

July 23 2014

Letter 2: On Doubt, Surrender, and Dying

Dear D.Q.

Birth and death are nearly touching on the cycle of life. That juncture couldn't be closer and will never stop cycling.

I am flying on an airplane. Something I doubt you could imagine. Well, I suspect, if anyone could, it would be you. It is a fuel-powered carriage that holds hundreds of people, in a capsule of sorts, with wings, and a captain—like of a ship. It is that, ship in the sky, but closed on all sides because we wouldn't survive the air temperatures or the speed. You wouldn't believe how fast we fly.

I am writing again because I think you understand me better than anyone else. I am writing because my mind is whirring and I need to let it unwind and my daily journal is only providing a ledger for complaints and fears and worry. Writing to you inspires my imagination and strength.

I swam in a lake today. I swam in a lake carrying a white flag in search of a place to drop the flag, the flag of surrender. I feel like I am carrying this white flag with me everywhere these days, but that I have not found the point of surrender—I want to surrender, I want to let go of the expectations I hold for myself and to let life lead me. Yet, I am a fighter and the battle within, so far, proves to be far and away the greatest of all.

Did you ever have doubt? Or regret? They are new and horribly uncomfortable feelings for me. What did you do with those feelings? You charged, lance in hand, with a steel barbers bowl on your head, directly into a field of WINDMILLS! Didn't you know? After impact you simply claimed that the enchanters changed their form. Is that what happened? No one believed you. Even in your greatest fight, Cervantes STOPS the narration of it just as you are about to win, to kill your opponent—or at least offer him the chance to live or die. He stops the narration saying that was all he had in the translation he was writing then.

What is it like for your story to be *stopped* before your glory even prevails? For your author to claim the mythology of yourself!? To claim he is not even your author, but a mere translator from a story told by a moorish boy in Toledo. Are you real Don Quixote? From whose imagination do you appear?

I want to lead a meaningful life. And I want to leave a lasting impact. What does that even mean?

You, D.Q., led your life, which in turn left meaning in its wake. Your life has been endlessly meaningful. I struggle with that. You weren't even a real living human and look what you did.

I feel my world mediated by a constant flow of communication—internal and external. How old were you when you died? Did you feel a sense of freedom when you realized your mortality? Often I do. I feel

the freest when I know I am going to die. It gives me the feeling that anything is possible now and that I never have anything to lose. I understand that nothing really matters. I understand the fragility of life and the importance of love. If I had a kid, maybe I would feel otherwise.

Sometimes I feel like I am clinging to an antiquated style of living and it is of no use. The world will outpace me. It will make no sense to write with the hand and pen—my penmanship has already become nearly illegible, is that a consequence of the times? No one will read whole books, not of knights, or whales or myths and fables. No one will wander; we will always *know* where we are. The world is changing and I feel it so strongly right now. Where is my right time and right place? What am I doing? I am writing to a character from a book - whose premise is based on the falsity of reality, written 600 years ago.

Nevertheless, I have learned this from you, you unstoppable apparition:

MORTALITY = FREEDOM = FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING

You were no fool. You were free and alive.

Yours truly,

Cara