

## Video

*in memoriam David Bowie*

The Accountant logs in. Same username, same password. Still a wanted man, still on the run, he finds he's only a few days behind on his workload. The usual segments to reconfigure, an audit or two, recombinatory spells in need of encryption, an inventory of phlogiston canisters delivered by aero, gone missing, needing to be redone. He assumes the higher echelons would not have bothered to inform the dispatcher, disparate units never truly communicating, functionality an illusion, illusion a function forever to be maintained. He sets to work.

But there in the queue—what's this? Assigned to watch videos, some dating back almost a lifetime, some as recent as last year. Coordinate, analyze, extract. It's a ruse, they're on to you. The beautiful youth, volatile, hieratic, growing ever more stately from phase to phase, to end, magisterial, sacrificial victim and sly heresiarch—he was always a double agent, costumed ghost dancing among the orders, every acquiescence the grand refusal, every gesture the hermetic ritual, the initiation you longed to undergo always denied. He can't tear himself away.

So they're tracking him now, and he doesn't care. The nymph has been called back, and can no longer help him. He knows she could not bear to say goodbye. But on the screen, there, kneeling before the astronaut's body, dancing in a fit with all the others—it's her. Goblin King, Duke of Faerie, the final avatar unmakes himself, writing beyond the book while the Accountant is compelled to keep the tally. His hand moves like a mirror image, his mind spins through the void. Why is he wearing that same uniform? Is that the girl from the other video? And the jeweled skull on the desk?