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On inspiration and jealousy

So, I've got a little confession to make.

I sometimes get jealous of people. I have many talented friends, I follow many amazing artists and the world is just full of people who follow their dreams, take charge of their lives and create the things they love. Naturally, as someone who wants to be a better painter, animator, writer and all those things, I sometimes get a pang of jealousy when I look at super talented and successful people. I have this dangerous thought of "why can't I do that?"

I like to think I'm not alone. That all artists, and people, for that matter, sometimes wish they had different skills, different lives. But, to be honest, jealousy is a pretty useless feeling. All it does is leave you sad about things you can't change. It just makes you feel angry and useless and like you're never going to accomplish anything.

I've been following a lot of awesome artist for many years. And one day, some time ago, when I got seriously back into drawing and painting – something I hadn't done for real in a while – I realized that the reason I was working hard again is not because I was jealous. It's because I was inspired.

Everyone says "I love being surrounded by people who inspire me" all the time. But it's not always true. It can make you feel inadequate sometimes and I didn't really understand what that meant. I have a lot of art books by independent artists and what they show me is that all these talented men and women I admire so much work super, super hard, even in their free time, to do the things they love. They have failed, learned, felt depressed, lost and inadequate just like me. At one point, they could barely draw stick figures, just like everyone else. But they kept at it, and that's what made them so great.

I recently backed this amazing project on Kickstarter called **Lovely: Ladies of Animation**. It was very successful and I was so happy to receive the book after such a long wait and when I opened it, it inspired me to write this post. Because what I feel when I open the pages of this book and look at the gorgeous art, it's not inadequacy. It's not anger at not being that good or sadness. It's pure and simple inspiration.

I want to experiment with techniques they use. I look at the eyes, the colors, the way they light things, the way they pose their characters or draw their sets. I feel emotion looking at this art because I know emotion created them and all I can do is be overwhelmed by the will to create something amazing – or at least try to. These women, and many more like them, taught me the honest truth I never thought I would be able to learn: what true inspiration feels like.

So, even though I'm sometimes sad and lazy and hate the things I draw, paint or write, all I have to do is look at what the world is doing, at what this

wonderful community of artists is making every day and the will comes back. I want to be better. I want to, someday, do for someone else what these people are doing for me now.