**Excerpt from “Mirror” by Sylvia Plath**

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.   
Whatever I see I swallow immediately   
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.   
I am not cruel, only truthful ‚   
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.   
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.   
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long   
I think it is part of my heart. But it flickers.   
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Excerpts from The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein

Gestures are all that I have; sometimes they must be grand in nature. And while I occasionally step over the line and into the world of the melodramatic, it is what I must do in order to communicate clearly and effectively. In order to make my point understood without question. I have no words I can rely on because, much to my dismay, my tongue was designed long and flat and loose, and therefore, is a horribly ineffective tool for pushing food around my mouth while chewing, and an even less effective tool for making clever and complicated polysyllabic sounds that can be linked together to form sentences. And that’s why I’m here now waiting for Denny to come home—he should be here soon—lying on the cool tiles of the kitchen floor in a puddle of my own urine. I’m old. And while I’m very capable of getting older, that’s not the way I want to go out (1-2).

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Monkeys have thumbs.

Practically the dumbest species on the planet, next to the duck-billed platypus, who make their dens underwater even though they breathe the air. The platypus is horribly stupid, but is only slightly dumber than a monkey. Yet monkeys have thumbs. Those money-thumbs were meant for dogs. Give me my thumbs, you f---ing monkeys! ( I love the Al Pacino remake of Scarface, very much, though it doesn’t compare to the Godfather movies, which are excellent.)

I watched too much TV. When Denny goes away in the mornings, he turns it on for me, and it’s become a habit. He warned me not to watch it all day, but I do (15).