1 The play

No Exit is the best known play of Sartre. Sartre takes an existential loot at humans relations. Essentially the entire play takes place in a single room. A room that is always bright and never dark. Where you can not sleep. The three characters are dead. They think that they are awaiting in the room before they are escorted to hell.

They are brought to the room, one after the other by a mysterious valet, who in fact is the devil.

The characters:

1. Joseph Garcin is a journalist. He said he was shot for his pacifism. But in fact he was shot because he deserted the war. He thinks of himself as a brave man, a thing that is very important for him. And is his weak point.

2. Inez is a manipulative and a sadist. A lesbian that seduced her cousin’s wife, Florence. At the time she is living with them. This drove the cousin to kill himself and later led Florence asphyxiating herself. Inez feels guilty, and comes to the poisoned room and is killed by the gas.

3. Estelle is a simple woman married to a wealthy old man. She had an affair with a man that resulted in a child. She killed the child, and this causes the father of the child to kill himself. Estelle says that she is here
by mistake. We find out that she is a vane person and a pathological liar.

All characters are terrible humans. Thus they should be taken by the valet to hell.

While they are in the room, they start to fight.

1.1 Torturing each other

_Torturing Inez:_ Estelle finds out that she is attracted to Joseph. Estelle tries to seduce Joseph. Joseph says that he can’t make love with Estelle, since Inez will be watching. All these attempts of seduction make Inez crazy. Finally Estelle, tries to kill Inez so she could sleep with Joseph.

_Torturing Estelle:_ Inez tries to seduce Estelle and makes her very scared. Estelle wants a mirror to see how she looks. But there are no mirrors there. This shows how vane Estelle is. She counts on her beauty like an evil woman in a film noir.

_Torturing Joseph:_ Joseph suggests that they try to get along. Inez cynically starts to sing about execution (Joseph was executed, and she is trying to make him angry). Joseph is obsessed that people will look at him as brave. Estelle finally agrees to tell him that he is brave. Inez refuses to change her opinion. Inez: you are obviously a coward. She promises to make him miserable forever.

When Estelle tries to kill Inez, the play end as follows. Inez reminds Estelle that they are already dead.

Inez: Dead! Dead! Dead! Knives, poison, ropes useless. It has happened already, do you understand? Once and for all. SO here we are, forever.


Garcin: For ever, and ever, and ever. (A long silence.)

Garcin: Well, well, let’s get on with it...

2 Interpretation

These three people are stuck in the room. They find out that this is it. Namely, they are not going to another place that is hell. This is hell. The three have to be in the room together for ever and ever and ever. Very fast that they start to get at each other’s nerves. While they lie about their death at start, the room makes them reveal the truth at the end. After they
understand that this is it, they ARE in hell, Joseph says the very controversial line: "Hell is other people."

In *Being and Nothingness* Sartre argues that the existence of another person will torment others. We see the world in one way, but other people see the world in their subjective way. The different ways we see the world, will make us compete. The existence of another person makes you feel like an object. We simply want the way we see reality to be declared the correct one. Other people say that the play is on how the French felt when occupied by Germany.

In existentialism lying to yourself is the biggest sin maybe. You should be authentic to yourself at all costs. You should agree to go to jail if faced with a tyrannical government that tries to make you say lies. At least Estelle and Joseph lie to themself. A big sin. Estelle lies and says that she should no be there, and Joseph tries to claim that he is brave.

And in the opinion of Sartre, no torture tools are needed in hell. Emotional torment is worse.

They could have chosen to not make life hell for each other. But I think that Sartre does not see humanity in this way. He wrote the play during the second world war, and was highly influenced by what happened.

### 3 The devil in Miss Jones

Every 10 years, when the year ends with 2 (namely at 1962, 1972, and so on until 2012, which is the last for now) the important journal *Sight and Sound* polls, critics and directors (separately in two different polls). Each critic and director gives his list of 10 best films of all times. Then they add the votes. The films are ranked according to the number of times they were chosen.

You would not think that American porn films would be chosen as one of the 10 best films by anybody. But this happened several times.

Porn films were considered for years, by feminists and conservative, as exploiting women. Why do the films not exploit men? Unclear. The films were always symmetric, namely woman and man do similar things. The actors and actresses are at least 18 in age. And this is strictly enforced. One time a girl by the (stage name) *Tracy Lord* entered porno at the age of 15. At the age of 18, she told the world that her porn films were done when she was younger than 18. This almost broke the back of the porn industry. All the Tracy Lords porn films became phedophilia. The discs and videos of her films were taken by the police, and are made unavailable on the web, slowly but surely. Tracy Lords did one porn film in France when she was slightly older than 18. This film is illegal in the USA as well. A person that buys or
bring from Europe porn films with Tracy Lord risks being accused of dealing with child porn.

The porn industry is the only one in which all the advantages go to women. Every male and female in such a film is not a real person. He is just a sex object. However, male actors are paid a small fraction of what women are paid. A male working 20 years in porn, will get much less money than a woman that just gets into porn. The famed females porn actresses can get 5000 dollars a single scene. Most of the directors and producers of porn movies are females that were once actresses, and now direct and produce. If this is an exploitation of women, its women that exploit other women.

Porn is considered dirty. But it should be looked as an agreement. The people on the screen are not real. They are sex objects. If a person deduces something about life from porn, this person is mentally ill. Those who produce porn should avoid any exploitation. There should not be films with violence against in porn film. It is worse and not allowed in my opinion to show rape or incest in porn. This is the law today. But older porn films were not bound by the above rules. I think porn films do much less damage than films like *Pretty Woman* or *An officer and a gentleman*. I do accuse the films done today of being unwatchable trash. But interestingly, this was not always the case.

Around 1972 a very strange (short) era started. A film called *Deep Throat* made a lot of noise. It was shown in regular theaters. It was considered for a short while perfectly fine to watch such films. The long queues to the film had celebrities such as Jack O. Very soon after cinema houses dedicated to porn were born. However, if porn is not allowed, I am not sure that masterpieces such as *The last Tango in Paris*, and *A clockwork Orange* (that was rated X, as porn films are) should be allowed. However, the above two films are among the best films ever done. *In the Realm of the Senses* is a film from Japan with explicit sexual scenes. It is a masterpiece. We should be careful not to ban porn, as in this case it is a true slippery slope.

Around 1972 there were a bunch of very few directors that wanted to make good porn movies. For example Mitchell brothers, but mostly by Gerard Damiano, that wanted to make art (the Mitchel brothers, while wanted to make good films, never claimed that they are doing art).

*Deep Throat* is chosen from time to time by serious critics as one of the best 10 films ever made. Do not ask me. I was way too young to see it when it was produced. Years later I watched it in video at home (going to a porn theater is very awkward experience that not everybody likes). It is a film by Gerard Damiano, that wanted to do a comedy. I started to see it, but after 15 minutes stopped. A boring trash. Another films that appeared in the choice of the best 10 films ever was *Beyond the green door* by the Mitchell brothers. I started seeing it in video but stopped after 15 minutes. Boring trash. The
leading actress Marilyn Chambers that had a very long career. She was born in 1952, and died quite young at 2009 from cerebral hemorrhage.

At the time it was legal to distribute such films, to watch such films in cinema, or at home in video. But it was illegal to make porn films. It was considered equivalent to prostitution. Gerard Damiano, the Mitchell brothers Marilyn Chambers and other actors, were arrested at sets by police. It became legal to make porn films in the USA only in the time Reagan was president. At around 1985, the so called golden age of porn ended, because they moved from shooting in film to shooting in video. This caused all the porn films to basically become garbage. Many of the films today do not even have plots. Hard core porn films were not allowed in England, until the year 2000.

The third highly acclaimed porn film was The devil in Miss Jones by Gerard Damiano, However I did not bother seeing it.

In 2002 I went and watched the choice of various critics on what the best 10 films of all times are. There were many films I did not see at the time (by 2012 I managed to almost all off them).

A surprise came with a very prestigious Philippines critic, who chose the porn film The devil versus Miss Jones as one of the best 10 films ever done. He left a comment: "Can an American porn film be better than Citizen Kane? Most of them are not, but a few precious ones are. I always thought of Citizen Kane as a film on white people that feel sorry for themselves”.

Roger Ebert a famed critic gave The devil in Miss Jones film 3 stars. He says that the film should be judge as a part of a porn films and not as a regular films. And among porn films it is good. His partner to the famed TV program Siskel, also gave the film 3 starts.

What is so special about this film? I took a look. What I can say is that this is the best porn film I have ever seen. Probably, the only good porn film I have ever seen.

There were several good things about it. It was directed by Gerard Damiano, the only porn director that wanted to make art. The leading female actress is called Georgina Spelvin. She is the only woman in porn I ever saw, who was able to act.

If some porn films indeed exploit the actors, The devil in Miss Jones is not such a film. And it had a real plot.

The film talks about a sexually frustrated woman, Miss Jones, that wants to have sex with her husband. She has a very strange husband, that would not have sexual relation with her. He is very strange and feeds us strange lines on insects (the one playing the husband also directed: Damiano). Then comes a unique scene for a porn film. Miss Jones kills herself. The only time
I saw suicide in porn.

She arrives above and it is established that she must go to hell. Everybody woman who kills herself must go to hell. But Miss Jones convinces the devil that if she is to go to hell, she deserve to have some sex. She is a virgin because of her husband. The devil agrees and Miss Jones is temporally sent back to earth to have sex. She meets a teacher. He is played by the then famed porn actor Harry Reems, the main leading character of Deep Throat (more on him later).

The teacher gives her three sexual experiment. Namely, three sex scenes. They are done in rare good taste. The last one is a lesbian scene. However when the sex of Miss Jones ends, she should go to hell now. But does not go to hell. She returns to her husband and again cries about the lack of sexual satisfaction. Her life was hell, so she does not need to go to hell. The script is clearly based on No exit.

A strange experience.

3.1 Reems

Reems was arrested after Deep Throat. But the conviction was reversed. So they treated him as Al Capone and claimed that he evaded paying taxes. So he was arrested this time for a longer period, and ended as a homeless drunk person, addicted to drugs. After years of drug abuse, Reems started to recover. He married and converted from Judaism to Christianity. He said: "Being the low-bottom drunk that I was, I started going around to churches," In fact he became a Mormon and worked in real estate in Utah, the most religious state in the USA. A rather curious ending to a person was famous in porn, but became a highly religious person. He never changed his name. Harry Reems so some people in Utah, I would imagine, knew who he was.

In around 2004 he gave an interview for a documentary about Deep Throat and was in the news for a short while again.

Reems died of pancreatic cancer on March 19, 2013, aged 65, at the Salt Lake City Veterans Administration Medical Center. Again, at a young age. This happens to many such actors and actresses. He had no children. Georgina Spelvin had quite a normal life after porn, and did not use drugs or alcohol. She is alive, when these lines are written.

Was Sartre (that died in 1980) aware of the porn adaptation of his play? I wish I knew.
4 Irrational man

This is an underrated but vane film by Woody Allen.

4.1 The plot

In a New England college campus, a famed philosophy professor Abe Lucas is an existential philosopher. On the other hand he is in a deep existential crisis. He suffers from existential depression. Abe says: "I couldn’t remember the reason for living, and when I did it wasn’t convincing." The usual symptoms. He find no meaning to his life. To try to feel something he drinks. He is in a bad shape. Does not look attractive. Somehow, two ladies are attracted to him. because some women are attracted to great intellectual. Allen hates intellectuals. He mocks then at any opportunity. Of course he is an intellectual himself. Allen persona in films is of a person that hates himself. I also suspect its true in real life. Allen makes fun of philosophy frequently. Abe says: "So much of philosophy is just verbal masturbation."

One woman that is attracted to Abe is a chemistry professor Rita Richards. Allen hates science, and even more, hates logic. Thus Rita is posed as an unethical person, like any scientist is (in Allen’s opinion). The second girl attracted to Abe is a young student of philosophy, Jill Pollard, (played by the lovely Emma Stone).

Jill has a boyfriend that all of a sudden seems boring. She lives with her parents. Rita lives with her husband, but her love to him was lost long ago. Abe is an opportunist. Clearly an unethical person. So he tries to sleep with Rita. His first sexual experience with Rita goes badly. Abe says: "I wanted to be an active world changer and I’ve wound up a passive intellectual who can’t fuck." But probably because of bad previous experiences, he does not sleep with Jill at the time. It is hinted that he was fired in the past because of such things.

Abe and Jill overhear a woman that is about to lose her children. An unethical judge will give them to her evil husband in family court.

This cures Abe’s depression. He decides to murder the judge. Maybe thinking on Nietzsche and his ideas on the super human that is not bound by the usual morality. Alternatively, he looks himself as the hero of the book Crime ond Judgment which makes no real sense, because the main character kills the elderly woman for no reason. The author of this book was an extreme catholic and thought of murder as a mortal sin.

Abe quite reasonably thinks that since he is not involved with the case he is not going to be caught. Abe steals a key to the chemistry lab of Rita. He manages to get a hold on cyanide which is completely lethal.
The judge runs (jogs) every morning and after that drinks orange juice on some bench. Abe manages to pour the poison in an identical cup, and exchanges the cups. The judge does not notice, drinks the orange juice, and dies.

Abe thinks that he finally did something important. The world is better without this evil man. After that the relation of Abe and Jill becomes a romance. Jill’s breaks us with her boyfriend. A very important scene is when the two go to some fare and Abe plays a game that is basically one of chance. He wins a flash light.

Abe’s is truly stupid. True, how can anybody suspect him? But he makes highly stupid decisions. This is the revenge of Allen against intellectuals. But a movie in which the director hates his main character is somewhat problematic.

The first doubt of Jill and Rita, is because of the missing key. There were better ways to find poison. Rita is aware that her key is missing, and later a student recalls that Abe was in the respective room. Then Abe does the stupid act of leaving his window open while he has the book Crime and punishment, open in a particularly incriminating place. Jill enters his house and see’s the open Crimes and punishment book. Only a stupid person will do such a thing. Like Allen said many times before: how can people be so brilliant (intellectuals) but have no idea about life?

Rita decides that even if he is guilty, she wants to leave her husband and live with Abe in Europe. Since she is in science, she is unethical. Allen can not help it. If he has a person that works in science, basically all such characters are unethical.

But Jill has a moral compass. She confronts Abe and accuses him of the murder. Abe then admits his guilt expecting her to forgive him. Jill at start promises that she is not going to tell the police. However, as in many such cases, the police charges an innocent man of the crime. They intend to execute the innocent man.

Then Jill tells Abe that he must go to the police. Otherwise she will report him.

Abe, who has only recently started enjoying life, is determined to stay out of jail. He attempts to kill Jill by pushing her into an elevator shaft, but he trips over the flash light he won by chance, and falls himself to the shaft and dies.

Jill reconciled with Roy, her boyfriend and continues her life, after learning a lesson of two.
4.2 Some remarks

The flashlight kills Abe and this means that life is random. This is something that Allen says in all his movies. Since he is an atheist.

As Friedrich Nietzsche said: ”Some people die too soon and some die too late.” Namely, people die at a random time.

A lot of the film is on the question: Can you kill for the greater good? Allen clearly says ”no” and punishes Abe. Abe once an idealistic man, fed starving families in Darfur. But good people do not get rewarded in this world. Abe contracted meningitis. His wife ran away with his best friend. And the friend died in Iraq (maybe its not the same friend? Allen does not say).

The fact that we will die and know it, is felt strongly in the film. Woody Allen loves Bergman, and many other artists. When he listens to Cole Porter he forgets for a second that he is mortal. But as Allen always said: Even Bergman and Porter are only a distraction.

Abe drinks to try and feel something. But this distraction does not work at all. Simone de Beauvoir the girlfriend of Sartre warned us: Change your life today. Don’t gamble on the future, act now, without delay. Nietzsche suggests finding a triumphant Yes to life. Accept that you will die, and make your life great.

But there is a problem. Fyodor Dostoyevsky raises the question: without God, is everything is permitted? The answer of Allen is: ”God does not exist, but we have to find ethics within ourselves”. Like in existential philosophy Allen says: be authentic to yourself. On the other hand it is clear that Allen agrees that ”Hell is other people”.

4.3 The vane citation by Allen

Abe quotes a lot. The critics saw that as a showoff. But no. It is a very careful collection of citations, the last one of which, tells the end of the film way before it ends.

Abe needs to justify the murder to Jill. He cites philosophers to justify his act. He cites philosopher in the order of the time they lived in. Abe starts with a philosopher that is very far from his philosophy and says that Kant said human reason is troubled by questions that it cannot dismiss, but also cannot answer. Kant is miles away from existentialism, so Abe is being an opportunist to use him. This does convince Jill. Abe says that ”Dostoevsky got it”, due to Crime and Punishment. Jill is not impressed. In any case Dostoevsky was highly religious, unlike Abe. Therefore using Dostoevsky is another opportunist act.
Then Abe goes to existentialism to convince Jill. He says: "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom" due to Kierkegaard that is for some reason considered an existential philosopher (I do not get it. He was religious). Then he goes closer to Sartre. He cites Simone de Beauvoir, the girlfriend of Sartre.

Now, could I know the faith of Abe upfront, given my knowledge of (all) Allen’s films? No. It is not like people do not get away with murder in his films. It happens a lot. For example *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Match point*. So Abe may get away with it, or not.

The final citation Allen was interested is citing *No exit*. This citation would give away the end of the film, We will understand that Abe has "No exist". So he will get caught or die at the end. Thus Allen refrains from mentioning Sartre. Allen thinks the people watch his films are idiots, The low opinion he has on the viewers is most clear in his film, *Stardust memories*. At the end of this film a fan kills him. Allen complains about people that wanted him to continue with comedies, etc. He said countless bad things on those who watch his films.

So Allen makes Abe just say: "Hell is other people". Allen hoped and thought that the viewers would not connect this to *No exit*.

After he cites *No Exit*, I knew the ending of the film a long time before the end. I knew that Abe has "No exit", and I knew that at the end he either will go to jail, or will die. When I saw the flash light scene I knew that Allen will have to use this randomness. He cant help himself. So I was sure that Abe will die because of the flash light, a thing which unfortunately happens in the movie. He ruined the film for me. Maybe I am not idiot enough for him? NO I think I am idiot enough for him, in any case.

### 4.4 Another ugly citation

I will give another example of a bad taste citation by Allen that shows amazing vanity. This citation probably achieves his goal. Probably hardly anyone who watch this film *Midnight in Paris* understood the vane quote. This makes Allen feel that he is smarter than everybody.

In *Midnight in Paris* a struggling writer named Gil, is in vacation in Paris. He finds a portal to the 1920’s in Paris and therefore meets the remarkable artists that worked there at the time. He meets the famous Jean Cocteau. I had excellent knowledge about him, since he among other things made films. He was quite amazing. He was a poet, playwright, novelist, designer, filmmaker, visual artist and critic. Only people like Pasolini or Welles, can compete with such record.

Gil also meets the hero of Allen (and of course, my her) Cole Porter and the legendary Zelda, and Scott Fitzgerald (I admit that I do not like his
books. I read them in Hebrew and it was lost in translation). They see see Josephine Baker dancing. He meets Ernest Hemingway and Juan Belmonte.

The most important true person that Gil meets, is Gertrude Stein. Here I was a victim of my “stupidity” as Allen will describe it. For me, she was not an important person. I knew her as an art collector, and that is it. I never heard of her in other context. But she was an American novelist, poet, playwright, besides being one of the most famous art collector.

I did not understand why Allen gave her such importance in the film. Only after the film, and after I looked her in google, did I find out all the other things. Stein helps Gil with critic of the first novel.

The Novel, almost as usual, is on Gil himself. There are good jokes like Ernest Hemingway understanding that Gil’s girlfriend is cheating on him. Gill says (the funny line for me): You can fool me but not Ernest Hemingway. His girl friend tells him that he has a brain tumor. Why otherwise will he be talking on Ernest Hemingway. But then she admits the affair.

Then Gil meets the surrealists Salvador Dal, Man Ray, and Luis Bunuel. The surrealists see nothing strange about his claim to have come from the future, finding it to be perfectly normal.

The tasteless citation comes here. Bunuel is one of the most admired director in cinema history (lets face it: admired by the critics. Not by humans. I doubt anybody in the theater knew Bunuel. And those who heard about him usually did not see his films).

Gil tells Bunuel: I have an idea for a film for you: A bunch of people come to eat in a house, and then loose their will to leave. He is talking about the film of Bunuel The exterminating angel. I always disliked this film. I saw it several times and it did not help. The film indeed describes people who come for dinner and loose their will to leave the house (no reason is given for that). Bunuel answers by: ”But why cant they leave”? In fact Bunuel asks this several times. This is a clear insult of Bunuel that was a surrealist. He would never ask such a question. This citation is just annoying. Just bad taste. And also vane. Who do you expect to understand the citations, besides the critics. This citation was not for the critics. Allen hates critics.

The people of The exterminating angel went to a place and lost they will to leave.

I had a similar experience. I went to cinema to see Midnight in Paris. I almost lost my will to stay in the cinema. But at the end, I did stay. My opinion on Allen was not improved, though.