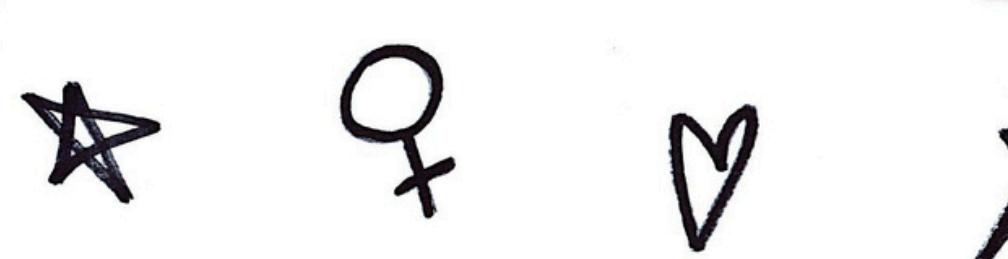


♀ ALL OF ⭐
OUR DOLLS
ARE LESBIANS
♥ NOW ♥

a zine by
Lo Riddell





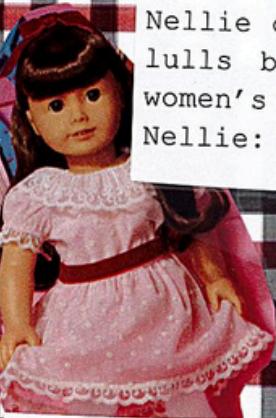
All of our dolls are lesbians now.



This should come as no surprise.

Samantha Parkington is 25 when she votes in her first election. Having dedicated much of her early adulthood to distributing resources to union organizers, she realizes the great privilege that comes from inheriting her Grandmary's estate and sets out to do good with it.

While catching up with her lifelong pal Nellie over lunch one day, the conversation lulls between bites of bread and talk of women's wages. Then comes a confession from Nellie: "I think I'm in love with you." 



That's all it takes. Their lives become one big Togetherness. Nellie moves into the old Queen Anne house and everything is all cotton bedquilts and social action and Sunday morning scones and forging a real life of their own - a "Boston Marriage," as Grandmary would have called it. Samantha reads aloud from her favorite book every night, sending Nellie to sleep with the sound of her voice. The novel's ending couldn't be truer:

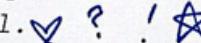
There is no place like home.



Molly McIntire goes to an all-women's college in 1953, her whole life ahead of her as the Eisenhower era begins. Her feelings for other women have surely never meant anything; being enamored with recess companions or high school rivals or your own third grade teacher is just a universal experience of girlhood -

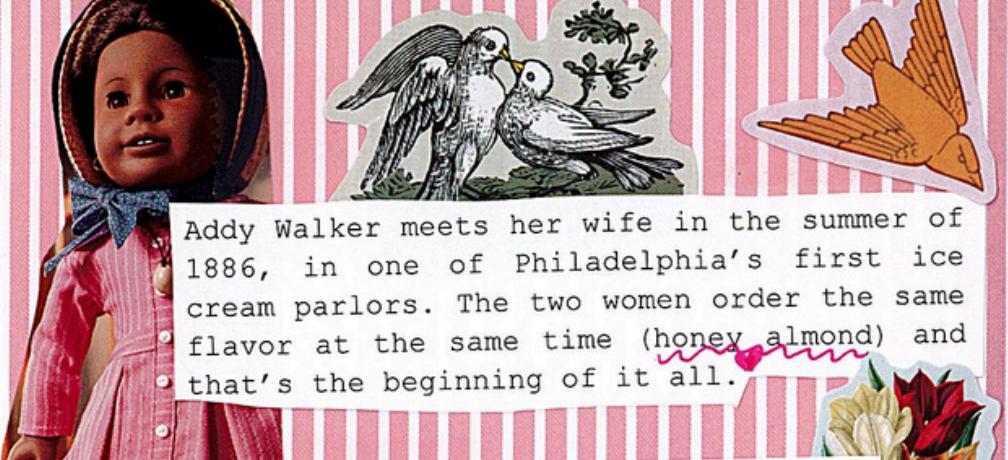
right?

When her roommate invites her to a bar in the city one night, Molly discovers a whole new world. Women holding other women in their arms, women with hair short like men's, women in work pants, women in suits. Butches and femmes and drag queens.

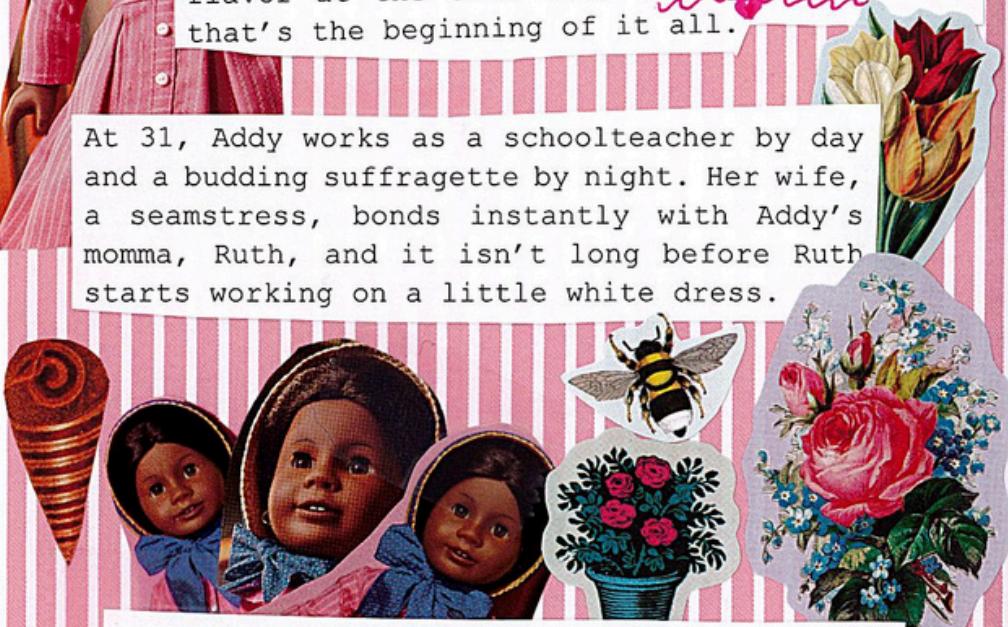
How foolish, she thinks, that a place has existed all along with people so wonderful and I never knew it at all. 



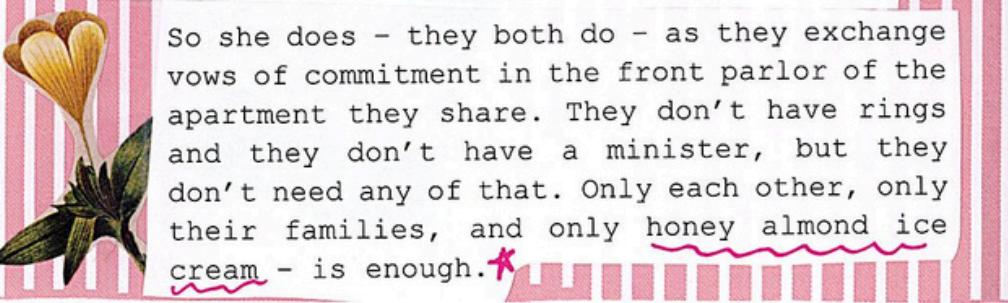
Impulsive as ever, she cuts her long braids off that night in her dormitory bathroom. She ditches her skirts for slacks - but keeps her argyle sweaters - and for the first time, she looks in the mirror and sees someone recognizable.



Addy Walker meets her wife in the summer of 1886, in one of Philadelphia's first ice cream parlors. The two women order the same flavor at the same time (honey almond) and that's the beginning of it all.

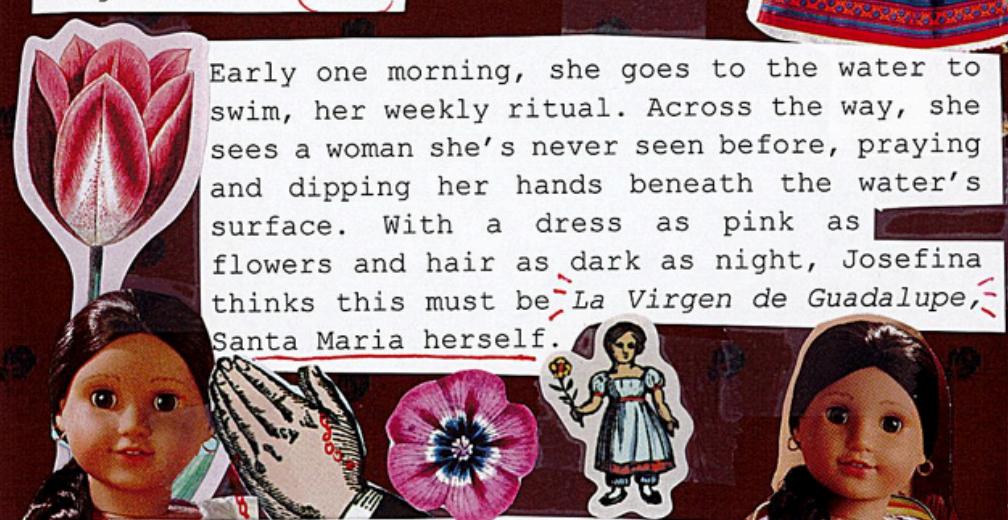


Addy protests, knowing the "marriage" will only ever be a family secret, but her Momma doesn't let up. "My daughter's in love," she says. "You're wearing a dress."

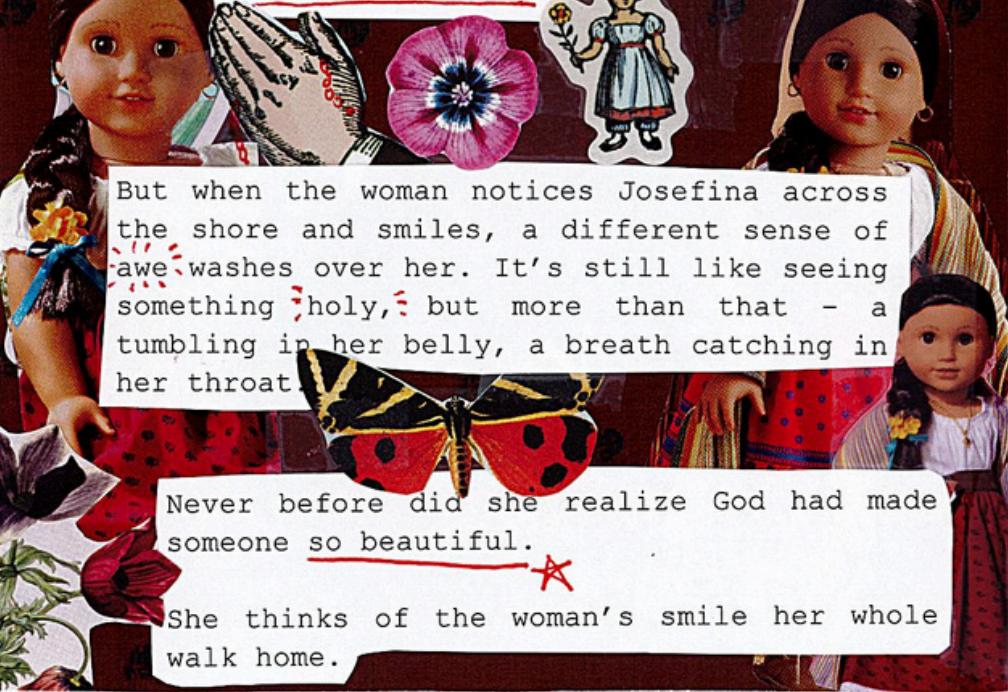


So she does - they both do - as they exchange vows of commitment in the front parlor of the apartment they share. They don't have rings and they don't have a minister, but they don't need any of that. Only each other, only their families, and only honey almond ice cream - is enough.

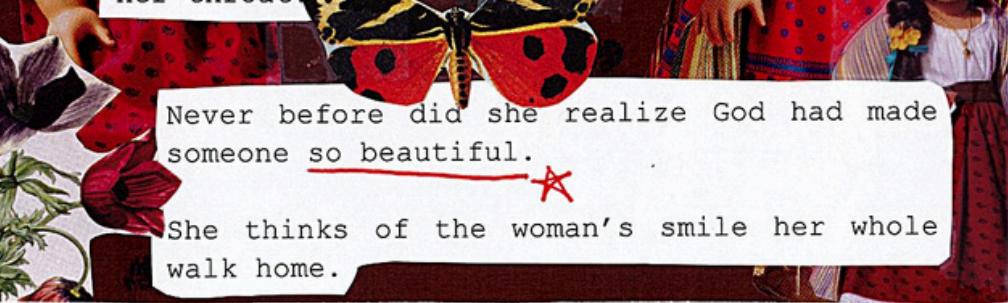
Josefina Montoya loves her father and her friends and her faith. In adulthood, she becomes a healer just as she's always dreamed. She especially loves working alongside las comadronas, the midwives, helping women in whatever ways they need. She develops a sacred understanding of the world around her - everywhere she looks, there's magic; there's God.



Early one morning, she goes to the water to swim, her weekly ritual. Across the way, she sees a woman she's never seen before, praying and dipping her hands beneath the water's surface. With a dress as pink as flowers and hair as dark as night, Josefina thinks this must be La Virgen de Guadalupe, Santa Maria herself.



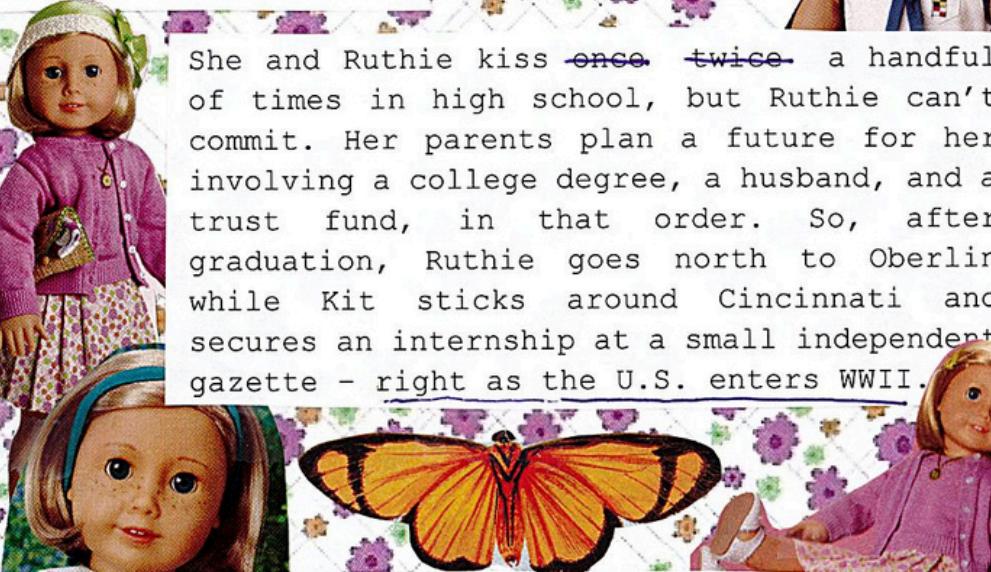
But when the woman notices Josefina across the shore and smiles, a different sense of awe washes over her. It's still like seeing something holy, but more than that - a tumbling in her belly, a breath catching in her throat.



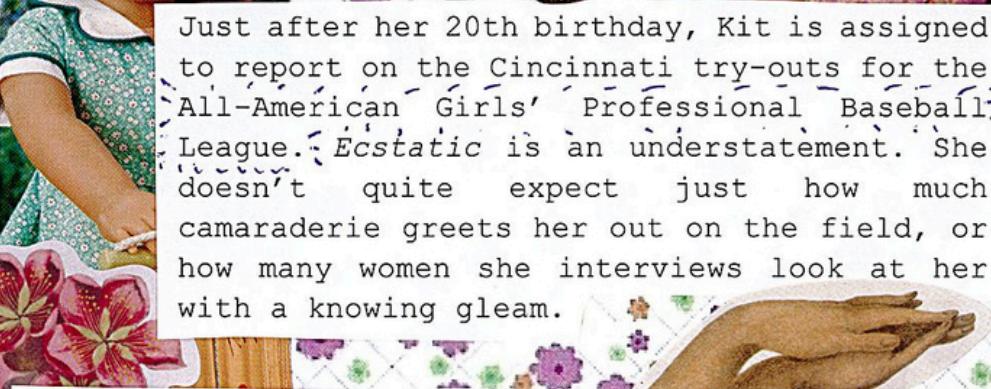
Never before did she realize God had made someone so beautiful.

She thinks of the woman's smile her whole walk home.

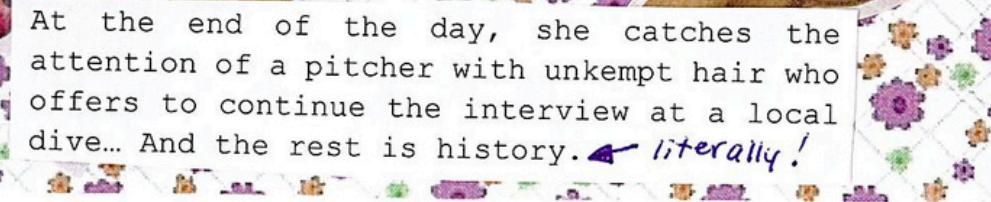
Kit Kittredge figures things out fairly early on - everyone could see it coming from a mile away, anyways. She always hated the girly frills and lace of her old bedroom; preferred playing baseball with the neighborhood boys to most anything else.



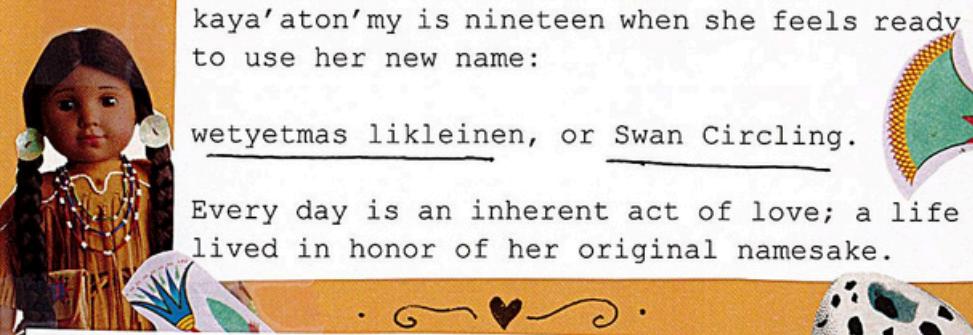
She and Ruthie kiss once twice a handful of times in high school, but Ruthie can't commit. Her parents plan a future for her involving a college degree, a husband, and a trust fund, in that order. So, after graduation, Ruthie goes north to Oberlin while Kit sticks around Cincinnati and secures an internship at a small independent gazette - right as the U.S. enters WWII.



Just after her 20th birthday, Kit is assigned to report on the Cincinnati try-outs for the All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League. Ecstatic is an understatement. She doesn't quite expect just how much camaraderie greets her out on the field, or how many women she interviews look at her with a knowing gleam.



At the end of the day, she catches the attention of a pitcher with unkempt hair who offers to continue the interview at a local dive... And the rest is history. literally!



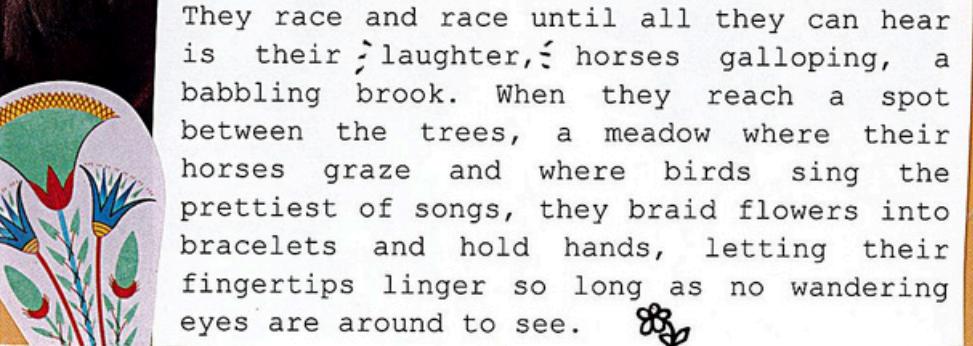
kaya'aton'my is nineteen when she feels ready to use her new name:

wetyetmas likleinen, or Swan Circling.

Every day is an inherent act of love; a life lived in honor of her original namesake.



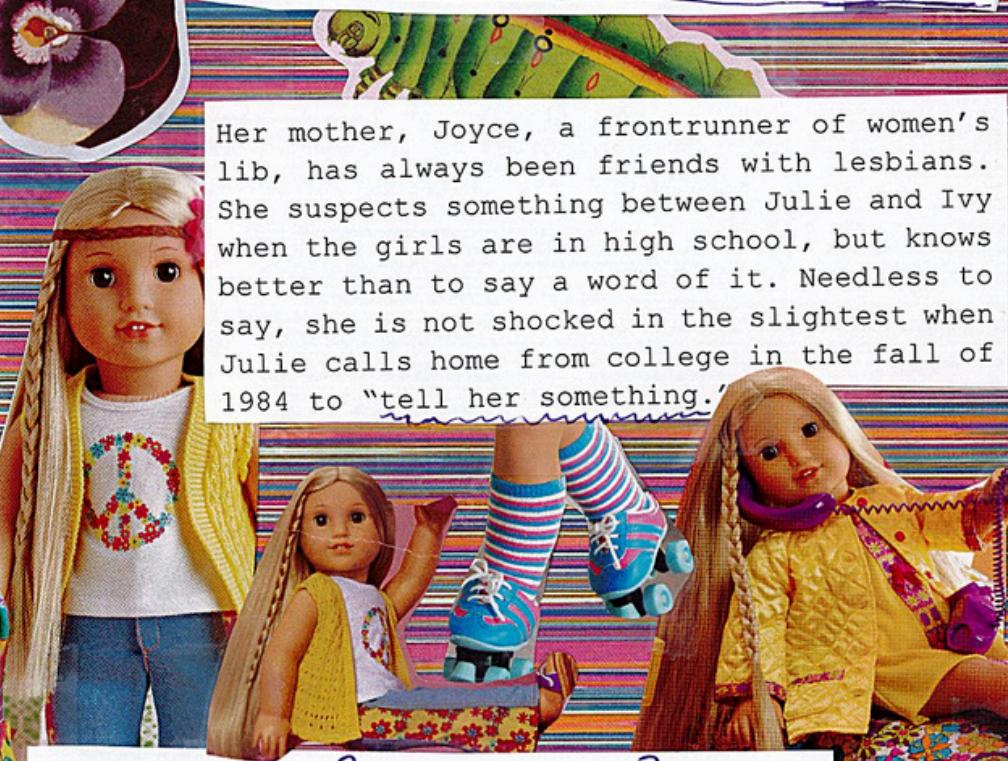
Upon meeting some new members of her community - a few mergers by marriage and whathaveyou - she befriends another young woman about her age, with eyes the color of sunlight on honey. The two women like to race their horses far past the trees on the edge of the horizon.



They race and race until all they can hear is their laughter, horses galloping, a babbling brook. When they reach a spot between the trees, a meadow where their horses graze and where birds sing the prettiest of songs, they braid flowers into bracelets and hold hands, letting their fingertips linger so long as no wandering eyes are around to see.

Julie Albright is a child of divorce, the first girl at school to join the basketball team, and a resident of San Francisco in the 1970s.

Did you really think she wouldn't turn out gay?



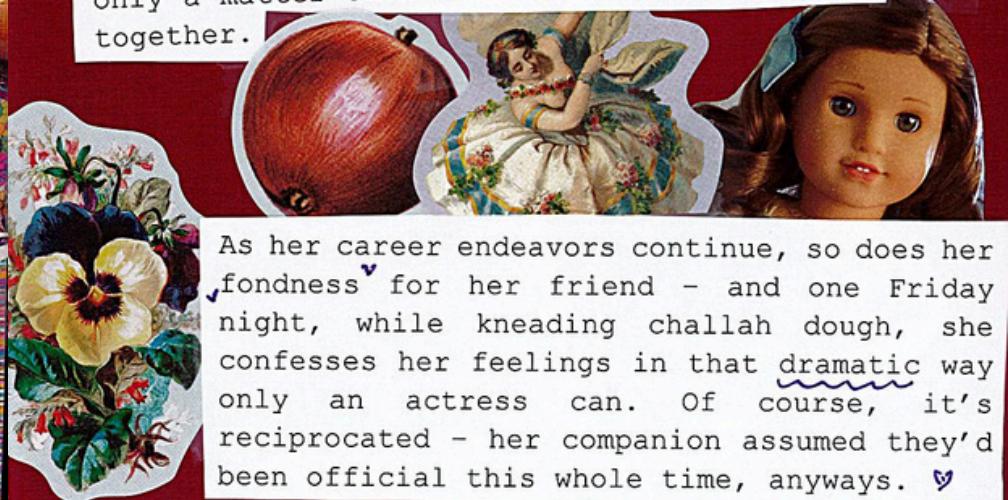
Julie works at a lesbian-feminist bookstore and spends her weekends distributing pamphlets on queer rights, accessibility, and abortion access. She organizes Dyke Night at the local gay bar every month and even considers getting a big Labrys tattoo that Ivy has to talk her out of. (Her skin is much too sensitive to hold tattoo ink.)

(And, yes, she loves Alison Bechdel's work.)

Rebecca Rubin's siblings all marry by the time she's 27, but she has more interesting things to do. A stage actress and up-and-coming playwright herself, Rebecca stays busy with local theatre endeavors every chance she gets (so long as she rests on Shabbos).



One fateful winter in 1932, she opts to volunteer with a project to produce, print, publish, and archive plays written in Yiddish. She becomes fast friends with one of the archivists leading the project - a pretty woman about her age - and then, it's only a matter of months before they move in together.



As her career endeavors continue, so does her fondness for her friend - and one Friday night, while kneading challah dough, she confesses her feelings in that dramatic way only an actress can. Of course, it's reciprocated - her companion assumed they'd been official this whole time, anyways. ♡

See, everyone jokes about the
"Barbie doll dykes."

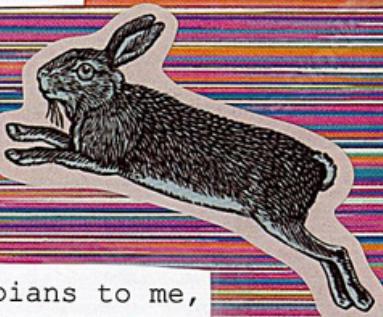
Those dolls are women already,
with prominent chests
and long, catwalk-ready legs.

It's easy to sexualize,
easy to fantasize.

But these dolls are different.



I saw myself in them, in their innocent stories of childhood and friendship, when I had no one else to see myself in.



They have always been lesbians to me,



long before I understood the "sex" in "sexuality."

They were queer in that way

that all little lesbians

are gay before they know it

All along, they have been little girls

with short haircuts, big dreams, loud voices,

in love with their best friends or female mentors

in only the most wholesome of ways.



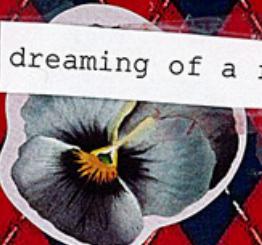
Just like me,

when I was nine,

holding hands

with my friends

on the playground



or at eleven,

dreaming of a future



of sleeping in my best friend's bed.



What I'm trying to say here is:

none of these stories

are difficult to imagine.

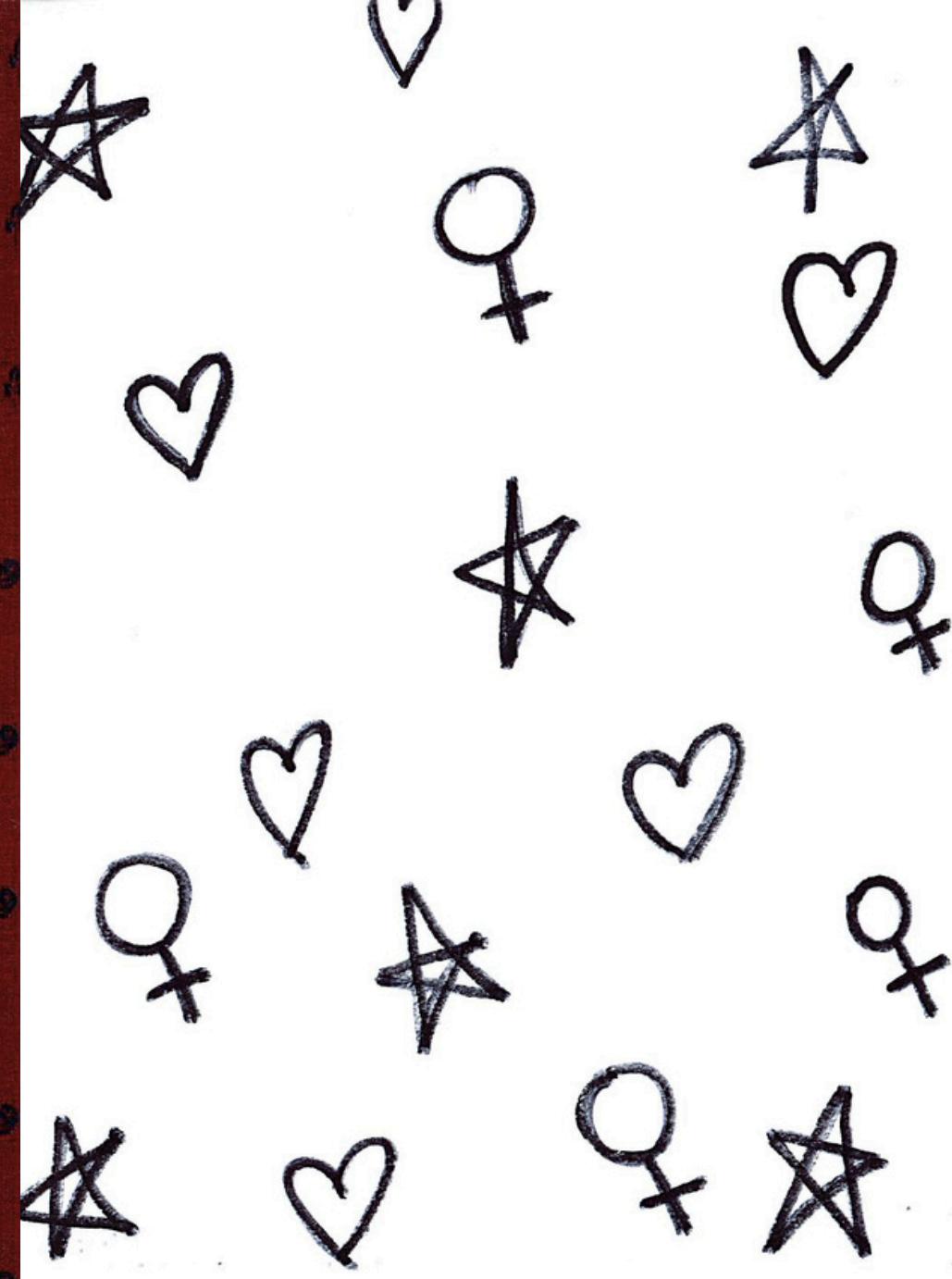
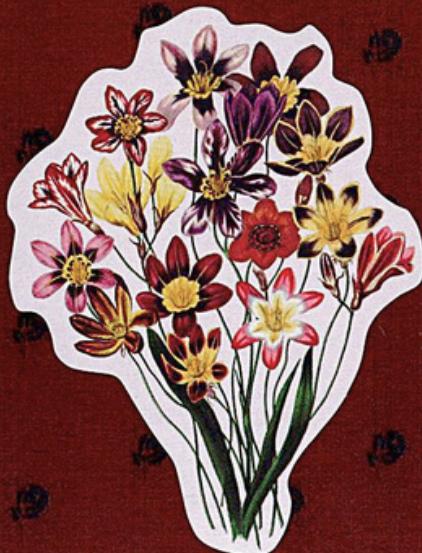


Image credits to the American Girl catalogs
I still receive in the mail*

and *The Antiquarian Sticker Book* from MacMillan
for all the stickers I used!

Words are all my own.

Hand-cut and collaged by me in December 2024!

*Hence the limited outfit options -
my favorites will always be the original "Meet" outfits,
but current catalogs can only provide me with so much.



a zine by Lo Riddell
loriddell.com
instagram @vintagelouisa



online edition 125

1st print edition, 2024