

Flock of Dimes - BIO

May 24, 2026

[Jenn chose to share the narrative behind *If You See Me, Say Yes* through a letter from her close friend, writer Rachel Monroe...]

Dear Jenn,

I'm sitting here in California imagining you in your house in North Carolina — I'm picturing an overgrown yard, those baby bunnies you were telling me about, the green hum of a country morning in spring. And of course the ghost of the city heard as a kind of absence: no sirens, no police helicopters, no strangers in the street yelling hilarious or terrible things.

At this point it's been a year since you left Baltimore, where you grew up, where your family is, where you began playing music, where you started Wye Oak with Andy, where you were such a beloved and integral part of the community. "Baltimore, to me, is noise, and light, and excitement, and constant activity, and all the good and bad things that come along with that," you wrote me. I know what you mean when you say that Baltimore is overwhelming in the best and worst senses of that world, and you were worried that it was eating you alive.

Now you live all by yourself in a brand new place. And so when I listen to this new record, *If You See Me, Say Yes* I think about how when you say yes to one thing, you're saying no to another. And how this record is a kind of monument to those moments when you're poised on the precipice, that feeling of diving into the new but at the same time looking back at what you left behind. When you're on an edge like that, both sides — where you've come from, where you're going — are in such sharp relief, and I feel like this record comes out of that intensity. From "Birthplace" to no place at all, from a deep history to a future in flux. Maybe that's why so many of these songs are built around these ecstatic moments when it feels like something is spilling open, or breaking through, from the cosmic dance-dream of "Minor Justice" to the soaring reassurance of "Everything Is Happening Today." Or "Semaphore," a signal sent from a distance, an attempt to bridge the infinite space between two people (or two cities).

It's also powerful to listen to this record and to think about the three years of work that went into it — from the initial recording in Baltimore (with Mickey and Chris Freeland), to the process of refining and tweaking (alone and with friends in Durham, Brooklyn, and beyond), to the mixing in Dallas (with John Congleton). And also that it's the first record where you've done the bulk of the work — writing, playing, producing— yourself. When you wrote me, you said that making this record on your own after having spent so much time making music in close collaboration was harder than you expected, but also liberating. I can hear that in the songs, too — so many of them are about being lost, and being free. Maybe because we're both living alone now (how grown up of us!) that this sounds to me like a record made for dancing alone in your room with your eyes closed. (Okay, or with very good friends.)

When you write about creativity, you always talk about the various competing versions of yourself, the Jenn who tells you you're being self-indulgent, that you should be out saving the world (whatever that means), and also the workaholic Jenn who never wants the record to be done—who identifies with Arthur Russell, for whom declaring a song finished felt like a kind of death. But the songs on this record seem to come from another Jenn — the version of yourself who “believes in magic, and love, and the mysteries of the universe and shit like that,” as you put it. The Jenn who loves making songs more than anything. I guess what I mean is, I'm so glad you let that Jenn say yes to making this record.

Love,

Rachel