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## The Way You Look

Diane Shipley DeCillis

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*Diane Shipley DeCillis*

## The Way You Look

When I was younger I dropped acid with my boss,  
a doctor who said he was doing it for research.  
One thing he discovered was that I looked Japanese  
under the influence, which was interesting

because I always thought my mother, who was pretty  
and very photogenic, looked Asian  
in certain pictures. I stayed with him for more  
than a decade. We became lovers and had our pictures

taken many times. He was older than my father,  
a foot taller than me and Irish. His skin was fair  
next to my Lebanese complexion and he wore  
size 13 shoes to my 7's. But looking at

our photos we saw a strong resemblance: our smile, the eyes,  
and he noticed we both had freckles, a sort of connect-  
the-dots that formed a bond. I wondered if this likeness  
was really there or if it grew out of the desire to merge.

I never think of myself as photogenic. It's hard for me  
to pose. I try to open my eyes wide, smile, chin up,  
chin down, it's just not good. They say symmetry  
is key, "the golden ratio" which has something to do with

beauty along with high cheek bones, and nice teeth—  
features models and actors possess. A British artist  
made a study of how facial features influence attraction.  
She discovered Echoism, a basic similarity

where two people respond to an echo of their own face.  
It even happens with dogs and their owners. Another theory  
is Prima Copulism where one is attracted to another  
because the face reminds them of their first love—

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their father or mother. I've never told anyone  
about the acid trips. It opens your mind to all kinds  
of possibility. Once we drove to the store and he saw  
a dead animal in the road. I asked if it was an elephant

and it was. And then we saw the dead giraffe, the zebras,  
animals everywhere. On acid you can say the word geisha  
and watch a girl become origami that unfolds with vivid  
color in fantastic detail. The Japanese don't demonstrate

affection openly, they believe in expressing it  
with etiquette—but I think love is a wild animal  
without measure or manners, the hunter on drugs,  
the fun mirror that morphs reason and ratio.