

There's Something Wrong with This Mirror

I'm noticing a delay in my reflection.
Everything seems to be five seconds slower.
I wipe the condensation off with a towel,
but the moisture evaporates after the swipe.
I give myself a smile after brushing my teeth,
he seems to hesitate before giving one back.
I tell him he's going to have a good day,
his response feels more sarcastic than affirmative.
I try to understand why my mirror won't
match me in time.
I turn the lights on and off, but the mirror stays
bright in the dark and vice versa.
I exit, close the door, reenter.
He's too sluggish in his action.
I want to rip the mirror off the wall
and understand why he's not accurately
reflecting me in these moments.
However, all that's behind him is an empty medicine cabinet.
He takes longer to look at its contents than I do.
Maybe we'll sync up again someday.
Or maybe he'll start moving before I do next time.
Then I'll have to wonder why I'm so slow,
so hesitant, so incredulous at what he does
that he'll really have to give me a much closer look.

Title comes from a riff from the Mystery Science Theater 3000 episode The Pumaman.

BIO: Alex Carrigan (he/him) is a Pushcart-nominated editor, poet, and critic from Alexandria, VA. He is the author of *Now Let's Get Brunch* (Querencia Press, 2023) and *May All Our Pain Be Champagne* (Alien Buddha Press, 2022). He has appeared in *The Broadkill Review*, *Sage Cigarettes*, *Barrelhouse*, *Fifth Wheel Press*, *Cutbow Quarterly*, and more. Visit carriganak.wordpress.com or follow him on Twitter @carriganak for more info.