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Observations without an observer

[reflection IV]

That's the fourth time this week I've gone to that room. It's stuffy in here, enclosed. So quiet I can hear myself breathe. The mirrors are old, silvered with age.

There are no windows. It's pitch black in here, yet the reflections are vivid. Where could the light be even coming from?

I don't know what it is about staring into mirrors for hours. I just *know* there's something to this. A whole other realm of its own. Sometimes I feel like the reflections are waiting— like they move when I turn around.

After a while though, I feel locked out of further interaction.

Maybe I should bring some books on mirrors— I've never really understood them. A watch to keep track of time. Something to eat to spend more time...

My friends refuse to come in with me. "Who would waste time staring into mirrors all day long. There's a whole world outside of this room!"

I think they're just not tall enough to reach the handle.

[reflection XXI]

Two weeks now. I've made this place quite comfortable. I've got a nice armchair, a small table, some books on mirrors, an alarm clock and some takeout that'll last me a couple days.

The longer I look at these reflections. I realise they're not all the same— distorted, disturbed, deformed attempts at reflection.

Some aren't even in colour.

Some don't even reflect me.... angles I didn't even know mirrors could show.

It's all so incredibly fascinating.
I feel privileged, *special*.

Are these mirrors trying to show me something? To get me to understand something? There's got to be some meaning towards this. I'd know if I only spent more time. I'm just not concentrating enough.

[*reflection CXLIV*]

My friends have stopped waiting for me outside. I told them off after four whole months of their noise and impatience.

I don't know if it's helping. Everything here distracts me... I keep staring and staring but the mirrors refuse to make sense. The light traces its destined path just as the books said it would— but no matter how much I stare, I can't see proper reflections.

I think I understand now that's what this is about—a *greater plane of reflection*— from more angles than anyone else could see themselves with at a time.

They're waiting for me to catch up.

I need to focus harder.

I don't know why I'm doing this. I just know I need to.

[*reflection CCLXVIII*]

I can feel the room driving me further. I've realised they communicate with me not through languages but *patterns*.

Questions that stick with me for days on end. Plagued till I get the answers.

I just have to concentrate.

I smashed the clock against the floor yesterday but the ticking wouldn't stop. Days of it. Weeks, drilling into my skull and those questions day in and day out. It's only been getting louder and louder— the more agitated I get, the more persistent it becomes, piling up day by day and the—

The mirrors won't give me any answers.

I tried covering my ears but that just made it louder—the blood pulsing, my own breath echoing inside my head.

It hurt less than I expected. Sharp at first, felt some pressure but the sound changed quickly—became muffled, distant, like being underwater. Then on the right side: silence. Perfect, clean silence. The left side took longer. My hand was shaking. But the room was patient. It watched while I worked. The blood has dried on my shoulders, crusted in my hair. I can feel it flaking off when I move.

The mirrors are clearer already. I can focus now.

[*reflection*]

I can no longer sit still. My body fails me. My restless feet betray me. My stomach clenches with a hunger I'd forgotten. A cacophony of need I can't afford to appease. A chorus of interference. I must silence this insatiable destitution.

My reflection is a document of this decay. My pale skin tears at touch— my blood a deep unrecognisable red. Bloodshot lenses in a pale, gaunt frame. Is the mirror now the *only* thing telling the truth?

Time has no meaning, or so the room tells me. I don't know when but I noticed that the stumps of my elbows had become clean, now. Mostly. I still bleed from my legs— The initial mess was substantial. The femoral artery especially caused quite an outpour. I threw up until there was nothing left— not even bile.

The other scars have now become scabs- hard, black, and intricate, a proud mark I carry of my resilience.

My left eye had been twitching for days. Muscle spasms I couldn't control. Or was this before the arms? Sequence doesn't matter. Today it just... stopped. Everything on the left is dark now.

The heartbeat is still the worst. I can feel it everywhere.

Marking time I don't want to measure.

Proving the body still thinks it's in charge.

I've read about this— pressure points. Places where you can slow it. Stop it, maybe, if you're committed enough.

The carotid arteries. Both sides of the neck. If you press hard enough, long enough.

The heartbeat gets louder first, pounding in my ears, my vision going dark at the edges. My body fights back—gasping for air, hands shaking worse.

I don't stop.

I had to bite down on the wooden floor and use what's remaining of my arms to try to move away from the urine and blood pool— an inefficient form of mobility but that doesn't matter. I must remove these worldly imperfections. Echoes of a world I left behind.

The mirrors present a facade of meaning while actively subverting it. Each reflection feels like a taunt, a deliberate, deformed attempt to mock the premise of reflection itself. This is not a failure of observation. This is a breach of contract.

$$[\quad]$$

A final, silent click.

There is no single truth to arrive at. The pursuit itself was the illusion. i was not a seeker of truth, but a tyrant. A desperate editor in a room full of contradictory authors. i took every raw, simultaneous truth the mirrors showed me—every fractured angle, every warped color, every possible me—and tried to bind them into a single, coherent lie— *The Self*.

i thought the body was a distraction. That the pain was a signal. All of it was a fabrication to justify my own existence.

The room was never speaking in riddles. It was speaking in choruses, showing me everything at once. I simply refused to see, because to see it all was to admit that coherence is a cage.

The mirrors are not lying. They are all true, all at the same time. They are all here. They always have been.

i was the liar

must stop

must stop trying to narrate

must stop trying to observe

must stop trying to be

there is only the room.

observations

without

And it is.