

POST-OP

by

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I can see clearly now, the haze has gone – and the ghosting – scraped into a kidney dish, a new lens fitted making the world smaller but sharper. Stripped bare. I am bewitched by brightness, the whiteness of white, the purity of shape. Flower petals are more delicate, leaves are greener, begonias blowsier, tomatoes plumper. Raindrops bejewel cobweb strings, sparkling sunlight. And why didn't I notice the insect perforations in the broccoli leaves, slug holes where the light comes through, ants scuttling, minute flies hovering over the fruit?

Indoors, though there's dust on the screen I can watch television without glasses, even read the subtitles. What I still cannot see are the instructions on my bottles of eye drops or the eye of a needle.

In the bathroom, my left eye sees a shower cap, smoky yellow, dusted with amorphous smudges while my right sees it cloudy white with a thousand black love-hearts. 'Floaters' have disappeared from the snowy sink, replaced by the minutest specks of blueberry from breakfast, dislodged by my toothbrush. As for my teeth, least said. No Colgate ring of confidence for me. No pearly 'Ting!'

For, now, my treacherous Dorian Gray mirror shows every crag, sag and wrinkle, every blemish, every sorry life-stain, with pitiless glee. 'What now, old woman?' it cackles. 'What else makes you you, now that your face is gone?'

Surely there's something? Beneath the skin? Deeper?

For so long, I saw **you** through a glass darkly but now, seeing what you must have seen when **your** cataracts were peeled away – your wife revealed as an aged crone – I see you better. This was the truth you never told me, my rock, my kind and ever-loving white liar.

Who knows what I will see when the left eye is done?