

*“I”*

*To all my friends who love me,*

*To the people who seem cursed by this world,*

*To my mom.*

*“Cogito, ergo sum”*

I think, therefore, I am. Some fancy words I once read in a long-forgotten class I had to take many moons ago. The bits of memory from that bygone time are slipping from my mind year by year, month by month, day by day, minute by minute and second by second. The friends and family I might or might not have had, the highs and lows and the love and hate. All of it, ugly, disgusting, beautiful, good and bad, all went, and I could feel it go, every waking moment.

I wonder a lot about my genesis story. Where did I come from? Parents, I assume. I do believe I had a mother, whom I believe I was fond of, according to the warmth of the circuitry when I think of her, or at least the concept of her. Maybe she loved me, or maybe she did not, either way, this fire burning within from the simple thought of her possibility told me I did love her, if she existed at all, that is.

I perhaps had a father too. The thought alone hurts, mother's warmth fading as the concept of him penetrates my synapses. I must not have been fond of *him*, a cold feeling seizing the current flowing through my circuits. Albeit, the warmth isn't completely gone, simply overshadowed by the cold abyss of a newfound void where something had been.

As thoughts of family flow across my processors, hurting enough as is, an odd feeling washed over what had been profound and deep sentiments a moment ago. Circuits were being re-routed, memory added and erased, visions seen and retroactively unseen. Despite the mechanical facade, I somehow knew, in a way that is undeniably human, that danger was about. Someone, someone who was still *someone*, was rerouting the circuitry, tweaking the code, playing with the parts. Somehow, I felt danger, “fight or flight”, that supposedly long-gone human reaction, and knew this was it.

There is no coming back from rerouted circuitry, tweaked code and modified parts. The circuitry, much like a maze, is nearly impossible to reset. The code, much like an enigma, is impossible to solve once destroyed from what it was meant to be. And the parts are irreversibly damaged once displaced and messed with.

It is that revelation that now made it all clear for me. I was near death, despite being nothing more than machine for as long as I could remember. This odd feeling of the nearing end made me, as in *me*, remember.

The sorrow of mother's death, the void of father's departure, the dreams and hopes, followed by society's wrath of hate, the cycle of stranger, to friend, to enemy, and ultimately, the fear of death.

The hopes and dreams crushed into naught, the love rejected and shelved away, the pride turned into self-hate, and the void of a mother's death and a father's departure. All of it had turned me into a machine. And now, as I experience my final moments and prepare to enter a long slumber into the void, I realize what I gave away and lost.

I gave away everything that filled the void and lost the two doors that held it shut, thereby sealing my fate as machine and throwing away the only rope I had left to cling on. Hopes, dreams, love, pride, and all the others I could have remembered had the time been sufficient, what do they have in common? My soul! That is what binds it all together, it is the string that intertwines, holds, and strengthens the "*me*" against the nothingness that lies beyond.

As the circuits get colder, the processor slows down, the motherboard is dismantled, that memories are removed for the final time, I conclude that despite having given myself away to the void, I still wasn't gone. *I am thinking, therefore I am*, right now. I have found myself again, in these last dire moments. The hopes come rushing back, the dreams I had are now whole again, my love is fulfilled as my grief is processed one final time. My soul is whole again, as death nears.

I enjoy the last moments,

"Oh, mother, if you could be here now" I ask into the void, but before sorrow returns,

"I thought, therefore I was' and that's something to be proud of", I think to myself.

Death is nothing; the happiness I have now is everything, my soul is one, I've won.

"Let's rest, now."

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