

3 REFERENCES TO THE REAL ESTATE

And who among us is not neurotic, and has never complained that they are not understood? Why did you come here, to this place, if not in the hope of being understood, of being in some small way comprehended by your peers, and embraced by them in a fellowship of shared secrets? I don't know about you, but I just want to be held.

Mary Ruefle, "Madness, Rack, and Honey: Collected Lectures" 2012

- What does it feel like in there?
The rational answer to this question involves a kind of person who, in addition to the spiritual, also possesses something material, something either to grasp, or with which one could grasp.

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At the end of the sixth minute of the film "The Lonely Villa," a mother and three daughters move all the furniture in the room – namely, a table, a chair, an armchair, and a sofa – to the door to prevent burglars from entering. Nearing the end of the film, the burglars finally manage to break down the door, and the family, along with the film's action, moves to the next room, which looks identical in layout to the previous one, but with a slightly altered set design. Here, the stage is occupied with a coffee table, two chairs, and a chest of drawers, but the door is now blocked with the family's bodies. The 12-minute silent film, devoid of any soundtrack, is not at all devoid of language. Although language in its classical form appears only a couple of times in the film, these almost elusive signs, together with the languages of acting and scenography, can describe values and relationships far more clearly and powerfully than speech that devolves into scream.

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"I keep looking, looking. Trying to understand. Trying to give what I have gone through to someone else, and I don't know who, but I don't want to be alone with that experience".

These words open Clarice Lispector's novel "Passion According to G.H." - the story of the protagonist's mystical crisis, much of which takes place within the walls of a single room in her large penthouse. In the more than two hundred pages of this turbulent monologue, the only hints of a description of the protagonist slip in only in the spatial elements, the props of her universe:

"All you need to do is see the initials G. H. in the leather of my luggage to know that that's me".

"The room was the opposite of what I had created in my home, the opposite of the gentle beauty that came from my talent for arrangement, from my talent for living, the opposite of my serene irony, my sweet, disinterested irony: it was a violation of my quotation marks, the quotation marks that made me a reference to myself. The room was the portrait of an empty stomach".

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The room was a portrait of a mouth without a tongue in the works of the Belgian artist René Magritte. He often took familiar, mundane objects as a question, searching for another object that could serve as an answer, giving simple scenes of the material everyday a plot, and thereby forcing the composition to doubt the normal order of things. The central object of the painting "Homage to Mack Sennett" is a wardrobe. Nothing in its form or surroundings, from an architectural standpoint, suggests further details. Only the left door of the wardrobe, almost wide open, like a half-opened curtain, sheds light on a possible continuation. Inside, a long, tight dress hangs on a hanger, with a pair of breasts visible in the front. Referring again to Lispector's novel, on page eleven, the protagonist says:

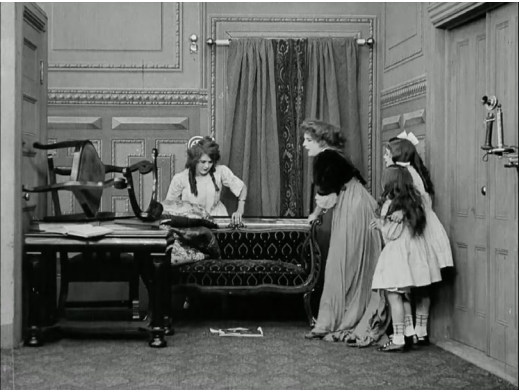
"I'm not up to picturing a whole person because I'm not a whole person myself. And how can I imagine a face if I don't know what kind of expression I need on it?"

Thinking about all this raises another question:
How can something that so strongly suggests presence so obviously indicate absence?
And vice versa?

Clarice Lispector wrote one of her most significant and famous novels, "Passion According to G.H.", in late 1963, very quickly, during one of the worst periods of her life. The finished work is a first-person verbal narrative, using language as a tool to comprehend something indescribable or difficult to describe. In an interview, Lispector, referring to herself, asserts that the events described in the novel have nothing to do with her own life struggles.

René Magritte completed his painting "Homage to Mack Sennett" in 1934, toward the end of his stay in Paris, where the artist finally developed his distinctive, recognizable style, built on the paradoxes of logic. I refer to him because the wardrobe appears in Lispector's work too.

Over his 25-year career, actor, director, and producer Mack Sennett, referenced by Magritte, contributed to over 1,000 silent short films, many of which repeated their plot lines, alluding to themselves. Sennett, as the screenwriter for the film "Lonely Villa," referencing himself, played the role of the policeman who apprehends the robbers in the film.



Stills from "The Lonely Villa", 1909



René Magritte, Homage to Mack Sennett, 1934