

Dearest 26,

I return to you tonight. I'm writing from a dream place you imagined into being thirteen years ago. Before moving to New York you conjured up exactly where I now sit, in a letter to a long ago love. On the page you wondered: do I dare lead a seemingly insignificant life, outwardly strange and lonely, if that life shelters deep meaning for me? Do I dare live in some far flung little town, a dog my only company, if it means I can shuffle across wood floors, wrapped in my robe to coffee, have time for a hot breakfast and in return? The day stretched out before me to write.

New York was simply one line item in this accounting of dream; in truth it was the easier sell. Most can support the romance and courage impelled by New York. But solitude and oddity for a woman seemed pitiable; especially when one does not have the full weight of Manhattan as The Reason. And thirteen years ago, that was your deeper fear.

But your dream (you titled that letter, The Dream, remember?) is present, is awake, is alive.

*ZORA: Now women forget all those things they don't want to remember, and remember everything they don't want to forget. The dream is the truth. Then they act and do things accordingly.*

This small unremarkable city on the river Cape Fear, is an appropriate stage. The receiver of that letter now lives here as well. And who could ever have envisioned *that*? I know now the writing is what mattered, and you. The recipient has long ago forgotten; I have not.

The dog and I visit the river almost daily. I'm not sure how much longer we'll be here but I'm glad we made it.

Love,

C