



The Horizon Is Not a Finish Line

A NOTE TO THE 1997 VERSION OF ME

It is funny how easy it is to forget that today's problems are often just yesterday's goals wearing a different jacket.

At some point, the younger version of you was standing there with no clue what was coming, probably broke, probably unsure, probably wearing sunglasses that had no business carrying that much confidence, thinking: man, if I could just get there.

Get the house. Build the business. Have the family. Make something real. Be taken seriously. Stop feeling like I am always trying to prove I belong in the room.

And then one day, without any music swelling in the background, you wake up and realize you did get somewhere.

Not all the way. Not cleanly. Not without a few dents, half-built ideas, unpaid invoices, bad haircuts, and emotional-support coffee. But somewhere.

The strange part is that the reward for reaching one level is rarely peace. It is usually a new level of problems. Bigger ones. Weirder ones. Problems that only exist because you actually made progress.

The old dream becomes the current responsibility.

The house needs work. The business needs decisions. The family needs you present. The idea you wanted people to notice now needs you to carry it further than you feel ready for.

And because you are standing inside the life you once hoped for, it is dangerously easy to mistake pressure for failure.

The old dream becomes the current responsibility.

But maybe goals were never meant to be treated like destinations. Maybe they are more like the horizon. Something to walk toward. Something that pulls you forward. Something that changes shape as you move.

You do not arrive at the horizon. You become the kind of person who keeps walking.

This is 1997 Thom. Big glasses. Bigger confidence. Absolutely no idea how strange, hard, beautiful, humbling, and expensive the next few decades were going to be.

He did not know about the losses. He did not know about the kids. He did not know about the business stress. He did not know about the strange little ideas that would somehow turn into real things. He did not know how many times he would have to start over without making a big speech about it.

But I think he would be proud as shit.

Not because everything worked out perfectly. It did not.

He would be proud because I am still here. Still trying. Still making things. Still chasing the horizon. Still stubborn enough to believe that the next problem might just be proof that an old goal came true.

