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# Narcissist's Public vs. Private Persona

Inside the carefully filtered illusion and the terrifying emptiness it hides



Elena Byron

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Photo by Julian Christ on [Unsplash](#)

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Online, he looked like the man everyone wanted to be — or be with. Trimmed, tanned, touched-up. Not a pixel out of place. Happiness oozed from every filtered pore.

Airbrushed and heavily edited photos flooded his social media, painting the picture of a successful, cool, desirable man.

His beard — suspiciously black — looked almost drawn on with a marker. In this illusion, there was no room for excess fat, grey hair, or anything remotely human. Nothing was casual. Every detail was carefully staged to portray happiness.

There he was, surrounded by beautiful women on a sofa, captioned: “Working all day!”

He holds a master’s degree in Bragging and a PhD in Humble-bragging.

There he was again, walking with a woman in Paris.

Someone asked: “Are you on holiday?”

He replied: “I’m working. In a beautiful place!”

Naturally.

Under his new profile picture, someone commented: “What kind eyes!”

If only Photoshop could blur out cruelty and traits of psychopathy!

Every picture, every caption screams (just a bit too loudly) I have the best life! I’m cool! I’m someone to admire! I’m happy and great!

Every inch curated to perfection, projecting an image meant to dazzle. An illusion designed to distract from the gaping, terrifying abyss of emptiness underneath.

And he calls it life.

I saw huge cracks.

The real man bears little resemblance to the polished character he performs online. In real life, he's not groomed, his unhealthy habits are all etched on

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While still living in his tiny bedroom he had as a teenager, he presents himself on the Internet as **a visionary, a high-tech guru, a man ahead of his time.**

4/11

He can't cook even the simplest thing. Can't clean. And when this is pointed out, he deflects with a joke, usually a homophobic one.

*"Cooking and cleaning? That's not for men."*

And if you dare to say homophobia is a real issue?

**You're too sensitive. Too 'woke'. Too serious.**

Always too much of something, or not enough of something else.

It was never him. No matter how disturbing or offensive his comments were: it was always you! Very convenient for someone severely allergic to introspection.

The illusion he sells is glossy, global, and grand. The reality? An unemployed man in jogging bottoms, asking ChatGPT "how to go viral" between naps.

Behind the filtered smile and curated captions is a man terrified of being seen, and seeing himself. So he built an illusion and hid inside it. And now he's trapped, **unable to ever live for real.**

*Hi, I'm Elena. I'm a clinical psychologist and a survivor of narcissistic abuse.*

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## Written by Elena Byron

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Psychologist & Trauma Therapist | Survivor Exploring the aftermath of narcissistic abuse, the resilience of the human mind and the path to self-reclamation.

## Responses (4)



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What are your thoughts?



Dewinta Bunda Sajak

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My God.....in Public, he was so angelic 😊



50



2 replies

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Naomi Shippen



Apr 22



I get the feeling this man believed his own lies. I'm glad you listened to your instincts and were not drawn into his web.



5



1 reply

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Naomi Shippen



Apr 22



While still living in his tiny bedroom he had as a teenager, he presents himself on the Internet as a visionary, a high-tech guru, a man ahead of his time

What a pathetic existence. If he put as much effort into his real life as his online one his situation may improve.



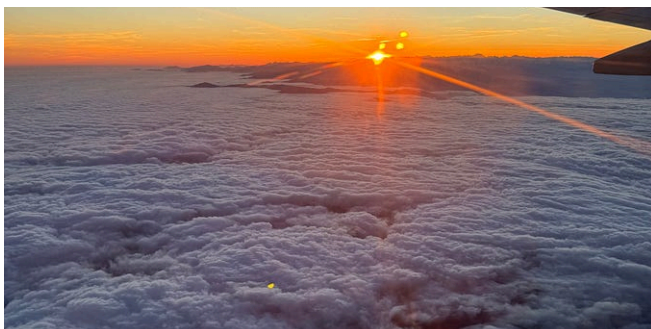
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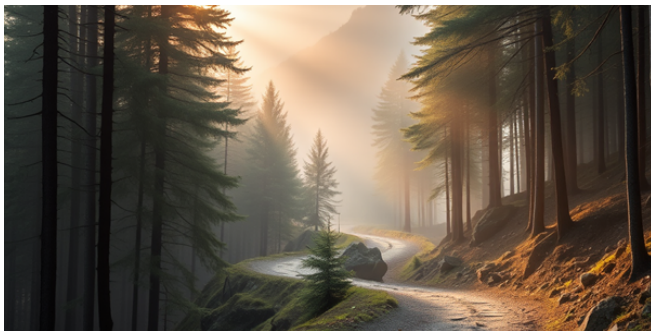
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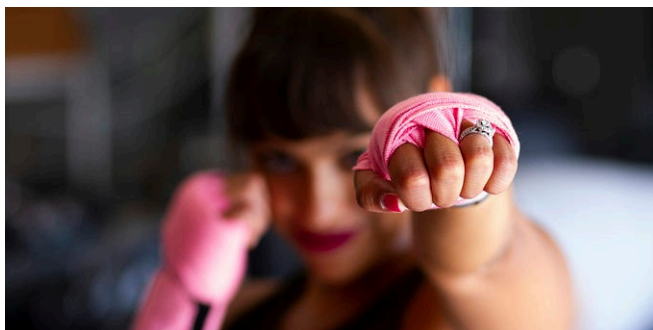


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