



NAXOS
AudioBooks

THE
COMPLETE
TEXT

Kafka On the Shore

Haruki Murakami

Read by

Sean Barrett & Oliver Le Sueur



NAX40512D

1	The Boy Named Crow	8:07
2	1 Cash isn't the only thing I take from my father's study...	14:43
3	2 The following document, classified Top Secret...	14:28
4	3 It's nearly dawn when I wake up...	14:32
5	4 US Army Intelligence Section (MIS) Report	17:04
6	5 I'm asleep when our bus drives across the huge new bridge...	36:15
7	6 'Hello there,' the old man called out.	20:18
8	7 At 7.15 I eat breakfast...	17:06
9	8 US Army Intelligence Section (MIS) Report	21:56
10	9 When I come to I'm in thick undergrowth...	18:32
11	10 'Is it all right, then, if Nakata calls you Kawamura?'	25:23
12	11 When I finish talking it's pretty late.	23:13
13	12 October 19, 1972	25:02
14	13 It's after twelve, and I'm eating lunch...	30:22
15	14 Nakata visited the vacant plot of land for several days.	27:32
16	15 Oshima climbs into his Miata and flips on the headlights.	27:01
17	16 The black dog stood up and led Nakata...	28:21
18	17 It's my third night in the cabin.	32:22
19	18 Nakata found himself face up in a clump of weeds.	19:50
20	19 It's Monday and the library's closed.	28:47

21	20	It was already past 8 p.m.	20:49
22	21	SCULPTOR KOICHI TAMURA STABBED TO DEATH	33:05
23	22	The lorry Nakata was riding in arrived in Kobe...	26:43
24	23	I don't know if a ghost is the right word...	34:37
25	24	It was already 8 p.m. when their bus from Kobe arrived...	20:49
26	25	I fall asleep for a short time...	33:05
27	26	It was already pretty late in the afternoon...	20:42
28	27	It's 2.47 when I notice that the girl's here...	19:50
29	28	For a man his age Colonel Sanders...	11:31
30	29	I call up Sakura from the public phone...	18:35
31	30	The two of them scrambled over the low hedge...	14:25
32	31	Just after one o'clock I take coffee...	28:59
33	32	When Nakata woke up at 5 a.m. he saw the huge stone...	28:43
34	33	I get the library ready to open...	19:36
35	34	The massive bank of thunderclouds crossed the sky...	20:38
36	35	When the phone rings at 7 a.m....	17:13
37	36	When he got back to the inn...	25:20
38	37	We stop at a town to have a bite to eat...	16:21
39	38	Hoshino looked up car-rental agencies...	22:12
40	39	My second day on the mountain passes leisurely...	17:55

41	40	Next to the sign that read Komura Memorial Library...	24:53
42	41	When I go to the woods this time...	17:54
43	42	Once the two of them were alone...	18:37
44	43	With all my baggage gone I can travel light...	20:58
45	44	They took the three files to a river bed...	20:19
46	45	As advertised, the path from the "entrance"...	30:03
47	46	After Nakata's death...	23:54
48	47	I wake up a little after dawn...	31:44
49	48	'Gimme a break,' Hoshino repeated.	26:17
50	49	Just after nine the next morning...	28:15

Total time: 19:05:29

Haruki Murakami

Kafka on the Shore

Translated from the Japanese by Philip Gabriel

The characters in much of Haruki Murakami's fiction live in between worlds; or at least they find themselves confronted with more than the standard reality of contemporary life. To some extent, this is true of their creator as well. He has gone beyond being a highly regarded Japanese writer with an attentive following abroad to one that is seen by some almost as a Western writer with Japanese roots.

Murakami creates a portrait of 21st-century uncertainty and consumerism standing unapologetically alongside – or interrupted by – a fantastic otherworld. In *Kafka on the Shore*, a truck driver is approached by an 'insensate being' in the form of KFC's Colonel Sanders who acts as a fast-talking pimp, introducing the driver to a Hegel-quoting whore; there are soldiers, unaged since the war, guarding an entrance to an alternative world of disquieting acquiescence; ectoplasmic

apparitions with violent intentions; talking animals; and rain consisting of leeches or mackerel and sardines – quite apart from literal elements of the Oedipal myth, epicoene haemophiliacs and the shadows of those who have glimpsed beyond the natural world. As Murakami says himself, he writes weird stories.

In this novel, his 12th book to be translated into English, he actually tells two tales, interweaving them in alternate chapters, although the connection is by no means clear to begin with.

The hero and narrator of half the book is a precocious 15-year-old, Kafka Tamura, driven from home by his overbearing sculptor father. An unexplained instinct is forcing Kafka towards a library where he befriends the highly cultured Oshima and the elegant Miss Saeki, who may be his mother.

Meanwhile, the tender figure of

Satoru Nakata is the central character of the other chapters. He was affected by a childhood incident that left him unable to read, but able to talk to cats. He is drawn into a world of surreal violence (cat-lovers may need to steel themselves for the encounter) that sets him off on a quest for something he will only know when he discovers it.

The two strands of the book are brought together but, as throughout the novel, this is possible to a large extent because of the interplay between the real world of trucks and trains and food, and the various limbos and after-lives concerned with teachings, choices and supernatural dangers.

Throughout, there are excursions into philosophy, the nature and purpose of art, discussions on Japanese literature; and themes that feature in other novels and short stories also make an appearance – Japan's history (especially its wars), a loner in the woods, cats, and music.

There are echoes of *The Catcher in the Rye* in Kafka's telling of his story, which is unsurprising for two reasons. First, Murakami was translating Salinger's modern classic into Japanese while

creating *Kafka*; and second, Murakami's attitude to Western culture is inclusive and welcoming. A profound love of jazz and pop, as well as much of the Western classical canon, runs through most of his work with the insistence of a soundtrack. He name-checks global brands. He translates American authors, and cites them as influences (Carver, Capote and Fitzgerald, for example). But possibly more significantly, his characters speak and respond to the world in a way that seems entirely at home with a Western perspective. Murakami is by no means the stereotypical Japanese man. He has said that he feels like an outsider in his own country, although his views shifted after the Kobe earthquake and the poison-gas attacks on Japan's underground.

Certainly he has never had an easy relationship with his home country. Born in 1949, he became uncomfortable with those traditions that seemed to represent a Japan that he did not want to be a part of. He turned instead to 19th-century European literature and contemporary American music in the mid to late sixties and found them far more to his taste – freer, more expressive and inspiring. He

began writing in a manner as bizarre and yet commonplace as any of his fictions. He was watching a baseball match, and after a particular hit decided to write a novel. So he did. But his successes forced him to leave his home and travel; and he also chose to spend some years in America teaching, adding to the sense that he was not comfortable in Japan.

In the literary world, there are critics in Japan who regard him as having, in effect, sold out; and who suggest that he is not attempting real literature in the true tradition. Meanwhile, for Western readers, he seems to be able to encapsulate something of their deeper moral concerns without sacrificing readability, and does so with reference to what they know. But Murakami is drawing from a much deeper well than, for example, magical realism, or 19th- and 20th-century English-speaking literature, and one that is sourced very much at home. Japanese fiction, from folk tales through the 1,000-year-old *Tale of Genji* (which is discussed in *Kafka on the Shore*) and beyond, has incorporated the spirit world with much greater ease than the West. We may have ghost stories or fairy godmothers, occasional magic or

fantastical powers, but these are either exceptional interventions or part of an entirely separate world that comes into brief contact with the human one. In the Japanese tradition, the existence of spirits that are a part of (and take part in) the real and physical world is taken much more for granted.

This is a profoundly Japanese core in Murakami's work. While his fantasies may spin with the fluidity of jazz, while he may cite American singers and German composers, and be compared to Camus and even the original Kafka, these stories can trace their ancestry back farther than any European tradition. In *Kafka on the Shore*, Murakami makes a point of discussing and mentioning great works of Japanese literature. If, as some of his characters do, he does exist between two worlds, he seems keen to introduce them to each other.

Notes by Roy McMillan



Haruki Murakami was born in Kyoto on 12 January 1949. He began writing at the age of 24. The impulse to do so first struck him, he says, during a baseball match, at the very moment when a famous player hit a home run. He went straight home and started to write.

His first book, *Hear the Wind Sing*, was published in 1979 and won the Gunzou Shinjin Sho, an award for new writers. At that point he was running a jazz bar called Peter Cat in a quiet corner of Tokyo.

In 1981, he started to write for a living and the following year published one of his most extraordinary novels, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, which bears all the Murakami hallmarks of superb writing, compelling plot, zany happenings and erotic moments. It was an extraordinary achievement for a relatively inexperienced writer, especially because it was strongly original in style and content.

There was a three-year gap before the publication of his next work, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, his most metaphysical, and perhaps strangest, novel. Three years after that, in 1988, came the sequel to *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Dance, Dance, Dance*, but by this time his reputation as Japan's most popular contemporary literary novelist was assured.

This was achieved with the publication of *Norwegian Wood* in 1987 which sold four million copies in Japan alone. *Dance, Dance, Dance* followed *Norwegian Wood* fairly swiftly, but there was a four-year gap as he started a new chapter in his life, living and teaching in the US. *South of the Border and West of the Sun* then came in 1992; his collection of short stories *The Elephant Vanishes* was published in 1993; and finishing this burst of creativity was *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, widely regarded as his masterpiece, in 1994.

He returned to Japan in 1995 after the Kobe earthquake, but it was not until 1999 that his next novel, *Sputnik Sweetheart*, emerged. This is another gentle study of the isolated individual, a theme that runs as a thread through much of his fiction.

After the Quake, his intriguing collection of short stories centred around, but not in, the earthquake, came in 2002. And *Kafka on the Shore*, which saw a return to his quizzical, off-beat fantasy style, was published in 2004.

With translations in other European languages, and a growing following on both sides of the Atlantic, Haruki Murakami's standing as one of the leading international writers of our time is increasing, and makes audio versions essential.

The Cast

Sean Barrett	Narrator	Georgina Sutton	Setsuko Okamochi
Oliver Le Sueur	Kafka	Bob Rollett	Dr Shigehori Tsukayama
Gordon Griffin	Dr Juichi Nakazawa	Daniel Philpott	Lt Robert O'Connor



Sean Barrett started acting as a boy on BBC children's television in the days before colour, when it went out live. He grew up through *Z Cars*, *Armchair Theatre*, *Minder* and *Father Ted*. His theatre credits include Peter Pan at the old Scala Theatre and Noël Coward's *Suite in 3 Keys* in the West End. Films include *War & Peace*, *Dunkirk* and *A Cry from the Streets*. He was a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company. He also features in *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnamable*, *The Voice of the Buddha* and *Canterbury Tales III* and read the part of Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot* for Naxos AudioBooks.

Oliver Le Sueur. Since leaving The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in 2002 Oliver Le Sueur has, amongst other theatre and television work; been a winner of The BBC Radio Drama Departments Carleton Hobbs Competition and appeared in a National Tour of *The Tempest* alongside Richard Briers. He performed the role of The Soldier in Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* with The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.



Georgina Sutton trained at Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art. She has toured extensively to repertory theatres around the UK in plays and musicals and has appeared in numerous pantomimes. Film credits include *The Gallery* (Channel 4) and the presentation and voiceover for 3G Mobile documentary. Audio work includes various commercials for Classic FM and recording course and instruction manuals as learning tools. Georgina is a regular voice for Marks & Spencer and Waitrose.



Gordon Griffin has recorded over 350 audiobooks ranging from Dickens to Catherine Cookson; from Thackeray to Chris Ryan. Recent recordings include *The People's Act of Love* by James Meek, *The Sixth Lamentation* by William Brodrick and *Viking* by Tim Severin. Also books by John Harvey, Robert Goddard, Beryl Bainbridge, David Lodge and JG Ballard. Naxos recordings include *Dead Souls* by Gogol and Plato's *Symposium* (as Pausanias).

Bob Rollett was born in 1939. BA Leeds 1962, PGCE Leicester 1963. Teacher, then Head of Department, then lecturer in English & Drama for 12 years. Seeking complete change he went to live and work on a farm as a Pigman and gained Craftsman's Grade Certificate. After two years he became a full-time student at Lincoln Theological College and was ordained in the Church of England in 1979. After serving as Parish Priest around the Cambridgeshire Fens for 20 years he was obliged to take early retirement and has now discovered that retirement is his true vocation, with time to read, write, garden, wood-carve and walk!



Daniel Philpott trained at LAMDA and, after success in the prestigious Carleton Hobbs Award for Radio Drama, has been prolific in BBC Radio and the Spoken Word industry. His theatre work includes numerous productions on the London fringe. For Naxos AudioBooks he has recorded *A Life of Shakespeare*, *Famous People in History – 2*, *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, *Pygmalion* and *Our Island Story*.

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Translated from the Japanese by Philip Gabriel
Cover design & concept by Hannah Davies

Haruki Murakami

*Kafka
on the
Shore*

Read by, Sean Barrett, Oliver Le Sueur
with Georgina Sutton, Gordon Griffin, Bob Rollett & Daniel Philpott

In *Kafka on the Shore* reality, mystery and magic merge in one of the finest novels from Japan's leading literary figure. The teenager, Kafka Tamura, goes on the run and holes up in a strange library in a small country town. Concurrently, Nakata, a finder of lost cats, embarks on a puzzling odyssey across Japan. Only gradually do we find how these stories interweave. Compelling story-telling drives *Kafka on the Shore*, but the novel is underpinned by Murakami's sensitive insight into humanity contrasted by a totally credible touch of the fantastical. It is a unique tour de force and particularly vivid in audiobook form.

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