

First morning in LA. I'm looking down on a tree filled with lemons. The painters are working. I'll probably be at the house until afternoon. Which isn't a problem. It's nice to have some time to decompress and ease into vacation. We did Mexican food at Costa Alegre last night on the way home from the airport. They have a full veg/vegan menu, which is nice. I had spinach, onion, mushroom enchiladas with salsa verde, rice, and beans. Exactly the right first meal. It's such comforting food, and so good, even vegan.

## FIRST MORNING IN LA (NOVEMBER 04, 2015)

at 730pm!--was two unbroken lines of headlights in white and rear lights in red. I was only as we flew closer that you could tell they were distinct to each individual car. LA feels like that--one big mass. But once you're in the city, the neighbourhoods reveal themselves. There are differences. I feel that especially when I think back on past trips. Megan lived in Echo Park the first time I came to stay, then Palms, then here in Silver Lake. I've had a chance to explore all of them on food. All of them are different, but still LA.

I definitely have an LA book in me. I might call it Chasing Effie. This is the street which has long eluded me. Today, I discovered my route to Amoeba Records (and Megan's office) started by following Effie all the way to Sunset. But Effie is a twisty turny thing, crossing boulevards, disappearing and reappearing. I lost her on Rosedale, but I stuck with it and found her again, around the corner. I kept walking and found Micheltorena and the very same intersection where I gave up last trip, sat down after hiking up the hill that is Micheltorena Street, and used mobile data to look at a map to find my way home. On the walk down,

followed Effie, I would have found my way home. But I didn't know that then. I know that now. All the books on the coffee table are by a YouTube personality. Everyone on the internet gets a book deal eventually. Kind of funny that everything comes back to books. No matter what industry you start in, you'll probably write a book. But what about the people who start in books? I do think it's easier to build an audience on the internet visually. No one loves reading online, as much as they claim to. I could finish this notebook, and it's only the first day of vacation. It's easy to write if your life is more interesting. I'm not feeling any fear of heights up here on the 19th floor either. I don't always--sometimes it's just a feeling, but I'm getting any of it right now. If this is a sign of what's to come, I'm excited. I started these antidepressants a week and a half before my trip, and my first thought was, "I could be a brand new person by the time I'm in LA." I don't know yet if that's true.

headed to Fountain, I discovered my best yet view of the Hollywood sign and Griffith Observatory. Later, on Sunset, I passed my previous best view, the intersection at Gower ("the Gower Gultch"), where I had once wandered in search of the sign while waiting for Megan at an appointment.

I'm having an iced latte at Groundwork (No. 25), across from Amoeba Records right now. The map was exactly correct. It took me one hour and forty minutes to walk here. Not bad, a little windy, but I walked most of it without my cardigan. (So glad I brought it.) The biggest problem was facing into the sun. I really could live here. Except that no one takes care of the sidewalks. That would have to be my pet cause. I would have to become a sidewalk advocate. It's hard to believe people walk any kind of distance in the city here.

A weird thing: I walked on Sunset over the freeway. It had a railing and chainlink, but still, pretty high up, and over many many lanes of busy traffic. And I felt fine. I didn't even get my usual tingly feet and legs. I didn't get my usual negative thoughts. I can't tell conclusively if this means something has changed, or

of the Group. Loving the idea of seeing his stark blocks of northern colour here in LA with the sun. Up on the 19th floor of Megan's building at Sunset and Vine. Beautiful view, especially at night with all the lights. I can see where I walked from. LA is all about the freeways. You can see that from a plane and down here, closer to earth. They are the bloodlines of the city. But the secret is that you can walk them and drive them just the same. It only takes longer to do the former. I love city lights. I love seeing them at night. I love neon--in whatever chemical colour it comes in.

It turns out I walked from Groundwork in exactly the wrong direction. I knew I had seen Vine, but I didn't trust myself. I just kept walking. This rule has served me well in the past, whether going in a physical or emotional direction. Just keep walking forward, and you'll find your way back to the path, whether it's the path you were looking for or the path you need. Whether it's the one you came from or the one that's brand new. It worked for me today. I found Effie Street again. And years ago, after climbing Micheltorena and feeling lost, I now know that if I had

It's not hot. At least, not yet. It's nice and almost too cool. I thought about grabbing my sweatshirt to sit out on the deck. I don't want to go back. I don't want to bother them too much. Just let them do the work and get it done. Then I'll walk down the hill. See how far it is to walk, and see how hot it gets. The whole point is to be disconnected a little. I think I'll delete Tumblr for now; just download it on Sunday to upload my zine, then delete it again. I woke up at 630, and that's what I checked. I don't need to be doing that. Here's a tweet I need to remember for later: Burr is the Snape of American History.

In all my years of coming to this house, I don't remember seeing other people in the other houses. Maybe they're just at work? There's someone pruning a tree across the street on the other hill. They're building a house at the top of one of the peaks to the right. It is chilly. I am chastened. This isn't cold, but it's definitely sweeter weather. No shame, LA. Wear your boots and flannel tights. Kinda wishing I had brought mine after all. I just thought the neon pink would be cooler. Saving that for this weekend.

I don't even know what time it is right now because

if it's just a different situation, but it felt new. It felt like progress, and I will take it. It's the first real positive since I started the antidepressants two weeks ago. I also drank coffee for the first time since that first morning. I'm starting to feel a little buzzy right now, so I've slowed down. I have about a quarter of my 16oz. left. (By the way, I love how Groundwork puts actual numbers on their sizes rather than silly names. I may not have a ton of sense of ounces, but I know that 8 is a cup, and therefore 16 is two.)

Skateboarding is big here again--longboards, like at home, and the new tiny plastic ones. I say new, but they're actually old. Just not the skateboards that were popular when I was in high school.

I'm putting myself in Megan's hands this trip. Let's do some new stuff. But still eat lots of Mexican food. Hilariously, we're going to see an exhibit of Lawren Harris paintings tonight. It's his first ever exhibit in the US. I say his show, but he's dead. Steve Martin is championing for more Americans to know who he is. "What would it be like to go into a room without any backstory?" the curator says. Except I know the back story. I love Lawren Harris. He's probably my favourite

my phone is charging. I use it for everything, and that's not a bad thing, but it also is. I need to let myself put it away for longer periods of time. There's not much that's a necessary notification. Whoa, cold breeze. I want to go get my sweater, but now she's painting right at the door. I need to be a brave Canadian and ride it out. It'll warm up soon. I hope. With my luck, it'll warm up too much, and I won't be able to walk into the city.

I know where a lot of stuff is, but I don't know how things connect. Once I'm in a familiar neighbourhood, I'm usually good. But getting from one place to another is hard, especially on foot or on transit. This is really such a car city. Last night, going to Home Depot, the best route included two freeways. I know that if I lived here, I could do it. I know I would learn and figure it out, and I don't doubt that going car free is possible. But as a tourist, it feels insurmountable. Even when I go on good in a mostly familiar place, I get off-track. There is just so much.

Flying in at night helps this illusion. There's no depth to break up the sprawl. LA looks like an endless blanket of yellow and red lights. One of the freeways--