

No Longer 1

It is when a person has two conflicting views of themselves that their mind is no longer one, but splits into two, taking both sides, backing both sides, and voicing both sides.

When a person thinks that they are one thing, but they are another thing, they become both, hiding what they are, and never letting on that they are who they are for one simple reason: They don't believe it.

Brian watched through the footage he had shot that day, thinking about how he was going to piece together the story he was telling on film. He had written the script with her in mind, but had not anticipated how well she had suited her part. He sat in the dark, in front of his television screen, linked to the video camera that had been used that day.

On screen, Helen turned around and smiled at the camera.

"Why did you do that?" Brian asked.

"Do what?" he asked himself.

Brian saw that the screen had frozen on a frame in which Helen was smiling. There was a twinkle in her eye.

"You paused the video."

After a few seconds' hesitation, Brian pushed the play button again, setting the image of Helen back into motion. He shook his head and tried to set his mind on looking for the perfect shot for the film, but he never managed to be able to think about this for more than a second or two, which was nowhere near long enough.

"Think about the video, Brian," Brian told himself.

"I am."

"Then stop staring at Helen."

"I'm not."

"Yes you are. Admit it."

"Look I'm supposed to. The film is about her. The scene is about her. The camera is on her."

"Yeah, but who was directing the cameraman?"

"Your point?"

"This is just an excuse to play with your obsession with her."

"Look, I got over that years ago."

"Not from where I'm sitting."

Brian shifted uncomfortably in the seat as he realised that the scene only needed about ten seconds of the three minutes of footage that he had shot. It was too long. But how could he cut pictures of Helen? He felt as though his not using any of the footage would somehow offend it.

Brian decided to watch the footage again. Maybe then he could figure out which shot to use. He rewound, and pressed play. Yet again, Helen walked onto the screen, in that dress which seemed to suit her so much, and played her part phenomenally.

"Stop staring at her."

"I'm only doing it because I have to."

"You're attracted to her, aren't you?"

"No I'm not."

"Yes you are. Admit it," shouted Brian, "You find her tempting."

"Fuck off. She's a nice girl. I would never do that to her."

"So you say."

"What are you trying to do, turn me into some sort of pervert or something?"

"What are you talking about, Brian? I am you. I want what you want. I know what you want, and what you want is Helen."

"She is not an object. You can't own a human being," was the best thing that Brian could come up with to answer himself.

"That is what you were told to say."

"Told? By whom?"

"By your parents. By your peers. By society. You don't really believe it."

"How would you know?" shouted Brian, his temper rising.

"I am you," he replied calmly.

Brian dropped his head, and tried to pull out his hair. His teeth ground against each other. He tightened his jaw, making his head hurt.

"But I respect Helen."

"You respect her body," came a quick reply.

"I'm not that kind of guy."

"Bullshit. Stop lying to me. I know you well; possibly better than you know yourself. You're only telling yourself that you respect her because that's what is expected of you. You expect that if you come across as a good person, you'll have a better chance of getting into bed with her!"

"No, I am a good person."

"You want to be a good person."

"I am."

"Then why have you just watched through the entire scene without taking your eyes off her?"

"Because I'm supposed to watch her."

"You're not thinking about the movie."

Brian quickly realised that he was talking to the only one who he knew could tell what he was thinking. He didn't even know what he was thinking.

"You want to know what you're thinking, Brian?" came a thought. "You're thinking about Helen. You're thinking about how attractive she is, how much you want to hold her, how much you want to kiss her."

Brian fell off his chair, and crumpled into a small heap on the ground, sobbing gently. He knew it was true, that he wanted to hold her. He just didn't want it to be true.

"What do you want?" he sobbed, "Why are you telling me these things?"

"I want you to at least admit to yourself that you are doing what you are doing."

"Which is...?"

"You are obsessing over the image of a woman."

"I am not. I am trying to see what footage to use. I just need to..."

Suddenly, the voice shouted, "You already know what footage you are going to use, you've edited the bloody video! You don't need to watch it again!"

Brian, still crumpled up, continued to cry. He had edited the video already. He had told himself that he hadn't. The voice became calm.

"Just admit to yourself that you are only watching the video only so that you can look at her."

Brian mumbled to himself "Only so that I can look at her."

"That's right."

"Only so that I can look at her."

And then the voice was gone, and Brian was left, lying on the floor by himself.

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The only way that the two can merge into one again is if one gives in to the other, if one mind admits that the other is right, so that they can become one.