

## We Always Knew

You can still see it if you look closely. Between the tepid smiles and vapid words we share lies the dim flare of what we could never hold onto. The taste of completion that stings our tongues so harshly because we know it will fade to bitter resentment, then, most painfully, to nothing at all. Such is the dance we share, pirouetting around each other so gracefully such that neither you nor I will ever touch, for we both know at the gentle caress of skin on cold, cold skin, that one of us would shatter. No matter. The mournful tune to which we spin plays on, and so do we. It was never meant to be, but if we bear our teeth so kindly and meet each other's gaze, perhaps we can believe those awful affirmations we so crave.

*Why are you so difficult?*

You can still hear it if you're quiet. Among the twisted whispers that skirt around the words we could not bear, within the subtle hesitations that hold truths we cannot utter, is everything and nothing. We mutter to ourself in silence, for we do not dare disclose to one another all the kindness we weren't strong enough to share. Perhaps it was never there. Let us sit here then, basking in the impossible possibility that what we cannot say could fix what was born broken. We are not God, nor were we made in

His image, but we look just like each other, and that might be enough. So do not say a word, for what stays unspoken is forever perfect, and the most sincere comforts must remain unheard.

*This is what you made me.*

I wish I still felt it when I moved slowly. When I close my eyes, when I let the lines between myself and you fold away like linen sheets in Spring, when I pretend, if only for a moment, that I am whole, it isn't quite the same. We, no I, have changed. Stare back, the mirror's eyes so filled with blame, he speaks to me in crooked glares. Square my shoulders, stand up straight to match him, though I never can. He spins too fast and talks too slow, we're always out of time. If only we could just align, if only for a moment, if only just today. Stare back, the mirror's eyes not brave enough to meet mine. The tune still plays, our mouths stay shut, we dream our soft if only. The lights go out, the room goes dark. Together we are lonely.

*I'll see you in the morning.*

*And the one after that, and the one after that, and th...*