

*Possibly in vain, I hope you'll weaken, O my love,
And forget those rigid rules that undermine my dream of
A life of love and music with someone who'll understand
That even though I may be out of tune
When I attempt to say how much I love you.
All that matters is the message that I bring,
Which is: My dear one, I love you.*

Does anyone still own a Rolleiflex?

"Corcovado" presented problems, too, of course. The release contains a reference to a window looking on Corcovado, which means the Hunchback. But a North American audience would hardly know the name of that mountain and the great panorama of the sea that a statue there surveys. So I changed it. The Portuguese lyric is by Jobim, and it is one of his better ones. Again, it contains that fatalism so common in Brazilian songs.

The Portuguese lyric rhymes throughout until the end, when it breaks the pattern. It is almost the opposite of Shakespeare's practice of writing iambic pentameter without rhyme until he reaches the end of a scene, which he signifies by a rhymed couplet. Why did Jobim do that? The song, which is in C, begins with a chord Jobim called D9/A. I've seen it written as Am6, with which it is enharmonic. But its function is that of a secondary dominant, and Jobim meant it that way. It is a very guitaristic song. The bass line descends chromatically from the A to the Em7 open-string chord, if you want to play it that way. It lies perfectly on the instrument.

But the song never fully resolves; it never goes to the tonic chord. It ends where it began, on D9/A. And this puts you back at the beginning; you have to start all over. The song is thus cyclical in structure, like Malcolm Lowry's novel *Under the Volcano*. I realized that Jobim broke rhyme at the end to make your ear yearn for a resolution; it perfectly fits the setup that occurs with that D9/A. And I decided to retain that effect in English. For all its seemingly simple beauty, the song is incredibly ingenious.

*Quiet nights of quiet stars,
Quiet chords from my guitar
Floating on the silence
That surrounds us.*

*Quiet thoughts and quiet dreams.
Quiet walks by quiet streams
And a window looking on
The mountains and the sea — how lovely.*

*This is where I want to be,
Here with you so close to me
Until the final flicker of life's ember.*

(In Portuguese: "Ate o apagar da velha chama"; which means, "Until the old flame goes out".)

*I, who was lost and lonely,
Believing life was only
A bitter, tragic joke,
Have found with you
The meaning of existence,
O my love.*

I explained the lyrics to Jobim carefully, probably in French. He was delighted with them and asked me to leave them with him.