

Ninnoc:

R-r-r-r-r-r-r-ra-ra-ra-rr. It vibrates inside your head and it gives you a headache. All the time, it's like a-a-a-ah-a-ah-ah. And you hear that in your ears all the time. And I can't stand it. And then I just go and sit like this. Or like this.

Interviewer:

Ninnoc, can you describe yourself? What kind of girl are you?

Ninnoc:

No, what a sucky question. Next question. No, I can't do it.

Everyone sees who I appear to be. But only a few know the real me. You only see what I choose to show. There's so much behind my smile you don't even know.

Interviewer:

Why do you like that poem?

Ninnoc:

Because I think it suits me. Especially at my new school, you know. I just show my happy side as much as I can.

We had a schoolyard like this. It was sort of round...with a few exits. And here... girls from my class used to form a circle. And the most popular girl would stand in the middle with her phone...talking about all the text messages and things that she'd received. I would try to get into their circle, but usually...I got in at first but then I slowly got pushed out again...ending up just outside the circle.

When I walked away they didn't even notice. And they didn't even notice that I was there. I didn't fit in. Just like everywhere else. I didn't fit in. And then usually I would just walk back to the bushes...where there was enough room for me. And there I sat alone... during the breaks, just sitting there and thinking...and watching them talk, watching what people did.

Ninnoc:

"Normal." "Normal." "Different." "Normal." "Popular." "Normal."

Interviewer:

What <is> being normal?

Ninnoc:

How should I know. Like right now. I'm totally normal, I think. Hopefully. Not hopefully. Maybe.

When you're different, people always criticize you. "Act normal!" While you're not doing anything wrong and not hurting anyone.

And why can't you be different? Why does everyone have to look alike and do as the group does? If no one would be different, if no one would stand out...then everyone in the world would look more and more alike...and the world would look very scary.

I think other kids see me as someone...who actually tries to be different. I like being different...because then I can distinguish myself from the rest...and then I'll know better who I am.

Interviewer:

Do you dare to show yourself completely?

Ninnoc:

No. I don't really dare to show myself...because I don't want people to see my less appealing sides...until I really trust them. Like my nasty and depressive sides. They don't have to know about that because that's a less appealing side of me.

I'm scared that if they see that side...they'll think: she is less cheerful than I thought...let's not hang out with her anymore.

At my old school, every day was a nightmare. Cold. You know, I would get out of the car...and there was school and it was cold and it was nasty. A concrete floor. Everything was the colour of a concrete floor. Even the sky. Even the trees. The trees had the tint of a concrete floor.

It was...doing the assignments alone day in, day out...going home alone, spending the breaks alone. So I thought: Why would I go on living if all I feel is pain? I hated my life. When I felt like that in the classroom, I would walk out and lock myself in the bathroom.

Interviewer:

Is it a consolation to know you're not the only one who feels like this?

Ninnoc:

You always know you're not the only one who feels bad. When I felt bad in tenth grade, I knew I wasn't the only one...and that there are hundreds, thousands, millions of children in this world...who feel exactly as I do. I just didn't want to be one of those millions of children.

No, it's no consolation. When people say: "You're not the only one." Yeah, I know that! I can't stand it. Just like...when someone puts an arm around you and says: "Are you OK?"...when you've just been hit by a car. Of course I'm not OK! "Are you OK?"

I really look down on hypocrites. Hypocrites, I look down on you. Wrong question at the wrong time. And wrong arm. I hate arms around me.

After a while something snaps. And it can never be made whole again. And then something is broken forever in someone that has been bullied. You know when there's a little chip in a windshield? And then after a while it can grow into a crack. So the glass is more fragile when there's a chip in it. I think children get chips in them when they are bullied. And that it makes them so fragile that they get scared it will eventually turn into a crack.

That's one of the things that is broken in me too. The courage to show myself completely. That's what they really instilled in me in my old class: fear.

Now I'll be scared for the rest of my life that people won't like me.