the house with a gun but the bodyguards hadn’t noticed her. They were running to catch her, but she managed to get away. When she saw them together, she yelled:

²¹ Optou-se por substituir a palavra “conversa” por “chat” e não por “conversation”, como seria a tradução correcta. Em alternativa, tentou-se encontrar um termo mais usual e típico da linguagem da Internet.

Existe o contexto cultural, palavras relacionadas com formas de pensamento e comportamento de uma comunidade particular e palavras que possam ser culturais, denotando um específico objeto cultural.

«there is the cultural context, words related to ways of thinking and behaving within a particular language community, and words which may be cultural...denoting a specific material cultural object» Vid. Peter Newmark, *A textbook of Translation*, p. 193.

‘NO! YOU’VE GOT TO BE MINE!’

‘Sofia!’, Pedro exclaimed.

Everybody was in panic, watching that crazy woman with a gun in her hands, pointed at the bride and the groom.

‘NO, PEDRO! YOU’VE GOT TO GET MARRIED TO ME! NOT WITH THE LITTLE SECRETARY!’

‘Sofia! Be calm!’, Pedro shouted.

‘NO! YOU CAN’T! I DID EVERYTHING I COULD SO YOU COULD BE MINE! I TOOK ALL WOMEN FROM MY WAY! IT WAS ME WHO HAD KILLED LUÍSA! IT WAS ME! BETTER... THE BULLET WAS FOR YOU BUT SHE GOT IN THE WAY! THAT WAS WONDERFUL! AHAHAHA!’

They were all with their mouths wide open with all those revelations, Sofia was hysterical, completely crazy.

‘IT WAS ME WHO HAD YOUR CAR STOLEN FROM THE EXHIBITION, I ORDERED TO FOLLOW THAT POOR LITTLE WOMAN, I FOLLOWED HER ONCE WHEN SHE WAS DRIVING YOUR CAR, AHAHAHAH!’

IT WAS ME WHO HAD YOUR MOTHER RUN OVER! SO NOONE COULD GET IN MY WAY, AND NOW YOU’RE GOING TO GET MARRIED TO HER?? NO!! YOU JUST CAN’T!’

Mrs. Vilas Boas was surprised with all that. Sofia was a murderer! One of the security men tried to come closer but she turned the gun screaming:

‘GET AWAY! NOBODY COMES CLOSER!’

Sofia was out of control, and then she turned the gun to Maria Helena.

Maria Helena's legs started shaking and she felt weak, she had the feeling that she was going to faint because of all that.

‘I WILL FINISH WITH YOU, TOO! IF HE’S NOT MINE, HE WON’T BE ANYBODY ELSE’S!’

Suddenly, a shot was heard. Sofia had shot ... everybody was static ... Pedro fell on Maria Helena’s arms. To protect Maria Helena he had been shot.

Maria Helena had Pedro in her arms bleeding; her whole white dress was full of blood.

Everybody started screaming and crying.

When Sofia saw Pedro dead, she turned the gun into her head and shot herself. She fell down, dead on the floor.

Maria Helena and Mrs. Vila Boas were crying with Pedro's dead body in their hands. Sofia was dead, some guests had fainted.

Those had been moments of terror for all.

XVI

The miracle of life

Christmas was coming, and Maria Helena was in the Farm, decorating the Christmas tree. Her mother-in-law, Mrs. Vila Boas, was with her.

They were both dressed up with dark clothes.

Pedro had died three weeks ago and they still cried his death.

This Christmas was going to be a very sad one.

Maria Helena was now the director of the company and Cristina was her secretary.

All Pedro's proprieties belonged to her. She was now in charge of everything that belonged to him.

She was thirteen weeks pregnant and her belly could be noticed already.

'Do you know something, my dear?'

'Yes, Mrs. Vilas Boas?'

'Did you know that Sofia was broke and that she just wanted to get married to my son because of his money? And that Marisa, my maid, was her accomplice? They were cousins!'

'Yes, I heard that a few days ago. That woman was the devil! And Marisa... My God! Do you know something? I don't like to talk about this! It is bad for me! Every time I talk about this, my baby kicks me!'

'Do you know if it's going to be a boy or a girl?'

'No! I'm going to see that in January.'

'What do you prefer? A boy or a girl?'

'It doesn't matter to me. As long as it is healthy!'

'Yes, you're right about that. I'd prefer a boy.'

'Really?'

'Yes... I know that, that child you're carrying won't be my blood grandchild, but he or she will be treated as if it was. Maybe he or she will help me to recover from my only son's death... I feel so empty inside! Maria Helena... he was my only son... and that woman took him away from me! It's not fair!'

Maria Helena came closer and said:

'Yes... if it hadn't been him, it had been me. He saved my life!', she started crying.

'Your son was the most extraordinary person on earth! This baby that I'm carrying deserved to be his! His biological father... well... I'd rather not to talk about this...'

‘Yes! At least you are here with me... otherwise... I don’t know what I would have done with my life...’

Maria Helena hugged her saying:

‘I’ll always be here with you, and my baby will call you granny!’²²

After New Year, Maria Helena finally found out she was going to have a boy! Everybody was happy! Her father had always wanted to have a son and Mrs. Vilas Boas was going to fulfill the empty space left by her only son’s death.

Some months later, on the day after Maria Helena’s birthday, she arrived at the office in the middle of the morning.

It was getting harder everyday to carry her son. She felt heavy and tired. The doctor had told her to stay at home and relax, but she had decided that going to work was good for her.

When she got in the office, she saw some flowers on her desk.

‘Good morning’, she said to Cristina.

‘Good morning, Maria Helena’.

She took the flowers and asked:

‘Who sent this?’

‘I don’t know. The receptionist said it was a carrier... I think it has a card.’

Maria Helena was curious; it was a lovely bunch of white roses, her favourite.

She opened the card and read it:

‘I want you to know that I hadn’t forgotten you on our birthday.

Happy Birthday!

Why don’t you answer my phone calls and my sms?

I’m waiting for you in the Internet! I miss you!

A big kiss, from your Lisbon bro²³. Ricardo.’

Right then she felt her son moving inside her and put her hands on her belly.

‘Is everything ok? Are you in pain?’, Cristina asked.

²² Optou-se por traduzir a palavra “avó” por “granny” em vez da palavra “grandmother”, por ser uma forma mais informal e muito usada na língua inglesa pelas crianças em relação aos avós. (granny: Informal: a grandmother) (In: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/granny>, Consulta: 30-09-2009).

Vid. Nota anterior

²³ Optou-se por traduzir a palavra “mano” por “bro”. O equivalente de “mano” em inglês é “brother” sendo o equivalente em inglês “bro”. (<http://translito.com/pt/translators/Portuguese-English/>, Consulta: 20-10-09) *Vid. Nota anterior*

‘No! I’m fine... he has just kicked me!’

‘He must be anxious to get out!’, Cristina said, smiling.

‘Me too!’

‘I can imagine! Your belly is so big.’

‘I feel tired and heavy.’

‘Any secret admiror?’

‘Excuse me?’

‘The flowers...’

‘Oh! The flowers... they’re from an old friend.’

‘They’re lovely.’

‘Yes, they are.’

Maria Helena wasn’t expecting such a gesture from the father of her son. She was thoughtful, that card had touched her. She even thought about throwing the flowers and the card into the garbage, but the roses were so lovely, that she couldn’t do it.

On that night she decided to go to the Internet, he wouldn’t be on line at that time, as he didn’t know that she had Internet.

But as ironically, he was on line and as soon as he saw her there, he started chatting:

‘Sis? You’re here?’

She remained in silence, she wanted to talk to him but at the same time, she wanted to go offline.

‘Maria Helena? Is that you?’

She finally answered:

‘Hi!’

‘What a nice surprise! Have you got Internet at home?’

‘Yes.’

‘That’s nice! How are you? What have you been doing? Tell me! I miss you!’

‘I’m fine, thanks. And you?’

‘I am ok. Why didn’t you answer my text messages and phone calls? Did you receive my flowers, today?’

‘Yes, I did. Thanks!’

‘What’s wrong? You’re so vague... what’s the matter with you?’

‘Nothing.’

‘You’ve got a webcam, I can see it. Can you turn it on, so I can see you?’

‘No!’

‘But... Why not? What’s wrong?’

‘How’s your life? Have you got married yet?’, she asked.

‘No... you?’

‘Yes.’

‘Yes, what? Have you got married?’

‘Yes.’

Ricardo didn’t write anything for a few seconds, he was surprised with that revelation.

‘With... your boss?’

‘Yes.’

‘How nice! Congratulations!’

‘Thanks!’

‘Maria Helena! I can feel that you are so cold! What’s wrong?’

‘Nothing!’

He wanted her to turn her camera on.

‘Come on! I want to see you. I want to see how you are.’

‘What for?’

‘Come on!’

She finally accepted to turn the webcam on.

They could now see each other, after such a long time. Since the day she had got pregnant.

‘You look so gorgeous! But... you look sad.’

‘You are very nice’, she wrote. Seeing him was touching her feelings for him. He touched her.

‘Can you get up, so I can see you better?’

She remembered that he was going to see her pregnant and she didn’t want to.

‘Why do you want me to get up? I’m the same.’

‘Don’t be like that! It’s been such a long time that we haven’t spoken to each other! I miss you so much!’

‘Really?! I don’t think that a provincial girl can make you feel like that!’

‘Why are you attacking me? Have you forgotten what we have been through together? I haven’t! I would love to be with you again!’

‘Really?! What for? Just to spend some time?’

‘Don’t be like that...’

‘Why not? It was only a moment of sex!’

‘No! It wasn’t just a moment of sex! It was much more than that!’

‘Oh, yeah? I can imagine!’

‘Why are you like that? So cynical?! I loved what happened between us! It was very special. Believe me! It wasn’t just a moment of sex! Do you think I have sex, just to have it?! I wouldn’t have done with anyone else what I did with you! I was at ease with you. Believe me! It looked like I had known you for ages!’

‘Right... but it’s over.’

‘I want to be with you again.’

‘What for? You have your girlfriend, you owe her some respect!’

‘Maria Helena! Don’t be like that! What I feel for you is really special. I would never have done with another woman what I have done with you! Believe me!’

‘Didn’t you feel guilty afterwards? When you were with your girlfriend?’

‘No! I didn’t!’

She remained silent without writing, he watched her through the webcam.

‘You look so pretty! I missed you so much... Is your husband around?’

‘No.’

‘But... is he at home?’

‘No.’

‘Travelling?’

Her eyes got full of tears and he noticed that.

‘What’s wrong? Are you crying? What’s wrong?’

‘Yes... he travelled in a journey of no return.’

‘How? ... Don’t tell me that...’

She was drying her tears.

‘Honey! You’re crying... did your husband die?’

‘Yes...’

He got surprised with that revelation. He didn’t know what to write. They didn’t write anything for a while.

‘Tell me... did he die in a car accident?’

‘No... he was murdered!’

‘What??! That’s awful!’

Right then Mrs. Vilas Boas called her.

‘Maria Helena?’

She got up, saying:

‘Yes? Just a moment!’

Ricardo got very surprised when he saw her pregnant. She hadn’t noticed what she had just done.

Sometime later she came back.

He wrote:

‘Are you pregnant?’

She didn’t know what to do or write.

‘Yes.’

‘I didn’t know that...’

‘It’s normal... I haven’t told you.’

On that moment, he felt very sad.

‘When are you expecting to have your baby? Your belly is big!’

‘End of June, beginning of July.’

‘It’s getting closer.’

‘Yeah.’

‘Is it a boy or a girl?’

‘A boy!’

‘Have you already got a name for him?’

‘Pedro.’

‘The father’s name...’

On that moment she wanted to write ‘No! You are the father!’

‘Are you nervous?’

‘A bit! But everything will be all right.’

‘Sure...’

He had a sad look, she noticed it.

‘What is it? Why do you look so sad?’

‘That baby... could be mine...’

When she saw him writing that, she had no reaction. Her tears started rolling down her cheeks, he watched it.

‘I have to go.’

‘Wait! Don’t go!’

‘I have to!’ , her tears kept on rolling down her cheeks.

‘You’re crying... don’t cry...’

‘I’m sorry... I have to go!’

‘Wait! Promise me, that you’ll show up more times! Promise me that you’ll answer my text messages!’

‘Bye!’

She turned the webcam off, he had written:

‘Sis! Don’t be sad! I adore you!’

Maria Helena turned the programme off and put her head on the computer keyboard.

She cried and cried. She wanted to have said to him ‘Yes! He’s really your baby!’

But at the same time she thought about their lives. They were miles ²⁴away from each other and he lived together with his girlfriend. Their lives were distant from each other and they were also very different.

She was alone once again, she had had a man who had loved her and who had died for her. A man who accepted to be the father of her child.

That child was going to be her company, until the day he decided to carry on with his life. She wasn’t interested in finding another man, but deep down inside, and as much as she wanted to lie to herself, she loved Ricardo! They could be away from each other but they would always have something that tied them up.

On Maria Helena’s last month of pregnancy, Isabel decided to be by her sister’s side. She returned from Mozambique and went with her to the maternity, when Maria Helena started feeling her first pain.

On the seventh of July they were both very nervous, Isabel got in the delivery room with Maria Helena, her baby was having some difficulties to be born and Maria Helena suffered a bit. She had decided to have a normal labour, and some time later, a hoarse crying could be heard in the delivery room.

They both cried of emotion, he was a strong baby, but they soon realized that things were not happening as expected.

The baby was taken away for bathing and then they took care of Maria Helena, who was very concerned.

Later in her bedroom, Maria Helena was anxious, expecting her baby.

Isabel arrived with the doctor and without the baby.

‘Where’s my baby?’, Maria Helena asked.

‘Mrs. Vilas Boas, your baby had some problems and needs a blood transfusion.’

²⁴ Optou-se por converter “quilómetros” em “miles” para sermos fieis ao sistema de medidas de comprimento e medição britânicos. Na ficção, a decisão de converter ou transferir depende da importância de manter a fidelidade aos costumes locais. A não ser que haja argumentos fortes (o período de tempo num romance, bem como numa região), sugere-se a conversão para: milhas, libras, acres, galões, etc. « For fiction, the decision whether to convert or transfer depends on the importance of retaining local colour. Unless there are strong arguments (e.g., time in a period novel, as well as region), I suggest you convert to miles, pounds, acres, gallons, etc.» Vid. Peter Newmark, *A Textbook of Translation*, p. 218.

‘What?’

‘Sis! Take it easy!’

‘But... is it serious?’

‘The real matter of the problem is the blood...’

‘How is that, doctor? I don’t understand!’

‘Your baby’s blood type is very rare, B negative. We don’t have it here in the maternity, we have already contacted other hospitals, but they’re having some difficulties.’

‘But... that’s not possible! There must be blood in other places... what about me? Can’t I give blood to my son?’

‘Maria Helena, you have just given birth! You have lost a lot of blood! But even if you hadn’t, your blood type is not the same. I have already talked to Isabel and it seems that no one from your family has got this blood type.’

‘Doctor? Can I speak to my sister in private, please?’ , Isabel asked.

‘Sure!’

The Doctor turned his back and Maria Helena looked at her sister.

‘Sis... is this possible? What else can happen to me?’

‘Maria Helena! Your baby’s blood type is rare, and there aren’t a lot of people who have it ... the maternity have tried other blood types that could be compatible but he’s not reacting well! Hospitals usually have a list of donors and they are looking for one... but the problem is... he needs it in less than 48 hours, otherwise...’

‘NO! Say no more, please!’

‘Sis... there is only one solution...’

‘Which one?’

‘His biological father...’

‘NO! NEVER!’

‘Maria Helena, there is no time to be proud! He must have the same blood type! We need him!’

‘Isabel! No!’

‘Maria Helena! It’s urgent! He can save his life! In three or four hours he would be here and everything would be solved! Listen! He doesn’t need to know that he’s his son! Talk to him! Ask him if he can help you, I’m sure he will! Come on, sis! It’s your son’s life we’re talking about!’

After thinking for a while, she picked the mobile phone up. Some seconds later he answered it.

‘Hello, Ricardo... I’m so, so... I’m at the maternity... yes, he’s born... thank you... I need to know something...’, she was static and happy at the same time.

‘My son needs a blood transfusion urgently, and so far, we haven’t found a compatible donor. This blood type is rare and then... I remembered you... would you be willing to donate blood to my son? Ricardo! I can pay you the trip and the workday, but please, save my son’s life!’ , she started crying.

‘Yes? ... Ricardo? Thank you very much!’

She hang the mobile phone and started crying.

‘Sis? Did you make it?’, Isabel asked,

‘Yes! He’s coming to the North and he’ll donate him his blood!’

‘That’s nice! I’m going to warn the Doctor.’

Some hours later, Maria Helena was sleeping, Ricardo got in there and caressed her face and kissed her forehead. She opened her eyes and a big smile illuminated her face.

‘Ricardo! You’re here!’

‘And I’ve already donated blood to your lovely son! He’s a big boy!’

‘Thank you...’

‘How did you know about my blood type? Have I told you, before?’

‘Yes...’, she said timidly.

‘I can’t remember... but that’s a coincidence... your son has got the same blood type as I do.’

‘Yes... Pedro also had it... but he’s not with us anymore’, she said, lying.

‘Yes, I understand.’

They both looked at each other intensely. Isabel was going to get in the bedroom, but when she saw them, she stopped and turned around. Mrs. Vilas Boas was also going to get in the bedroom and when she saw Isabel she asked:

‘What’s wrong?’

‘Let them be.’

‘Is he the one? Pedrinho’s father?’

‘Yes, he is. Let us leave them alone.’

‘But... will he take our baby away from us?’

‘Mrs. Vilas Boas! Please! He doesn’t know that he’s his father! He has just came here to donate his blood. He’s going back to his life. Let’s get out...’

They both left.

Ricardo and Maria Helena still looked at each other.

‘You are a pretty mother...’

‘I’m horrible! I’ve got dark circles under my eyes.’

‘No, you’re not horrible! You’re pretty...’, he grabbed her hand and kissed it.

‘I missed you so much! I’ve never thought I could see you again! Not even pregnant! If I could... I would stay here and I wouldn’t come back!’

‘Ricardo! Don’t say those things... you’ve got your life in the South.’

He remained in silence and then he said:

‘I was about to leave everything because of you.’

‘What?’, she couldn’t believe her ears.

‘Yes! I was about to leave everything and come here to stay with you! To fight for you!’

A tear rolled down her face.

‘And... why didn’t you do it?’

‘I was a coward! And I didn’t know if you wanted me. Your story with your boss was never very clear to me. I decided to leave things as they were!’

Maria Helena looked at him with her eyes full of tears. She didn’t know any of that. Why hadn’t he told her that, before?

‘When are you going back to Lisbon?’

‘Later.’

They looked again at each other in silence. Their eyes seemed that they wanted to say something to each other. Ricardo came closer to Maria Helena’s face and kissed her lips. She didn’t know what to do or say.

‘Bye! I’ll see you one of these days...’

She looked at him in silence. When he was leaving she hugged him tight.

‘Ricardo!’

They hugged each other and she cried. He didn’t understand it, but he was also touched and sad, he didn’t want to leave her. On the other hand he had all his life organized in Lisbon.

XVII

Brother and Sister forever

Two years passed by.

Mrs. Vilas Boas died in the beginning of spring. The grief of her son's death had let her too fragile, one night Maria Helena found her death on her bed.

Mrs. Vilas Boas had left a will where half of her property was for Maria Helena and the other half for her grandson. Maria Helena would be the manager until he reached majority.

On that year, Isabel came on holiday, she loved being with her godson Pedro Filipe, Maria Helena had chosen that name.

As time went by, he was looking more like his father and their mother had asked once, why he had such almond shaped eyes.

Maria Helena and Ricardo talked once and a while in the Internet and they had seen each other a couple of times through the Webcam, until the day he told her he was going to get married! Another disappointment to her, who still had the same feelings for him from years ago.

One day, Isabel found her, sad, in the office at Pedro's house which was now hers.

'What's the matter with you?'

'Nothing... I was just lost in my thoughts...'

'Let me guess... Ricardo!'

'Am I that predictable?'

'You're transparent, expressive! You cannot hide your feelings. I've known you for a long time, dear sister. What's the matter?'

'He's going to get married.'

Isabel was quiet for a while and then she said:

'Really?'

'Yeah... I've just chatted with him...'

'Maria Helena, as much as you try, you can't get him out of your mind, can you?'

Maria Helena got up, went close to the window and said looking at the garden:

'No... I love him, Isabel! I love him like I've never loved anybody in my life. And as time goes by, seeing Pedrinho growing up, looking like him everyday, it's torture to me.'

'Do something, damn it!', Isabel exclaimed.

'Do what?'

‘Fight for him!’

‘But... what do you want me to do? He’s got somebody else, he’s getting married to her.’

‘When is the wedding?’

‘6th September.’

Isabel was thoughtful and then asked:

‘Why don’t you tell him about Pedrinho?’

‘No! I don’t have the right to ruin his life!’

‘Stop it, Maria Helena! Stop thinking about the others and think about yourself! Think about your feelings, damn it! Fight! You only have two chances, whether you win or you lose, damn it! At least try to be happy, woman!’, Isabel grabbed Maria Helena’s shoulders.

Maria Helena looked at her and said:

‘I’m surprised with you! You didn’t like him, before.’

‘That’s over now! Have you seen what you have been through because of him? And the things he told you at the hospital. He must feel something for you, too! Maybe he’s afraid to take the chance, but right now you have nothing to loose! Try it! Try your happiness! Never give up on what you want! It doesn’t seem like you! You have always been a decided woman! Fight! I’ll help you, if you want!’

‘But... what can I do? Tell me?’

‘Talk to him! Tell him the truth! Go to Lisbon!’

‘You’re crazy! Completely crazy! I don’t know you anymore, sis! What has Africa been doing to you?’

‘Africa taught me to fight for what I want and never give up in the first battle!’

As much as Isabel tried to convince her sister that her happiness could be three or four hours from her, Maria Helena was not convinced, to her, things remained the same.

Isabel didn’t give up, because as time went by, her sister was sadder everyday.

She wondered if she would ever see her sister’s face, full of happiness again. Just like the day when Maria Helena had told her that she and her virtual friend had made love.

One day, and without telling anybody, Isabel got up early in the morning. She went to her sister’s bag, took her mobile phone out, saw a number and wrote it on her own mobile phone.

She went to her wardrobe’s drawer, took a photograph from Pedrinho, left a note to her mother saying she had gone to take care of some urgent business and that she would be back at the end of the day. She took her things and left in her car. She had finally managed to get her driving’s license in Mozambique and had bought a car which stayed at her parents’ house in Portugal.

In the middle of the trip, she dialed the number she had copied from her sister's mobile phone.

On the other side of the mobile phone, there was a voice:

'Hello?'

'Ricardo?'

'Yes.'

'This is Isabel, Maria Helena's sister.'

'... Yes, Isabel...What happened?'

'Nothing happened... I just need to talk to you.'

'All right, what is it?'

'Not by phone. Personally.'

'But...' , Ricardo couldn't understand.

'I'm arriving at Lisbon. Where can we meet each other?'

'You're arriving at Lisbon?!', he was surprised, curious and at the same time worried. What did Maria Helena's sister want with him? Maybe something serious had happened to Maria Helena and she didn't want to tell him on the mobile phone.

'Yes, I am. Where can we meet each other and, at what time?'

They set up a place and some time later, they were both at an esplanade in a coffee shop. They said hello and Ricardo looked at Isabel, curious.

'What's the matter, Isabel?'

'Calm down. Don't you know a quieter place where we can be more comfortable to talk?'

Ricardo was thoughtful and then said:

'If you don't mind coming with me to a flat I've got.'

'No, of course not!'

They only took a few minutes to get to Ricardo's flat. They went up in the lift together in silence, and some seconds later they were inside the house.

'Never mind the mess. It's been a long time since I came here.'

'Don't worry about that.'

'Sit down.'

She sat down in one of the couches and he sat down on another one. She could notice he was nervous.

'Ricardo... I know that you're getting married soon.'

'Yes, this Saturday.'

'I'm sorry to come like this and almost force you to talk to me, but nobody knows that I'm here.'

‘ But... is it something wrong with Maria Helena?’

‘Yes.’

‘Yes?’ But... what is it? Did something happen to her? Please, say something!?’

‘Yes, it did, Ricardo. She met you a couple of years ago and since then, she had never been the same.’

He didn’t understand what she was trying to say.

‘I’m sorry... can you be more specific?’

‘I believe that you can imagine that I know everything that had happened between you two...’

‘Well... I don’t know...’

‘I do... I know everything from the beginning. I don’t know what you did to her on the first time you chatted in the Internet, but she got fascinated by you.’

He was in silence. Isabel said:

‘I could never imagine that things would come to this. She fell in love with a guy she had met in the Internet!’

He couldn’t believe what he had just heard.

‘She tried to do a lot of things in her life, but you were always there. You have always occupied that special place in her heart. When she talked about you, her eyes shone. Even though she had never hoped that something else could have happened between you two, as you live far away from each other and your lives are completely different.

But one day, you met each other casually, in one of those meetings that happen only in films. And after that, everything changed.’

She went to her bag and took Pedrinho’s photo, she gave it to him and asked:

‘Do you know who he is?’

He took the photo, watched carefully. That photo looked familiar to him, he even felt a shiver, he felt something strange seeing that photo.

‘Is he... Maria Helena’s son?’ , he answered hesitating.

‘ No... he’s not only Maria Helena’s son...’

‘ No?’

‘No... it’s YOUR son, too!’

‘Excuse-me?! , he got up suddenly, laughing nervously. ’Isabel, is this some kind of a joke?’

She also got up and said:

‘It’s no joke! That is yours and Maria Helena’s son! The result of that afternoon of love you two had.’

‘But, it’s not possible! We... we wore condoms!’

‘Yes, you did, but as you must know, nothing is a 100% guaranteed and you two made love on the beach, maybe the sand ruined it or maybe it was already ruined. Listen! Ricardo! My sister was a virgin!’

‘I know that! I knew that, back then! But it’s not possible! What do you want with this joke?! And a very bad one, I must say!’

‘It’s no joke! Do you think I would go through all this trouble, coming here to Lisbon, talking to you all by myself, without letting anybody know, if this were a joke??!! My sister had never had anything intimate with anybody else. Not even with Pedro! Besides, on the day he discovered my sister was pregnant, he assumed the baby’s paternity and they got married in a few weeks. He assumed a child that was yours! But, unfortunately on their wedding day, a lunatic ended it all and killed him! A bullet that was for my sister!! Just count the time. See the day when you two made love, the day you donated blood to the baby. You two have the same blood type! What more evidence do you need? DNA²⁵ tests? Ok... I’m willing to it! I’m willing to everything, just to let you know, that I’m not lying! Have you seen his face? He’s just like you! Your eyes! The worst blind is the one who doesn’t want to see!’²⁶

Ricardo didn’t want to believe all those revelations.

‘Isabel! What do you want with all of this?’

²⁵ Optou-se por substituir a palavra ADN em português por DNA - O ácido desoxirribonucleico (ADN, em português: *ácido desoxirribonucleico*; ou DNA, em inglês: *deoxyribonucleic acid*), é um composto orgânico cujas moléculas contêm as instruções genéticas que coordenam o desenvolvimento e funcionamento de todos os seres vivos e alguns vírus. O seu principal papel é armazenar as informações necessárias para a construção das proteínas e ARNs (ácido ribonucleico, sigla em português: ARN e em inglês, *RNA, ribonucleic acid* é o responsável pela síntese de proteínas da célula. O RNA é um polímero de nucleótidos, geralmente em cadeia simples, que pode, por vezes, ser dobrado. Formado por moléculas de dimensões muito inferiores às do DNA). Os segmentos de ADN que são responsáveis por carregar a informação genética são denominados genes. (In: http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%81cido_desoxirribonucleico. Consulta:12-10-2009).

“Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is a nucleic acid that contains the genetic instructions used in the development and functioning of all known living organisms and some viruses. The main role of DNA molecules is the long-term storage of information. DNA is often compared to a set of blueprints or a recipe, or a code, since it contains the instructions needed to construct other components of cells, such as proteins and RNA (a biologically important type of molecule that consists of a long chain of nucleotide units. Each nucleotide consists of a nitrogenous base, a ribose sugar, and a phosphate. RNA is very similar to DNA molecules). The DNA segments that carry this genetic information are called genes, but other DNA sequences have structural purposes, or are involved in regulating the use of this genetic information.” (In: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DNA>, Consulta:12-10-2009).

Os acrónimos são frequentemente criados dentro de tópicos especiais e produtos designados, aparelhos e processos, dependendo do seu grau de importância; na tradução, ou existe um termo padrão ou se não ainda não existir, um termo descritivo. « acronyms are frequently created within special topics and designate products, appliances and processes, depending on their degree of importance; in translation, there is either a standard equivalent term or, if it does not yet exist, a descriptive term (...) » » Vid. Peter Newmark, *A textbook of Translation*, p. 148.

²⁶ A expressão em inglês equivalente encontrada para o provérbio em português: “O pior cego é aquele que não quer ver.” foi: “The worst blind is the one who doesn’t want to see”. (In: *A Dictionary of English and Portuguese Equivalent Proverbs (Portuguese Edition)*, Teodor Flonta, February 2001)

‘Me?, she laughed cynically.’ I just want you to be happy! Both of you! If you’re getting married, think about it! Make an introspection and see what your heart really wants. Don’t do things just like that!’ , she went into the door’s direction. ‘Well... I’m leaving. I have already done my duty. I could die now, that I would be relieved. I feel empty!’

‘Isabel... I don’t know what to say... I don’t have words...’

‘Don’t say anything... think about your life. I’m leaving... I wish you all the best! Oh! Don’t think this is some kind of a fraud... Maria Helena must be one of the richest people in this country... her son already has a father, even though he’s dead. I’ll see you one of these days.’

Isabel opened the door, leaving Ricardo with Pedrinho’s photo in his hands, he ran after her to the lift.

‘Isabel! Wait!’

But it was too late. She had already gone. He laid down on the sofa thinking about everything he had heard. He stared at his son’s photo and said:

‘Are you my son? Are you? Isabel! You didn’t have the right to leave me like this... What will I do with my life? But, now looking better at the photo... he really looks like me when I was his age... what the hell!!!’, he threw the photo away and it fell on the floor.

On Ricardo’s wedding day, in the morning, Maria Helena woke up Isabel.

‘Isabel? Isabel?’

‘Yes... what it is, sis? What do you want at this time?’

‘It’s today...’

‘What is today?’ , said Isabel, sleepy.

‘His wedding!’

‘Yeah?’

‘Come with me!’

‘Where to?’

‘To his wedding’

‘What?! Are you crazy?’

‘Yes, I am. I want to see him getting married.’

‘But... are you a masochist?! No, I’m not going with you! You don’t even know which is the church he’s getting married at!’

‘Yes, I do! I called every church in Lisbon and I found out.’

‘But... you are completely crazy! What do you want to do over there?’

‘I want to see him... for the last time...’

‘Oh! My God...

‘Come on... Pedrinho is ready.’

‘Are we going to take Pedrinho with us?’

‘Yeah, we’re going with my driver. Come on! Hurry up! The wedding is at noon, we’ve got five hours! Come on! - Isabel sat down on the bed saying:

‘That’s all I needed... Oh! God...’

Some hours later, they were getting at Lisbon and with the help of the GPS²⁷ of the car they arrived at the church quickly.

Ricardo was at home, looking at the mirror. He was dressed with a dark suit and tie. He was very nervous and confused. His hands were shaking and all sweaty. He was thinking about everything that Isabel had told him that week. His brother got in the bedroom in that moment, and asked him:

‘Ricardo! What’s that look in your face? It looks like you’re going to be hanged!’

‘Luis Carlos! You’re not helping! I’m nervous like hell!’

‘Ok, I’m sorry! But what’s that face? Weren’t you supposed to be happy? After all, you’re getting married to a gorgeous woman! A little snob, but... nobody’s perfect!’

‘Luis Carlos, if you don’t shut up, I swear I’ll whack you!’

‘Uou! I’m gone! But don’t be too long... gloomy... you’re getting late!’

Ricardo took a pack of cigarettes and threw them away into his brother’s direction.

‘Watch it bro! Since when have you been smoking?’ ,the brother yelled, running away and laughing.

‘Dumb!’, Ricardo said smiling.

His father got in his bedroom and asked:

‘Ricardo? Is everything ok?’

²⁷ GPS ou Sistema de Posicionamento Global (do acrónimo do inglês *Global Positioning System*), conforme o nome diz, inclui um conjunto de satélites, é um sistema de informação eletrónico que fornece via rádio a um aparelho receptor móvel a posição do mesmo com referencia as coordenadas terrestres, esse sistema que por vezes é desapropriadamente designado de sistema de navegação não substitui integralmente ao sistema de navegação astronómica, mas apenas informa as coordenadas do receptor e não o rumo indispensável à navegação estimada faltando solicitar o recurso de um simulador integrado ao receptor.

(In: http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistema_de_Posicionamento_Global, Consulta: 12-10-2009)

“The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a U.S. space-based global navigation satellite system. It provides reliable positioning, navigation, and timing services to worldwide users on a continuous basis in all weather, day and night, anywhere on or near the Earth.”

(In: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Positioning_System, Consulta: 12-10-2009)

Vid. Nota anterior

Ricardo and his father were best friends. Mr. Mendes knew his son very well and noticed he was nervous and a little strange.

‘I don’t know, dad²⁸... I don’t know if I’m going to do the right thing.’

‘What are those doubts, now? You have been living together for a while, isn’t this what you do want, my son?’

‘Do you want the truth? No!... I didn’t want to get married... I let myself be dragged by Margarida, by my friends, I don’t know...’

His father looked him in the eyes and said:

‘Son... you should be the one to know what to do with your life. You can’t let yourself be dragged by anybody, just because that’s what your girlfriend wants or your friends, or what the society tells you that is standard.’

‘Yeah... but that’s a little late to think about it, don’t you think?’

‘It’s never late, Ricardo! But... do you love Margarida or are you confused?’

Ricardo sat down on his bed, put his hands on his head and answered:

‘Yes, I’m confused, very confused. Dad... I need to tell you something.’

‘Tell me what?’

‘I have a son!’

‘What?’

‘Yeah... I have got a son.’, he got up, opened a drawer, took a photo out and gave it to his father.

‘This is your grandson!’

Mr. Mendes observed the photo and exclaimed:

‘He’s just like you... but... why didn’t you say something? I don’t understand.’

‘I only discovered it this week.’

‘But... who’s the mother?’

Ricardo sat down, again.

‘A girl I met in the Internet a few years ago. We were together once and even though we wore condoms she got pregnant...’

‘But... are you sure he’s your son?’

‘Dad, please! Look at his face... what if I tell you that his mother has got black hair and green eyes, will you believe it?’

²⁸ Optou-se por traduzir a palavra “pai” por “dad” em vez da forma mais formal “father” visto a personagem ter uma relação muito próxima com o pai. «dad - noun Informal: father». (In: <http://www.yourdictionary.com/dad#>, Consulta:06-10-09).

Vid. Nota anterior

‘Yes... nobody can deny it... he’s just like you. He’s your face when you were his age.’

‘When he was born, he needed a blood transfusion and his mother asked me for help. I went to the north and donated him my blood... without knowing, I donated blood to my son...’

‘Does she live in the north?’

‘Yeah.’

‘Ricardo, my son... what a mess...’

‘Tell me about it... and now? What will I do?’

‘What do you feel for the mother of this child?’

Ricardo got upset with that question, he got up and said:

‘She’s very special... she’s lovely... pretty...’

‘Do you love her?’

‘I don’t know, dad... I don’t know... I’m very confused... she lives in the north... what future could we have?’

‘Ricardo, please... that doesn’t seem like you. We’re in the twenty first century, boy! Look... I’m going to church. Think about what you’re going to do. Whatever your decision is, I’ll be here to support you... but I only ask you something... listen to your heart, it commands life! Don’t do it like me... I betrayed your mother and I lost her forever... think about it!

Ricardo’s father left and he was thoughtful once again. Margarida had already arrived to church, but somebody told her that Ricardo hadn’t arrived yet, so she decided to stay in the car. She asked her father to call Ricardo, but he didn’t answer it. Margarida got nervous and her mother calmed her down, saying that probably the mobile phone was in the silence mode. It was almost one o’clock in the afternoon when Ricardo arrived, Margarida calmed herself down and soon they all got in the church.

Margarida looked lovely in a white dress with a long veil. Ricardo looked at her with emotion.

The ceremony was going normally when Maria Helena, Isabel and Pedrinho got in the church. When Maria Helena saw Ricardo, the man she loved and the father of her son getting married to another woman, she got breathless.

When the bride and groom were making their vows, Pedrinho started crying and everybody looked back.

Maria Helena took him on her arms saying:

‘Shhh... be quiet, honey...’

Ricardo recognized them and exclaimed, smiling:

‘Maria Helena!’

Everybody was looking at those three, and at Ricardo who wasn't hearing what the priest was repeating to him. Margarida was getting nervous and said in a low voice:

'Ricardo? Ricardo? Look at the priest...'

But he looked like as if he was in another planet. He was gazing at Maria Helena and at the child. His eyes got filled of tears and he looked at his father and remembered what he had told him '...listen to your heart, it commands life...'

'Ricardo?'. The priest called him, Margarida called him.

Suddenly he looked at the priest and at Margarida and exclaimed:

'I'm sorry! I can't do this... I can't! I'm sorry, Margarida! I'm sorry!'

He ran away, down the church's corridor, leaving everybody with their mouths open.

Margarida fainted and Ricardo's brother took her on his arms saying:

'My bro has freaked out!²⁹

When Maria Helena saw Ricardo running towards her, her face got illuminated, he stopped in front of her, saying:

'I can't do this, I can't! I'm so glad that you came! I love you, Maria Helena! I love you! Let's stay together! To hell with all!³⁰ Let's be a family, the tree of us! I'm going with you to Oporto, Braga, to Cochín in China! I just can't be away from you anymore! Let's be bro and sis, forever!'

They hugged and kissed, Isabel and his father smiled.

THE END

²⁹ Optou-se por traduzir a palavra "passou-se" que é calão usado na língua portuguesa pela palavra mais adequada equivalente na língua inglesa: "freak out", que significa uma pessoa que está a entrar ou a causar um período irracional do comportamento ou de instabilidade emocional e também uma pessoa que perde o controlo emocional de uma excitação extrema como: choque, medo, alegria, desespero. «freak out, Slang: To enter into or cause a period of irrational behaviour or emotional instability, as under the influence of a drug. To lose or cause emotional control from extreme excitement, shock, fear, joy, despair, etc.» (In: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/freak+out>, Consulta: 06-10-09)

Optou-se aqui por uma tradução mais literal para se aproximar o mais possível da palavra do texto de partida.

« In doubt, the translator must play for safety by preferring the more literal version. In fact, in as far as he practises a science that reflects extralinguistic reality he never ceases to play for safety. » Vid. Peter Newmark, *Approaches to Translation* p. 131.

³⁰ "Que se lixe!" É uma expressão em calão que na tradução para inglês figura como "To hell with all!"
Vid. *Nota anterior*

CONCLUSÃO

Este trabalho de projeto reproduz a tradução de uma obra literária em língua portuguesa para a língua inglesa.

No decurso deste trabalho surgiu a dúvida de o chamar de ‘retroversão’ ou de ‘tradução’. Após várias pesquisas, e de acordo com várias versões contraditórias, pude verificar que segundo um fórum na Internet, ‘retroversão’:

“É ‘traduzir a tradução’ de volta para o idioma de origem, para verificar o que se entende dessa tradução (...).”

“Retroversão é traduzir do português para outra língua (...).”

(In: http://www.proz.com/forum/portuguese/143666-a_retrovers%C3%A3o.html, data da consulta: 17-11-2009).

Segundo o dicionário da Priberam a definição para retroversão é:

“s. f.1. Med. Descaimento para trás.

2. Gram. Exercício escolar que consiste em verter para a língua original um trecho dela traduzido.

3. Tradução de um trecho qualquer da língua nacional para uma língua estrangeira.”

(<http://priberam.pt/dlpo/default.aspx?pal=retroversuio>, data da consulta 17-11-2009).

Pude concluir que não encontrei uma resposta concreta e objetiva que esclarecesse a minha dúvida.

Assim sendo, optei por chamar ao meu trabalho, uma ‘tradução’ de parte da minha obra: “Nunca te vi, mas posso sentir-te...”.

Um dos aspetos menos positivos da tradução de literatura estrangeira, neste caso em língua portuguesa, para a língua inglesa é que atrai relativamente menor investimento e não é evidenciada. É mal paga, não é reconhecida, é invisível para os leitores que lêem em língua inglesa. Conforme nos diz *Lawrence Venuti* em *The Scandals of Translation* (pp. 88).

Contudo, o aspeto positivo é que pretendo que este trabalho e outros que possa vir a realizar no futuro, abram a porta a um novo *target* de leitores, constituídos essencialmente por cidadãos de língua não portuguesa, permitindo que toda a obra seja apreciada e explorada quer em Portugal pelos cidadãos estrangeiros residentes, quer em qualquer país do mundo dada a universalidade da língua inglesa.

Com a elaboração deste trabalho de projeto pude adquirir um conhecimento mais aprofundado de Literatura. A palavra Literatura vem do latim *litterae* que significa *letras*, e possivelmente uma tradução do grego *grammatikee*. Em latim, literatura significa uma instrução ou um conjunto de saberes ou habilidades de escrever e ler bem, e relaciona-se com as artes da gramática, da retórica e da poética. (In: <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literatura>.Consulta: 18-02-2010).

Na língua portuguesa é grande a nossa história em redor da Literatura, donos de uma literatura rica e sem par, os escritores portugueses fizeram-se, entre os falantes de línguas latinas, um marco único e singular.

A Literatura Portuguesa iniciou no momento em que surgiu o idioma português, com a poesia galaico-portuguesa medieval, desenvolvida na Galiza e a norte de Portugal. A Idade de ouro situou-se no Renascimento, momento em que apareceram escritores como Gil Vicente, Bernardim Ribeiro, Sá de Miranda e sobretudo o grande poeta épico Luís de Camões, autor de “Os Lusíadas”.

O Barroco surgiu no século XVII e ficou conhecido como o século da decadência literária, contudo, não podemos esquecer escritores como o Padre António Vieira, o Padre Manuel Bernardes e Francisco Rodrigues Lobo.

Os escritores do século XVIII para contrariar uma certa decadência da fase barroca, fizeram um esforço no sentido de recuperar o nível da idade dourada – o neoclassicismo, através da criação de Academias e Arcádias literárias.

No século XIX, foram abandonados os ideais neoclássicos, Almeida Garrett introduziu o romantismo, seguido por Alexandre Herculano e Rebelo da Silva. No campo da novela, na segunda metade do século XIX, desenvolveu-se o movimento realista, de feição naturalista, cujos máximos representantes foram Eça de Queirós, Ramalho Ortigão e Camilo Castelo Branco. As tendências literárias do século XX estão representadas, principalmente, por Fernando Pessoa, considerado como o grande poeta nacional a par de Camões.

Nos últimos anos do século XX, e começos do XXI, a literatura portuguesa em prosa tem demonstrado uma grande vitalidade, graças a escritores como António Lobo Antunes e José Saramago, Prémio Nobel da Literatura.

(In: http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literatura_de_Portugal.Consulta: 18-02-2010).

Este trabalho foi escrito respeitando já as regras do novo acordo ortográfico e foquei com especial atenção o tipo de Literatura com o qual a minha obra se identifica, uma obra inserida na Literatura Contemporânea do séc, XXI. Uma literatura de fácil leitura, com pouca dificuldade na

linguagem, mas com muito discurso direto para que o leitor viva com mais intensidade os sentimentos das personagens, tornando-as vivas, como se estivessem a ver uma peça teatral. Esta será sem dúvida, umas das características das obras que ainda penso vir a escrever.

Na elaboração deste trabalho encontrei dificuldades em traduzir algo que tinha sido escrito por mim pois não é fácil ser-se a autora e a tradutora ao mesmo tempo. Ao parecer algo com certa facilidade de traduzir devido à linguagem simples usada, a tradução corre o risco de não ter a qualidade que deveria ter. Mas ao mesmo tempo sendo a autora e a tradutora pude ter conhecimento da cultura do país de origem da obra e sendo a mesma pessoa, as referências intelectuais e culturais são conhecidas, o contexto sócio cultural é bem conhecido tornando-se, como seria de esperar, numa tarefa mais facilitada.

Com a elaboração deste trabalho adquiri mais experiência tanto a nível das ferramentas de tradução, como a nível pessoal, o melhoramento de obras futuras quer a nível de vocabulário, de linguagem e descrição de ações, emoções e espaços. Experimentarei também fazer traduções de trabalhos que não sejam meus para que a tradução me ofereça um maior desafio.

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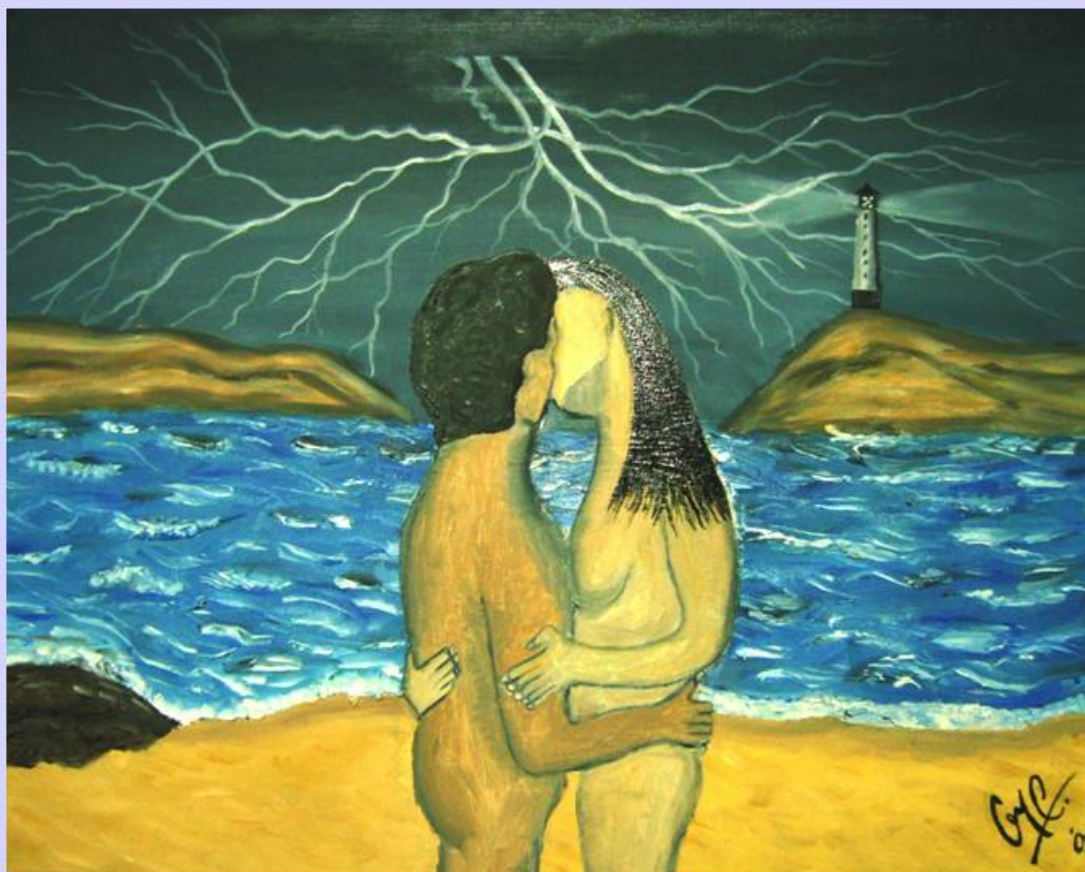
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ANEXO

Livro com a história completa no original

**Nunca te vi,
mas posso sentir-te ...**



Mónica Pinto da Silva