

A Standup Comedy

My closet is breaking apart.

My actual closet. Not the metaphorical one. If that one exists, it's locked very tightly somewhere in my appendix. Look, I'm not gay—yet—but I do feel like I was in the closet for a while.

Anyway, the other day, I pulled open my physical closet, and the closet knob literally fell into my hands. And for a millisecond, as I was standing there with the knob in my hand, I was like ... am I radioactive? Then I peered into the closet, and I saw a stuffed animal fighting ring, and they were really going at it. Just ripping the stuffing out of each other. And then this pink underdog—who was actually like a carebear or something—started shooting lasers out of its eyes and overthrew the evil overlord of this fight ring.

Then, Coldplay appeared—and they were the ones playing dramatic background music for this pink carebear's radicalization—and told me, "You're the next Chooosen One."

And so, I fixed the closet temporarily and shut the door on them.

If you understood that Radioactive reference, chances are that you've worn skinny jeans before or wanted them, specifically the colorful ones. And if you didn't catch that Radioactive is by Imagine Dragons, you're just like me. Unable to imagine dragons. I can only just vaguely see them from the corners of my eyes.

(pause as I side eye someone or something)

I forgot that kids existed for a while, which is something that many people should think, who do not think. Having been a kid once or twice in my 1000-year lifespan, I can confidently say it's not a period I want to return to.

I feel like children in this world are often used as a morality benchmark before being treated like actual humans. Yeah, I feel like a concerningly large amount of people don't know how to treat children well. I can't. Every year up until like last year, I thought to myself, man. If I were to meet my past self, and we were standing on a bridge, I'll tell her, "hey. It's going to be okay. I won't take offense if you jump now. Jump. Now." And then I'll push her off.

You know how when someone controversial dies, and whoever liked them or whatever is like, You shouldn't talk bad about them because they had a wife—usually a wife—and kids.

And I get that that's meant to remind people that no matter how awful or controversial someone is, they also have possibly good parts of them or whatever. But I feel like ... if that's your first point when defending someone—like hey, that person who existed is of the human species—maybe think of a better point?

It always rubs me the wrong way when people say that.

Who doesn't have kids? The human population is unfortunately still continuing, so. I feel like the percentage of people who can have kids, have kids, and that's a bigger number than those who don't. At least, right now. The world isn't great, or even halfway there, so there's definitely not a correlation between being a standup person and having a family.

Also, what about the parents? The great-great-great grandma? The second cousin once removed? Shouldn't they all get a shout-out, too? Why is it just the nuclear family?

I guess the moral of the story is, if you're running an illegal stuffed animal fight club, don't have a family when you die, so people can use better arguments to defend your crimes. Like, maybe your personality. And if you have a terrible personality, get really rich or really attractively hot really fast, and you might just be entirely pardoned of every crime that you've committed. That's justice for you!

HEY! WHAT'S THAT!? Sorry, false call. I thought that I finally saw a dragon.

Sex and Religion

I've noticed two things that are quite prominent in adult life: sex and religion. A lot of things are either about sex, religion, or sex and religion.

Which is why being an atheist is so troublesome. Sometimes, when something bad is happening, or if I anticipate something bad is going to happen, I end up praying anyway because it's in my vernacular. Like, please, God, please don't let those people walking toward me be evangelists.

Where are my prayers going? Not to God. Google maybe? The government? Glory? I wanted to keep one of the traditional 3 G's, and I feel like the gold would be confiscated by the government. You can't own anything these days! I can't even complain to an omnipresent, omniscient being about this!

Sorry, I don't mean to offend anyone. I'm not religious, as I have said. I don't know if there's specific rules or like unsaid practices around talking about or to God. Like is it a per-appointment thing? Is it considered rude if you hit God up more than a certain number of times a day? Can you just be like, "Hey man, I'm taking an exam, please grant me some mind-reading powers or some divine intervention?" And then God might be like, "No can do, bro, you've hit your number of prayers today. Come back in 3-5 business days."

It's interesting, there's so many categories under religious and non-religious. Like, if you're religious, you can be Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, etcetera. And if you're non-religious, you can be atheist, agnostic, asexual. I know I said I was atheist, but really I can be any of those three.

I don't think sex should exist. I don't mean it in a way that's like, oh, sex is gross—well. Okay, I don't mean it in a way that's like, pandering to purist culture or trying to police consenting adults. It's your business, I'm not in it. Be weirdos, be freaks, be polite, be prudes. I don't care, it's whatever.

I mean it in a way that's like, if a species can't figure out how to asexually reproduce by the first generation, they should just not exist. What says survival of the fittest, if not the ability to naturally clone yourself?

Have you ever heard about those stories where someone is the only surviving person of a specific gender in an apocalyptic world? Like, you're the only woman among men, or vice versa. I have never read or watched those because I think it's kinda a weird premise.

If it were me in that situation, I would just die!? What do you want me to do? Produce an incestuous next generation? No thank you. Figure out how to asexually reproduce.

Sorry, I do have to remind you that I'm joking. I don't actually believe that all sexually reproducing animals should be asexual instead. Just, don't want you to form an untrue opinion of me. Kinda untrue.

Am I asexual, you may ask? I don't know. I am either asexual or atheist, one or the other. I can't have too many a-words to describe myself, you know? It's one or the other. No overlap between them. I would prefer if everyone were blobs, unable to judge people or feel things or perceive things ... I just realized I'm describing jellyfish. Jellyfish, by the way, can asexually and sexually reproduce. If you didn't know. Now you know.

I generally don't like labels for myself. I get that many people use them to get a better sense of who they are in this world, and to let other people know that they exist and stuff like that. But I don't know what the heck is going on here, and I don't want to fully know right now, so I generally try to avoid making very definitive statements about myself.

I just have my regularly scheduled life crises every hour of every day. Who am I? Who am I? Who are those people walking toward me? I better cross the street. Oh frick, they're crossing the street. Is it weird to cross again? Okay, I'm crossing again. Oh, they're crossing, too. Oh, they're running toward me. Crap, I gotta get out of here. Why are they running at me?

One of them grabs me by the throat and slams me to the ground, and they're like, "DO YOU HAVE GOD? DO YOU BELIEVE IN SEX?" And I give them all my money just to make them leave me alone.

Rock ...

I had some skin problems growing up and ... well, also now. I blame it all on my second elementary school.

Dodson. Dodson, Dodson, Dodson. Dolphins. I'm doxing their mascot right now. I don't think that's how you use the word dox, but I just felt like it added to the alliteration we have going on here.

That was something I really appreciated about the elementary schools I went to: they knew how to use alliteration. Then, middle school happened, and even worse, high school happened.

I went to this high school that was basically a campus because there were 3 high schools in one, and we would walk between them for classes, depending on what we were taking. We still had our home high schools, though. Mine was called Salem.

I know, already off to a bad start. But wait, it gets a bit worse. Its mascot was a rock. It was allegedly named after Plymouth Rock, but there was a high school in this high school campus called Plymouth, and their mascot was a rabid-looking wildcat, so ...

Anyway, I really liked my elementary school mascot, until I learned that dolphins are actually very similar to humans. In terms of, they should not have a better reputation than sharks.

Sharks are not smooth, is what I learned from screenshots of a Twitter post on Tumblr. My skin, also not smooth. It used to be. I dunno if it was because I was young and unburdened by time, or if it was because I was pre-Dodson.

By now, you must be wondering, d-what did Dodson do? And I will not tell you. Just kidding. I live off attention. So I will tell you.

When I was in ... fourth? Grade? I think? My friends and I would spend recess at this small garden—I guess you could call it that—which was sort of separate from the actual playground. We would walk around the perimeter of this garden, and use the plants to balance. I was really good at balancing. I was, perhaps, the king of the garden. And, I think, I was also the one with the worst case of poison ivy rash a week or so later.

Yeah, turns out the plants we were playing with were poison ivy. And that's the price you pay. For being king.

I remember most of the rash was on my face. And I know I wasn't rubbing my face on the plants for balance, so it really made me realize, I touch my face a lot.

At that point, I don't think I ever had to take a day off school, but I think I took one off because of how bad it got? My memory is kinda spotty, but I remember my face was so swollen and everything was uncomfortable, and I had to put this white paste on my fingers and face, and I hated how it felt and looked.

I couldn't even enjoy being like ... incapacitated. You know how when you get sick, and you go, oh I'm sick, and people fawn over you for a bit? When the rash was small, I felt pretty powerful. And then, you know, it got to a point where the discomfort was not worth the comfort.

I had to go to a piano recital a few days later. This was after the worst of it was over. I did not want to face the public. I did not want to move. I was at the point of discomfort where I thought, if I don't move a muscle in my body, I could forget I existed. However, I am weak for "free" snacks—in reality, we had to pay for the stupid goodie bag and perform on stage—so I went to the recital. I don't remember the recital. All I remember are chocolate-covered raisins.

I was so embarrassed by my appearance. I did not want anyone to see me. I was so aware of having skin, which is a weirdly terrible experience.

If something's in working order, you don't notice it. And I think that's why I have always been so introspective. My mind. Is ... not ... working correctly. Just like how my skin stopped working correctly after I was poisoned.

Which, you know, has made me really appreciate rocks. I would love to be a rock. Or a jellyfish, but for the sake of the recurring motifs in this script, a rock. You know how people would say, "That person is as dumb as a rock." At this point, I would take it as a compliment. The less I think, the more happy I am. I'm channeling no-thoughts-head-empty right now.

Maybe that was what my high school was trying to get a bunch of teenagers to realize. That to be a rock is to be ... rock.