



# The Mirror

*The way you see yourself when no one is watching*

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## What the mandala shows

An ornate gothic mirror stands at the center of the page. A hand reaches toward it from below. Inside the frame, instead of a reflection: the moon, stars, and a single raven. A hooded figure is suggested in the shadows behind. The mirror is not showing what others see. It is showing what you see when you are alone.

## What this shadow is

The Mirror is the reflection you meet when no one else is in the room. You look better in other people's eyes than in your own. A friend gives you a compliment and you disagree silently. A photograph catches you at a good angle and you delete it, convinced it was luck. When you pass a window, the face you see first is the one you have been arguing with for years. This isn't vanity. It is a long quiet war — between who you are, and who you learned to be ashamed of being. Most of what you call self-honesty is someone else's old verdict, repeating in your voice.

## You may recognize The Mirror when:

- You can give others grace you refuse yourself
- You cannot accept a compliment without correcting the person
- You avoid mirrors in certain moods
- The voice you hear most often about yourself is not friendly
- You have a list of things you will fix before you let yourself rest

## Where it lives in the body

Chest, gut, and behind the eyes. A pulling-in when you catch your own reflection; a small recoil you never named.

## What the coloring does

When you color the mirror slowly, you spend time with what it shows, without the usual argument. Color the moon first. Then the raven. Then the hand reaching up. That hand is yours. It is not reaching to correct the reflection. It is reaching to meet it.

## After coloring, take five minutes:

1. **Breathe.** Three slow breaths, soft eyes.
2. **Color.** The moon first. The raven second. The hand last.
3. **Notice.** Whose verdict is the voice in your head repeating?
4. **Write.** One sentence: "If I saw myself kindly, I would notice \_\_\_\_"

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*The face in the mirror has been waiting for you to meet it without a report card.*