

Tabula Rasa

by S.H. Gall

When I was younger, I tried very hard to be myself, but it never worked. I'd close my eyes, wait a beat, open them and slowly bring them into focus. *This is the new me, the only me.*

Never worked, not once. It could only last a minute or two, so I spent my entire adolescence with blurry, expectant vision and dashed hopes.

In high school I found that my hunting knife — gift from Grandpa — was a valuable friend. My flesh was so easy to slice into! And then I could forget my lack of identity, and sample my thick rich blood, and when I started smoking at sixteen I discovered the pleasure of the self-cauterizing burn. No blood to taste, but a lingering smokiness in the air that literally got my dick hard. The scars were better too.

It turns out that the childhood me was totally right in his uncertainty. The identity I was so desperate to assume wasn't me at all. I was seeking something unreal, imaginary, falsely encoded. The real me? He's regenerative with each passing nanosecond, turned inside out, a step ahead of his own future.

Sometimes I still close my eyes, wait a beat, open them and bring them slowly into focus. What I see there is me, watching myself and watching myself ad infinitum.

225 words

