



O PÁSSARO DO SILÊNCIO (2021)

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Through a tender and delicate language, simple and accessible to younger readers, the author constructs a narrative that speaks to the beauty of things, friendship, and a world where everything is connected, a world without borders for those sensitive enough to perceive it: “everything now had a different brightness. [...] without differences or borders.” (p. 15). This is how Bernardette Capelo’s work, *O Pássaro do Silêncio* (The Bird of Silence), unfolds before the reader. Beyond her fictional work, Capelo has also dedicated herself to producing texts on creative writing. In 2017, she published *Escrito a Roxo/Ecrit en Violet*, where she explores the adventure of discovering writing and the magical universe of reading. The book *Perspectivas sobre literatura para crianças e jovens e a leitura* is currently in press. Capelo thus engages in a simultaneous process of creative writing and reflection on the processes of literary creation and reading, demonstrating an extraordinarily sensitive writing style. While her fictional texts are primarily aimed at the youngest readers, they have the potential to captivate readers of all ages.

The Bird of Silence comes from afar, from above, from the night, approaching with the first lights of the day. In its gaze, it carries the grace of contemplation, observing from a distance mountains, rivers, lakes... However, as it approaches and reaches a city, the bird that once flew in harmony feels the discomfort of urban hustle and bustle: “the Bird of Silence became dizzy, trembling, and frightened” (p. 8). It is from this contrast that author Bernardette Capelo will immerse us in a delicate plot, richly illustrated by Evelina Oliveira, where the bird and a boy discover an affinity.

Thus, the Bird of Silence finds refuge in a park, where it notices a boy. Like the bird, the boy knows how to listen to “invisible voices” (p. 25). The seemingly isolated boy, with his sensitive gaze, perceives a lack of boundaries between things and beings that inhabit the world. He hears the bird’s song, feels its breath. The bird approaches the boy, and a friendly dialogue ensues. The boy has questions, and despite being an attentive and sensitive observer, he doesn’t understand some issues. Issues that the Bird of Silence gradually comments on. Helping the boy understand the subtle way the universe speaks in various forms: the stars with their brightness, the waters with their almost inaudible murmuring... Revealing the importance of a state of contemplation where silence teaches appreciation, understanding, and is also a necessary requirement for change: “But how can what is unheard or unseen change what we see and hear?” (p. 21). In addition to providing space for creation: “Silence is like a kind of blank canvas, and on it can be born all the free forms of your dreams” (p. 25). In this territory, in this conversation between two unique characters, Capelo calls the reader to this state of contemplation, inviting them to look and apprehend space from broader perspectives.

In this way, the “song” of silence ruffles its feathers and reveals to the boy the beauty of its surrounding plumage. Bird and boy identify themselves in the art of contemplating the world, of listening to sounds that can only be perceived in silence, sounds full of enchantment and mysteries. They discover themselves as friends because both know how to listen.

In a society increasingly inclined toward interactions through virtual platforms, electronic interactivity, and a lack of time for conscious rest and lucid experience of the surrounding environment, Capelo’s text is an intoxicating “song” that calls upon this “bird of silence”—which is also a bird of happiness and a bird of beauty—to evoke in us the need



and happiness of paying attention to what surrounds us even at different distances. Reminding us of the beauty of a starry sky, which has been the subject of so much poetic construction, as well as the lightness of a leaf that detaches with the wind and gently adorns and nourishes the soil. We need this bird, this whispering silence in the movement of life, in the movement of our existence. We need it as a space to feel, to change, to create. That's what the author says. Something so delicate and fragile, this silence seems to dissipate with the daily hustle and bustle of human life. But what the writer tells us is that this important silence, which reveals the greatness of things, is always present, never dissipating. It only takes a moment of our attention, and we will be in the presence of its beautiful song. "Silence is a prelude to revelation" (Chevalier and Gheerbrant, p. 608), as Capelo so well demonstrated in her captivating text.

REFERENCES

Capelo, B. (2021). *O Pássaro do Silêncio*. Letras & Coisas.

DECLARAÇÃO ÉTICA

CONFLITO DE INTERESSE: Nada a declarar. **FINANCIAMENTO:** Nada a declarar.



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