

STOP LOOKING AT ME - Short Film

written by

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INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Top down view of a disheveled young adult in their mid 20's shuffling into the bathroom. SALEM opens the closest mirror cabinet to grab their toothbrush, revealing a hint of THE REFLECTION and its unsettling stare. The Reflection disappears into Salem's normal reflection when they close it.

Close up of their phone by the sink buzzing with messages, the clock reading "3:42 am". Salem turns it over face down.

Cut to a mirror shot of Salem, then even closer into their baggy eyes, smudged mascara, picked-at skin, and dandruff-riddled hair. They strategically face down at the sink.

Salem brushes their teeth. They spit into the sink then watch blood streak it. They look up at the mirror.

The reflection appears, a misshapen version of Salem with pinhole eyes. Blood drips out of the corner of its mouth.

THE REFLECTION

Do you want to know what I see?

SALEM

Stop.

The Reflection shoves a vericose hand through the mirror and begins to trace Salem's nose. They shove another through and trace their baggy eyes. Slowly, a third hand twirls their dandruff-riddled hair as a final fourth hand slowly tugs down their lip to revealed bloodied gums.

THE REFLECTION

(matter of factly)

I see a runt that should not have been shown mercy. What a cruelty to leave you uneaten. Now, you go to waste.

Salem shoves its hands away.

SALEM

(shakily)

Stop it. You aren't real.

The Reflection smiles slowly, revealing an impossibly crowded grin filled with crooked teeth.

THE REFLECTION

I am as real as everything else you've seen and heard.

Salem grips the sink as they suddenly become dizzy.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. CLASSROOM

Suddenly sitting at a desk and holding its edges, a pale CHILD'S HAND points at TWEEN SALEM'S crooked nose and teeth, prompting them to cover them quickly.

INT. PARENT'S HOUSE BATHROOM

Tween Salem dons make-up and straightens their hair with Mom.

MOM

There you are. How pretty.

INT. CHURCH BATHROOM

YOUNG SALEM grips the bathroom sink while wearing a spring dress, a large curtain drape trailing into the bathroom, out of place. The shadows of PASTOR and FATHER loom over it.

FATHER (O.C.)

(pleadingly)

Please Pastor, she's only a child.
She doesn't know any better.

PASTOR (O.C.)

If you hadn't let her dress like a
whore, I wouldn't have to cover her
up!

YOUNG SALEM sways, then stumbles back as if fainting.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Salem lies on the floor, helpless and tear-streaked as The Reflection prods at their body with many, many hands.

SALEM

(weakly)

Stop.

THE REFLECTION

You don't want this body, do you?

The Reflection pins them down, becoming terribly monstrous.

Salem's phone buzzes again. The Reflection **grows larger** to cover it.

SALEM

(choking up)

I just want you to stop looking at me.

THE REFLECTION

(forcefully)

You don't want *anyone* to see this foul vessel of yours. Otherwise, why do you always worry over what they will think of it?

The Reflection leans in much too close to Salem, its eager mouth **dripping saliva** onto their face.

THE REFLECTION (CONT'D)

(increasingly monstrously)

Otherwise, little beast, why would you care *so much*?

The Reflection opens its terrible maw as if to swallow Salem whole. The phone buzzes once more, tipping off the counter and snapping Salem out of it.

Top down view once again. They lie alone on the floor of their bathroom.

Slowly, they sit up. They grab their phone and turn it on. Messages from concerned friends **pop up**, with one particular message sticking out. It reads, "salem!!! im coming over if you don't respond soon im serious!!!!!!! no more missing hangouts for u!!!"

The Reflection appears once more and peeks over their shoulder, but they don't turn around to face it.

SALEM

(whispering)

I don't want to care so much...but I do want to be seen. No matter what you say.

Salem taps the latest message and **brings up the call button**.

THE REFLECTION

(quietly)

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Salem hovers their thumb over the button.