

A Brief Scrape with Self Reflection

Holed up in a classroom. Fluorescent lightbulbs ringing out a dull pale glow. Harsh shadows.

Sleepy eyes. A boy on his phone. Someone's asleep in the back. Traveling in circles. Going nowhere. A question with no answer and no desire to debate. Strange, artificial lighting.

Unsaturated color. Feels like winter. Could be summer. Feels like nighttime. Might be the middle of the day. Any questions? Silence. Okay.

I may have willingly relinquished my autonomy. Is independence something to grab with force?

Or more prudent to grow through a simple, gentle shift of framing?

I have to stop falling in love. I'm certain it would be fruitful to stop falling in love (it most certainly would be healthier than this - Obsession). With a woman who doesn't love other women. Have I morphed into a bore? Distracted. Perhaps this is why the universe is shifting at a jarring angle. Perhaps this is why I feel my chest is a hole.

To force my hand or to surrender instead? Surrender sounds sweeter, but opens the possibility of slipping back down the hill with the rain, like a mudslide toppling downwards. Getting covered in gravel. Standing in the same spot in a year. Goofing "oops!" before crying about the death of progression.

I feel as though I have seen this movie before. Let it go, let it go. Cut the ropes, cut the ropes.

A day in my childhood home. Laying outside. My mother has these soft brown lounge chairs that have wheels with which to mobilize the relaxation. I use them to follow the sun - every hour or so, the sun travels further across the sky, and I'll be getting up and wheeling the chair several inches in order to maximize the sun damage on my skin. Another situation of perpetual self sabotage, I suppose, but it feels so nice to have the sun on my skin. That smell. I don't know what it is, its something like - the way the mixture of the chlorine on my skin intermingles with my sweat. The sun beating down. Biting. I watch as a water drop travels down from the edge of my wrist, as it trickles down my arm. Slowly, it slips down the middle, where my vein must be, I think. I watch as it passes by, in the moment the skin underneath - magnified. I see every wrinkle, every line. It drips down into my shoulder and I lose my resolve. I drop my arm back, slung over my head and close my eyes under the 4:00pm summer sun. Then that breeze. I let out a sigh. So my breath and my noise could travel with it. Going west. My skin has dried. Sticky. I imagine what there might be inside for me to eat.

This, right now, this very moment is an irrevocably remarkable time! Everything in front of us, a blank expanse - the horizon is new and unexpected and strange and

Jarring. White knuckles. Are we supposed to be enjoying this more?

Shouting out into the wind. No one paying attention to words. So scared. My voice caught up in the void. Vacuumed up like a rug. Crumbs disintegrate into nothing. I too, fall into nothing. I can't even know if *I'm* paying attention to me. It's as though none of us ever learned how to stop running. Running with our heads down, eyes focused on our feet, as the road ahead is a shade too dark to peer into. Oops, we ran right into a wall. Oops, I ran myself right into the ground.

The world is shaking. Coffee spills out of a paper cup. Droplets splash onto a table. A door creaks. A pen rolls off the table and clatters on the ground. A bird chirps outside. A car crunches over gravel. It rolls in over the driveway. Finger taps on wood.

Too young, too young. Sitting in a classroom isn't making us any smarter. Stale. If anything, we might be getting duller. A nation paralyzed. When you sharpen a pencil too much, so much that the sharp tip breaks off and it becomes dull again. Too much of a good thing. If you invite it in, that is. Everything requires cordial invitation. Yet you can be fluent in a language and never be heard.

It's monotony that I slink away from, like a cat. Sometimes I feel like I am narrowly avoiding a treacherous slope towards insanity.

Another way to let down the world. White light is dancing on the tips of my fingers and the circular fans whir on above my skull. I brought my film camera but nothing happened. So I sat under the stars where I stared and thought softly, singing. Dreaming of my mind and the way my arms wrap around my side and my hair drips water in my face which goes, intermingling with my clothes.

This whole mess of a world is curling up inside you. Asking to be let out and shared. Holding hands, molding into the darkness. Focus on the roots and the rhythms and the lines and the grooves. Something grounding, something to make each of us feel a little more special.

We're real human beings. That should be enough for magnetism! I feel that we don't do enough to acknowledge our frailty, our vulnerability. She says happiness is a safety net, one that I have used since a little child to escape into the expanse of my mind. I goof, "oops." Progression is a myth. But I do. And I did. I find happiness in all the emotions. And in the wave of a palm tree.

I get a tattoo out of stubborn indignation. A symbol of myself for my spirit, trapped in a vessel. Built-in reminder - you're you, oh right, I love you. Ridiculously, borderline psychotically, fantastically, madly entranced by you. All tangled up. To live in infinity together. Am I the only one planning ahead?

Mist strolling through the clouds like a bird strolling across a lawn. The sun rolls up and my mind begins to spark. A sparkler glows dimmer in the dark. I have a flower in my hair. I see the way the colors intermingle and slip out of my mind.

You tell me you don't love me. Grey. I recognize your voice and I was afraid the others could hear me but I— they did. They held me down to break my neck, I lay so still, still that the yellow could drip out of my mouth and my ears, from my mouth rolls off my tongue comes the sound, the sound came, the sound came and I was free. I was humming. I am humming. And the pink

and green were swirling, with all that humming. As always, I wish I could disappear into the folds of my mind.