✨Bonus✨ It's Been a Year

This has been my personal NYC Marathon.

Zoe

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Happy Birthday to the Cooperative!

I have been writing my newsletter for a year now. It has been a rollercoaster.

Something that I have been learning for the last couple of years—maybe my whole life—is how to keep doing something even when you aren’t good at it. One of my more recent newsletters is about this, specifically as it relates to my favorite hobby.

It feels wrong to call writing a hobby. Writing feels like something that is wired into me. I have been telling (truly terrible) stories for as long as I could speak. I was coercing my friends into helping me write books about our Barbie Fairy exploits in the backyard.

I have wanted to be a writer for so long. Starting my newsletter felt big for a lot of reasons. It was—and is—the fulfilment of many of my aspirations for my adult self. Chief among those was the hope to be a writer.

I have a routine every week. Monday and Tuesday are for musing on what I might write that week. I am paying attention to the world around me. I am noticing what I am noticing. Wednesday is ideally when I would draft the week’s newsletter. Some weeks that takes at least 4-5 attempts, my frustration mounting after each one, fearing the worst: that I have no more left to say to the world. Then inspiration strikes, or maybe I let a rant run away with me. However, some weeks, I am noticing so hard that I look up and it’s thursday and I still have not written a damn thing. Then you can find me holed up in any number of corners writing whatever feels relevant.

For 52 weeks, that newsletter has gone out.

The part of the process that is the hardest is not when I am searching for inspiration or editing or even when I am in the act of writing. It is the hours that follow sending it out and dying to know what people think. It’s watching the view count tick up and comparing that to how it went last week. It is waiting for my friends to text me to tell me how funny or insightful it was. It is waiting for my boyfriend to inevitably like, comment, and text me about it—or my Dad.

I wish I didn’t care about this external validation. I think that every single aspect of my life would be improved if I could just shut that part of myself off. Maybe I would play the fiddle or sing outside of the sanctuary of my car. Maybe I would finish writing a freaking novel. Unfortunately, I have not yet learned the trick to letting go of what the world thinks of me.

Truthfully, when I don’t see the stats behaving in the way that I want them to—when people aren’t showering me with praise, and even sometimes when they are—I wonder if I am bad at writing. Hell, I might be. I am not the best, I know that. But somewhere in me, I want to believe that maybe I am in the top 10%. Those stats bring me right back down, though. They make me wonder why I am doing this. They make me look through old newsletters and wish I had never hit “publish”.

When I first started the Femme Futures Cooperative, I wanted to give myself a year. It seemed like a good goal. At the time, a year felt like a marathon. I would need to keep pushing week after week, even when that seemed inconvenient or I felt like I had nothing new to say. I would have to keep writing even when I felt like I was bad at it.

Clearly, I did it.

I want to celebrate this like it is my personal New York City Marathon. Every week felt different, just as I imagine every mile does. But you know how once you run your first marathon, you start itching to run your second? Yeah. You aren’t getting rid of me just yet. I cannot imagine stopping now. I granted myself the title of Writer, and I will not let that crown be taken from me now.

I hope that everyone has a great weekend, and I cannot wait to talk to you more on Friday.

Best,

Zoe