

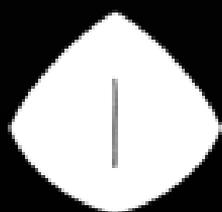
REFLECTIONS

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And other things I should tell a psych

By Shapeless Ink

Preface

Have you ever looked into an infinity mirror and noticed that the deeper you stare the more distorted and dark the reflections become?

In reality it's because light can only bounce so many times between two surfaces before it ends up rebounding off some slight imperfection, away from its repetitive path - but that's not how it feels.

Over the past several months, I have been experiencing what I can only describe as "feelings of unreality." I do not know if what is going on with me is physical, or psychiatric, or a combination of both.

In attempting to reflect on moments and events in my past, I became less and less sure of anything, including who I am as a person. I'm not sure that doing this has helped, but it felt like I needed to.

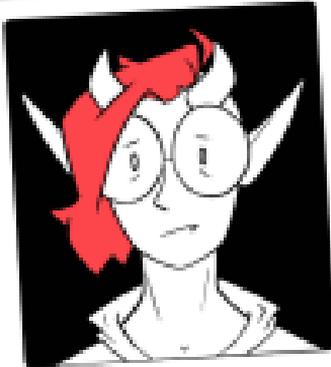
This collection of works is the result of those self reflections.



I'M NOT WELL

AND I'M NOT SURE HOW TO GET BETTER
IF I CAN GET BETTER
WHAT CAUSED IT
WHAT I CAN DO
IF I EVER WAS
OF ANYTHING
OF WHO I AM

REGISTERED CRYPTID



NAME
SHAPELESS INK

DESIGNATION
NON-HUMAN ENTITY

STATUS
OFFICIALLY DISPUTED

REGISTRATION No. **34-172-L3X1**

This card certifies the above as a Registered Cryptid or other
Creature of Disputed or Unsubstantiated existence with the
Terata Falls Wildlife Authority



DON'T BE FOOLED

On good days I'm not human.

On the bad ones I'm not real.

Friend said it to me once.

"Medication can't help people like you."

But maybe a tranq dart can.

Just don't photograph me.

The images never look right.

Just like mirrors.

I don't know my shape

There are a lot of things I don't know, but the worst is not knowing my shape.

Because I don't know my shape, I don't know where I fit. And because I don't know where I fit, I feel forever unbelonging.

Momentarily I might feel in place. But the feeling doesn't tend to last long. Eventually it fades, and new corners have to be filed down, or sometimes it becomes obvious that I don't fit somewhere, and so I leave — as quietly as I can, usually.

People sometimes ask what the tattoo I draw myself with means. To me, at least, it means that we are always changing. We have changed, we can change, and we will change. It was meant to represent my desire to be a better me but on reflection, I realize it also signifies the truth that I like less: That stability is impermanent.

I can appreciate my shape, and the comfort there might be in thinking that I know it for a while. But it doesn't last forever, and the loss of what I think I know still hurts every time it happens. In that way I guess I fear being reminded of not knowing my shape.

I still plan on getting the tattoo I so often draw myself with, though. Maybe it will serve as a reminder to myself that change always comes, whether I'm ready or not. Maybe it will make it hurt less.





I NEVER ASKED FOR THIS

I WAS TOLD TO TAKE WHAT I AM GIVEN

EVERY ACT FEELS SELFISH NOW

AND THESE WINGS WERE BESTOWED

WHEN I WAS TOO FUCKING AUTISTIC TO KNOW I SHOULDN'T HAVE HAD THEM AT ALL

AND NOW I ACHIEVE TO FEEL THE GROUND BENEATH MY FEET AGAIN

THE RESPITE IS A TEMPORARY SALVE FOR THE SOUL, THOUGH

BECAUSE THE WINGS WILL GROW BACK

THEY ALWAYS DO

BUT I'M NOT YOUR ANGEL

AND IT WAS UNFAIR THAT YOU SAID I WAS

AND NAÏVE THAT I BELIEVED YOU



I LEFT MY CORPSE IN THE FREIGHT ELEVATOR AT WORK



When the eye spoke.

I think if I had to pick one abstract concept that has had the biggest impact on my life it'd be climate grief.

The six years I spent at university studying the multi-faceted field of Environment Management broke me. I don't think it's uncommon for that to be the sentiment among university graduates, but something in the specifics of my degree truly fundamentally changed me as a person.

I transitioned because of it.

I abandoned the UK and moved to Canada because of it.

I fell in love and got married because of it.

I wrote books and made art because of it.

I let the mania develop a voice because of it.

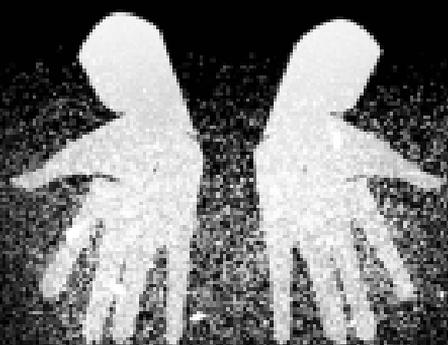
That's what Lighthouses is about, if you've read it. The feeling of knowing, or at least having a pretty good idea of what's coming, and no one listening. Just stuck there, watching the ship get closer and closer to the rocks. I figured I'd rather die having experienced joy than been forever miserable and curious.

It changed me in a lot of ways, I think, but maybe the most intense way was the fact that all of this feels like borrowed time, now. Like eventually, my end will come and it will suck, but it'll suck for a lot of people, really, so why get so upset about it? Grave's already dug.

Death's coming and I had it pretty damn good for a while, all things considered.



|| DISCONNECT ||



BUT
DESPITE
IT ALL,



I THINK WE'LL
BE ALRIGHT

End notes

I don't like sanist language, and I often feel diagnosing myself with anything in particular as being pretentious or otherwise an exercise in making myself somehow more unique than I am.

I am aware these are learned behaviours that in the long run may hinder my ability to accept myself for all that I am.

Suffice it to say for now, though, that the last few years of healing have been rough, and my reflection isn't what I thought it was.

I don't know if I will ever fully know myself. DID, OSDD, CPTSD, OCD, DPD, DRDP. They're all just letters .

All I know is that something hurt me, shaped me, and made me this way, and the best I can do is learn to cope, and enjoy it for what it is.

Sincerely,
Whoever you think wrote this.

