I know now mommy, I know why you could only watch.

Jody Salerno is a Queer, Femme, feminist, Italian Mother of three, Grandmother of one and Other Mother to several. She is a Trans ally and former Sex Worker. She has worked within the hotel, shelter, and social service settings for 21 years. Currently, she is the manager of a shelter for women, children, and youth escaping violence. She is also completing her undergraduate degree in Women's Studies at York University.

JANE TASKER

The Blind Mirror

To be myself (I note) I need the illumination of other people's eyes and therefore cannot be entirely sure, what is myself.
—Virginia Woolf, The Waves

The mirror was not always blind. When you first brought it home, Its trinity of glass surfaces, Arched and bevelled, Shone With the depth of silver.

It limned us so sharply then —the man, the woman, the boy— Held within the narrow and burnished frame Carved with small, dense roses (I saw no gargoyles then).

The first scratch was a superficial one: Perhaps some grit of cast sand caused it, Or perhaps a child's makeshift sword Swung lightly, recklessly through the air, Glanced its tip across the mirrored surface As if over the filmed retina of an eye.

There were other abuses: A moon-shaped nick, Like the imprint of a fingernail, Left by a flung teacup; A dulled edge along the bevel Where you rested your head On the sleeve of your coarse tweed jacket, Telling me you were worn down, abraded.

We kept secrets. Love was offered, withheld. We sought ourselves in the eyes of the other’s reflection. I saw you look through me and past.

LINDA FRANK

Miscarriage

Henry Ford Hospital, 1932

The hospital bed is a raft she floats over a dun coloured plane Blood stained sheets against a deserted Detroit horizon, pewter gray sky

This kind of loss is like no other It tosses her naked through inarticulate space Grief. A desolate stare. One amplified tear slides down her cheek. Her belly still swollen with the missing child

She can barely grip the artery-red reins of sorrow that yoke her to the harrowing symbols she paints Her lost fetus. Her broken pelvis salmon-red torso and damaged spine The snail slow abortion. The machine grip of pain and Diego’s gift, the bruise coloured orchid

On her mantle she keeps a fetus in a bottle of formaldehyde Tells everyone it’s her own stillborn child

Linda Frank grew up in Montreal but has been living in Hamilton, Ontario since 1977. She teaches social science at Mohawk College. Her work has been widely published in journals and anthologies across Canada. Her first collection of poetry called Cobalt Moon Embrace was released in 2002 from BuschekBooks. These poems are from a manuscript seeking a publisher on Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, called Kahlo: The World Split Open.

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