

Grief has never looked so beautiful.
Quite a paradox, as surely it must be the
hardest emotion we have to bear.
It is said the only way out of grief is through it.
Otherwise it can hold us in depression or
send us into a madness that can take lives.
Even in death Ophelia is held by grief
as firmly as her heavy dress holds her in water.
The haunting subject makes
this painting an unlikely favourite.
In postcard form it remains far and away
Tate Britain's biggest seller.

See 'Ophelia' by Millais.
BP Displays. Free at Tate Britain.



Selfies showing us living the dream.
We show the world only
what we want the world to see.
The right setting,
the best angles,
wearing the latest fashion.
Maybe true for you.
Certainly true for celebrities.
And it's long been true for royals.
The earliest full body portrait
of the 'Virgin Queen',
Elizabeth I,
is portrayed with a body ideal
that would break the internet.
There are no shadows.
Like wrinkles,
aren't they for ordinary folk?
Elizabeth couldn't
take a selfie in 1563
but if she could,
it would look like this.

If you like likes
or shares,
come and take a selfie
with the Queen of selfies.
Queen Elizabeth I.

See 'Portrait of Elizabeth I' British School.
BP Displays. Free at Tate Britain.



You're a gay man.
Sex is still a punishable offence.
Love perhaps feels the same way.
You describe obsessive love as something
you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy.
The day before your first Tate Retrospective
your partner is found dead,
probably from alcohol.
History mockingly repeats itself.
Nearly a decade later, just before your
Retrospective at the Grand Palais in Paris,
your next partner is found dead from an
overdose in your hotel room.
You are Francis Bacon.
'Triptych – August 1972' is the painting that
follows this torture.
**You don't paint studies of flowers in a vase
and you aren't going to start now.**

See 'Triptych – August 1972' by Francis Bacon.
BP Displays. Free at Tate Britain.

