

The dimensions of a singular life contain absurdity. We were brought into existence without objective reason or expectation. Governed by opinion, socialized by region, we are bought by our peers and sold by our desires – hoping for something more, seeing the present as less. Time passes while we try and ache for what's next. Reaching out to the darkness of the unforeseen. Crying, laughing, counting on our efforts and disposition to catapult us into satisfaction. Particles of the sentiment of a lived life.

A being is raised in a way that suits the parents wants and desires. The child watches the parent – relies on them to observe habits, rituals, and room to create their own story. Education instills the world of language and academically notable concepts based on the country of origin. True socialization starts when communication can be reciprocated in a verbal and nonverbal sentient manner. Relationships with objects, the self, and peers create a jumbled metaphysical mess that's not worth solving past the core subjective values each person holds during the course of their evolution. All minds think differently, so a solution is always a personal solution instead of a universal solution. Full scale total agreement on a subject in this life will never exist, there will always be alternatives and contrarians. There is a narrative for everything by everyone – none necessarily better than another past the opinion of an individual. More particles of a life.

I would like to lie, to say that I've always been an intellectual interested in classical philosophical literature, but that is a false narrative. I buy classic philosophy mostly from the penguin publishing network because that's where I have always known to find it and I learned about the character of Sisyphus not from reading Greek mythology, Pandora's box is a pretty coffee table book in my life, but instead from a video game called Hades marketed as a dungeon crawler when the player meets, fights, befriends, and flirts with embellished characters from the classics. Personally learning about this figure through video games instead of traditional pieces is a contradiction.

"Where did you learn about Sisyphus?" "Hades." "Huh?" I interpret my life as a contradiction, as nonsensical, imperfect, and unforeseen. My college years have been nothing like a movie plot, they have been dark, desolate, often void spaces and periods where I am a leveled up version of a hamster on a wheel. During low moments, I find it difficult to see the point in character development, in proactive change, when the factor of minor flaws can hold a person back from metamorphosis, much like mythological bodies meant to serve as lessons and warnings.

In the first grade, I played the character of Arachne during an after school play. I was quite little, but I remember the web and fake loom set out for me on the rubbery basketball court. I even had a cute little homemade spider mask for my part. My after school teacher told me I was "perfect for the role," and I didn't know what she meant at the time. For context, the story follows a skilled weaver named Arachne, who challenges Athena who is the goddess of war to a weaving duel. Arachne portrays a weaving of the gods in a negative light while Athena produces a weaving of the gods presented in a positive light. Athena becomes angry because of the high quality and insult of Arachne's piece and turns her into a spider as punishment. In hindsight, this story is a lesson in pride and censorship, which are two concepts that have seemed to follow me through my lifetime.

Lack of goodness comes into consideration during assessments of character. 'Lack of goodness' can translate to actions made from anger, greed, and spite: a reaction that is considered not good in modern popular culture. I believe these acts can be characterized as various types of crimes. Perhaps one shouldn't "chastise his wife" (Camu 1) much like Sisyphus did. Romantic crimes don't always lead to success, but for some the act has net positive effect. Oftentimes I believe romantic crimes are the closest a person can come to getting away with committing true crimes without the risk of being

punished by the laws of the state. Emotionally intimate acts performed with a known lack of goodness is a means to an end in my eyes: I also understand this is a contradiction – in a classic sense it's seen as wrong to falsify romance without genuine intention, to be in a relationship with someone who you aren't romantically attracted to is opposite. "Why would you spend time with this person if you don't love them?" "Because I get something out of the interaction." I will never forget the first time I was accused of being a Macchievelian, but I'm thankful because *The Prince* is a good read. If I were a Macchievelian, I think I would be a *Machiavellian/Act Utilitarian* hybrid, which is a silly way of saying I don't believe I'm either of those things. Romantic crimes are an example of emotional manipulation, which is a term that's thrown around in modern dating as a buzzword. Crime can be interpreted as negative – but I believe there are positive and negative crimes, just as there are positive and negative punishments. Emotional manipulation isn't a negative concept. All human interaction is emotional manipulation: the words and ideas exchanged between two people result in mental action due to the exchange. Conflating abuse to manipulation is apples and oranges. Additional particles of life.

At the beginning of combing through the idea of 'absurd' starting with "An Excerpt of The Myth of Sisyphus" by Albert Camu – I was left with the impression that there are two modes of feeling: the 'absurd' which accounts for all emotions besides happiness, and happiness. I took this to heart truly when it's said that, "Happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth." (Camu 3). In response to this interpretation, I have chronicled an absurdity of my own. The pursuit of the absurd implies repetition, which is a noun with a connotation of the feelings behind the action being negative and related to anxiety or insecurity. So, please stay with me, in my free time I practice the arts. I have a website where I upload all of my content, this is a recurring task I engage with which requires repetitive motions of me

uploading items on a regular basis – making the same clicks, but the action of growing my portfolio, of returning to a new beast with each piece I feed it is worthwhile. My oeuvre is a repetitive monster which I regard with happiness.

Now this might sound extremely absurd, but my biggest boulder to roll is getting ready in the morning. I have less issue with starting a project, working, and classwork, but I loathe the necessary exercise of getting ready. The phrase is distinctly dissimilar to everyone but I will explain what this phrase means to me personally. Getting ready equals me painting the same picture every morning and hating the results. Routines socially implied for females in Western society are slightly more akin to useless labor. I scrutinize my calories to the point of my daily morning meal resembling a tested experiment in order for my body to be remarkable to certain figures. I take chromium – a vitamin in prescription medication for people with type 2 diabetes because I'm worried my blood sugar is too high, that I need to boost my insulin resistance as an already thin person. I was worried my forehead was too big a year ago, so now I have a short curtain of hair that hangs across my face and requires constant upkeep and fidgeting. I apply two prescription treatments on my face along with beauty store snake oil to increase cell turnover. A bit of sunscreen with zinc every day so I don't age too quickly and become undesirable. I don't even want to mention makeup, where I slather concealer under my eyes, put a little cream contours on the bridge of my nose which is too big, mascara on my eyes, a wet q tip on my eyelids to catch the mascara I missed. Am I starting to bore you? I'll stop. All of these small actions take place almost every morning for me. All of this just to take it off at the end of the night. What's the point of all of this work if I can't always see it and keep it? Would I be more fulfilled without living in a state of consistent attempts of physical maximalization? Perhaps. I must admit that there is personal fault to the interpretation of the higher power of societal opinion. I am making the choice to shape my appearance based on an invisible court of law meant to represent

the different characters I need to maintain a reputation within my head saying “yes” and “no” to my looks. When I am engaged in the repetition of getting ready, I’m not thinking about the action, I’m thinking about the past and the court judging my fate.

However, the acts of my particular absurdity can result in happiness. Albeit I can’t completely confirm that a person is treating me well in part due to my appearance, I can infer that a portion of their positive reaction is due to my visuals. I can especially infer this well demeanor relates to my appearance among vapid groups. Vanity is a mundane struggle. I recently read some girl’s Substack newsletter who babbled on for a few pages about her eating disorder treatment friend who lives in LA and is a strange person like everyone else. The literary highlight of the piece were the points where she sprinkled in brand names and popular objects. After reading it I thought to myself, “wow, this is so boring and basic.” Yet here I am writing about something I consider to be boring and basic being beauty, which serves as a personal contradiction.

Alright, I’m sorry for the getting ready comparison. I’m sure many other people who are perfectly imperfect have been punished to a far more repetitive endless eternity of suffering via a task to which there is no end in sight, one task appointed by power and past sequences of actions that have led up to the never ending cycle. However I’m 22, and this is my example, I hope it will be enough. Let’s discuss more views of the absurd.

“An ordinary life situation is absurd when it includes a conspicuous discrepancy between pretension or aspiration and reality:-” (Nagel 4). To make a flat comparison, I would like to believe this is a piece of the origin of the phrase, “expectation vs reality” – which served as a popular online meme in the last decade, the funny part of the piece being that the discrepancy between the picture of the expectation and the reality is so extremely different

that it's laughable. In practice, this area isn't laughable. Examples of potential discrepancies like, "You are being knighted and your pants fall down." (Nagel 4) isn't applicable to the everyday man, folks may laugh at this example because it's unrelatable. Interactions of the absurd are often social, communicated. If a person is visiting their hometown and they reach out to an old friend, one they've shared many memories without coming to a negative falling out, and receive no response, the interaction becomes absurd. Why? A clear disconnect between expectation and reality.

The sense of repeating an absurd social sensation may cause an attitude of epistemological skepticism for an individual. In the vein that if what we believe to know about others and the solidity of our relationships to them is entirely false then there's no real way to prove that any and all situations won't result in absurd, contradictory, and opposition. No one can expect social normalcy. There is a volatility that resides in everyone which can fester and appear somewhat randomly. A safe practice is to expect the unexpected, therefore expecting the absurd, or happiness. An understanding that an individual's actions can result in response 1 or 2 will prepare them with the tools necessary to navigate and attempt this life with better productivity. I would like to highlight that absurdity can result in happiness as well. Perhaps the word happiness should be exchanged for the term 'productive' instead. There are situations a person might find themselves in that they are interacting with which are objectively negative at the starting point but lead to an unexpected productive (positive) result. Classifying results as being either absurd or 'productive' may be alienating to some, but when the expectation of absurd results in the reality of happiness perhaps framing the alternative to the absurd in a neutral light is more realistic. The more one considers the absurd, the more possibility opens up. "Many peoples lives are absurd temporarily or permanently for conventional reasons having to do with their particular ambitions, circumstances, and personal relations." (Nagel 4)

The dimensions of a singular life contain absurdity. How absurdity manifests to an individual depends on what the individual considers serious, realistic, and expected. The absurd lies in the contradiction of what is thought to be the end result of a sequence of events. If there is never a thought of an outcome, everything will appear absurd. The contrast to this being the end result of the productive. Every individual will have a different expectation of what an absurd outcome might be depending on their values. The subjectivity of absurdity and the alternative is what makes this life absurd. There is no common agreement past the belief of the concept itself.