

Yes, A Dream

by Deborah Oster Pannell

In a dream, she saw herself as a ghost. She thought, there's a dividing line between the conscious and the unconscious, and I can feel myself slipping over...

At any given moment, Lydia might be on the wrong side of the mirror, trapped in a wordless void. From this silent vacuum, she wanted to dive deep into a dark, cold lake, and then, burst up through the surface into the sunlight, gasping, craving the rawness of the air.

Making love had ceased to be fulfilling. Hovering on the edge of satisfaction was no longer exciting to her. It had become more of a flirtation with death, the completeness of pleasure tantamount to the end of all process, all yearning, all meaning and significance.

Yes, I know it seems as though I'm exaggerating, but she really did feel these things. At least, that is what she told me, in our weekly sessions that had begun to feel less like work to me and more like entertainment. For Lydia's existential crisis had taken on the qualities of a most excellent cinematic experience. A dada carnival of random images that came together in an expression of universal harmony, as much as any soundless cartoon merged with the musical journey of the song that happened to be playing, she the hapless soundtrack to my narrative du jour.

It is a miracle, I thought, that I am able to maintain my professional demeanor, as I felt the floor coming up to greet me, my own mirrored self flashing bared teeth, torn and tattered flesh hanging from them, Lydia's suffering injecting brilliant color into my professional pallor, and I saw myself licking her face, biting her lip, nuzzling my face between her breasts, and thought, oh please let this be a dream.

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