Suga: "You’d think I live with super grandiose dreams, but I’m not like that at all."

**LEE JI HOON22 DEC 2021**

The dreams and breaths of the continually evolving SUGA.

**GQ: How are you doing these days? Are you doing well?**

**最近怎么样？过得好吗？**

Suga: I’m doing just right. Yes, I think that’s the perfect expression for how I’m doing. I’m able to work with incredible people and I’m not going through anything negative at the moment. I feel at peace these days.

Suga: 过得特别满意啊。嗯，感觉这是最能形容我现状的表述了。最近和优秀的人一起工作，没有任何负面事件发生，很平静。

**Yes, you do seem very relaxed. How do you manage to keep so balanced and calm?**

**嗯，你看起来确实很放松。怎么做到这么平和冷静的？**

It’s possible if you take a step back and observe the situation from a bit of distance. People are bound to become emotional and go to extremes at times, but you can gain a sense of clarity if you just hold on and take a step back. When things get heated, I stop everything so that I can think. This is probably why I don’t get into arguments.

如果你退后一些，隔着点距离观察情况，就能平和下来。大家都会有情绪化，走极端的时候嘛，不过只要你等一等，退后一步，就能看清情况了。我就停止所用。这大概是我能远离争端的原因吧。

**So you look at the situation from a third-person perspective.**

It works for me. Honestly, if something could have been solved by a burst of anger, it would have been solved long before.

对我来说还挺有用的。说实话，要是有些事靠愤怒就能解决，早就解决了。

**Are there things you’re right about now that you were wrong about before?**

Oh, so many. I think I was particularly affected by what people thought or said when we first debuted. I became very sensitive to their responses, some of them malicious. But I never actually met anyone who said these things to me in person. Not one. It was unwise of me to spend so much time online back then. From a certain point, I felt that it was too far removed from the real world. The issues that seemed to be a big deal online didn’t hold any weight in reality. I spend minimal time online now.

啊，那太多了。我觉得我们出道的时候，我特别容易被别人影响。我变得对外界评价很敏感，包括一些恶评。但其实我从来没有在生活里遇到过跟我当面说这些话的人。真的从来没有。那时候在网上花太多时间看恶评很不值得。网络世界跟现实太脱节了，在网上看起来很大的问题，现实里根本不值一哂。现在我很少上网了。

**Now the only news you ever hear is of BTS’ relevance. What’s something you just can’t get used to, even after all these years?**

We’re always three years behind in our ability to take in people’s responses. We have no idea what people are thinking at the time. In a way, that’s our strength, but it does mean we’re still awkward and embarrassed by the praise we receive. We’re thinking, “But we’re not on that level…” And I still get both excited and nervous about performing on stage.

我们对外界评价的的接收会滞后三年吧。我们其实是不知道大众当下在想什么的。这算是我们的长处，但也不是说我们会因为收到赞美而尴尬。我们只是会想，“还没到那个水平呢……”现在我上舞台表演的时候还是会兴奋紧张。

**Is there a performance that appears in your dreams sometimes?**

I still have vivid memories of the final 2019 Seoul concert [from the “Love Yourself: Speak Yourself” world tour]. I look it up sometimes. On the days I watch it, it’s sure to appear in my dreams.

**Your outlook and approach to music must have changed over the years, so I’m curious about what exactly has caused you to rise up time and time again. If it was “han” [a Korean-specific emotion of deep sorrow] in prior years, what would you say is your fuel these days?**

I’d say it’s the interesting thoughts within me. It’s a rare move for someone like myself to work on external projects, whether they’re commercials, advertisements, or easy-listening tracks. But these challenges are a lot of fun. It makes me look forward to tomorrow. “Han” and rage tend to gnaw at a person, so I’ve put those emotions to rest and I’m trying to use positive energy instead.

**There’s “SUGA” of BTS, solo artist “AGUST D,” and commercial producer “BY SUGA.” How much does each of these parts take up?**

All three are me. They each take up a third of myself, and one isn’t more reflective of me than another. I simply give people a choice. These three sides of myself are incredibly different, so I’m giving people a choice to see me as they want.

**Is there a certain standard or point at which you stop working on a piece? Even in a painting video [broadcasted on YouTube Live] last year, you barely put down your paintbrush.**

I stop working when nothing comes out. I just stop. I’m not the type to cling onto something when it doesn’t work. But when I’m in the zone, I’m hardly aware of the time. I think I’m like that with everything, not just painting. If I find something I like, I carry it to a ridiculous point. I keep at it for a long time simply because it’s fun.

**What are the words that you expressed through audio waveforms, which you screen-printed onto your painting “Morning”?**

They’re written on the back of the canvas. If someone ever gets the painting, only they will be able to read them.

**Those words must hold special meaning for you.**

They do if you think they’re special, but they don’t if you don’t think they’re special.

**How interesting. It’s not easy to keep delving into a field with a constant level of excitement and curiosity. It makes me think of how you’ve stated in all your interviews that you intend to make music for a very long time. Is there a way for a person to continue doing something they like for a long time?**

It’s possible only if you don’t like it too much. If you like something too much, it’s difficult to carry on for a long time. I used to like music too much. I loved it so much that I tried to like it less. I’m still trying to love it less.

如果你不那么爱它，就有可能。要是太爱了，会很难长期坚持下去。以前我就是太爱音乐了。就是因为爱得不行，所以我试着少爱它点。现在我还在试着少爱点。

**Even now?**

**现在也这样吗？**

Yes. I don’t listen to music unless I’m working on my own music. I keep it as far from me as possible. I seek music only when I need it. If you love something too much, there comes a time when you have to give it up for that very reason. You need to keep it at a certain distance if you want to pursue it for a long time and if you don’t want to be consumed by it. If you give it too much meaning, it becomes very difficult to continue.

对啊。我自己制作歌曲的时候不会听其他音乐，会尽可能离它们远点，只有在需要听音乐的时候才找来听。要是太爱什么东西，总会遇到因为太爱而不得不放弃的时刻；得和它保持某种距离，才能长期坚持，不被消耗心力。如果赋予一件事太多意义，它就会变得难以为继。

**When did you start keeping music at a certain distance?**

About five years ago. I think it was the right move. I can let it flow naturally and not try too hard. After all, even if I get stuck while working on a track, we’re a team, so there’s always someone who can tie up the loose ends. In a way, it means I’ve come to rely on the members a lot. Of course, I still have a sense of responsibility, but it’s nice to know that there are people who will catch me if I make a mistake.

五年前吧。这个决定还是正确的。

**There are many meaty and hard-hitting themes in BTS’ music. You’ve dealt with themes like dreams, reality, loneliness and hope – things that scratched my own itch. What keywords are left, do you think?**

Don’t you think we’ll keep talking about our dreams? I continue to live with dreams, and I’ll continue to dream in the future. It’s still difficult to decide what our focus will be for this next chapter following the release of “Dynamite”.

**Yes, people are paying close attention to see what themes you’ll raise next.**

I will definitely have more to say in the future, because I like to share what I’m experiencing firsthand. I guess I’ll need to keep moving forward on this endless seesaw ride.

**It feels as though BTS SUGA has a soft spot for the word “dream.” The counsel that you’ve given – that everyone is equal before their dreams and that it’s okay to not have a dream – has been a balm for many. But at times, the existence of a dream or goal can be a crucial form of motivation. What should we do when we feel like a lost child before our dreams?**

We can’t give our dreams too much meaning. Dreams are just dreams. When I say it’s okay to not have a dream, it’s because you don’t really need one. You shouldn’t have to struggle so much in order to live your life. It’s heartbreaking to see people being pushed to pursue one path when there are 7.8 billion people in the world, living out 7.8 billion different lives. People in their 60s and 70s can dream too, of course, but I often think that the world is especially cruel to the young. It’s often suggested that they’ve failed if they don’t start out on a particular path or continue along as expected. But as you live, you realise life doesn’t work that way. It would be good if children and youth didn’t blame themselves too much, because it’s not their fault.

And don’t compare yourself to other people either. There is absolutely no need for you to compare the size of your dream to someone else’s dream. You’d think I live with super grandiose dreams, but I’m not like that at all. I don’t have a dream right now either. Does that make me miserable? No, it doesn’t. Rather, I’m at peace. I’m sure another dream will come to me. My dream could be to become better at basketball, for example. I believe it’s a good, worthwhile life to achieve dreams like this, one by one.

**You’re saying that a dream, whether big or small, is just a dream. That’s refreshing.**

I tried looking for reasons to live each day, but it turns out what I like most is being at peace. It’s my dream to become someone who worries less and who has peace in their heart. That is actually my dream, but I hesitate to say it, because it can sound hypocritical. Some might say, “You’re only able to say that because you’ve achieved it all.” But I really wish we all had dreams no matter how big or small that could become a driving force in our lives. There’s no need for them to be grand, either.

**Then a dream is something that comes to find you naturally.**

Of course. Dreams keep changing, don’t they? Who I was six months ago is so different from who I am now, and I’ll be different again in six months’ time. Wouldn’t our thoughts change as well? That’s why I don’t like the phrase “original resolve”. It feels like a phrase used by adults to keep people in line. We need to accept that people change. I trust we can adapt to change and carry on.

**So does that mean we can wait for the day you’ll be singing folk songs? I heard you’ve recently become interested in acoustic/folk music.**

It sure does seem possible, doesn’t it? I haven’t played my guitar as much these days, but I’m practising my singing. The members don’t think much of it, but I’ve gained courage, thanks to those who like my voice. And I do really like genre crossovers. I mean, we live in a time with little to no genre boundaries. So can’t you picture me singing in the future?