

Synopsis: **A Goodbye Without Us.**

Some farewells never happen in front of the other person. Some take place within us, when we finally understand that we can no longer keep living among the former versions of who we once were.

In *A Goodbye Without Us*, Noel H. Hodgson returns to the emotional places where he learned to hide: loneliness, unrequited love, family memories, the body he avoided looking at for years, and the experiences that remained silent because he still did not know how to name them.

Through intimate prose that blends memory, narrative, and poetry, the author reconstructs the path of someone who survived by disappearing inside himself and is now trying to return to his own life. Not to erase the past or turn pain into a perfect story, but to acknowledge what happened, say goodbye to what could never be, and stop abandoning himself.

This is not a book of answers. It is the testimony of someone who, after losing himself many times, made one simple and profound decision: **not to disappear again.**

In Front of the Mirror

Today, I have to look at myself.

And I am not ready.

I get up with heaviness in my feet,
afraid...

not of what I will see,
but of what I will have to accept.

I am standing in front of the mirror.

And I know I can no longer run.

I have to face myself.

But I am afraid.

Because if what I see matches reality...

then every story I created to protect myself
will fall apart.

For years, this is how I survived:

with stories,
with kinder versions of myself,
with worlds where everything was different.

And it worked.

It kept me standing.

But now...

what am I supposed to do with thirty-two years

I did not truly live as myself?

I look.

And the first thing I feel...

is guilt.

Guilt for abandoning myself.

For taking better care of my thoughts

than of my own body.

For living inside my mind

while my reality waited.

And there he is.

That is me.

A body I do not recognize,

eyes that never learned to look at themselves with tenderness,

a version of me I never accepted.

But the strangest thing...

is that I am not alone.

On the other side of the mirror,

my mind is there too.

And we do not see the same thing.

My body says:

—You are imperfect.

My mind answers:

—You are enough.

My body sees sadness.

My mind sees possibility.

My heart...

only remains silent.

Because it knows something I avoided for years:

I have lived without myself.

And even then...

my mind insists on falling in love,

on creating stories,

on imagining futures with people

who will not even stay.

Is that strange?

No.

It is survival.

It is how I learned
not to break completely.

So I ask myself:

Do I keep running?

Do I keep inventing versions of myself
so I do not have to face who I am?

Or do I accept it...

even if I do not like it?

I cannot turn back time.

There is no magic.

There are no second versions.

This is what there is.

And the question is no longer
who I used to be...

but what I am going to do with who I am now.

I do not like what I see.

That is the truth.

But it is also true
that this is the only real thing I have.

And as I look at myself...

I cry.

Like always.

But this time, it is not only pain.

It is recognition.

Because even like this...

I have been loved.

I have been accompanied.

And maybe...

that counts too.

Maybe that...

is enough too.

Then, for the first time,

I do not run.

I stay.

I look at myself.

And in silence,

as if it were a negotiation...

my mind and I
decide to keep going.

Author's Note

Each of my books begins with a question, a wound, a memory, or a part of life that needed to find its way into words. I do not write to offer perfect answers, but to approach with honesty those emotions we often feel and do not always know how to express.

I invite you to enter these stories without rushing, to discover the different voices, characters, and fragments that shape my literary world. You may not recognize yourself on every page, but perhaps you will find a sentence, a scene, or an emotion that stays with you and reminds you that someone else has been there too.

Each book opens a different door.

This one may be the first.

Welcome to my work.

Noel H. Hodgson