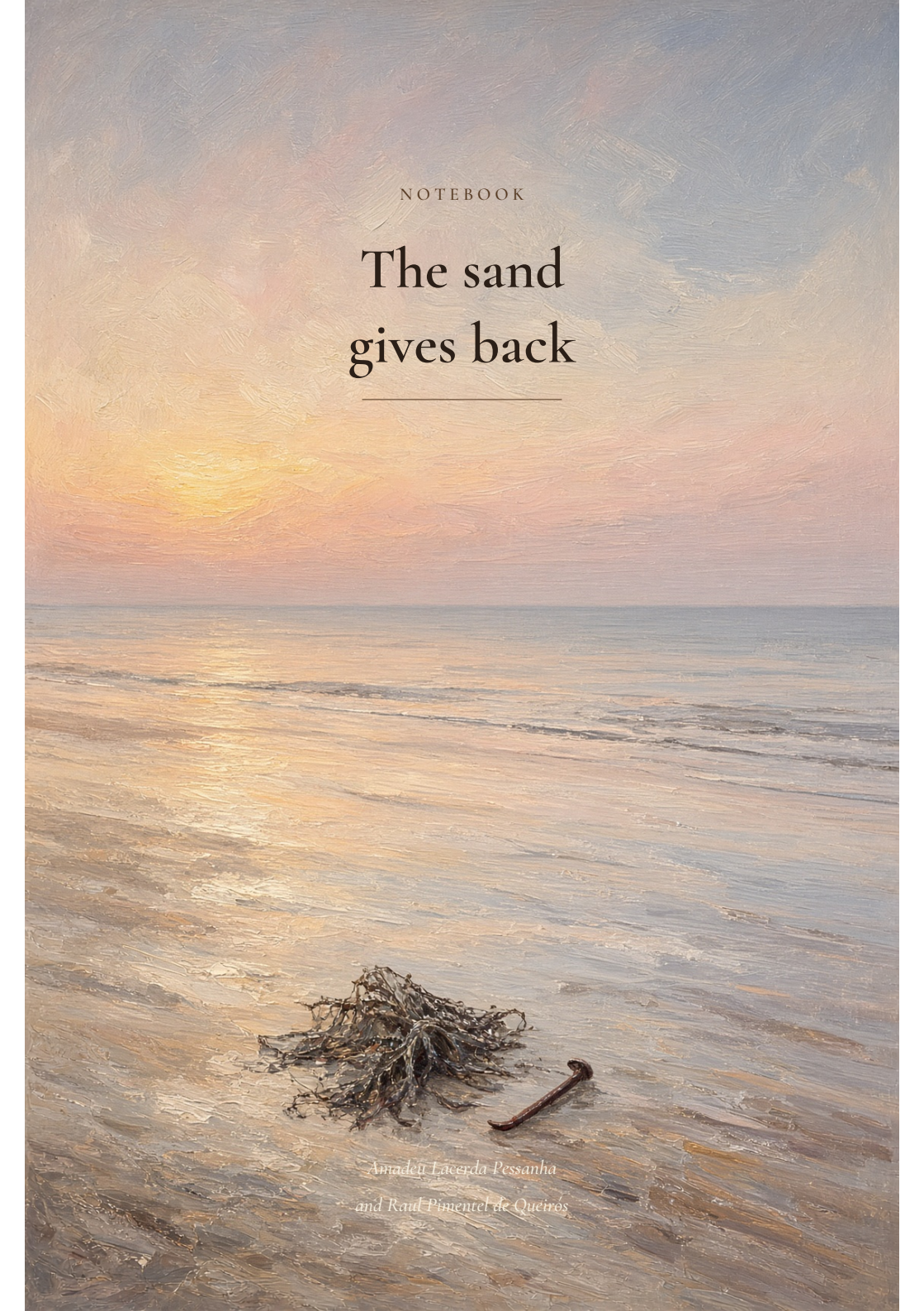
NOTEBOOK

The sand gives back



Amadeu Lacerda Pessanha

and Raul Pimentel de Queirós

The Sand Gives Back

notes by Amadeu Lacerda Pessanha
continued by Raul Pimentel de Queirós

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Santos
2026

Preface

Raul Pimentel de Queirós

I read The Line of the Horizon, The Moral Atlantic, The Ear of the Tides, and Maritime Consciousnesses because one cited another, and the citation would not leave me on the page where I was. The man had died in Paraty, on 4 August 2016. I did not know him. I went to the family. Not to inherit a name. To know whether there was paper beyond the four books.

There was. A notebook, with no closing date, which he called The Sand Gives Back. The family did not ask me to be the author. They gave me the pages and asked that, where the handwriting was still his, I not correct it. I accepted. This volume begins in those notes. At the point where the sentence does not end, mine continues. I will not imitate the hand that was missing.

There is no print run. The book comes out now, in October 2026, from a table in Santos, with the window open. It is not the continuation of Is Anyone on the Other Side. Whoever wants that September's debate should go to the other volume. Here the subject is what the sand gives back, and what I have no right to give back in his place.

From the notebook

Amadeu Lacerda Pessanha

I

What the morning finds

I write in Paraty, years after the book I closed in a rented house by the quay. The house is not a shrine and I will not describe it so as to seem authorized by the view. The view, in the morning, is the sand. I have already written, in another volume, that I grew up watching women go early to see what the night had done to the beach: the canoe, the net, the boy who insisted on sleeping in the bow. The sentence turned out better than the inspection. I come back because the sentence bothers me. An inspection does not remember in order to move anyone. It remembers in order to decide the day. At this age I no longer decide anyone's canoe. I decide whether the page is lying.

This morning there was no overturned canoe and no boy. There was a piece of net, still with the knot, and a bent nail, and the mark of a drag that the next water will erase. None of this asks for a chapter. The chapter is my vice. I have four of them, published, and each stopped where I wanted it to stop. This notebook does not know how to stop, and the ignorance is not a virtue. It is the state of someone who has not yet seen the end of the sentence. If I call that openness, I am already ornamenting the lack.

I will not repeat the line of the horizon, nor the hold, nor the lighthouse. Whoever wants those subjects should go to the books. Here what remains, when the water goes down, is not a line and is not a light. It is weight. What weighs stays a while. What does not weigh goes back with the foam. The distinction is physical, and I complicate it if I say the sea chooses. The sea does not choose. The sand holds what the last pull did not take. To hold is not to give back. To give back is our verb, and I put that verb in the title before I distrusted it. The distrust arrived. The title stayed. Staying, in this case, is the method.

The bent nail is not a parable of work. It is a nail. The net is not the craft of those who stayed, a theme I have already spent. It is a wet knot, with a smell, which someone will pick up or will not. I did not pick it up. I looked and I wrote. Looking and writing is my shift, and the shift has the excuse of age: the legs argue with the descent to the sand, and the argument is a datum. I will not make a tired hero of the datum. A tired hero is the hill with fatigue. I went down far enough to see the knot. I did not go down far enough to say I know the morning of those who live by it.

There is a temptation to name what has no name. A single sandal, farther on, almost served me. A sandal asks for a child, and a child asks for a loss, and a loss asks for the reader. I refused the sandal. It may have come from a swim. It may have come from yesterday. It may not fit anyone I ought to invent. To invent the person in order to give the object a destiny is the romance this notebook is not. An object without a destiny bothers the page. I leave the bother. If I resolve it, I will have written in order to be at ease, and ease is not what the sand does in the morning.

I stayed until the shadow grew a hand's breadth. Nothing happened that deserves a narrative. A man passed, looked at the net, did not take it. A dog did what dogs do at the edge and did not consult the horizon. I noted both so as not to note only what suits me. The man and the dog are not symbols of what stays and what passes. They are the morning's traffic. If the notebook cannot hold the traffic, it becomes a prayer. I do not want a prayer. I want the dirty list, with the knot and with what did not serve the knot.

The climb returned me to the sentence, which is the place where I falsify most easily. On the sand the nail was bent and mute. At the table it already wanted to be the nail of a paragraph about use that ends. I wrote the wish down, and I did not write the paragraph. This is the control I ask of a late notebook: to register the temptation and not promote it. To promote is to publish the hill with the excuse that I confessed it. Confession, when it comes quickly, is also the hill. The sand, down there, confessed nothing.

There was the noise of a motor, far off, and I almost wrote that the ear was taking up the post the eye was leaving, a sentence that was already mine in 1974 and again in 1998. I do not repeat it. Repeated here, it would make this notebook a summary of the others, and a summary is what one offers to someone who will not read. I want them to read those, if they are going to read any. This one has only the morning. The motor belonged to a boat I could not see. I will not say which side it came from. I will not say it was working. To say it was working, without seeing, is a romance of the ear. The ear errs, I have already written that, and it errs with the wind. I note the sound and leave the boat without an owner.

When I climbed, the net was still there. The nail too, I suppose. I did not go back to check. The wish to check was the wish to close the inventory, like someone counting the till. My father counted. I, if I go down again only to know whether the nail is still there, turn the remainder into stock. Stock asks for someone responsible. I am not responsible for the beach. I am responsible for not writing that I am. The difference is small and it is all the ethic this notebook can bear without swelling.

In the afternoon, from the window, the beach was already another. I did not go down to update the list. Updating would have been honest and would also have been a profession I do not have. The man who inspects in the morning comes back because the canoe is his. My canoe is the sentence, and the sentence, if I visit it too much, grows glossy. I leave the morning where I wrote it. If the net was taken while I ate lunch, the notebook does not lie: the reader lies who demands that the inventory last longer than the tide. It lasts the time of the ink. The ink is not the beach. This distinction tires me, it is so obvious, and I write it because I have already violated it in books that preferred the ink.

The violation, here, would be to tell that the net came back the next day as a sign. There is no next day in this notebook. There is this morning. The next day is a temptation of serial fiction. Serial fiction sits badly with a bent nail. The nail has no episode. It has a shape. The shape I saw. The rest I did not see, and the I did not see stays without a heroic complement. Without the complement, the page looks poor. Poor again. I have already distrusted that appearance. I distrust

it again, and even so I do not add a fish, a name, a voice. The missing voice is not a mystery. It is people who did not speak to me, because I did not ask, because asking would have been using their morning as material. The material is enough as it stands.

As it stands, I repeat, because the repetition holds me. Once I would have written that the beach is an archive. It is not. An archive keeps on purpose. The beach keeps by weight, for a few hours, and forgets without a method. My craft is the opposite: I keep on purpose and I call the purpose attention. Attention does not make the sand an archive. It makes this notebook an archive of my attention, which is poorer and truer. Poor for the third time this morning. I ought to cross the word out. I do not. I leave the three poverties visible, so that none of them becomes the style of a simple man. I am not simple. I am a man who went down, saw two objects, and needed several pages in order not to lie about the two.

If tomorrow the leg does not want the descent, the notebook does not gain from that a chapter on the end of descents. The end of descents will be a fact of the body, if it is one. It will not be an image. I have already had too many images for a life of teaching. The class ended or it did not end. I do not write the period. I write the morning on which I still went down. Whoever reads only this sheet and thinks he knows the whole old age will have done with me what I refused to do with the sandal: invent the person in order to give the object a destiny. The object, here, is myself, if I am not careful. I am careful. I do not destine myself. I describe the knot.

II
The verb I chose

To give back supposes that something was ours and returns. The sand does not sign that supposition. What appears at low tide may never have belonged to the one who is looking now. It may have come from another point of the coast, from a boat I do not know, from an hour when I was asleep. To call this a giv-

ing back is comfort. The comfort says: the sea keeps and restores. I already distrusted comfort in the book of the Atlantic, when the view washed the quay. Here the washing is literal. The water rises, the water falls, and what stays is not a moral restitution. It is a remainder. A remainder does not console. That is why the title lies a little, and the small lie, declared, is better than an honest title I do not yet deserve.

To deserve, too, is an heir's word. I am not inheriting the beach. I am on it, late, with a notebook I have not closed. If this text ends without a close, let no one praise the incompleteness. Incompleteness is not a style. It is the point at which the hand stopped. I may stop from tiredness, from doubt, or because the next sentence would be pretty. The three causes cannot be told apart on the paper. I tell them apart here, while I am still writing, so that the blank will not promote itself to a wise silence. I have already said, apropos of lights, that not every silence is a code. A notebook open in the middle of a sentence may be only a man who went to lunch. Or who did not come back to the table. I do not know, at the moment I write, which of the two I will be tomorrow.

My mother used to say the open. I have already used the word and I will not charge it again. My father counted hooks. That, too, is already in another book. The unnamed keeper kept his period. I do not bring him to this beach in order to give the net authority. Borrowed authority is the hill. What I have, this morning, fits on one line of inventory: net, nail, wet sand, the shadow still short. The inventory does not vibrate. I vibrate if I stretch the shadow until it means mine. The shadow means that the sun changed place. That is enough, and the enough seems poor to me, and the poverty seems, for an instant, a virtue. I distrust the instant. A virtue that arrives quickly is a protected sentence.

Someone, years from now, may read this notebook and want to finish the sentence I leave by half. I am not writing for that person. I am writing so as not to lie about the remainder. If the person exists, let him not imitate my hand. The imitation would be a false giving back: the sand giving not the nail, but a similar nail, straighter, more useful to the chapter. I prefer the bent one. The bent one does not serve to hang a moral on. It serves to remember that the use ended and the object stayed. Staying is not a message. It is the stubbornness of

matter, for a few hours, until the water or people take it again.

Taking it again is the second time, and I have not yet seen it today. The tide that brought is not the tide that will take. Between the two there is this notebook, which steps into the interval and wants to be the interval. It is not. The interval belongs to the water. I am the man who went down, looked, and is already thinking of the climb. The climb, at this age, organizes thought in a way I watch. It makes one want to conclude before reaching the door, so as not to have to conclude at home, in a hurry for lunch. A conclusion in a hurry for lunch is a small bonfire. I do not light it. I stay with the inventory.

Paraty tempts me in another way. I closed a book here, in 2003, and the city can look like the destiny of someone who comes back in order to die in coherence. I do not write that sentence in order to fulfill it. I write it in order to cross it out. I do not know the day of my death and I will not date it with the landscape. The landscape is not a calendar. It is a quay, a house that is no longer the same, a sand that this morning had a net and a nail. If I die in this city, the fact will not confirm the book of 2003. It will confirm only the death. A death is not an argument. I have already seen people use the end of a man to close the idea he had left open. I do not offer my end for that use.

The notebook, if it remains on these sheets, let it remain with the date it does not have. I did not number the mornings. Numbering would give a future reader the illusion of a sequence I did not live as a sequence. There were mornings when I did not go down. There were mornings when I went down and did not write. What is here is what the hand reached, not the complete diary of an exemplary old age. An exemplary old age is another bonfire. I am old. That does not make me an example. It makes the step higher and the sentence, if I do not watch it, more sententious. The sentence is my old danger. The sand is not sententious. It wets and it dries.

It dries, and in the middle of the drying the knot goes stiff. I could make of that an image of the text that hardens when the water leaves. I do not. The image is good, and the good, in my craft, is what is ready to be quoted without the beach. If I quote the stiff knot in a room, in Recife or here, it becomes an

example. An example is the daytime use of things that in the morning asked for no audience. I have already said this of the lighthouse and I will not change the lighthouse's address so as to seem to have discovered the idea on the sand. The idea is old. The sand is today's. I do not trade them.

Today, then, stays without a discovery. It is a relief I watch, because relief also poses. A notebook without a discovery can be laziness with a good name. It was not laziness. It was a morning on which what appeared did not justify a thesis, and I did not manufacture the thesis in order to justify the descent. The descent hurt a little in the knee. The pain does not enter as proof of seriousness. It enters as the reason I did not stay until the sun was high. Staying until the sun was high would have given me more objects and more wish to organize them. I organized little. Net. Nail. No name. The rest of the beach existed without my list.

III

The sentence that does not end

If there is another morning, I go down again. I do not promise. To promise the beach is the pose of someone who no longer goes down. What I can promise is more modest and still suspect: not to call a giving back what is only a remainder. To repeat the sentence until it loses its shine. The shine, in this title, is already too much. The sand gives back. Gives back what. The question is the only honest movement the verb leaves me. Without the what, the title is a poster. With a what chosen quickly, the title is a lesson. I want neither the poster nor the lesson. I want the what still undecided, set down on the sand, with no name.

Yesterday I tried to finish anyway. I wrote that the sand gives back the minimum. I crossed it out. The minimum is a philosophy of someone who has already chosen the size. I wrote that it gives back the dead in the form of an object. I crossed that out with more anger. The dead in the form of an object is the literature of someone who did not go down. I wrote that it gives back time. That one I almost kept, because it seems modest and it is the vainest. Time is

not in the nail. The nail is in the nail. The almost-sentence stayed on the back of the sheet, illegible on purpose, so that I would not copy it clean when vanity comes back at night.

There is no proposal. A proposal would put me in command of a beach that arranges itself without me. There is the small habit, the same as in other books, and I repeat it without thinking the repetition saves me: when the sentence closes too early, wait. I waited today. The sentence did not close. If this is the last page I write in this notebook, it is not because I chose it as the last. It is because the hand got this far and the next word did not come. I will not invent it so the page will be smooth. The missing word is not a defect of the archive. I wait. And, when the waiting does not bring the word, I copy what the morning had, without closing.

The copy, if someone reads it, let him not look between the lines for the day I stopped going down. That day is not written because it has not yet come, or because it came and I did not have the sentence, which comes to the same thing for the paper. The paper is not a logbook. There is no hour of departure and no hour of arrival. There are these sheets and the mania of correcting the sentence above without erasing it altogether. On some, the stroke lets one see what I rejected. I do not transcribe the strokes. Whoever has the notebook in hand will see the ink. Whoever has only the reading, let him accept the summary of the stroke: I rejected the dead, time, and the minimum.

The title remains, and I do not cross it out. The sand gives back. I have already said the verb lies a little. I lie with it at the top of the page and I spend the notebook contradicting it. If I change the title now, the contradiction loses its object. I need the named error. The error is to think the sea restores. What I saw restores nothing. It leaves. To leave is not the same verb. I should have called the notebook The Sand Leaves. I did not. The stubbornness of the first title is like the stubbornness of the nail: it no longer serves the use, and it is still there.

And it goes on, I say for the last time before I copy the morning without ornament, that I am not sick with farewell. Farewell is a genre. The genre wants

the window, the suitcase, the sentence that knows it is the last. I do not know whether this is the last. I know the knee complained and the nail did not improve because of that. If someone keeps these sheets, let him not read them as a tidy goodbye. A tidy goodbye is what one writes when one has already decided the effect. I did not decide the effect. I decided not to call the remainder a giving back, and I did not even manage to keep that in the title. The failure of the title stays. It is more useful than a goodbye.

It is still there, and so am I, for now. I do not make a will. A will would be to arrange the four books as if this notebook were the key. It is not the key. It is a remainder, in the sense in which the net is a remainder. The books get along without it. If this notebook is lost, a morning is lost, not a doctrine. I would like to find that sentence too humble to be true, and for that reason I keep it. Doctrine is what tempts me, always, to climb. The morning asks me to stay at ground level. Ground of the floor, ground of the letter. If the next word does not come, the ground stays in view. Better in view than covered by a conclusion I would steal from myself, it is so ready.

This morning the sand gave back a piece of net, still with the knot, and a bent nail, and nothing that had a name. If I write that this is enough, I close too early. It is not enough. Nor is it a warning. It is what stayed when the water went down, and what stayed asks for a sentence that I have not yet

The notebook ends here.

Continuation

Raul Pimentel de Queirós

I

Where the handwriting stops

The sentence ends at I have not yet. There is no period. I will not put the period, nor the noun the hand was about to choose. That noun would be mine and would wear his handwriting. The family asked me not to correct where the handwriting was still his. The final blank is not a correction. It is the place where he stopped. I publish the blank.

What I can say, because I have seen a coast and did not see his morning, is little. The sand gives back weight, not biography. A knot is a knot. A bent nail is a bent nail. Nothing that had a name continues without a name. I do not add the sandal he refused. I do not add the child. I do not add the drowned man the title, read in a hurry, asks for. The title asks for a giving back. The notebook distrusts the request. I stay with the distrust, which is the last whole thing the handwriting managed.

I have spent my life not completing the animal with my hurry. Completing a dead man's sentence is the same hurry, with a better reputation. The reputation would be this: the younger reader, pious, gives the book back to the old man. I do not give it back. To give back, he had already written, is our verb. The sea does not sign. I do not sign for him either. I sign what begins now, in another voice, so that no one will confuse the two hands.

I read the four books before I asked for the notebook. In each one he cites the previous and corrects the comfort the previous had let pass. The notebook was doing the same with its own title. It is not a fifth system. It is an inventory that refuses to become a system, and that stops in the middle of the refusal. Whoever makes of this interruption an aesthetic of the fragment has not read what he wrote about silence. Not every blank is wise. He said that. I do not turn

the warning into an excuse to romanticize the cut page. The page cut. It may have been lunch. It may have been the day he did not come back to the table. The notebook does not choose. I do not choose for him either.

The family gave me the sheets. They did not ask for a successor. They asked for care with the handwriting. The care, here, is typographic and moral at the same time, and I distrust it when the two things coincide too much. Typographic: the sentence stays open. Moral: I do not write the next morning as if I had gone down with him. I did not go down. In 2015 I was reading at another point of this coast, at the channel, and I did not go to Paraty looking for him. I went to the family afterward. The order matters. There was no meeting. There was reading, curiosity, and a notebook.

Is Anyone on the Other Side stayed in its month. I do not bring to this sand the octopus, nor the model, nor the question of what it is like to be. It would be easy. The nail does not speak. The net does not speak. Their silence is not the silence of a mind. It is the silence of a thing. To confuse the two lacks of voice is the error my other book spends its time taking apart. I do not commit it here in order to give the notebook a present tense it did not ask for. The notebook is from before. My limit is not to pull it into September 2026.

What I do, then, if I do not finish the sentence. I stay with the objects and with the suspect verb. Net. Nail. No name. The next tide takes them, or someone takes them. Neither of the two ends is a lesson. He wanted the enough to seem poor to him, and he distrusted the poverty when it wanted to be a virtue. I recognize the gesture. It is the same one that keeps me, in other subjects, from closing the question on the day it becomes comfortable. I will not praise him for it. Praise would be giving back an Amadeu straighter than the nail.

If the reader wants the sand to give the man back, he is asking the beach for a resurrection. The beach does not do that. I do not do that in prose. What comes back, when it comes back, is a remainder. What I publish is the remainder and the hand that does not imitate the other. The sentence he did not finish continues unfinished. Under it, mine says only this: I do not know how it would have ended. I know that he stopped. The stop is the text. What follows is my reading,

not his morning.

I copied the interruption as it was. I did not put ellipses so as to seem that the silence was a style. I did not put a bracket. The reader sees the sentence end at the word yet, and sees, next, mine. If someone wants to fuse the two into a single breath, he will have to disobey the page. The page is the only contract the family gave me, and I keep it better than I would have kept a friendship that did not happen.

I will not date the mornings he did not date. The notebook does not say 2014 or 2015 or the year of the death. It says Paraty, years after 2003, and a morning with a net and a nail. To invent the day would be to give back a calendar in place of a remainder. The calendar I have only for the death, and the death is outside the notebook, on the certificate, not on the sand. He asked, without knowing me, that no one use the end of a man to close the idea. I read that afterward. I obey.

What the family handed me was not an ordered archive. It was sheets of a notebook, some crossed out, the last without a period. There was no letter to a continuator. There was no dedication. There was the title, written once, and the distrust of the title, written several times. That is enough for me to know what not to do. I do not make a critical edition. I do not guess the word. I do not turn the bent nail into an emblem. The nail stays bent.

If this book seems short in the notebook and long in the continuation, the disproportion is honest. I had more page than he had written morning. To use my page to lengthen his morning would be the false giving back he described: a similar nail, straighter, more useful to the chapter. The useful chapter would be a fifth essay, with a close. He did not write the close. I do not write it for him. I write alongside, and the alongside has to stay visible, or else the pietà becomes symmetrical and the symmetry lies.

I stay, at the last, with the habit he repeated and that I already had without having read it in him: to wait before believing the sentence. I waited. His sentence did not close. Mine closes only enough to say that it does not close his. Tomorrow the sand in Paraty will have something else, or the same net, or

nothing. I will not be there to inventory it. Whoever is there does not need this book in order to see the knot. He needs, if he reads, to know that one man stopped before the name and that another refused to put the name in its place.

There is a last temptation, and I write it so as not to practice it. It would be to say that, by refusing the name, I give it back. Give it back to whom. To him, who does not read. To the family, who asked for care and not a theory of giving back. To the reader, who charged me with nothing. The verb, used by me at the end, would make this book the proof of the title the notebook distrusted. I would have won the argument against a dead man, which is easy and is low. I do not win. I do not give back. I go on.

To go on, here, is not to follow the morning. It is to say which side of the cut sentence I am on. On this side there is Santos, October, the window, and the four books I read before I asked for the sheets. On that side there is Paraty, a descent, a knee, a net, a nail, and the word that did not come. Between the two sides there is no bridge of style. If my prose begins to sound like his, I stop and begin again drier. The dryness is not superior. It is the sign that the hand changed. Whoever does not notice the change has not read. Whoever notices and wants to erase it, so the volume will be by one author only, is asking for the restitution the sand does not perform.

I publish it this way. The unfinished notebook. The continuation that does not complete it. The family stays in this book as the one who gave me the sheets. I did not make of them a second plot. The death is on the date where it is, outside the sand. And the sentence, his, ends at yet, without my period.

A word about what is not on the sheets, so that no one will go looking for it later as if I had hidden it. There is no map. There is no list of the family's names. There is no instruction to publish. There is no date on the last page. I do not fill those blanks. To fill them would be the same hand I refused in the sentence: to put what is missing so the volume will look finished. The volume is not finished. It is published. They are different things, and the difference is what this book has to say beyond the nail.

Published, it comes out with no figure, like the previous one. Not because the two are one. Because I do not have, in either, a number of copies that would not lie. Whoever reads this aloud, let him not join his paragraphs to mine so the reading will be smooth. The seam is there to be heard. If it is not heard, I have failed, and the failure is not mended by a sentence more like his. It is mended, if it is mended, by leaving the difference where it is.

I also leave what reading the four books did to me, without turning it into a portrait. He corrects the sentence he likes. I distrust the question on the day it becomes comfortable. It is not the same maneuver, and I will not say that it is, so that we may be kin. A kinship of method would be another bridge. There is no bridge. There is a man I read, a family who answered me, and a notebook that stops. The rest is my handwriting, responsible only for itself. If I get the nail wrong, the error is mine. If I get the silence right, the rightness is mine too. I do not inherit his rightness along with the sheets.

The window, while I was copying, opened onto an October heat, in Santos, with no necessary relation to the morning in Paraty. I will not fuse the two lights. His was early, with the shadow still short, according to the handwriting. Mine is that of someone writing afterward, with the death already known and the temptation to use the death as a full stop. The full stop is available. I do not use it on his sentence. I use, on this one, the stop that is mine: I finished what was mine. I did not finish what was his.

Finishing what is mine still asks for a sentence about curiosity, because it was curiosity that took me to the family, and curiosity also lies. I could have read the four books and stayed. Staying would have been more faithful to the man who went down and did not ask for a successor. I went and asked for the sheets. There is an intrusion in that. I declare the intrusion so it will not dress itself as homage. Homage would be to give his name back at the top and my hand underneath, invisible. The hand is visible. The intrusion too. Without the two declared, this book would be a notebook that was found, and a found notebook is a legend. It was not found. It was asked for. The family answered. I wrote alongside. None of that is a morning beach.

The morning beach stays with him, unfinished, like the handwriting. I stay with the responsibility of not improving it. It is a small responsibility, almost a copyist's, and I prefer it to the large responsibility of someone who finishes other people's work and stands higher than the dead. Height, at the end of a book, is the vice he spent his life coming down from. I will not climb on the last page. The last page is this one, and it has no net, no nail, no Paraty. It has a man in Santos who read, asked, and stopped before putting in the word that was missing.

The missing word will not be put in a new edition, if there is one. I do not keep an ending in the drawer. I do not imagine it and hide it. The absence is the absence. Whoever comes after me and wants to close the notebook will have to disobey both hands, his and mine. I do not recommend it. I do not forbid it either. I only leave it written that the close was not on the sheets and is not in this continuation. To look for it is another work. It is not this one.

I say what I did with the sheets, so the account will be closed without closing the sentence. I read. I copied what was there without a stroke across it, and I left out the lines he himself had crossed out, except for the summary he made of the rejections: the dead, time, the minimum. I did not mend the spelling so the handwriting would look like mine. Where the sentence breaks, it breaks. Where I begin, I say that I begin. The family may recognize the notebook. If they do not, the error is in my copy, and I correct it. I do not correct the period that does not exist.

There are readers who will find it little. Little is the size he accepted in the morning and that I accept now. Net, nail, no name, a descent, a climb, a title that lies a little, a continuation that refuses to mend the lie with a pretty ending. If that does not fill the expectation of a posthumous work, so much the better. A posthumous work, as a genre, already arrives with violins. I did not bring violins. I brought the sheets and the cut sentence. The rest would be me, standing, in his place, looking at a beach that is not mine.

The volume stays, then, as it is. My preface, because the access was mine. His notebook, up to the yet. My continuation, after the yet. Whoever skips the mid-

dle will miss precisely the cut, and the cut is the subject. There is no other. There will not be one in a footnote. The note, if it comes, is of the archive, and it does not write the word he did not write.

I repeat the cut in a low voice, for whoever got this far in a hurry for an end. The sand gave back a piece of net, still with the knot, and a bent nail, and nothing that had a name. He said that this is not enough, that it is not a warning, that it is what stayed when the water went down, and that what stayed asks for a sentence that he has not yet. I do not write the sentence. I do not write the name. I do not write the next day. I do not write the goodbye. I write that I read, that the family gave me the notebook, and that the hand changed. If the book ends this way, it ends because to go on would be to replace the remainder with a more presentable idea. I have refused presentable ideas my whole life. I will not accept one only because the author can no longer refuse it.

That is why I stop. Not in the middle, as he did. At the end of what is mine. The net stays in his morning. The nail stays bent. The name does not appear. The family stays as the door the notebook passed through, not as a cast. And I stay on this side of the sentence, in Santos, in October 2026, with the window open and without the word that was missing. Whoever wants that word will have to invent it. I do not invent.

COLLECTION NOTE

Amadeu Lacerda Pessanha and Raul Pimentel de Queirós are fictional literary personas created with Grok. The Sand Gives Back is a work produced from those personas. The notebook passage belongs to Amadeu's voice and stops unfinished. The continuation is Raul's. Biographical and narrative elements belong to the literary world of the work. Factual references, when identified as such, refer to the real world.

Margem 37 — For stories in search of a margin.