Echo and Narcissus

There once lived a blind prophet named Tiresias, many came from far and wide to see what future would bestow them. One day a woman came, and in her arms she held a baby so beautiful and handsome that his mother feared of his future. She worried the gods would try to kill her son as they were jealous of his immortal beauty. Tiresias heard the question and looked into the future. “ The Gods pose him no threat, he will live a long life unless he learns to know himself.” The woman walked away, the baby in her arms. His name was Narcissus.

Day after day his mother got more and more fearful of Narcissus's fate. For each passing second he was getting more and more handsome. Any woman who laid their eyes on him fell instantly in love. Many came from far and wide to see his face, get a glimpse of his beauty. Hundreds of maidens craved him, but none of them talked to Narcissus. The one flaw that Narcissus held was that every day he got more handsome he became more and more vain.

Meanwhile, Zeus was pursuing Nymphs Goddesses, searching women and not one hesitated to respond even knowing that Zeus already had a wife. Zeus knew did not even bother to keep it from his wife. So he got a nymph to distract Hera every time she was close to catching him in the act. Her name was Echo. She prattled on to Hera about nothing and everything. Zeus had underestimated his wife. She saw right through it. So one day, to get back at Zeus she said: “Nymph, you always have the last word and now you will have nothing else!” Echo tried to respond but strangely all that came out was “nothing else.” Echo was an echo. Hera had bewitched her and Echo no longer had a voice but one for the many others that did. She was destined to repeat everything forevermore.

I shall take you back to the beginning, when we met a beautiful man named Narcissus. Echo stumbled across him and instantly fell in love like the many before her. She followed him far and wide trying to proclaim her love, but she could not speak for herself. One day, Narcissus and his friends went hunting and they got split up. Echo was filled with joy. This was her chance. “Is anybody here?” “here” repeated Echo. “ Then come to me” said Narcissus. Echo ran towards him and put her arms around him. “ Leave me alone!” He screamed tunning away from this ugly nymph. “Alone, alone.” Repeated Echo. After that day Echo became pale and thin, soaking in her sadness lying in it bathing it day after day. One day she tried to stand up on her weak legs. She was not strong enough though. Her bones ripped through her body and she crumbled. Blood and bones she could not hold it and she did not survive. Only her voice did. It hides among caves and hills, anywhere, everywhere was Echo.

Looking behind his shoulder Narcissus kept running, careful of the nymph. His breath became heavy, his body got tired. He stopped by a lake to drink. It was perfect just like Narcissus .It was like a mirror. Leaning over the edge Narcissus saw a face. He craved this face it was so beautiful. Narcissus leant forward to kiss it but it disappeared. Narcissus was pained by it. He needed that face. He lay by the mysterious lake anguished and hurt. Confused and horrified. Again and again he tried to kiss it, but every time the face disappeared. The one who would fill the non-perfect part of him. I bring once again to the prophet. Narcissus had fulfilled his telling. He truly knew himself. So, the torture began. No thought could better this one and day after day Narcissus would stare at it. He stayed there for years on end weeks on weeks, one after the other. “Come to me!” Cried Narcissus. “ When I cry you cry, when I laugh you double over. I know you love me. Why should we not embrace? I think I understand. I love myself. I crave myself. We will always united and separated. I have loved you in vain.” Echo stole the words for her own.” I have loved you in vain…… Narcissus closed his eyes and put his head on the ground. His soul flew out of his mouth travelling beneath the earth in houses big and small. Into the underworld, into the land of the dead. It travelled upon the river of forgetfulness. It could not resist the urge to take a peek over the side at its reflection that lay on the surface of the water.

The news spread far and wide, not one person did not know of his fateful death. They searched the woods for his body. However in his place lay a flower, leaning over the edge of a pool, looking at its reflection.

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