

Technicolor

A Raw, Introspective
Poem on The Path
to Acceptance

For autistics, those
with social anxiety,
and
neurodivergents.
You are so very
loved.

By Hannah Barron,
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They labeled you weird,
Annoying,
Awkward,
Antisocial,
Awkward,
Twitchy,
Intolerable,
Too much.

“Why didn’t you say hi?”
“Why won’t you hug me?”
“You are rambling again.”
“You were never my friend.”

Words cut like a knife.

You didn't understand why the other kids didn't follow the rules
Or didn't want to read books with you
Or didn't invite you to parties.
You only knew once it was on Snapchat.
You couldn't read the facial expressions and hidden meanings
The shared glances and behind the scenes secrets.
Or why the therapist gave you board games instead of talking (you learned later your play was 'abnormal').
The lies and boundaries you accidentally missed.
Those texts that freaked you out.
Friend breakups you weren't even aware were happening.
You were yelled at and ignored
Scared to be yourself.
You couldn't control what was happening,
You thought differently,
You led by good intentions,
the social rules weren't explained to you.
Everyone had the password to the secret clubhouse but you.

You believed in second chances.
You were giving the same love you would want.
Understanding and unconditional.
You didn't know where the boundaries were
And couldn't catch the signals.
Those trauma flags
That therapists warn about
You could never see.
Communication and relationships left you scared
You over-explained to not be misunderstood
scared of everyone's reactions.
No one likes to be hated.
You helped because you loved them
But they didn't understand it.
You sent texts that were like sporadic thoughts
And hoped someone got you.
You were scared of initiating.
What will they say? Do they know what I mean?
Am I annoying?
Am I bothering? A burden?
Texting - another social code.

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As you've grown up
You've seen the brighter side.
That it's okay to be different
And to have a brain that sees things uniquely
To look at patterns and analyses
To see the world in technicolor,
To feel the rush of everything around you
And those snuggly blankets.
And that familiar smell of your friend's Beetle.

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But it was okay to be you
And have a good small group of friends
Who could do close hangouts
And drink responsibly.
You could be accepted by them,
And loved for every little bit of your personality.
You saw the world in technicolor,
And so did they.

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You felt out of place not enjoying crowds and bars,
(The loud noise and lights and funky tastes.
Boom. Boom. That music is too loud for your sensitive heart.
Those bodies - way too close.
Where's the exit?)
That you didn't get a lot of likes.
That your voice didn't have a good cadence,
And you didn't wear makeup.
Or have lots of friends.

You learned that lots of people see the world differently.
Large neurodivergent communities ready to welcome your
stories and hugs,
And that brain.
Brains are beautiful,
And messy,
And human.
You like honest communication,
Clear and direct feedback,
Kindness and acceptance,
Helpful questions and advice,
A middle ground of social rules.
Friends to get and understand you
Like you try for them,
And you think you found them.

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Everyone's brain is beautiful.
Minds are loved and valid.
You can be accepted and cared for just as you are
With a little understanding.
A level playing field for all neurotypes.
You deserve to exist, to love, to feel,
To be in a space as much as you want,
And show your heart and energy to whomever you meet.
You are good and kind and trying
And no one can take that away from you.
You see the world in technicolor
Blues and greens and purples,

And you are just starting to paint your colors.

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