# **Runaway Bride**

### How do you take your eggs?

Zoe's avatar

[Zoe](https://substack.com/@zoeffc)

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2

[2](https://femmefuturescooperative.substack.com/p/runaway-bride/comments)

2

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Hey!

I grew up on romcoms. Hell, I continue to raise myself on romcoms. The 1999 film “Runaway Bride”, starring Julia Roberts and Richard Gere (who is hotter than George Clooney — I said what I said), has a central trope that I return to time and again. It involves eggs.



Subscribed

A quick plot summary to bring you up to speed: In this 1999 classic, small town girl Maggie Carpenter, begins to make headlines by getting engaged, making it to the alter and then dramatically running away. I believe she does it at least three times before big city journalist, Ike Graham, comes across her. Obviously, in the end, they end up together, this is a romcom. Over the course of the film, Ike seeks out each of Maggie’s ex-fiancés to get their story. Each time Ike talks to an ex, he ends with one question: “How does she like her eggs?” and each time, they tell him some iteration of “exactly the same way I like mine”. Through this, it is revealed that Maggie has been creating versions of herself to mirror the men that she is in relationship with.

They don’t make romcoms like they used to.

Subscribed

Here is what lingers with me: Maggie goes full bore with emulating the personality and interests of whichever man she is in a relationship with at the time as a way to run away from uncovering who she is and what she really wants or likes. In the movie, this is seen as manipulative, cunning, and immature, but how bad is it really?

Growing up is a process of trying on different ways of being. Personally, I have been The Feminist, The Liberal Arts Student, The Climate Activist, and The Organized One, among others I am sure. That is what it means to be young and to figure out who you are.

On top of that, we are taught that we should do work that is aligned with our passions. Guidance, college, and career counselors advise us to reflect on what our interests are and choose our next step based on that. It is easy to then let our jobs define our personalities. If we truly care about this thing, then it clearly, needs to be reflected in all aspects of our lives.

My first job fell into my lap. I had been looking for fundraising jobs at nonprofits and universities, and through some connections I had, I ended up speaking to one of the executives at a climate nonprofit. While at that point, I was already trying to reduce my waste production and associated carbon emissions, I never would have called myself “an environmental activist”. Suddenly though, that became the lens through which I understood my work and myself for a period of time — I even bought a used Prius. Now, a couple of years removed from the role, I still certainly care about the environment, but my sense of self has diverged from the idea of “environmental activist”.

After that job, I clung to some bits of that “environmentalist” self. I still drive my 15-year-old Prius, and still follow climate news. The job that followed that one was more corporate and less Portland-coded. Eventuatally, I realized that I was less anti-institution and more comfortable around people in suits and heels. This version of me wore make-up to work most days, and learned how to use corporate lingo. In my current role, I have entirely lost my “climate” label, but have gained new labels, such as “project manager” and “board meeting expert”. Now, I think a lot about how people like me exist in worlds built for people not like them. Hello, Femme Futures.



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Perhaps the major difference between me and Maggie Carpenter is that I do not return to a blank slate after each version of me that I try on. I keep the Prius and the affinity for project management software.

In Runaway Bride, the scene after our act three breakup is of Maggie sitting at her kitchen table with an assortment of eggs cooked different ways. She tries each plate, trying to figure out how she likes her eggs. I think that this is what your twenties/early career is. You must try each type of egg and really ask yourself if you like it or not. You are allowed to kind of like some eggs, really like other eggs and not be able to stand other eggs. You don’t have to like the same eggs as your parents or your partners or your friends. All that really matters is that you are figuring out how it is that *you* take your eggs.

With all of that being said, I now need to plan a Julia Roberts movie marathon. Maybe that is my passion. Who knows? You gotta try the eggs.

Cheers,

Zoe

