

# I, Kannot

*By Stanley Kelman Jr.*

## *The Visionary*

Kenny Kannot marches into the room like a prophet—or a scam artist—here to rewrite the laws of the universe. His beard, a cascade of misplaced wisdom, spills onto his chest, and a man bun perches atop his head, his self-declared badge of rebellion.

Dressed in a smock and sweatpants that only amplify his unkempt absurdity, he looks like an overweight garden gnome who's recently discovered post-structuralism.

His sneakers, scuffed and peeling, speak of many miles walked but no destinations reached. His hands jitter, forever rolling invisible dice, gambling on the next big idea—one that will, of course, change the world.

He clears his throat dramatically, commanding the attention of his two bewildered coworkers.

## **The Gospel**

“Kannot,” he begins, hand slicing the air, “is no ordinary name. It's layered—like me.”

“First: *cannot*. A word soaked in oppression. ‘You cannot.’ ‘You shall not.’ But me? I am Kannot. I break their fences.”

He paces, sneakers chirping against the tile. “Second: *kannot*—Hebrew for seedlings. Shoots of potential. Fragile. Unyielding. Like ideas breaking through concrete.”

He leans in, lowering his voice to a reverent hush. “And third, the *pièce de résistance*: *kanòt*. Haitian Creole for ‘canoe.’ A vessel. That’s me—ferrying rebellion across the stagnant waters of mediocrity.”

Kenny grins, eyes bright with conviction. “Three meanings. One destiny.”

He spreads his arms wide. “I am the Johnny Appleseed of thought! Some seeds will grow into forests. Others... weeds. But weeds crack concrete, don’t they?”

He lifts a stapler like a relic. “History will vindicate me. Today’s heretic is tomorrow’s headline.”

Silence. The coworkers blink. Brandon sips from a bejeweled thermos, arching a penciled brow. “You’re exhausting, Kenny. But committed.”

The other, half-asleep, mutters: “Five minutes late. Even Godot had a watch.”

Kenny pirouettes dramatically and strides out, sneakers squeaking a half-beat behind his fervor.

And as the door swings shut, another voice—quieter, older—rises inside him.

*Kannot*. A name he doesn’t own. A misspelling at the border. His grandparents were *Kanon*, refugees clutching a paper birthright. The clerk gave them safety—and him, a name stitched from error.

Sometimes he wonders: Did that slip of the pen rewrite more than letters? Did it mark him as outsider? Did it fracture something no speech can fix?

He preaches reinvention. But buried beneath every sermon is a silence he's never outtalked.

*Not yet.*

So he keeps talking. Because silence, to Kenny, sounds like not belonging.

### **The Revolutionary**

Kenny is the reformer who can't organize his own laundry, the prophet of utopia who's always behind on rent.

"Down with capitalism!" he bellows, pawning his mother's antique clock to fund another artisanal cold brew. He extols the virtues of "perfect socialism" while eviction notices bloom like poppies on his kitchen table.

"People just don't get me," he insists, eyes wild. "I'm an innovator. A disruptor."

And disrupt he does—dinner parties, staff meetings, quiet lunches—with rants about quantum communism and post-capitalist anarchy, half-baked in both theory and tone.

His manifesto lives on pizza boxes and napkins pilfered from the breakroom: a kingdom of cardboard communism, stacked with promises of a revolution that always cancels itself by noon.

Amid this clutter, one spark: a sketch of something oddly brilliant—a decentralized power grid of intellect, driven by artificial intelligence.

He spills soy sauce on it.

Then repurposes the napkin for a haiku about socialism. Underlined. Circled. Filed in the sacred drawer.

*MindGig* is more than an app. It's a prophecy. A future where learning is obsolete. Neural circuits will replace study. There will be no more classes, no more degrees, no more proving you belong.

For once, he won't be the dumbest guy in the room.

He'll be equal.

And if equal, why not exceptional?

## **The Carnival**

The world is his stage. The lights? Fluorescent. The prop? A stapler held high like the torch of liberty.

Kenny marches forward, a one-man parade to the carnival tune of his own delusions.

His arsenal? Borrowed catchphrases, fragments of TED Talks glimpsed between tweets, and the boundless confidence of a toddler explaining quantum mechanics to a room of Nobel laureates.

Once, he marched solo down 3rd Avenue with a sign that read *Ban Reality*, shouting "Free the algorithms!"

A child waved. Kenny bowed, solemnly convinced he'd sparked a movement.

His troops are paper tigers. His banners, misspelled protest signs. "Down with mediocrity!" one declares.

"*Mediocrity*," corrects another.

Then, the bathroom incident.

Kenny, ever the rebel, declares war on men's room engineering.

"Why should I stand? Why should I aim?" he challenges, glaring at the urinal like it's a ceramic oppressor. He crouches awkwardly, splashing his manifesto onto the tile floor.

He emerges victorious. Unwashed hands. Eyes blazing. A maverick who "just won't play their game."

The janitor stares at him.

"You missed."

Kenny doesn't flinch. Rebellion, he tells himself, is never neat.

### **The Messiah**

Kenny wears authenticity like a costume, swapping masks by the hour: the intellectual, the maverick, the misunderstood genius.

Beneath the bluster, he's scaffolding over absence—a shrine to ambition built from used coffee cups and unread manifestos.

He talks *as if* he's changing lives, *as if* he's building movements, *as if* every tweet is a spark in history.

In truth, he's rearranging paperclips, convincing himself it's strategy.

His confidence is a helium balloon, trembling at the edge of the ceiling—just waiting for the pin.

Years ago: third grade. A presentation on clouds. Kenny froze. The class laughed. The teacher didn't. Her silence rang louder than any cruelty.

Since then, he's talked to fill that silence.

The child who couldn't find words became the man who can't shut them off.

Each failure becomes “a lesson.” Each dismissal, “a test of resilience.” He recasts setbacks as prophecy, embarrassments as milestones.

At 3:00 a.m., he stares at his own reflection in a blank Zoom screen.

“You were electric today,” he tells himself.

And then—finally—lets the tears come.

## **The Tragedy**

We laugh at Kenny because we must. To pity him too openly would mean staring too long at our own reflection.

In his cracked mirror, we glimpse the brittle masks we wear. The scripts we improvise. The little delusions we dare not audit.

Kenny Kannot will never stop. Not because he believes the lie—but because stopping would mean admitting it was never his to begin with.

So here's to Kenny: the fool, the fraud, the prophet of punchlines no one queued up for.

His name—once a clerical error, now a banner. A single misplaced “o” carrying generations of misfired meaning.

He is the hero of a story no one else remembers.

And perhaps that's the real revolution.

## **The Singularity in the Gig Economy**

The van lurches forward with a mechanical groan, its tires singing a symphony of despair across pitted asphalt.

“Another mile,” Kenny mutters, words curling through stale cab air. “Another sordid chapter in my Sisyphean saga.”

Behold: the modern world's solution to inefficiency—*me*, a philosopher-king in a fluorescent vest, reduced to ferrying trinkets to the desperate and the degenerate.

His hands grip the wheel like a gladiator's blade, knuckles pale with righteous indignation. In his lap: a soggy sandwich, steeped in yesterday's mustard and the existential runoff of every poor decision that led him here.

Behind him, packages stacked like regrets—each labeled with a barcode and an unspoken possibility.

A crooked stop sign looms ahead: a bent relic of order in a world that's forgotten how to mean anything. Kenny laughs—a single derisive bark.

“What fools these people be,” he says to no one, the phrase swelling with all the borrowed grandeur of a mind convinced it's wasted on its time.

The van groans. He takes it as cosmic solidarity.

“This van is my ark,” he declares, slapping the dashboard. “These streets, my seas. I'm not delivering packages—I'm delivering the future.”

Each stop is a duel. Each squeak of his sneakers on suburban concrete, an act of rebellion.

He hefts a box like Excalibur. “Today, I slay complacency,” he mutters, leaving a fragile-labeled parcel on a doorstep. The door stays closed.

He salutes anyway—a knight errant acknowledging an unworthy opponent.



“Too much sanity may be madness,” he whispers, climbing back behind the wheel. “And maddest of all: to see life as it is, and not as it should be.”

The GPS interrupts with a sterile tone: *Arrived at destination.*

Kenny stares at the beige monolith ahead, the kind of building that apologizes for existing. He steps from the van with the solemnity of a monk bearing holy writ.

The box in his hands is smudged with rain and indifference.

For a moment, he considers leaving it on the stoop—an offering to the void.

Then: the door creaks open. A man in a wheelchair looks up, gaze dull and watery.

Kenny resists the creeping shadow of pity. *Pity is for the weak*, he tells himself.

*I am not here to feel. I am here to deliver.*

The box changes hands. The door closes. The moment is over.

But its weight lingers—an echo that hums with the van’s tired engine.

## **The Weight**

Back on the road, the van becomes a cocoon—unbothered, unseen. Exactly as he designed it.

Solitude wasn’t a symptom. It was strategy. A fortress against the world’s disbelief.

The dashboard bears its own scars: receipts, crumbs, an ancient coffee stain that resembles a map to nowhere.

His breath fogs the windshield, blurring the line between the world outside and the cosmos inside his skull.

“This is the price of greatness,” he whispers, unwrapping a granola bar like it’s a sacrament. The foil crinkles—a metallic hymn to perseverance.

He scans the horizon like it owes him something.

“Do they see the martyrdom of my existence?” he asks the windshield. “Do they see the tragedy in these roads I traverse, lined with mediocrity and waste?”

The packages shift behind him—cardboard cargo full of false promises.

Kenny laughs, louder now. “A rebellion born in absurdity is still a rebellion.”

He passes a yard. A garden gnome watches from the grass, its plaster smile frozen into forever.

“You get it,” he says. The gnome, of course, says nothing. But Kenny feels seen.

Another stop. Another door. Another transaction emptied of meaning.

He presses on. Not as a driver. As a crusader. A reluctant saint lost in the asphalt labyrinth of a world that keeps misfiling his gospel.

By nightfall, his knees ache. His shoulders sag—under the weight of boxes and ideas.

At a red light, he grabs a discarded packing slip and scrawls furiously:

*MindGig. An app for truth. Delivered.*

He pictures himself in a boardroom. They'll laugh at first. But his conviction will smother their doubt.

He won't leave that room a legend. He'll leave it rewritten.

Rain begins.

Kenny pauses.

*The Singularity is not yet near*—not in the depot, not on the skyline.

But he feels it approaching, humming at a frequency too faint for lesser minds.

"Not today," he whispers, gripping the scanner like a sword.

"Tomorrow," he says aloud, climbing back into the van. "Tomorrow, we charge."

The depot lights buzz with unsung prophecy.

Somewhere, in one of those packages, waits the revolution.

Kenny lifts his chin. Stares into the fluorescent abyss.

The engine sputters like a reluctant oracle.

He pulls into the rain. The wipers tap their rhythm of quiet defiance.

The headlights cut forward.

Somewhere ahead, the Singularity waits.

The check engine light comes on—flashing furiously red.