

# BOOKS ABROAD

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✱ José Cardoso Pires. *O Hospede de Job*.  
Lisboa. Arcádia. 1964. 253 pages.

Cardoso Pires (whose book of stories *Jogo de Azar* we have chosen among the three best Portuguese books of 1963) does not leave either a particular reader or the most fussy critic indifferent about his new novel. With short scenes, often accelerated in rhythm or slowed down, sometimes counterpointed, the author gives us the "principal images of life" (in the sense of Bachelard) of the life of the poor devils in a village of Alentejo, that limitless plain south of Lisbon. We often brush against legend or a primitive painting, so much does Cardoso Pires know how to create myths. Nevertheless, his epic-novel is of the here and now. He knows how to make us forget it only to recall it sharply: the short-

circuit technique, that is his forte, his aesthetic success, almost always achieved.

This book was published simultaneously in an Italian translation.

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