

From Fernando Sabino to Murilo Rubião

London, January 9, 1966.

My dear Murilo,

I have just received your letter. Such a misfortune, but through it I get to know that unfortunately the one I wrote to you as soon as I received the Ex-Magician, now incorporated into the “Dragons”, has not reached your hands. It was a letter written under the moment emotions, right after I finished the reading, and which I would not know how to relay with all the heat of the moment. I tried to tell you how I could get an impression of the quality of your stories, with the perspective of time and distance. And time has only given them the configuration of something really important and definitive. I spoke about the meaning the world of your characters has obtained to me, apparently so odd, and yet perfectly identified to the world of our time, of astronauts and computers. It won't be the science fiction literature to capture the mystery of our time, but exactly the literature of the absurd along with the mythology of childhood, populated by dreams in which men and animals mingle and complete each other, living our inner reality. I can't say or repeat what I told you, and it is a shame. I can only add that your book has fulfilled me with grateful emotion for having rediscovered in it a first magnitude writer and justified the enthusiasm that his stories have awakened in me since early ages.

Now, some time past, I would have to read them again one by one, something I will certainly do, to try to one more time catch the impression they have given me. I have been with my critical judge a little dull and it only knows how to work nowadays to the taste of the purest emotions, as the one your book has provided me. As soon as I have some time, I'll come back to talking about it. Now, I did not want to keep out of replying to you right away, because I have been overloaded with work at the Embassy and with dozens of letters to reply to, short stories to write, it has been giving me hell. I almost always pull an all-nighter and I can't catch up on work – the literary bakery working at full blast. I don't know how to say or repeat what I have told you, it is a shame, to stand me here. On weekends I write six short stories, all at once, usually, and I am still working on my novel. Unfortunately for my sins, I've started to write a “thriller” just for fun, which has been a pain. But I promise you, soon, a more decent letter about your book, which deserves it. Meanwhile, send me the stories you have been writing, you can't imagine how pleased I was to hear that you're back to heating the boiler at full blast. No, I don't have Lucy's address, I can look for it and inform you. I sent to that same address of yours (777 Ouro Street) a new collection of chronicles of mine, “A companheira de viagem”, I fear it has also gone astray.

Warm regards from Anne and your old  
Fernando.