Truth, in the Eye of the Beholder:

Coming to Terms with Reality in the Writings of

Yann Martel

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Yann Martel represents the continuation of a great tradition of oral story tellers by engaging his audience. His literary techniques — which can only be described as experimental — have the ability to create powerful emotional reactions in his readers. Martel uses these techniques to impact the reader in carefully planned ways, creating deep emotional connections reader. The reader leaves his books emotionally exhausted, yet satisfied, having gained a deep understanding of the characters and their stories. Martel, like the oral story tellers of previous generations, is a teacher who turns unsuspecting readers into his students. Unlike oral story tellers, however, Martel’s mastery over the readers emotional response to his works allows him to teach lessons much deeper than any oral story. The lessons we learn from Martel’s books are not morals, but rather perspectives — new ways of seeing the world and the people in it.

Our investigation into Martel and his techniques begins with a brief biography written in his style. The inspiration for the style comes from Life
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

of Pi, where Martel inserts a fictional Self, a author writing the story, into the narrative. The story followed by the reader is both one of the writer and the subject, two story lines that complete (from the reader’s perspective) at convergence.

We then take a look at Martel’s most well known book Life of Pi where Martel takes the reader on an unbelievable adventure and then challenges the reader to accept the unbelievable, when given the choice. Martel presents the reader with a provocative argument in favor of faith.

Finally, we look at Martel’s first novel Self. Of Martel’s two novels, Self is by far the more experimental of the two. In it, Martel introduces the reader to the narrator then violently shatters the reader’s perception and understanding of that narrator. Martel takes the reader through a wonderful tour of identity and demonstrates for others how we are defined by our self and external identities.
Chapter 2

Biography

2.1

Research has always been my own form of class. After I failed out of college, research became my form of schooling. (“Facts”) In November of 2005 I decided that I was going to return to Saskatoon where I am spending a year at the University of Saskatchewan, a fitting place to continue my self-education. This is my second time in Saskatoon. Starting in September 2003 I spend a year filling the role of ‘writer-in-residence’ at the public library. (Wikipedia)

2.2

He strikes me as very intelligent, not in an academic way, but in a deep and meditative way. The experience of his many travels is visible in the street smart way he carries himself.
CHAPTER 2. BIOGRAPHY

My parents were Canadian civil servants in Spain when I was born. Their travels were my travels, taking me around the world and back again. We finally settled in Montreal. My dad was a poet. (“Yann Martel”)

2.3

He invited me over to his office the second time we met. It was a testament to the power of minimalism. Equipped with only the essentials: a futon, a desk, and a poor excuse for a kitchen. It was in an apartment building a short distance from his house, a place for him to escape and write.¹

My plan was to follow the academic ladder until some opportunity made itself apparent, but with the occurrence of my existential crisis the rung under my feet broke. I started writing, horribly, but I enjoyed experimenting with the medium. My parents supported me through my odd jobs as I gained experience as a writer. Eventually, I started getting published. (“Facts”)

2.4

I had plans for a glorious novel. Those plans died with me in India, and Life of Pi was born. (“Life”) I spent two years researching the book and another year writing it. It has been my most successful book.

¹This is based on the description of the office of the speaker in Self

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3.1 Introduction

Story telling is one of the most trying exercises in faith. The audience of a storyteller is required to trust him and allow themselves to be immersed in the story. This requires, at the most fundamental level, a suspension of disbelief; for the telling of a story to be effective, the audience must not question it. In his novel *Life of Pi*, Yann Martel explores this aspect of storytelling. He begins by demonstrating this concept with the example of religion. He then requires this same trust from his readers by presenting the reader with unlikely scenarios. He ends by presenting the reader with another explanation of the story and demonstrating for the reader the difference in experience that can be achieved by having faith in the storyteller. Yann Martel demonstrates that through willing suspension of disbelief that one is capable of having more vivid experiences.
Chapter 3. Life of Pi

3.2 Life Boat

While Pi is blind and hallucinating, he runs across another man in a life boat. The chapter begins describing a conversation Pi believes to be having with the tiger, Richard Parker.

I heard the words, “Is someone there?”
I concluded that I had gone mad. Sad but true. Misery loves company, and madness calls it forth.

“As someone there?” came the voice again, insistent.

“Of course someone’s there,” I replied. “There’s always some one there. Who would be asking the question otherwise?”

“I was hoping there would be someone else.”

... 

“Did you not hear me? Would you eat a carrot?”

“I heard you. To be honest, if I had the choice, I wouldn’t. I don’t have much of a stomach for that kind of food. I find it quite distasteful.”

I laughed. I knew it. I wasn’t hearing voices. I hadn’t gone mad. It was Richard Parker who was speaking to me! The carnivorous rascal. All this time together and he had chosen an hour before we were to die to pipe up. I was elated to be on speaking terms with a tiger. (242, 246)

Pi is clearly no longer in his right mind and is undergoing hallucinations. This sense of insanity that the reader feels in Pi in only exacerbated by his clam that he “wasn’t hearing voices.” This sets up the reader to view his current narration as a dream of sorts. Martel then breaks this dream by interjecting a visit from a real third party.

I woke up with a gasp. Someone was there! This voice coming to my ears was neither a wind with an accent nor an animal

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3.3 ISLAND

speaking up. It was someone else! My heart beat fiercely, making one last go at pushing some blood through my worn-out system. My mind made a final attempt at being lucid.

... 

I tried to hold him back. Alas, it was too late. Before I could say the word alone, I was alone again. I heard the merest clicking of claws against the bottom of the boat, no more than the sound of a pair of spectacles falling to the floor, and the next moment my dear brother shrieked in my face like I've never heard a man shriek before. He let go of me.

This was the terrible cost of Richard Parker. He gave me a life, my own, but at the expense of taking one. He ripped the flesh off the man's frame and cracked his bones. The smell of blood filled my nose. Something in me died that has never come back to life. (248,254)

Martel jars the reader back to the real world with with a touch of the improbable, if not the impossible; Pi, while blind, meets another man on a life boat. In this chapter, Martel sets up the reader; first by putting them into the context of a dream, then by violently breaking that context. This causes the reader to question the reality of what is occurring, a question that is answered by Martel with a description of the carcass of the man. The reader is forced to either accept that Pi really did run into another man, an unlikely event, or to sustain her disbelief, and lose to rationality a critical point of drama in the novel. By accepting Pi's version of the story, the reader comes away with a much more exciting, vivid experience.

3.3 Island

During his odyssey across the pacific, Pi runs across a island of algae. This incident, due to its biologically improbable nature, forms one of the biggest
leaps of faith of the novel. The chapter begins with the following disclaimer.

I made an exceptional botanical discovery. But there will be many who disbelieve the following episode. Still, I give it to you now because it’s part of the story and it happened to me.

Martel sets up the reader not to believe the following chapters, simply by telling them (suggesting) that they should not believe what they are about to read. Yet, at the same time, he puts the cynical and skeptic reader on a guilt trip by saying “and it happened to me.” In doing so, he is telling the reader that they should believe him. This sequence, first causing the reader to question their faith in the story teller, then suggesting the answer, produces a reader that is conditioned to think that they are believing the story out of their own choice.

I looked down. I was both satisfied and disappointed with what I saw. The island had no soil. Not the trees that stood in water. Rather, they stood in what appeared to be a dense mass of vegetation, as sparkling green as the leaves. Who had ever heard of land with no soil? With trees growing out of pure vegetation? I felt satisfaction because such a geology confirmed that I was right, that this island was a chimera, a play of the mind. By the same token I felt disappointment because in island, any island, however strange, would have been very good to come upon.

Once again Martel strikes uncertainty into the mind of his readers. Through the asking of rhetorical questions, Martel causes his readers to ask these questions, of belief or disbelief, of themselves. For example, “Who had ever heard…?“ directly questions the possibility of what Pi is observing.

I decided to judge. I looked about to see if there were any sharks. There were none. I turned on my stomach, and holding
3.3. ISLAND

on to the tarpaulin, I slowly brought a leg down. My foot entered
the sea. It was pleasingly cool. The island lay just a little further
down, shimmering in the water. I stretched. I expected to bubble
of illusion to burst at any second.

It did not. My foot sank into clear water and met the rubbery
resistance of something flexible but solid. I put more weight
down. The illusion would not give. I put my full weight on my
foot. Still I did not sink. Still I did not believe.

... 

I fell overboard.

The combined shock of solid land and cool water gave me
the strength to pull myself forward onto the island. I babbled
incoherent thanks to God and collapsed. (256-258)

Martel, once again, directly answers the question of the reality of Pi’s
story, not once but twice: in the first two paragraphs, with Pi’s discovery
that the island was real, and in the second two, with the demonstration
of Pi’s new discovery on his emotions. The reader is not the only one
questioning the reality of Pi’s observations, Pi himself is as well. Martel
must therefore account for two answers at every point of disbelief, one to
the question of Pi’s disbelief and one to the question of the readers’. It
is this reinforcement, stemming from the two-headed approach to backing
the reality of the story, that pushes the reader to suspend any disbelief in
the events that they are being told. When successful, Martel provokes the
same reaction in the reader as that of Pi; the reader falls overboard into
the current of the story; no longer a passive observer, skeptic, and critic,
the reader is free to enjoy a more vivid and immersive experience. However,
without the spontaneous doubt in the reality of the events, the experience of
the reader can feel superficial, even fairy tale like. Martel must, therefore,
CHAPTER 3. LIFE OF PI

make sure to remind the reader that these events are being presented as real and that as a result, some disbelief is to be expected. This final bit of skepticism is produced by Pi’s discovery of human teeth on the island. The idea that another human had wondered onto the island and died is very unlikely (just as was his meeting another man in a lifeboat) and, therefore, allows for one to consider the claims Pi is making. This cycle, of doubt and measurement, helps to further enforce the reader’s active suspension of disbelief.

The above two incidents directly involve the reader in the act of suspension of disbelief. In doing so, Martel is using his audience in his demonstration of the power of suspension of disbelief. Moreover, he does an excellent job of demonstrating this through the thoughts and actions of the characters in his novel.

3.4 Religious Faith

Throughout the novel, Pi expresses a deep faith in a number of religions. While he is born into an environment of Hinduism, as Pi gets older he discovers Islam and Christianity. Pi fully accepts all three religions with no regard for the contradictions between them. However, his religious teachers find fault in his blind faith in all three religions.

“What it comes down to,” the priest put out with cool rage, “is whether Piscine wants real religion – or myths from a cartoon strip.”

“God – or idols,” intoned the imam gravely.

“Our gods – or colonial gods,” hissed the pandit.(68)
3.5. INVESTIGATION

While each of the religious leaders finds faults in the other religions, Pi suspends his disbelief opting instead for a love of god.

“Bapu Gandhi said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God.” (69)

With this statement, Martel explains the entire motivation for faith and suspending disbelief in one concise sentence. “I just want to love God”, with those six words Pi declares the only foundation he needs for his belief, the joy of believing. A love of god is, at its very foundation, a suspension of disbelief to achieve greater enlightenment. Through this declaration, Pi has placed his joy and enlightenment over the rationality that many feel is required to ground us and in doing so has entered in a world in which suspension of disbelief, not rationality, is king.

The pandit spoke first. “Mr. Patel, Piscine’s piety is admirable. In these troubled times it’s good to see a boy so keen on God. We all agree on that.” The imam and priest nodded. “But he can’t be a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim. It’s impossible. He must choose.” (69)

It is Pi’s suspension of belief in this ‘impossibility’, that allows him to have a intense and vivid religious experience.

3.5 Investigation

The second example of willing suspension of disbelief in the novel occurs with the Japanese investigators into the ship’s sinking. After hearing Pi’s story, they tell him that they do not believe it. In response, Pi mounts a wonderful argument for the suspension of disbelief.
CHAPTER 3. LIFE OF PI

“We just don’t believe there was a tiger living in your lifeboat.”
“The arrogance of big-city folk! You grant your metropolises all the animals of Eden, but you deny my hamlet the merest Bengal tiger!”
“Mr. Patel, please calm down.”
“If you stumble at mere believability, what are you living for? Isn’t love hard to believe?”
“Mr. Patel–”
“Don’t you bully me with your politeness! Love is hard to believe, ask any lover. Life is hard to believe, ask any scientist. God is hard to believe, ask any believer. What is your problem with hard to believe?”
“We’re just being reasonable.”
“So am I! I applied my reason at every moment. Reason is excellent for getting food, clothing and shelter. Reason is the very best tool kit. Nothing beats reason for keeping tigers away. But be excessively reasonable and you risk throwing out the universe with the bathwater.”(297-298)

Pi both acknowledges the necessity for reason and the need to suspend disbelief. Pi fully acknowledges the many uses and necessity for reason, but makes the bold statement that if you are too reasonable “you risk throwing out the universe with the bath water.” Pi is saying that the only way to understand the universe around you is by suspending disbelief; the world itself is hard enough to believe that one can not understand it through reason alone. Throughout this exchange, Pi is issuing a challenge to the Japanese investigators, to suspend their disbelief. He then tells them another story, one without animals, placing upon the investigators the decision of which to believe. Martel, once again, demonstrates the desirability of suspending disbelief for a more vivid experience by having the investigators choose to mention the story that includes animals for their report.

[Mr. Okamoto’s] report, in its essential part, ran as follows:

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3.6. CONCLUSION

As an aside, story of sole survivor, Mr. Piscine Molitor Patel, Indian citizen, is an astounding story of courage and endurance in the face of extraordinary difficult and tragic circumstances. In the experience of this investigator, his story is unparalleled in the history of shipwrecks. Very few castaways can claim to have survived so long at sea as Mr. Patel, and none in the company of an adult Bengal tiger. (319)

This forms the final test for the suspension of disbelief. When faced with two options one which was reasonable, the other unreasonable, the investigator suspended his disbelief and chose the more vivid, enjoyable version of the story. By ending the novel on this note, Martel influences his readers to make the same decision as they are faced with the two versions of the story.

3.6 Conclusion

Life is filled with stories and story tellers. With every act of perception we are turning the world outside into a story in our minds. We are then faced with two choices, to view that story with skepticism and to attempt to be ‘reasonable’ with regard to what we believe, or to suspend disbelief and by doing so live life in a more vivid world. As seen in Yann Martel’s novel Life of Pi, by suspending disbelief we are able to achieve a much more deeply fulfilling experience.
Chapter 4

Self

We can not escape from our expectations. Everything we perceive is colored by them, from what we see to how we interpret the words on a page. The readers responses to a novel are heavily influenced by their expectations and assumptions. In the novel Self, Yann Martel as able to force the reader to reevaluate the characters in the novel and the way that the reader evaluates the world.

4.1 Early Childhood

Martel begins the book with a description of Self’s early childhood. Just as with the rest of the book, the perspective from which the story is told is decidedly first person. In the case of Self’s early childhood, the narrator takes on a naive and idealistic view of the world that causes readers to see through the eyes of a child and reevaluate their assumptions. In this passage Martel takes on childhood views of gender and sex.
4.1. EARLY CHILDHOOD

Once at McDonald’s near the school, at an unhappy moment of tension, I stood in front of the washrooms with Sonya, sweet Sonya. MEN said one door, WOMEN said the other. I thought, "No, no, this isn’t right. It shouldn’t be this way, not MEN, not WOMEN. It should be FRIENDS and ENEMIES. That should be the natural division of things, one that would better reflect reality. That way Sonya and I could go together through one door, and the others through the other."

The Self muses over division of people by sex, believing that instead people should be divided by “friends” and “enemies”. The Self seems, to the reader, not to understand the point of the division and, as a result, proposes an idea that is, to the reader, ridiculous. It goes against the most basic assumptions of the reader and in doing so, adds meaning to the idea. This antidote regarding the Self’s childhood is without purpose and meaning, unless it demonstrates a perspective radically different from the readers. By forcing the reader to accept a different perspective they gain incite into the Self and are better able to understand the perspective of the Self in childhood.

Martel also uses the readers view on an every day, mundane activity, washing clothes, to force the reader to reevaluate their views and use the difference between their views and those of the child Self to understand the perspective of a child.

I abandoned the boiling of carrots when I discovered the washing of laundry. Staring down into the toss and turmoil of clothes being cleaned mechanically is the closest I have come to belonging to a church, and was my introduction to museums.

The Self compares to the washing of laundry two things that would normally be entirely dissimilar in the adult mind: church and museums.
doing so, he sets the reader up for a new perspective, and brings the readers feeling about these things into their conscious mind.

It would start with my mother fooling the washing machine’s safety stop by jamming a coin at the back of the machine’s lid – the price of admission to the exhibit, the alms dropped into the alms box.

The Self begins the description by creating a solid comparison between something known to the reader and the washing machine. This allows the Self to pull the reader into his perspective and cause the reader to evaluate the view provided by the self in terms of their own life.

... The hot water rose slowly, a gentle immersion into grace – something i felt intimately since this was exactly how I took my baths ... I took an evangelical pleasure in the to-and-fro motion of laundry being sermonized. ...it was a painting – abstract expressionism in its purest, most ephemeral form. For entire cycles I would watch this kinder, broader stroked Jackson Pollock feverishly at work in his studio.

Through the imagery provided, the reader begins to understand the perspective of the Self. More importantly, however, the imagery causes the reader to recall their own memories of washing machines and from that can begin to view them from a child’s perspective.

When the washing cycle was over, the holy weather would retreat through the pores of the washing machine’s barrel. ... A final click and it would be over.

This sequence of connection and description causes the reader to bring their own concrete experiences to the view provided by the Self. As a result, the reader has a new perspective on this basic occurrence and has a better
4.2. FIRST TRANSFORMATION

understanding of the childhood self.

4.2 First Transformation

In the book the Self goes through a transformation from male to female on his 18th birthday. Much of the power of this transformation as a story telling device comes not from the impact on the Self, but from the impact of the transformation on the reader. This transformation is marked by a feeling of ambivalence on the part of the Self and is presented without regard for the idea that the change may be unusual or strange. It begins with an ambiguous statement regarding the Self’s physical changes.

The smaller my erect penis, the more intense my pleasure. Every morning my chest was itchy. When I scratched it, hairs cascaded onto the bed-sheet. (103)

Here, the Self begins to describe in not entirely unambiguous terms the transformation that he is beginning to undergo. A number of physical changes are described that as a whole place the reader on uneasy footing in the understanding of what is going on. This sets the reader up for the reality of the transformation that they are about to witness. The Self later continues describing the process of his transformation by mentioning the four symptoms that accompanied “it”, but still does not provide the reader with information about what “it” is. While this also hints at the nature of the change that the Self is undergoing, it still does not tell the reader the exact nature of the change or prepare the reader to accept what is happening to the Self.
CHAPTER 4. SELF

I awoke suddenly . . . I couldn’t remember anything . . . I knew that I was a woman . . . What I remember most clearly of this confusion is the feeling that come upon me afterwards, the feeling that everything was all right. . . . I got up in the morning, stood naked in front of the mirror looking at myself and thought, “I’m a Canadian, a woman – and a voter.”

While sudden, this transformation, in terms of its description, is not startling. The transformation is, however, in reality, a very frightening change. This point is emphasized by the matter-of-fact and nonchalant manner in which it is described. The truth of the transformation that the Self is undergoing is described in such a way as to make it seem like an after thought and the Self describes having turned from male to female not in terms of a transformation, but in terms of a reality: the reality that the character with whom the reader has connected is now a different sex. In describing the transformation as the Self does, the transformation is unrealistically simple. The readers surprise and internal disorder, which directly stems from the fact that such a fantastic event is described so precisely in the text, complements the lack of fanfare in the novel, to provide a medium for the change to occur in. It is only by adding the reader’s reaction to the equation that we are able to account for the character’s change in sex.

This straightforward description is also responsible for causing the event to be less memorable. While the transformation is disruptive to the reader, the fact that it is described briefly and subtly makes it less memorable. The readers adopts the understanding of the Self as a women and transformation takes a secondary role. This is taken advantage of by the Self’s first relationship with a man.

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4.3. SECOND TRANSFORMATION

He’s a man. This is homosexuality. I’m a homosexual. This was what had flashed through my mind downstairs when Tom had kissed the top of my head, and what began racing through my mind as soon as our lips touched. ... [it] is crazy, I know. We were doing the perfectly heterosexual normal, the banal even, but it came, over and over (201)

The Self is put into a sense of panic by her relationship with a guy. Having been born a man, this is the first relationship with the Self’s native sex. This shock brings the reader back to the reality that the self was at one point a man and in doing so solidifies the idea that the character has undergone a transformation.

4.3 Second Transformation

The Self undergoes a second transformation, seemingly as the result of a horrific rape filled with “pain” and “fear”. In sharp contrast to the previous transformation, this one is painful and troubling.

This time it started with a terrible headache. ... I wanted to scream, but I just lay there all night holding my head in my hands, aware of each passing minute. In the morning, the downy blond hairs between my breasts were darker.

Otherwise, I couldn’t pinpoint the source of pain. Breasts flattened, vulva closed up and then grew outwards, my every subtle aspect changed ... My emerging penis revolted me, but that was another self-induced pain.

I lost my baby, my child, my future. (313)

The rape and its following transformation causes the reader to become detached through its horrific nature. This time, instead of forcing a traumatic experience for the reader, the Self undergoes the traumatic reeval-
CHAPTER 4. SELF

uation of her identity. Due to the horror inherent to the self’s rape, her narration of it and the transformation that follows is, while graphic, sufficiently detached to avoid causing the reader similar turmoil in changing their understanding of the character. The graphic description, furthermore, makes the event meaningful enough in the reader’s mind that they find no difficulty in associating the transformation with it. An addition, the first transformation sets the reader up to more easily accept the second.

In each of these parts of the book, Martel uses the reader’s reactions to impact the meaning of text and uses the way he describes the different events in the self’s life to create reactions in the reader.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

When is a tiger really a tiger? Is a washing machine art? Can one practice more than one religion? Does one’s sex determine their identity? — What is true?

In both of Martel’s books, the reader is taken for an emotional adventure. Martel manipulates the reader, both unsettling and engaging her, leaving her emotionally fatigued. While Martel’s methods may be fairly clear, the overarching purpose is the question that we have found ourselves confronting.

Martel’s novel’s launch a flagrant defense of the idea that the truth is in our perception of that which we observe. We make real for ourselves that which we believe. That is, the belief of the mind trumps whatever reality may be.

In Life of Pi, regardless of what really happened to Pi of the life raft, the fact that Pi tells the story with the tiger makes it, for all intensive purposes, the truth. Whether or not that story actually happened is inconsequential,
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

the fact that those who he is telling the story to (the investigators, and (even more importantly) the reader) believe it makes it true. The same follows for Pi’s religious views — weather or not all three religions are true could be a matter of endless debate, but in the end, the fact that Pi believes in them makes them, for him, true. The mind makes them real.

Self deals with a much more intimate application of the same issue, our understand of the Self and others. During the Self’s childhood, the reader must come to terms with the alternate reality provided by the child through whose eye the would is presented. Later, when the Self undergoes transformation the reader must the come to terms with the reality of whose eyes they are seeing the world from: male or female, heterosexual or homosexual . . . In this case, the argument presented by Martel is that the truth is not our point of interest, weather or not the Self is male or female at a particular point in the novel is irrelevant, the Self simply is. It is during the first transformation that Martel shoves this idea down our throats, the still young Self has no problems accepting this new identity. It is later, when the Self has acclimated to the role of a women, that the idea that sex does not determine identity becomes a source of conflict. After the second transformation, the Self never fully recovers. The causes of this are debatable, however the fact that this second transformation is much more destructive than the first is undeniable. It is through this difference that Martel shows us the danger of becoming overly attached to what we perceive as external truth and, instead, tells us to only regard our internal identity free from the restrictions and expectations put upon us by our external identity. (This view of the world can be best seen in the child Self’s understanding of sexuality.)
Martel is very much, however, an idealist. While his tails and the lesions he tries to teach us are moving and deeply touching, their ability to be of use is limited by the very force they are fighting against, reality. From the lowest levels of our cognitive system, we are based on the principle that if it looks like a skunk and smells like a skunk, it probably is a skunk. And, we identify this thing we are observing as a skunk, no matter how much we want to believe it is god, the fact that we have fitted our schema of a skunk to it can not be escaped. Martel’s understanding of this limitation can be seen in the realm of possibility that he does restrain himself to (with the notable exception of the transformations of self which, intentionally, violently break free from what we view as possible). What if the tiger spoke?

“Doesn’t the telling of something always become a story?”
“Uhh... perhaps in English. In Japanese a story would have an element of invention in it. We don’t want any invention. We want the ‘straight facts’, as you say in English.”
“Isn’t telling about something—using words, English or Japanese—already something of an invention? Isn’t just looking upon this world already something of an invention?”
“Uhh...”
“The world isn’t just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no? And in understanding something, we bring something to it, no? Doesn’t that make life a story?”
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