

I WANT TO SEE MYSELF REFLECTED IN THE MIRROR OF YOUR SONG

Mario Bellatin

My body is in decline. Like a plank that someone is raising, little by little, until it is vertical. Once they achieve this, they will have finished me. The angle gets ever more acute. My body, meanwhile, is becoming deformed. It is curious that I compare it to a plank – flat and smooth. My body began to deform three years ago. I believe it was due to the effects of medications, those definite, which I must take regularly. My lower abdomen is transforming – as the stomach, the chest. The front part of the body has begun to lose its reason for being. My shoulders narrow, one in particular, my neck is sinking, shriveling. I'm going to a Feldenkrais expert for my stretching. I have to be alert – especially at those times I flood my body with drugs. My relationship with digestion therefore has worsened. I must not let growths go unseen. The head, the mind, is another thing. It seems to be the zone that has suffered the changes more than any other – from convulsive states to coming to believe that the surrounding world does not exist to not being able to shake my head violently because I begin to feel a series of ricochets, like waves expanding into nothingness. There are also attacks of fatigue – sudden and devastating, precise – that are impossible not to obey. I see myself walking along the streets of a great city and into a café to sleep a while next to my just poured cup of coffee. The sleep state is so deep, and so short a duration, that when I awake I ignore what has happened, as much with my surroundings as with myself. I don't know where I find myself and why I have experienced so many crowded images. It's true, in moments like that an entire parallel reality appears in my head – intense and luminous. As if the first signs of the event were a title to a song, whose mere mention is capable of eliciting the most ludicrous memories. I check my watch and see not five minutes have passed. My legs still recall the memory of my days as a professional cyclist when I would ride 40 kilometers a day and 200 on weekends. I believe they are still strong. My right hand recently granted me a big surprise – unpleasant, or better, sad. I always thought it did twice the work of a normal hand and that it would by now be twice as strong. It was curious to confirm that, on the contrary, it is now a hand with little power – weaker by one half. Nevertheless, nothing hurts. It scares me to sometimes lose my breath. For that reason, I always carry an inhaler of salbutamol with me. It also frightens me to drive on certain nights when I'm not seeing well. That lucky break of night blindness, or variable sight, is a consequence of an operation for myopia undertaken in the years preceding the use of lasers for such surgeries. My eyes were submitted to the scalpel alone. I shave my head. I could let hair grow, but it doesn't come out the same. I would like to stop time – make these mutations stop once and for all. Perhaps the lyrics to a song heard at a time that has frozen itself in timeless fate; perhaps that could do it. Staring through that looking glass a present memory creates, it might be possible to return to the point of origin – back to that place that represents us ideally. We will observe how a similar mechanism operates inside us all. Aldo Chaparro is familiar with the manipulation of these laws, though they appear impossible. We contemplate, listen, record and claim that we are not in reality how others see us.

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