

The Reflection in the Mirror was never mine⁴⁶²

Julia Prieto Pérez⁴⁶³

I stare at the mirror looking for my eyes. I can't find them. I look waiting to see the reflection staring back at me. It never comes. I wonder where it's gone to, why it is always so busy to look back at me. Finally, it's not my reflection that I see, but a face appears in the glass. I can only think how ugly it is. It seems to be distorted and I wonder why. A smile creeps up its face and I wonder why it is judging me. Distorted as it is, it seems to come in waves, sometimes blurry, sometimes clearly. I can't decipher who it is that is reflected in the mirror, I don't think I know them. A stranger perhaps. Their mouth moves and I think they might be telling me something (some secret message I am yet to understand). I can't hear them. Now I feel like I'm drowning inside the mirror and I can't feel my legs anymore. Is this what being dead feels like (is this what death feels like)? I find that I rather like it very much. Of their own doing, my fingers have reached the frontier of death, now they are touching glass. It's cold. It brings me back to the present, where a stranger is still looking back at me. I try to caress its face because I can see the sadness in it. It looks like it took hostage there years ago and never left. I understand that feeling. But why is the face mocking me if I was just trying to comfort it? Maybe it's been isolated (inside the mirror) for so long it doesn't remember what being touched feels like.

Everything has become a blur now. I can see a silhouette in front of me, but where is its face? Why are there no eyes looking back at me? It has two hollow black holes right where the eyes were supposed to be. I feel like it wants to humiliate me. How funny, I think, that I feel just like the reflection looks. So empty, so hollow, so dark, so foolish. Is it a real person

⁴⁶² **Recommended Citation**

Prieto Pérez, Julia. "The Reflection in the Mirror was never mine." *JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* vol. 12, no. 2, 2024, pp. 184-185:

<<https://www.ucm.es/siim/journal-of-artistic-creation-and-literary-research>>

©Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

⁴⁶³ **CONTACT:** Julia Prieto Pérez <julpriet@ucm.es>

in the mirror or is it just the reflection of my true self? Am I really so ugly? So disgusting to look at that one can't bear to breath while doing so, scared that it will realize that I am here, just as hideous, yet with a skin to pretend? I do pretend, mostly, to be someone I am not. To be anyone at all, really. I can't endure being myself, if there is anything to be. Indeed, when I do have to be myself, I feel so disgusted that I try to forget about it immediately. I fade away those memories, burying them so deep down inside my soul that I forget they ever happened. They are just a pigment of my imagination. They are not real. If I think too much about it, I am not real either and, again, I feel like I rather like that feeling very much. But how come it is no longer a reflection in front of me that I see, but a dark figure standing behind me in my side of reality? Maybe it can teach me how to do that so that I can crawl inside the mirror and hide there forever, away from the revulsion that keeps me from being nothing at all. At the end of the day, that's all that I am, just like it is, I'm nothing but emptiness, and all emptiness is nothing.

Notes on contributor

Julia Prieto Pérez

CONTACT: <julpriet@ucm.es>