So I entered into my first Photography competition, @worldphotoorg   
While this, in and of itself is not something deserving of praise or whatever (anyone is allowed to enter), it gave rise to a thought that really made me smile. It was the realization that the things I've been doing in '24 - '25 are so much more.. involved, than what I understood myself to be capable of.

Its hard to explain.

I am not trying to wax poetic over some common sentiment along the lines of “If teenage me could see me now”. Because come on now.. Don’t get me wrong, it’s a great feeling! looking over your shoulder to take in with sweet vindication all the things you have overcame. In fact, that’s part of the inspiration behind this websites bi-line “Let’s do things our future selves will thank us for.” But lets be real, that’s not worth any more of our time.

The apperceptions that bubbled up, while I was working on the tasks involved in entering a photography competition, were surprising.

I’ve been shooting film photography since I was 17 years old. It was the first hobby that I had which truly was my own. Growing up, for all intents and purposes, all my interests were hand-me-downs. I was a younger brother and we shared a large group of friends, the concept of liking things of my own accord felt like a non-sequitur. That is until I chose Photography as my elective in Junior year. After hearing about this, my fantastic uncle gifted me his Canon AV-1. It is, hands down, the best gift I’ve ever received. I still shoot with that, 18 years later.

I love being able to capture moments that would be overlooked, the ability to share my perspective through photography was the first time I had a voice. It was something I could call my own. The first thing I ever really wanted, my first aspiration, was to publish a book of photography. I thought about that for years. The fact that I could actually work towards that goal never crossed my mind. Up until recently I never genuinely thought I could do anything of substance. Out of a malformed sense of self preservation which I believed to be some virtue of mine, I would not allow myself to believe that I could reach beyond myself, and make things that others would appreciate. It was not fear of failure, as that would imply I thought enough of myself to be someone who could even try.

Living was always something other people did. Allow me to renege on my earlier statement and, in fact wax poetic for a moment! If younger me was told what he would be doing at 35, I think he would believe it, it would totally resonate with him, my interests are largely the same as they have been for as long as I remember. He would smile, and be excited! He would think something along the lines of “neat! Things will work out!”

The joy I would feel would be real, but it would be a vapid understanding of the idea, and not actually affect me. Because it would simply be a story about somebody else.

The comprehension would have been utterly lost in translation. Why? Because I had hatefully annihilated the very concepts of impetus and development from the scope of my understanding. I did this because of a misguided belief of what I needed, and a desire to protect myself.

So I recently submitted some of my shots to a photography competition. Other than a contest I entered (for credit) during highschool, it's the first time I've done anything like this.

This, in and of itself is not something deserving of praise, an atta boy, or any notice at all, it's a free, competition, open to all. Still, it gave rise to a thought that really made me smile, and than think, those two things became more that the sum of their parts.

 It was the realization that the things I've been doing, the endeavors in which I have partaken these past several years, are so much more involved than what I understood myself to be capable of.

Its hard to explain.

I’m not trying to wax poetic by saying “If teenage me could see me now” or something along those lines. True, looking over your shoulder to take in, with sweet vindication all the things you have overcome is a great balm to the bruises we get, while navigating the mountains that are our life. No, the balm I hope to bring to your attention is more along the lines of a desire-path, so that you can understand something sooner than I had.

What came to my mind after submitting my photos was not validation, satisfaction, or something arising from impetus. But rather the understanding that no matter what is going on in my life, or how commonplace things seem, there will always be ways to have novel experiences, those moments that seem less common the more time we are on earth.

 While I was getting ready to enter the contest and finalize my submissions, I was surprised at the apperceptions that bubbled up.

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Living was always something other people did. Its trite I know.. but if younger me was told what he would be doing at 35, I think he would believe it, it would totally resonate. he would smile, and be excited! The joy I would feel would be real in that moment, but it would not affect me, because it would be just that, a story, a story about somebody else. The comprehension would have been utterly lost in translation. Why? Because I had hatefully annihilated the very concepts of impetus and development from the scope of my understanding. I did this because of a misguided belief of what I needed, and a desire to protect myself.