

I don't have a soul-piercing stare. That kind of scares me because every single person I know who's got that *je ne sais quoi* has a very striking kind of look. Marie Curie, my mother, Kendrick Lamar. Their eyes glow with an intensity that reveals something about their character, their ambition, their poise.

I've tried to replicate that look before; I'd sit down and stare intensely into the camera, eyes slightly narrowed, mouth slightly agape. The resulting photo reveals my intense concentration, but directed at what? Pleasing the camera? The people who have intense stares think about the world, matter, anything but themselves.

If the camera weren't there, I wouldn't be trying to look emotionally constipated for fun. In the absence of the camera, I think I'm also intense. What translates into the sort of burning stare that captivates me? Is it not being aware of the camera's presence until the *click* catches you by surprise?