

# Reflections

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## Characters

Augustus  
Augustus the Guilty  
Augustus the Liar  
Augustus the Fear  
Augustus the Reminder  
Augustus the Lost  
Augustus the Insane  
Augustus's mother

One-act written by  
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## Reflections

*Setting: No time, any time. Somewhere in the fibers between reality and the human mind.*

*AUGUSTUS sits on an armchair with a remote, pointed at the TV, flipping through channels, maintaining the illusion of normalcy. Various TV sound effects are heard, but none of the sound effects have words until the soundbite: "...freak power outages causing..." AUGUSTUS clicks the TV off. The sound of a clock ticking remains.*

*AUGUSTUS: (looking directly at audience, speaking in a unnerving, almost unfeeling tone) The day after it happened, I started talking to myself. The week after, I started seeing my brother everywhere. Bo would be sitting on the couch, next to me, as I clicked through channels. (AUGUSTUS grips chair, but does not change tone) He would be staring at me from across the room as I tried to make sense of the game of death. He would be -- he would be 19 today. (AUGUSTUS stands up) I convinced myself that all I needed to do was think.*

*MOTHER enters.*

MOTHER: Bo? Oh, Augustus.

*She tries to console him, but he stays frozen, looking out.*

MOTHER: Augustus, sweetie... Are you doing okay?

AUGUSTUS: All I needed to do was think.

MOTHER: Here you are, all alone, by yourself...

AUGUSTUS: I just need to reflect. I'm just going to the bathroom to clear my head.

*AUGUSTUS walks from the armchair to the "bathroom," which is just comprised of a mirror and sink. MOTHER exits robotically, in time with the ticking of the clock. AUGUSTUS talks to himself in the bathroom.*

AUGUSTUS: God, if he could see you now. *(groans, bent over the sink, head down)*  
What am I doing?

*He splashes water on his face. Lights flicker off and then on, suddenly revealing Augustus's reflection, which is THE INSANE. As AUGUSTUS looks up, his reflection (THE INSANE) looks up and they begin speaking together, mirroring each other's movements.*

AUGUSTUS and THE INSANE: What. Am. I. Doing. *(exhales in frustration)* All I am is Bo's little brother...all I am is an accident...all it was was an accident. Who are you? I need to know. I used to know. I used to recognize you. *(angrily)* Me! Reflections change. *(AUGUSTUS turns his back on the mirror)*

THE INSANE: *(from mirror)* Augustus, you don't think you're going insane, do you?

*The unseen clock stops ticking. AUGUSTUS's face changes with the fear of going insane, as he realizes that he's talking to himself.*

THE INSANE: You're guilty, you're lying to yourself, you're scared, and you can't stop reminding yourself of what you did. You're lost and --

AUGUSTUS: But I'm not insane!

THE INSANE: *(tauntingly)* Then why are you talking to me? Huh?

*AUGUSTUS wheels around and punches the mirror. We hear a cracking sound. He punches it again and each Augustus comes spilling out. THE INSANE laughs. Blackout.*

*Lights up, revealing each Augustus (except for the original) standing in a separate frame (a separate shard) of the mirror, spread across the stage at different depths.*

*AUGUSTUS stands free at center facing out and snaps his head up, breathing hard.*

*Each Augustus in the mirror shards take turns saying "tick," emulating the sound of a clock ticking.*

AUGUSTUS: *(struggling for words in a mixture of emotion)* No, this can't be happening! *(looking around)* Who -- where -- what -- what's going on? Who are you?

THE GUILTY: I'm you, Augustus. Augustus the Guilty.

*AUGUSTUS approaches THE GUILTY, who stands resigned at his frame. "Ticking" continues.*

AUGUSTUS: *(frantically)* What do you mean?

THE GUILTY: If you hadn't lost control, it wouldn't have happened. It's all because of you.

AUGUSTUS: *(backs away)* No.

THE GUILTY: He didn't bet his life. Bo didn't gamble. You know that. You wanna take another shot? Well guess what, you don't get another shot at a brother like him.

AUGUSTUS: Stop! *(THE GUILTY falls silent)* I didn't want to play God, okay?

THE LIAR: You're not guilty, Augustus.

AUGUSTUS: *(falters)* I...

THE GUILTY: Ignore the liar. Please. You can't believe anything he says. He just denies everything that happened.

THE LIAR: *(scoffs)* I do not deny everything! *(turns back to AUGUSTUS)* Look, you didn't do anything. In fact, you were a hero for running back to the house and getting them to call the ambulance.

AUGUSTUS: Except that I was the one that --

THE LIAR: That doesn't matter. What you need to do is forget about him. Bo was just a casualty of the world. You just happened to be the vessel through which the universe acted. There was nothing great about him anyway.

AUGUSTUS: Shut up! How dare you talk about Bo that way?

THE LIAR: Augustus, if you would just come a little closer, I --

AUGUSTUS: No way! I'm not dumb. No one good enough ever trusts a liar. Besides, I'm not the one that's trapped in there.

*THE INSANE, THE LOST, THE REMINDER, and THE FEAR whisper "that's what you bet" at varying rhythms. AUGUSTUS continues like he hasn't heard it. "Ticking" resumes.*

Ha, I don't need you. I don't need anybody. *(his frustration turns to self-loathing)* You make me sick. Get away from me!

THE GUILTY: You can't get away from yourself.

THE LIAR: *(voice even)* All I'm saying is that you need to move on and live.

AUGUSTUS: *(breaking down a little)* I can't. I'm afraid to live!

THE FEAR: *(echoing)* I'm afraid to live!

AUGUSTUS switches his attention and approaches THE FEAR who shrieks and recoils.

THE FEAR: *(rambling stream of consciousness)* Will I do it again? Am I going insane? I didn't mean to do it. I didn't mean to do it. What if it happens again? Blood on my hands. Same blood runs through my veins. Why did it have to happen? What if I'm going insane? Am I going insane? I'm so scared. I'm so scared. I'm so scared.

THE GUILTY: Just look at what you're doing to yourself.

THE REMINDER: And don't forget what you did to Bo and to your family.

AUGUSTUS: *(to THE REMINDER)* Who...who are you?

THE REMINDER: I am the Reminder. And really, who are you?

AUGUSTUS: I thought I was who I was, and I thought I was happy with that but it's hard to want to be anything anymore because I can't get away and undo what I did and now... I just don't know anymore.

THE LOST: *(always looking out, unfocused and in a different world)* I'm still there. I'm still there. I don't know where I am anymore. I'm lost in the confusion.

*AUGUSTUS looks to THE GUILTY for an explanation, who shakes his head sadly.  
AUGUSTUS looks back to THE LOST, worried and confused.*

*THE INSANE and THE FEAR whisper "I just need to reflect."*

THE REMINDER: In the morning, we ate cereal for breakfast. There wasn't enough milk, so Bo ate his cereal dry.

THE LOST: Isn't it terrible, how quickly people can vanish?

THE REMINDER: We went to the field to hunt.

THE LOST: One moment, you're standing shoulder to shoulder and the next moment you're alone in a field.

AUGUSTUS: The field where my brother died... I've imagined going back.

THE LOST: The field. I'm surrounded by weeds and some grasses. There's no trace of the scene I know too well.

AUGUSTUS: I've imagined going back. But always, always, I arrive too late to take the rifle from the boy I was, too late to warn him of what he can't imagine.

*The next section is a flurry of overlapping thoughts expressed as dialogue, crescendoing in volume and energy as the tensions rise higher and higher. None of the characters move from their frame and AUGUSTUS stays in the middle, getting battered by their words.*

THE REMINDER: It's all your fault. It was you!

AUGUSTUS: No it wasn't.

THE LIAR: I didn't do it!

THE GUILTY: I didn't mean to!

*THE LOST begins to hum underneath it all.*

THE REMINDER: *(mockingly)* You wanted to do it yourself. You wanted to spend time with Bo. Bo's time is all spent up now, isn't it?

AUGUSTUS: It was an accident!

THE GUILTY: Does that even matter, if someone ends up dead?

*THE FEAR screams. "Ticking" ceases. AUGUSTUS's eyes are scrunched closed and his body is tense.*

*AUGUSTUS opens his eyes and looks up, reliving the scene right then and there.*

THE REMINDER: In the morning, we ate cereal.

THE LIAR: There was enough milk for both of us, but Bo was a martyr yet again. Turning down the pleasure of breakfast to be a hero...

THE GUILTY: Somehow, I owe you. I appreciate all your sacrifices, but there's no way I can ever pay you back.

THE FEAR: I'm never gonna be good enough for you.

*THE INSANE, THE LIAR, and THE LOST whisper: "He was always better."*

THE GUILTY: Why couldn't it have been you instead of him?

THE REMINDER: We were going hunting. We were going to the field.

THE LOST: Bo pushed me. Scraped my hand on the ground, a little blood.

THE LIAR: It was an accident.

THE REMINDER: We got to the top of the hill. Only one of us would come back down. Bo was perfect. At hunting, at it all.

AUGUSTUS: Hey! Let me try. I'm not stupid.

THE LIAR: You're inferior, Augustus.

THE REMINDER: Every time, I hear it.

AUGUSTUS: Just because you're older!

THE FEAR: The drums. I heard the drums.

*Drums start playing in the background, barely heard but noticeable.*

THE REMINDER: You were at the top.

AUGUSTUS: *(speaking to the "Bo" that isn't there)* I know how to do it! Stop! You always treat me like a kid. Let it go! I want to do it myself --

*AUGUSTUS pantomimes a rifle in his arms as he tries to wrestle it away from the "Bo" that isn't there.*

THE REMINDER: and you heard the --

*A gunshot is heard.*

THE FEAR screams, a curled up ball on the floor.

*AUGUSTUS, horrified at accidentally shooting Bo, freezes.*

AUGUSTUS: No no no no no no no!

THE REMINDER: He fell in front of you, it was already seeping across his sweatshirt.

THE LOST: The gun...it just...went off...

THE REMINDER: You remember screaming and running back to the house. You remember hiding in your room.

THE LIAR: No one will ever forgive you, Augustus.

AUGUSTUS: No. *(on the verge of tears)* You're lying.

THE REMINDER: The next day, someone brought me oatmeal. It was the same bowl from which I'd eaten cereal before it happened. There I was, eating it in the morning.

*THE INSANE and THE GUILTY whisper "we were all mourning."*

THE LOST: They say he's in a better place. But how can I tell them that he's still near me, still terribly close?

THE FEAR: Is there anything left?

*AUGUSTUS stands center, head hanging down, exhausted by sadness.*

*Until this point, THE INSANE has been standing, arms supporting himself against the frame. He's been a sort of sleeping criminal, a villain listening in on every bit of the conversation, reacting.*

*But now, THE INSANE looks up with a malicious grin.*

THE INSANE: Well, well, well. Augustus. Bo's little brother. Are you doing okay?

AUGUSTUS: *(looking up in shock)* What -- no, I know you! You're crazy!

THE INSANE: *(taunting)* Well look who's smart enough to figure it out. Ha, I guess I could give you some credit. But I'm not just crazy. I'm Augustus the Insane. I'm you. We're one and the same.

AUGUSTUS: No, we're not. I know we're not! *(AUGUSTUS falls to the floor and crawls away backwards from THE INSANE mirror shard)* Get away from me! I -- I'm not you, get away!

THE INSANE: Believe what you want to believe Augustus, but we both know what's true.

AUGUSTUS: No... *(standing up)* No.

THE GUILTY: Accidents happen, Augustus. Some things are just out of your control.

AUGUSTUS: *(still looking at THE INSANE)* I --

*Unable to find words, AUGUSTUS turns his back.*



THE INSANE: *(laughing)* You can't even stop yourself from killing your own brother. There's no way you can stop yourself from going insane. You can't do anything.

*AUGUSTUS spins around and drums increase in volume.*

THE LOST: It was an accident.

*AUGUSTUS approaches THE INSANE, who stands with his arms against the frame.*

THE INSANE: Yes. You're finally doing the right thing.

THE REMINDER: There's still a chance.

THE GUILTY: Healing, recovery, hope!

THE INSANE: You're almost there.

THE LIAR: Go ahead, get closer. He can't touch you.

*AUGUSTUS takes more steps towards THE INSANE.*

AUGUSTUS: You think you can play me?

THE INSANE: Yes, that's right.

AUGUSTUS: Well, I'll show you.

*AUGUSTUS steps right up to the frame and looks THE INSANE directly in the eye. THE INSANE reaches through the frame and grabs AUGUSTUS by the front of his shirt, as if about to drag him into the mirror. Lights flash on and off. Black out.*

*THE FEAR screams.*