



## LOS ANGELES

1.

My sister's boyfriend, M, lives in Koreatown, which is where I am right now and it's the end of the day. The year is 2008. I'm 32 years old. M's apartment is the shape of a rectangle and that's about it. It's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of a grimy warehouse. A lot of artist types live in the building and I try to avoid them when I walk by. M is in his early twenties just like my sister and they are happy because they live in California and they are in love and they think they are characters in a movie about two young people falling in love, which they are. M is rolling a joint on a Mike Kelley book and my sister is taking a shower, washing the sunny day out of her hair.

2.

This is my 3<sup>rd</sup> night in Los Angeles. The road trip with Lost Weekend started in Pontiac, Michigan nine or ten days ago and it ended here and now I don't know what's going to happen. Lost Weekend and the dog were good company on the road. The dog put its head out the window a lot. The dog's tongue wagged like it was a tail. I drove most of the way even though we were in Lost Weekend's car. It wasn't hard to stay awake because there was so much to look at. Most nights we camped in state parks. Some of the parks were so desolate that we could've gone missing and nobody would've found us for a long stretch of time. Mt. Rushmore, Lake Tahoe, The Badlands, and Yosemite National Park were great. The Spiral Jetty in Utah was my favorite. It wasn't much of a tourist attraction. In fact, it was hard to find. We followed a little "jetty" sign that pointed the way to a rocky dirt road that kept on going and going before we got to anything.

3.

The traffic on Wilshire Boulevard sounds like an industrial fan blowing hot air directly into M's apartment. *Endless Summer* is on the television. The volume is turned way down so I can concentrate on writing. I have no income. I don't know what the fuck I'm doing in Los Angeles, but I still feel pretty good. I've been passing time reading *Helter Skelter*. And I've been making three "DOINGDEKOONING" paintings each day – it takes me about twenty minutes to make one so I spend one hour a day making art. That's all I need right now.

4.

M recently took me to Bikram Yoga for the second day in a row. It's an interesting experience – I like the way the sweat feels as it drops off my body and onto the yoga



matt and I am so refreshed when I step outside and walk back to M's car with the California sun on my face.

5.

M is at work. I'm on a walk with the dog. I'm trapped in Koreatown and there's nothing else to do. I'm reading *Helter Skelter* on a random bench. Sunglasses on, but the sun is still hitting me in the face like an angry boxer.

6.

It's a typical Korean summer afternoon in 2008. I'm here with the dog again and she's waving her tongue at me like a little flag that says, "help me!" because down is up today. Down is up today because it's Good Morning's birthday. She's 26. As you know, I met Good Morning in New York when she was only twenty-two. Now I don't even know where she is or what she's wearing on her birthday. I just sent her a text message, but I'm not expecting a reply. Good Morning just got back to me. She says she's in LA, which certainly is an odd coincidence. She's staying in Venice with some guy who doesn't have a name. She's going out tonight with No Name and some friends to celebrate.

7.

I haven't heard from Good Morning since her birthday, which was more than a week ago. I'll get sad if I think about it too much. Lost Weekend is coming over later tonight to listen to me talk about Good Morning and other important matters. The "DOINGDEKOONING" paintings are done and I'm out of supplies so all I do is talk now.

8.

I gave the dog to my sister to hold onto for a while. It's 1:54pm. A lot of shit happened in the last two days. The night before last I went out for a drink with two friends at the Gaylord. I had a Budweiser because my money ran away with the dish and the spoon. I was irritated with Lost Weekend because she backed out of the Humboldt trip at the last possible minute. Lost Weekend is like that sometimes. I get the feeling she may back out of Berlin too. It's hard to be reliable in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Anyway, after I said goodnight to my friends who flew back to Detroit last night to check in on their home that they can't sell I went home to Koreatown and checked my email at 1:45am. There was a message from Good Morning.



Hi,

*I'm sorry we couldn't meet up in Los Angeles. Maybe we can in August? I figured it'd be a bit much. Are you working at that pot farm? When are you going to Berlin? Sorry for the delayed reaction, you know how slow I am.*

*Good Morning*

I wrote back:

*Hi Good Morning,*

*I wasn't sure I would hear from you. I'm happy you decided to write back. I drove cross-country with my friend, Lost Weekend, a month ago. We went to the Spiral Jetty at the Great Salt Lake in Utah – the landscape reminded me of our trip to Marfa and it made me wish it had been you and me traveling together instead of Lost Weekend and me. Lost Weekend was planning to drop me off in Northern California, but because of all the fires I decided to go to LA instead. It's strange out here – I'm trying to decide if it's someplace I'd like to stay for while. There are things I like about LA, but there is a loneliness here that is different from the east coast way of life I think. I was going to write more, but now we're chatting online...*

2:11am

*Good Morning: Hi are you up?*

*Me: Yea.*

*Good Morning: Where are you?*

*Me: I'm in Koreatown at M's apartment. Where are you?*

*Good Morning: I'm in Venice. Can't sleep.*

*Me: You want to talk to me?*

*Good Morning: I don't have privacy here. I can't talk on the phone. How long are you in town?*

*Me: I'm leaving on a bus at 5am tomorrow and I won't have phone or email for a while.*

*Good Morning: Really?*

*Me: Yea.*

*Good Morning: Where is M?*

*Me: M is with my sister in New York.*

*Good Morning: It's so strange we've been so close to one another. I live on the border of Santa Monica and Venice.*

*Me: I went to Venice Beach the other day and looked for your face in the crowd.*

*Good Morning: I was probably there.*

*Me: What are you doing out here?*

*Good Morning: I'm with No Name in Venice.*

*Me: No Name is your boyfriend?*

*Good Morning: But don't worry, I'm sleeping on the couch. We had a horrible fight. He says he's moving out.*

*Me: It's ok.*

*Good Morning: I'm so sad right now.*

*Me: What's going on?*

*Good Morning: I don't know. It's been hard out here, and I feel overwhelmed, and I shut down, and he got angry because I wouldn't talk to him and then he called me all these horrible things.*

*Me: Shit, I'm sorry.*



9.

I'm at Bob's Café, which is near M's apartment in Koreatown. Ok. I will try to pick up where I left off. I saved Good Morning from Mr. No Name. It involved a late night rescue and an earthquake, but it was no big deal. Obviously, this No Name guy is a real asshole so mentioning anymore about it isn't even worth it. Good Morning was happy I saved her so in return she put me in her car and drove me through a giant Red Wood on the way up north to the pot farm. We stopped in San Francisco for a night. Good Morning got us a hotel room with two beds in an old hotel that was very San Francisco. The next day, after we had a San Francisco breakfast, a stranger took our photo. We looked just like two young people in love. Except we weren't in love – it just looked that way in the photograph.

10.

When we got up to Humboldt we ate a big meal with the pot farm people and I think we must've had at least three bottles of wine because I don't remember anything we talked about. After dinner, Good Morning and I walked along a narrow trail on the side of a dark mountain until we found our tent. We got in our sleeping bags and went to sleep and that was that and I didn't see her again until the morning and I didn't see her much then because she left awfully darn fast and I'm not a morning person anyway.

11.

On the pot farm I mostly worked with the plants outside during the day and read *American Psycho* in my tent at night. I spent two weeks alone before Lost Weekend showed up. I was happy to see her. We worked eight-hour days out in the hot sun. We were a good team – I did all the talking and she did all the listening. She's still up there now as far as I know. Maybe she can still hear my voice in her head even though I caught a ride back down to Los Angeles exactly one week ago with Dakotah and her boyfriend. Dakotah's boyfriend drives like a maniac – he nearly killed us multiple times because he was driving so fast. Dakotah told me she's thinking about ending it so I'll call him the ex-maniac from here on out.

12.

After Dakotah and the ex-maniac dropped me off in Koreatown I got something to eat. Then I got very drunk with two girls who picked me up in a convertible around nine-thirty. At 1am the girls got undressed and went swimming in a pool that didn't belong to me or them or anybody else we might know. They splashed water on me and told me to get in, but I was too unhappy about Good Morning to go swimming. This is my last day in Los Angeles. I'm going to miss it.