

CURATED REALITIES: On the Architecture of Narrative Truths



A suburban gallery's walls held a muffled silence. On one white plaster wall a lettrist projection was cast with fractured glyphs and splintered alphabets spiraling into smoke and hints of flame. Against that chaos, a luminous nude stood, strangely still, a calm island in a sea of dissonance. Satoru broke the silence, his voice threading deliberately through the air.

"Each discourse," he said, eyes on the alien letters, "is never just words. It is a curated vision—a singular, filtered window into what we call reality." He stepped closer to the projection, as if proximity might help make it more decipherable. "Don't these images feel incongruous because life itself is incongruous?"

Melissa followed his gaze, with a greenish light from the projection pooling across her face. She tilted her head and for a moment the boundary between image and room dissolved. "Truth migrates," she said slowly, testing the idea. "It slips from frame to frame, adopting new masks stitched by our imaginations." Her fingers brushed Satoru's arm, to anchor herself to something human amid the digital flux.

The clack of Tim's shoes broke the spell. Sharp. Deliberate. Each step a refusal to reverie. He did not look at the figure, but merely looked at the system, its scaffolding beneath the aesthetic. "Every discourse," he said evenly, "serves something." He paused, lingering on the digital projection. "There's no neutral ink." He then turned, eyes cutting across the room in a way that was unyielding, yet not unkind. "We inherit narratives like maps already marked with borders. If we want honesty, we have to read across them: layer against layer, shadow against shadow until understanding who drew those lines and why."

Silence tightened for a moment, then loosened. Liao exhaled, a weary breath that carried skepticism. He glanced at his phone's glow, then back to the projection, which neither blinked nor yielded. "This," he said with a tired half-smile, gesturing toward the images, "is a distraction. Does it confront what's real?" His thumb traced the seam of his jacket from habit rather than conviction.

Tim paused. Then looked again at the figure—that still, impossible center where all noise seemed to dissolve. "And yet," he admitted, softer now, "some messages are more than just flickers. Some constructions of meaning demand our attention. They deserve memory. They deserve preservation."

The digital artwork offered no reply. But something within it suggested a quiet insistence: not all fragments are broken. Some fragments, when placed together, can reconfigure what we call the truth.

- T Newfields

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