

# Life's Stories

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## ***The Atlantic:***

In Paul Murray's novel *Skippy Dies*, there's a point where the main character, Howard, has an existential crisis. "It's just not how I expected my life would be," he says.

"What did you expect?" a friend responds.

"Howard ponders this. 'I suppose—this sounds stupid, but I suppose I thought there'd be more of a *narrative arc*.'"

But it's not stupid at all. Though perhaps the facts of someone's life, presented end to end, wouldn't much resemble a narrative to the outside observer, the way people choose to tell the stories of their lives, to others and—crucially—to themselves, almost always does have a narrative arc. In telling the story of how you became who you are, and of who you're on your way to becoming, the story itself becomes a part of who you are.

Read the whole story: [The Atlantic](#)