

# ON THE PIE THAT HAD NOT YET BEEN EATEN

***A Meditation on Wonder, Becoming, and the Happiness That Did Not Wait***

**By Makita R Thatcher**

**November 25, 2026**

Yesterday, I discovered that I could make pastry.

This afternoon, I discovered that I could become nearly beside myself with happiness over seven apples.

Neither discovery was particularly revolutionary.

Human beings have been making pies for considerably longer than I have been alive, and the necessary materials were available to me without petition, special appointment, or extraordinary expenditure.

Nevertheless, the discovery was mine.

And I was delighted.

I had combined four tart apples with three sweet ones and had given considerable thought to the participation of ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves.

The cloves were permitted a modest contribution.

There was flour on the counter.

There was flour on the floor.

There was, quite possibly, flour in places that had not been consulted concerning its arrival.

And eventually, there was a pie in the oven.

I found myself returning to the kitchen simply to smell it.

I attempted to observe its progress through the glass, which offered me a considerably clearer view of my own reflection than of the pastry.

I returned to the other room.

I watched the minutes diminish.

I announced their diminishing with an enthusiasm somewhat disproportionate to the ordinary passage of time.

And then I considered something.

I had not yet eaten the pie.

I had not established whether the pastry would be sufficiently flaky, whether the apples would be sufficiently tender, or whether my enthusiasm for ginger had exceeded the good judgment of the other ingredients.

The undertaking might yet disappoint me.

But the afternoon had not.

There had already been happiness.

I thought, briefly, that I had not been this excited since the field trips of my childhood.

Then I reconsidered.

This was not quite the same happiness.

It was something new.

There is a peculiar wonder in discovering, as an adult, that the world still contains experiences one has never had, and that some of them may be brought into existence by one's own hands.

Not everything unfamiliar requires a journey.

Sometimes it requires a mixing bowl.

I wonder how often we postpone our happiness until the conclusion of an undertaking, as though the present were merely the price of admission to some more desirable moment.

The dough must become pastry.

The pastry must become pie.

The pie must be tasted.

Only then, having satisfied the conditions we have established, may we permit ourselves to be happy.

Yet happiness had arrived considerably earlier than the pie.

It had arrived while I was measuring flour.

It had arrived while I was considering the spices.

It had arrived while I stood before an oven that declined to disclose its proceedings.

I had been happy in the presence of something unfinished.

And perhaps this is worth remembering.

There are many things in this life that remain unfinished.

Things we are learning.

Things we are making.

Things we are attempting.

Things whose eventual condition we cannot yet know.

We need not withhold all tenderness from the hours in which they are becoming.

Today, I made an apple pie.

I also spent a considerable portion of the afternoon being ridiculously happy.

The second accomplishment did not depend upon the first.

When the pie finally emerged from the oven, golden and fragrant and wonderfully imperfect, I was glad to see it.

But I had been glad before.

That, I think, was the greater discovery.