

# remind me to talk to you about the topic concerning murakami, consciousness, and my dog

Gregory Nero

*Abstract*—And then November was gone; and parts of me with it. Hands leading my way through a patch of bramble, parting leaves and thorny branches. Getting scratched and pulled by time, tugging at my clothes. Memory burrs that I carefully pick off once I'm in through. Little scratches. Blood. It's so fresh right now, but these too will scab. Tender, precious inventory.

*Index Terms*—back to the mind

## SECTION

And so I'm back, after what feels like too long and not long enough. I'm reading the paper and listening to the piano. Keep me safe from everything that hurts and I'll try to finish today's Sudoku puzzle.

### THOUGHTS FROM THE AIRPORT

A.

It must be normal to think of dying on a plane. Natural, even. *I could die right now and I'd have no control over it.* I wanted to talk about death. It didn't scare me. I tried casually bringing it up to the man next to me who I'd had an earlier conversation with. *So, did the retirement home you worked at offer hospice care?* A casual segue. Unfortunately, he said they didn't. I considered what I'd be most upset about, ten, in the moment, if the plan lost control and I was instantaneously headed for death. The glasses I got for my mom for Christmas in my carry-on overhead. These were special glasses, and if I couldn't get them to her I'd be really bummed. I settled on that. Though, I bubble-wrapped the shit out of them, so they might have survived the crash. Who knows.

I imagined sitting, waiting for Death in a crashing plane. It's not a terribly creative metaphor for life I guess. The Reaper might approach me, look at me, and say *Wow, have you been waiting for me?* What kind of life am I living? No, I don't think my situation is that dismal. I hope, I know, The Reaper would instead see me and think *Let's leave this one for now. They have unfinished business.*

B.

It's beautiful, cloudy, and windy in Chicago today. They didn't card me at the airport bar. It was bright and sunny above the dense grey clouds. I feel so comfortable beneath this blanket. Sunny to cloudy. Southwest to Northeast. Everything's a fuckin' metaphor.

C.

Let me dissolve in this dream. I don't want to perceive. I want to participate.

### LAUNDRY, AND GRIPPING ONTO SHREDS OF MY MIND

*And bring up the basket,* I interjected. Proof that I was still thinking. I don't want my mind to deteriorate. **Basket.** Yes, that's what it's called. **Basket.** It felt like a refusal of time and its progression. Maybe I shouted it. Maybe I was yelling. Maybe I was angry, even. Why shouldn't I be? It's slow, cruel syrup the way I'm dripping from myself this evening. I'm dissolving into this mess, into *The End of the World. That's just built into her, I didn't teach her that.* I watched my dog in a trance, walking slowly toward the feather. Suddenly I, too, was drudging toward that feather. My subconscious now a dog in a trance. Murakami made me do it, I promise. This is my third circuit.

### WANTING YOU

It's midnight and I'm looking at airplane tickets. The truth is that I'm desperate to see you. But I'm here and you're there. There are only so many ways to say that I miss you. I can't be a poet forever.

Winter is for thinking about the mind and consciousness. I don't know how or why but it just is. I could just call it a coincidence but that wouldn't be any fun. Gödel, Escher, Bach and now Murakami.

### ON MY SUBCONSCIOUS STATES OF MIND

I used to get fevers. Really bad fevers. I would hallucinate. I remember laying down on the edge of my parent's bed and looking at the red digits of the alarm clock while my sickness held me captive. And things would happen. I can't yet articulate what was happening but I remember how my mind felt during the entire thing. And I think that feeling was sealed into a box somewhere inside of me, preserved. And sometimes, like recently while I was reading *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (though, this wasn't the first time) I will involuntarily open this box and *feel* how I felt before. No hallucinations or anything, but it feels like my mind shifts into the state of mind I was in during my fevers as a child. Like it was getting unlocked, and I could re-experience how I felt before, exactly how I felt. It's very convenient, I think, that I happened to be reading this particular book. It really has me thinking about if other subconscious profiles are sleeping inside of me, waiting to be tapped into and re-awoken. This also gives me another way to look at anxiety and panic attacks. I recently had a pretty massive episode of panic, and ever since

then I've been prone to slipping back into this *state*. But this box feels more dangerous. It's guarded by lightning and the little curious kid with the skeleton key in my brain just doesn't know any better. They stick that key into the lock guarding the box. And I'm pushing down on the top to keep it from erupting and consuming me.

I had a dream that we made love by the lake  
On a patch of moss, just above the rocky shore.  
We had our fill of each other,  
Then rested there forever,  
Becoming moss,  
By the lake.