



Mirror

Sylvia Plath

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see, I swallow immediately.
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike
I am not cruel, only truthful –
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me.
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

Speaker = the mirror = dramatic monologue



The mirror says that it's unjudgmental and it just reflects everything it sees – it swallows or absorbs images and then reflects them truthfully

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see, I swallow immediately.
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike
I am not cruel, only truthful –
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.

These short sentences stress the mirror's straightforward, no-nonsense approach.

Is the mirror comparing it's functioning and "morality" to that of human being? As humans "mist" things with preconceptions, we "love or dislike" we are cruel and tell lies.....

The dash an afterthought – mirror is all-seeing and all-knowing.... Also limited in that it is a "little" god – what limitations does it have?

The mirror leads a dull and mundane life



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It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Woman searches the
mirror for her true
identity.

METAPHOR
Mirror = lake *How is a mirror
different from a lake?*



Narcissus

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me.
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.

She is upset and
disturbed by what she
sees reflected in the
mirror.

Why?

Candlelight and
moonlight is far
softer and kinder.



I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

*As time passes, the woman loses her youthful beauty and
starts becoming an old woman as ugly as a terrible fish.*



*Fish = cold-blooded, limbless creature – cold, empty limited
life of vanity*