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### Review of Motherhood by Sheila Heti

First of all, contrary to what many readers seem to believe, this is not a book you read to help you decide whether or not you want to have children. This isn't even a book written to help the author decide whether or not she wants to have children; she seems to already know the answer from the start. This is a question she poses to begin an exploration of herself, and it's incredibly honest and resonant.

In my experience it's rare to see a female author talk so sincerely about the impact of hormones on our lives and the demanding weight of our bodies. I found the rolling of the dice to work as a perfect symbol in this book, as decision-making is often exactly that; the fact that an outcome as significant as having children or breaking up with your partner can be determined by a brief mood swing or an accident (or the alignment of the planets on a third Thursday in June or whatever) can be overwhelming to say the least. Heti does not offer solutions. That's not what this is about.

Heti explores the ironically burdensome freedom of choice philosophically and also very personally. In conversations with and observations of her friends with children, her resentment and feeling of otherness only grows. Around the time she seems to abandon the whole dice thing, we see her thoughts revolving and replenishing rather than changing, without apology or egotism—a different form of growth than we are used to seeing celebrated in our society—and taking on a new (obviously impermanent) sense of joy and self-assuredness.

Undoubtedly nihilistic, this book was somewhat difficult and had to be taken in small doses to avoid that feeling of soul-crushing defeatism. But Heti clearly shows great care with her words and handles a messy topic with sophistication, and she perfectly articulates what most of us either struggle to say or repress about the experience of womanhood.