

Amber's Update



Cozy

I just learned
that this week between
Christmas and New Years
is called Cozy Week.

It's a liminal time, these odds-and-ends days between holidays, whether you are working, traveling, hosting guests and family, caring for children or elders, dealing with snow or lounging by a pool somewhere.

We have things to do, but it is also the time to be cozy, read, make art, or come up with your word for 2025.

Right now I'm eating some leftover, reheated roasted Brussels with bacon and pinenuts, made by my nephew, right off the cookie sheet, straight out of the oven. My sons are spending time together, reheating cranberry bread, and raiding all the leftovers. I'm burning the holiday-scented candles with abandon, while it rains outside. It's cozier than cozy.

I'm thinking of all the sweet and intentional moments of family time I've had from Thanksgiving through Christmas, and how grateful I am for all of it. From my husband making sure the deck and windows are clean, to the extra hug from a nephew, the camaraderie in the kitchen making cookies or applying the spice rub to the brisket (this has to be carefully worded so as to avoid the term "rubbing the meat" in my house of boys). To the shopping assistance from an entertaining and helpful nephew. To a sister who brought puzzles and a hilarious game and a sister who made hot buttered rum after dinner, before she left with her family to finish packing for a big trip. To the garbage taker-outers and the dishwashers and the gift-giver who made my mom and my dad laugh. To the person that made sure I had wine in my glass to sip on and a little bottle of leftover cosmopolitan nestled in my refrigerator for clean-up day. To the person who set her alarm to get up and make breakfast for the whole crowd, so I could sit and sip coffee.

One of my favorite things about this Cozy Week is the reflection on the year just passed. It's a time for fun lists too. You know, the best books, movies, podcasts, songs, recipes, and photos of 2024. The annual hindsight ritual helps me to review my year, before moving forward into the new year with intention. In the next year, I have family events to look forward to, and my own goals to work on. There will be hard things too, there always are, and I hold energy for those things too.

I am so thankful to you, my readers. I love writing this newsletter, and how it allows me to connect with you in a way that feels so different from social media. And by that I mean different in a good way, that feels less ick. I think you know what I mean.

I have a special treat for you, dear reader, during this cozy week. You will see another email from me soon. It's my end of year gift to you and I hope you will make some time during Cozy Week to enjoy it.

With much love and appreciation,

Amber

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Happy Cozy Week!

Amber McClain Shaw, author, artist, mother, wife, friend, sister, daughter, aunt,
neighbor, reader of books and eater of chocolate chip cookies.

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