**Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more? (250 words min, 650 words max)**

Standing lamely in front of the towering bookshelves, my neck aching from being tilted for so long, I would quietly scan the titles, or more so the authors, to see any names I recognized. I would always start in the “C”s, because they should often have Camus and sometimes Calvino close together, two authors who have distinguishing book covers—a trait I’ve always appreciated. Perhaps I’d also stop by “O” for Orwell, “R” for Rand, “K” for Kant and Kierkegaard, and then I’d usually then hop back to “A” and work my way forward, glossing over the swaths that I had already covered.

This pastime is enjoyable, in a way, apart from reading the books themselves. In truth, while I always feel better for having read a book, the scanning of bookstores is where my romanticization runs supreme.

The behavior of speculating the thought of having read a book more highly than the act of reading it—which can, admittedly, be more strenuous, and especially in the onset—might be somewhat unhealthy and unsustainable, but I’ve always been excited about the idea of reading great works because essentially, these great thinkers have left us guides into their minds, and I’ve read their books I’ll be able to host them—these thinkers who have turned tides in human thought—in *my* mind, and *I’ll* be able to wield their thoughts like weapons against human apathy and disassociation.

Just think, when looking upon the inch-and-a-half thick Penguin Classics edition of “Grundrisse” by Karl Marx, with the disheveled worker on the cover hauling worn-out fire bricks, or the equally-thick but heavier Knopf edition of “The Second Sex” by Simone de Beauvoir with the deckle edge, a mark of craft, and a photo of the gallant visionary herself. Imagine the storms that flooded civilization, the seeds for which are entirely contained in these two important documents.

These movers and others who have magnanimously shifted the specter of philosophy—whose influence is of infinite account—are *readily accessible in book form*! Isn’t that incredible‽ Their expertise on universal matters isn’t lost to the barracks of oblivion, but can be reincarnated at will.

This is why I buy more books than I’ll ever read.