

*Lucidity

Death

They say that looks can be deceiving.¹
More and more, I find myself believing that.
But I'm still torn between the facts my eyes deliver and the translation my brain extracts.²
If what I see is what I get, that's all I have and nothing more.
Yet my mind loves to conjure –
illusory perceptions, cunningly woven fabrications of its invention
So with every look I give I find I live in tension
between what I know and what truly is³

They say the eyes are windows to the soul
Less and less I feel it stressed to look in two big black holes
Mere physical features of social creatures, there's nothing more there to behold
Or so I'm told⁴
But what then of beauty?
Where then does it lie,
if not in the eyes of an immortal
Past those black, those glassy portals
unto perspicuity
Into the essence of a being⁵

¹ I do a play on three different phrases. 1) they say looks can be deceiving, but our eyes only deliver information. That is not deceiving. What is deceiving is our interpretation based on assumptions, limited information, etc. So what I "know" isn't what always truly is. 2) Eyes being the windows to the soul is meant to say that we can read emotions and intentions in others eyes, regardless of what they say. However, I take this phrase literally. If I look into another's eyes and don't see or believe in a soul behind them, I just view them as another pile of matter. And while beauty being in the eyes of the beholder is meant to give the beholder the power of importing meaning and value, here I flip it to mean not that the power to import beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, but beauty actually lies behind the one beholding (or using their eyes to see). 3) The saying is really that "time remedies all ills." However, the accrual of enough time is simply synonymous with death and destruction, as that is what eventually happens, and what is meant in the saying. In this section I flip the intended phrase by saying that death will cure the ills time will build, which opposes the common saying.

² It's not really the looks of things that are deceiving. Everything that enters our eyes and senses is true. It's when it gets to our brain and our thoughts that things get twisted. If my mind is so good at twisting reality, even as the facts are right in front of me, how can I trust any assessment I make of "facts?"

³ So often the things I have "known" to be true ended up not being true. There's a tension between what I feel I know, and the knowledge that what I've "known" in the past has frequently been overturned because of my twisting of reality.

⁴ Physicalism has many moving away from notions of the soul, and other such spiritual concepts. When I look into another's eyes I'm just looking at a conglomeration of carbon and other elements. What my brain extracts and takes as knowledge is largely a social construct.

⁵ But if the eyes I look into are windowless, what of my eyes? If there's no beauty in the eyes of those I behold due to there being no soul, then I'm not really a beholder myself, as I have no soul. What then of beauty? And what then of the value of others, and of my own value? What then of essence? Do I become a machine moving along purely by the laws of physics? If eyes aren't windows to souls, there is no beauty because there's nobody who can discern it. It's a chemical construct.