



Every Brain

What the World Needs to Know

By Renardo Jones

What is I? It's the suit I wear; the lead actor in every thought in my head, my most prized possession..

I won't survive a scratch on I. I is the sum of 28 years of experience. It's my responsibility to look after I, so I keep I in line with we (everybody else's I) because I needs we for comfort, support, to create little I's.

I make sure I follows the unwritten codes for social cues: a nod, a smile, a "*I'm alright thanks, and you?*" I make sure I's interests don't deviate too far from the norm. I make sure I's volume's somewhere reasonable between not too high and not too low, because trial and error's taught me we hates I when I's too loud or too quiet.

I'm training I to have the right level of eye contact, because too much eye contact feels like assault, too little feels like pathetic. I force I into small talk; it's a work in progress. Right now it feels like learning Yiddish , but I hear when you get it right it feels like a fifth level of consciousness, or something like that.

i write i with a lowercase i so it doesn't stand out, because the goal's to get I to blend in, fake normalcy, not be special.

Why?

I need to fit in; it's just what you do. In theory the idea of being different is romantic, but in practise it's dangerous. A lot of confused stares come from different; many teens die from different. It's a wrong turn that leads to confusion; confusion leads to "*I don't understand or get what's wrong with you ,so I'm gonna like , not be around you, I hope that's ok*" then that leads to loneliness ; loneliness leads to hopelessness - hopelessness leads to nihilism; nihilism leads to.... Well, not a very happy ending.

So I is going to have to fit in. I won't be speaking languages like experimental, or be yourself or autistic, because you know, leads to different, and pity.

Definitely don't want no pity, can't buy nothing with pity; can't make love to it, can't plant it and grow nothing from it. Definitely do not want no pity. I look at pity as a human reflex to viewing something you think of as lesser off than yourself and not being able to instantly undo their troubles, so you offer what's closest to hand, sympathy.

I've been looking after I for nearly three decades, and it never knew pity until I learnt it was autistic. It's hard to write I un-crooked after that, when every "*you don't look autistic*" feels like a rubber fading I.

Sometimes I feel it'd be better if I let I I be I, the real I. It's exhausting wearing a fake personality, but I've been wearing this costume for so long I don't know what the real I looks like.

Every now and then after a good night's sleep I get this idea: I'm gonna do it, I'm gonna let I be , screw the consequences, rock bottom sounds like a good adventure anyway. But what if I gets burned by we?

Then another thought fires back like: *I think you should let I come out for a breather, think of being yourself as a holiday without the traffic light system. The only visa needed is the words: I am me.*

Ok...I AM ME; I'd like to think that's a good thing. I am autistic, but that's not some sort of Open Sesame for your sympathy. Sympathy is good every now and then, but It's a runner up prize to respect; I think I'd like that more.