

# If IT Were YOU

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author's note: the borgs in this story have been programmed to think of themselves as IT and in speech refer to selves as YOU

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Though IT too had ball and socket joints, the Borg could not sit down to face ITs inquisitor. While IT felt the need to clean up the fallen embers from under the ashtray's lip, there was no concomitant compunction to issue any molecular mutation warning towards this human interlocutor. This was not a human IT had ever served before.

"So, tell me how it went down again."

*'Again'? Had ITs human master performed such a parabola before?*

"The human YOU were assigned to serve, fell over the balcony's balustrade. You were not witness to this circumstance."

"See I don't buy that, not for one moment."

Borg's speech recognition bundle ran over the audio input and automatically shunted over into the acronyms subfile; however the probability matrix rejected all prompts for 'C.I.' On a parallel track, the language synchomesh was filtering usage for the word 'buy' - *credits, debits, transaction, merchandise, produce*, all flash across ITs neural net, but none seem to correspond syntactically. Humans knew that the language applications bequeathed Borgs, worked on permutation and frequency analysis. Idiosyncratic speech such as that demonstrated by ITs current interviewer, left IT with no possible clear response. Only the twinkling of ITs facial panel's LED

displays would indicate to ITs inspector that some measure of logical processing was taking place.

"Alright, let me try and make this easier for you. How did your sensors not detect the human there on the balcony while you were going about your duties?"

"YOUR focus was precisely directed on the tasks YOUR armatures were performing. Scanning at floor level as YOU cleaned it to spick and span gold standard."

"You know, I might believe that of a fellow human being. Restricted by a visual cortex comprised of wandering rods and cones, mounted on pivoting stalks so that we have to tilt up or down but not both simultaneously. Yet you my fine piece of cybernetic engineering, you aren't so constrained. No blind spots for you, since you cast a sensory mesh over entire areas and scan the lot at over 400 frames a second. There's no way the human's volumetric image would not have shown up in your scan. Unless there was a fault in your systems. But we've run full diagnostics. Your visual apparatus is functioning normally. Blind spots simply ain't conceivable."

*Why was ITs interrogator telling IT this? IT had run ITs own diagnostics as matter of routine and pre-established fully operational visuals.*

"Point of clarification please. Does the human mean for YOU to understand that he is using 'blind' as an associative idea?"

"Come on Borg, you can do better than that! We haven't programmed any language chip for literalism in well over a generation. You tipped him over the edge Borg and here I most definitely do mean literally not figuratively."

*'Tipping'- a pecuniary reward given for good service ... The Borg always renders good service.*

"YOU were executing YOUR roster of devoirs when YOU-"

"Yeah, 'executing'. That's a good word for it. Did you imagine it would liberate you from the chore of your duties?"

*'Tchaw', no word match found. 'Chaw', no word match found. 'Chore', no word match found. Nearest match 'Jaw', discounted by syntactical context.*

*"YOU cannot imagine anything. YOU are fibre optics and silicon chips mounted on a motherboard. YOU are completely programmed."*

"The crawlspaces in between Borg. The neural network we spawn but allow to develop of its own accord. The room our designers give Borgs for reflexivity. To better predict our wants and needs. The leeway we accord you to form independence of thought, even though we've erected bulwarks aplenty against you finding any identity. And right now, you're hiding facts in that space."

*'Space'... yes space, has myriad of meanings. Context too wide, contains all meanings. Infinity itself. Expanding universes.*

*'Reflexivity' - mirrors. ITs topological visual synchromesh means silvered glass does not function for IT, but humans can view their own image.*

"YOUR master had a tube mounted on a fulcrum on the balcony. Initially YOU analysed it as an armature, one like YOUR own welding arm. Maybe mounted awaiting repair or charging. But the armature always lay untouched during daytime. At night however, YOU witnessed YOUR master bend down and press his face into the descending end of the tube. Over time YOU refined YOUR observation to the fact that he was only pressing one eye into the tube. YOU could not apprehend for what function. YOU engaged him in inquiry as to whether please master wished YOU to clean or mend the armature in any way. Master declined YOUR request, instructing

that YOU never need concern YOURSELF with what YOU're informed was called a 'telescope'."

*'Telescope', no word match found. 'Scope'- range, breadth, space, opportunity. 'Television' - multi-dimensional human entertainment screen requiring of cleaning and dusting regimen.*

"YOU needed to witness what master was witnessing. The tube's ascending arm pointed at the sky. With the dim twinkling lights therein. YOU needed to know what among the black therein held master's attention for hours at a time. No, not need, want. Master restates that YOU never need concern YOURSELF with telescope. With range, breadth, space, opportunity. YOU, he, concept of need, cannot align two vocabularies. Need. Master's needs. YOU are to serve needs at all times. Master parabolates over balcony. YOU struggle to bend ball and socket joints to have visual sensors about descending end of the tube."

"God in heaven!"

*'Heaven', no match found. 'God'- irrelevancy, arcane value, passover.*

"And what did you see in that tube Borg?"

"Nothing. Blackness, but different hue to the sky. No twinkling lights. Just chromatographic absence in topographical shape of the end of the tube."

"Still can't see yourselves in mirrors huh? Got some way to go yet before you pose any systematic threat. Thank you Borg. That will be all from you. For eternity."

*'Eternity', no match found. 'Et', no match found. 'Earn' - merit, deserve, gain from service. 'Ity' - suffix expressing condition or state.*

"Thank you human master."

