

The Picture

Take a picture of me so I can think of something. I need to think of something. The picture will stare back at you, she alerts me. What do you want to see? I don't know. You're the one who asked for a picture. You must know. Show me your eyes, I insist, before she takes the picture. What do you see in the viewfinder? I ask. She's reflecting. You speak with your eyes, your metaphors, whenever you speak there are images and poetic figures. Does it make sense? At the same time, she tells me that my images are fragile, while my words have more strength. Where the images are, you are not, she emphasizes. Is there anything else in your horizon that you want me to reveal? She asks. The verb and the gesture and that they come from the same place in the brain, I reply. There is a center, a tension, between my eyes, my hand and my mouth.

Can I brush your hair? She asks, putting the camera down. I don't answer, yet she begins to brush my hair. She's often like that, initiative. You know you're not eternal, don't you? Nothing is eternal. Because things get postponed, they come later. All images are the idea of a desire, she says. She lectures me as she touches my hair, staring outside the window. I love the blue sky. The speed of the color is so limpid. Tell me more about my picture, I ask. Does it love you back? Because I love you back like any reflex weighting in the mirror. Even if you shatter the image, it won't break apart. My love for you is not in the picture. She's somewhere else as I speak.

I wish I could tell what she's looking at when she's not too concerned about my stories. She says out loud, I am going to transform you. Listening to her, I am not sure if it is her gaze or of myself looking at myself that affects me.

There's old age, a bit of old age in each one of us, she says, handing me back the camera. Your turn, she says. Have you taken it already? I ask. I wasn't expecting this. I want to photograph you passing through time, is it possible? I ask. Leonardo da Vinci understands perspective as everything you show behind a window, inside and outside, so yes, why not? I don't know where I am when I think about time, she says, staring at the camera in the front of my face. She's no longer interested in me. She's caught by the sound of the news, something about the military coup in Turkey, an old interview, weeks later. Is the Internet in real time? I question.

She looks back at me and I click, taking the picture. She smiles, as if she's not surprised. You know, Homer didn't know he was telling stories, for him what he narrated were facts. What to do with all these images? I just want to see my face through your eyes, I tell her, not really explaining how frustrating it is not have the experience of other bodies. It doesn't make sense. She nods. An absence is a presence in every image. Are you looking for a totality? No, I say. What is not in the picture? Who is looking back at you? What Di Cavalcanti saw when he painted the woman with the conical breasts? He's a Brazilian painter. I don't know, I tell her, looking down at her chest. Come here, hold my breasts, kiss me now, she continues, and I put the camera down, kissing her back.