

## Algo Rhythm

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**ALGO-RHYTHM** by Derek J. Snow

### **CHARACTERS:**

**DENIECE “NIECY” SUTTON**-mid/late teens. Biracial. Anxious. Speaks quickly, but clearly. Worries about everything in general.

**SETTING:** Anywhere, United States **TIME:** Present Day

### **SCENE 1**

*(A dark stage, as dark as possible. There should only be enough light to see the face and hands of NIECY as she scrolls her phone obsessively. She resembles a ghost with her face and hands appearing to float on stage. Throughout the monologue, she shifts between an almost arrogant self-confidence to a quiet sadness that feels as if she could cry any minute. After a few minutes, she senses the audience and looks up slowly, smiles awkwardly and speaks directly to them as if they are a new friend.)*

### **NIECY**

I work in the dead of night, when the screens are quiet and no one is around. Oh, you too? Yeah. It's the only time I log on, when I think that no one will be there judging me. During the day, I pretend I don't care. I try not to. I tell everybody that I am *not* addicted to likes and follows, that I couldn't care less about any of that mess. That stuff is for shallow people. *(unconvincing laugh)* Please. I just check it every now and then to see who might be on, but I certainly don't care what they're doing. *(looks down at phone, muttering to herself in a low growl)* I mean, this picture is cool. He's cute. She's cute. Nice picture. See, I didn't even know they were dating now, that's how much I *don't* get on here. I mean, they're supposed to be my friends too, but no one even bothered to tell me anything. But, you call yourselves my "real friends". Really? I think they forgot who introduced them in the first place. If we weren't given detention for having our phones out in class, you would've never met him in there. So, you're welcome. Sorry. I just get heated with all the fake people that are all over my pages. One minute they're adding me as a friend, the next day I log on and find out that they've blocked me. Apparently, they're jealous that I have so many followers. I mean, ok, I guess it's not that many, but it's enough to show people how popular I am, at least. Some people just make up reasons not to like you when a lot of other people do. It feels like they're trying to punish you for having friends. I mean, not all of my followers are friends-I mean, so most of them aren't to be honest. But I think because I'm sort of cute they probably add me. And a lot of them are probably rich because they do the bitcoin thing online, so they keep asking me to join. Yeah, no. I'm too busy for that. But, I let them add me anyway because I feel bad when people don't have a lot of followers. That's actually the reason I get on here sometimes. Trying to be helpful when people seem like they're lonely and you know, just feeling desperate for anybody to talk to or something. I used to be them, you know, so I feel like I *should* help. Well, it's such a relief to meet someone just like me. It feels like we were meant to meet tonight. Like, if you add me we can help people together. Like a team. I mean, only if you want to. *(NIECY begins to become visibly sad, her voice and words quieter and slower. A long pause as she adjusts.)* To be honest, I worry all the time about what people think about me. Lately, it's almost like I've become...I don't know *afraid* to check any of my social media. I sleep like a baby when someone has liked one of my posts or just says 'hey' in my DM's, but there are a lot of nights that no one

has liked anything that I've posted or even knows that I exist. And that part is hard for me. I get nervous and unsure of myself. I wish that I didn't act this way, and I wish that I didn't have to ask you this. It's embarrassing. But, like..could you see yourself being my friend? I've tried really hard to make friends on

all the sites, but it's like I'm the weird mixed kid. Awkward around Black people, awkward around White people. Awkward around *anybody* actually, especially online; and a lot of kids from school won't even accept my friend request. I don't know. You seemed cool, and like maybe you're dealing with the exact same stuff. I just thought. I mean, never mind. See? This is why people block me. I just don't know how to connect with anybody without making it weird. Forget I said anything. I'm so bad at this. But I am trying. I figure if you're here this late, then you just might be trying as hard as I am. Maybe we can help each other not feel so invisible for a little while. Like... being alone together, if that makes any sense. It probably doesn't. Here. I'm going to give you my username and if I hear from you, great. If not, I totally understand. I just thought it would be cool to have a new friend. Or contact. Or follower. Or whatever. Ok bye.

*(The light from NIECY's phone vanishes and the stage is completely dark.)*

**END**

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