# Ch 10 - 10/10

I have this weird, almost stupid hope that I’ve left you underwhelmed by the concluding chapters after having built up this great sense of impending dread… There really isn’t a game plan or strategy guide for replacing patriarchy, capitalism, and the like and it certainly isn’t anything I'm capable of definitively speaking upon. No, the singular most important bit of information I hope to have relayed to you is the importance of thinking for oneself—in paying attention to what you pay attention to. In affording others the basic compassion that they deserve. Only then can you begin to challenge what it is you live for and how you want to go about achieving it. It's like a room that’s suddenly gone dark—sure, you can sit there and wait for your eyes to adjust only to be able to make out the faintest of outlines here and there. Or you could get up and feel around. Look, it's the sentiment that matters, not my shitty anaologies.

And so we’ve made it thus far—the concluding chapter. I'm still quite amazed I was able to pull this off. You know, this project initially started as the brain child of a philosophy final I was writing last semester. I had entertained the idea of actually reading the texts and writing a real essay during my summer, but never did I think that it was going to become this. At first I was just calling it a zine, because I didn’t expect it to be all too long, but as I was reading I began to realize a certain passion to create was being cultivated deep within my chest. Before this summer, I had barely done anything outside of coursework; nothing motivated me to create for myself. An artist, struggling to create something, out of nothing. Yet something in *The Rebel* harpooned my thoughts and convictions and ever since then, I’ve felt… alive? I don’t know, I definitely didn’t feel like I belonged in the world I was experiencing, but I also felt as if I was just droning on, hazily aspiring for nothing in particular. I still don’t really know what it is I want to do or where I feel I most belong, but I've picked up this scent way off in the distance and I can’t wait to see where it leads me.

At this point, I feel as if this project—the writing at least—is at an acceptable level of polish. With more than six months of collective labor, I certainly feel good about the state it's in, if it had to be published with no more revisions. But I have this grand perception of a thing so shiny and complete that no additions or subtractions could ever make it any better. This is occasionally a helpful motivator for an artist—to envelop passion and encourage oneself to create something totally beyond what they previously felt capable of producing. Yet this grand ideal is nothing but a farce… Is there more that I want to include in this project? Absolutely! I have pages upon pages of additional sources that I hoped to weave into the inner narrative of the piece. But this thing is long enough as it is. Perhaps too long, even. This certainly won't be my last passion project and it certainly isn't all I want to put out into the world, but it is all that this singular project has to say for now. Not that there won’t be eventual editions published ;)

I’ve posited that the lack of compassion evident in our daily lives is perhaps the most glaring, alarming evidence we have as to why things are as fucked as they seem, but I also challenged you to help reassert the empathy that society lacks. *Humanity has a choice: either remain complacent in this great perversion of life and death; or stand up, say no, and assert that there is beauty and meaning in a life of solidarity*. If we truly believe this and indeed, the goal it proposes, we have to contend with the challenges we will face because of our commitment to *trying* to be good. It will not be easy, but it will always be worth it. Pick your battles, know your limits, and love. Love always.

Compassion is not a tolerance for hatred, nor an abstract prophecy for “peace on earth.” It's not submissive to the intoxicating gravitas of power and fear yet still holds its ground when a line gets crossed. Compassion is an insistence of meaning, of hope and love, of passion and acceptance. Compassion is the essential catalyst through which human solidarity is achievable.