



## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

1.

My new friend, Southern California, came to see me at 10:30am. That was a wee bit early, but she wanted to take a look at Good Memories' bicycle. He gave it to me to sell when he left for Poland. Southern California bought it for 25 Euros even though I could've gotten double on craigslist. I like Southern California.

2.

Two nights ago, Southern California was at a bar in my neighborhood with her friends. I guess she had one too many drinks because she was too drunk to ride home on her new bike. That's what she said when she called me up at 1am. Southern California wondered could she stay at my place.

3.

I've been spending a lot of time with Southern California. Today, we walked up Brunnenstrasse to see an old church in the early afternoon. Then we went to a teeny tiny shop on Torstrasse where they make German slippers by hand. I bought a pair of yellow slippers that Southern California picked out. Yellow is my favorite color and since they only cost 12 Euros I figured what the hell. After lunch, we walked toward Alexander Platz to see the giant Ferris wheel, which is in the center of Berlin for the holiday season. The Ferris wheel is the only colorful thing in Berlin except Southern California and my yellow slippers. After the Ferris wheel ride, which provided an excellent view of the city, we walked over to the Temporäre Kunsthalle to see video art. The video art was very good, something I don't often say.

4.

Yesterday, Southern California and I wandered aimlessly around the Christmas Market sipping Glühwein. The market smelled like Bratwurst and happy German children. In the evening, we went to a party with two bottles of red wine from Argentina in my jacket and a hunk of cheese from a goat in her purse. We got drunk and ate the cheese. At 3am we left in a taxi and went back to her place. Southern California and I slept in today past noon. Toasted wholegrain bread with vegan butter and salted cucumbers for breakfast at 1pm. Southern California is a healthy eater. I like Southern California.



5.

It's Christmas Day. I slept in until 1:30pm and then I smoked a hand rolled cigarette just for the hell of it. Southern California went back to Southern California for the holidays so I walked around Berlin by myself. I went to the Christmas Market near Alexanderplatz and watched the ice skaters for a while. I took a ride on the Ferris wheel again and thought about how unusual it is to be alone on a German Ferris wheel on Christmas Day.

6.

Christmas is a two-day holiday in Germany so it's still Christmas. The city is quiet. Southern California is gone and won't be back for at least two weeks. Peach Tree got in today at 2:30pm. She's staying with me until she goes back to London in ten days. I made her a cucumber sandwich and a cup of Earl Grey Tea. Then we played a game of chess in the kitchen. She won.

7.

I'm in my room with a belly full of German eggs because Peach Tree's friend, Fashion Week, is visiting from New York and he just sent a good-lookin' omelette down the runway. Peach Tree and Fashion Week are good company. We've just been hanging around the apartment getting stoned and laughing.

8.

Peach Tree, Fashion Week, and I started out with beer and Brussels sprouts at the apartment. Then we went to a small party in Friedrichshain. The apartment was sparse with giant windows looking out onto Frankfurter Alee. There was a lot of commotion in the streets. Fireworks were popping and cracking outside and people were coming and going and shouting and celebrating. At 5am I went home alone. I thought about Southern California and Good Morning in the taxi. I mashed their faces together in my brain. I turned them into Good Morning Southern California. There was a lot of debris in the streets. And that was the end of 2008.

9.

The past ten days have been a blur, endless joints and huge glasses of red wine with Peach Tree and Fashion Week. I don't feel so good. I'm eating a bowl of canned soup and half-heartedly stretching canvases. I miss Southern California.



10.

It's almost dark outside and it's not even 5pm. I had a bath about an hour ago after eating a delicious bowl of split pea soup and toast with two slices of cucumber. Southern California is back.

11.

Southern California and I saw a fantastic exhibition at a contemporary art gallery on our way to Southern California's apartment yesterday afternoon. This particular contemporary art gallery is on the way to Southern California's apartment. We've passed it many times. I always like the exhibitions. I like to imagine how good my paintings would look in there. Southern California thinks so too. I like Southern California.

12.

I woke up on the right side of the bed today. I even had energy to walk to the art supply store in the snow. I picked up canvases and other supplies and walked back with two full bags. I didn't mind the cold because I had on my winter parka, hat, and gloves. I love the way Berlin looks covered in white.

13.

Last night Southern California and I walked to Saint George's Bookshop to see a German film called *Solo Sunny*, but it was sold out so the owner of the bookshop sent us to a cozy bar called Yes around the corner. After several hours the bartender turned on the sun and we went home.

14.

I just ate the apple that Southern California was sweet enough to leave sitting on my wooden desk to the right of my laptop. I woke up early because Southern California slept over and she had to be at work at 10am and I couldn't go back to sleep so I watched her do her yoga exercises and get dressed after her shower. I like Southern California.

15.

Yesterday, Southern California and I ate scrambled eggs with garlic along with Brussels sprouts, toast, and coffee for an afternoon breakfast. In the evening, a tall Norwegian visited my studio. We shared a bottle of cheap red wine. Then we walked



to a bar down the street to meet his friends. We smoked cigarettes on the way over. The tall Norwegian told me my paintings were smart and dumb at the same time.

16.

Southern California left my bed this morning in my Boy George t-shirt at 9:50am. She kissed me on the lips and said goodbye. I went back into a deep sleep. I dreamt about giant strips of bacon and eggs. I've been painting in the studio for the past three hours listening to Bob Dylan's *New Morning* on repeat. It's cold outside and dark now too. I'm hungry.

17.

Last night, I visited the tall Norwegian in Kreuzberg. His studio was hidden behind two courtyards that looked like mountains. Inside it was clean and sparse with a number of large canvases resting on the floor against the wall. The paintings were made out of sturdy Norwegian wood.

18.

I met Southern California at Cindy Sherman's opening last night. Southern California was standing with Amy Sillman near the entrance. Everybody had on black turtlenecks and berets. Southern California and I left and went to the crowded hazy bar for Kölsch. Then we went back to her place for steel-cut oatmeal with real maple syrup and flack seeds.

19.

It's not dark outside yet, but the sun is going down. These last few months with Southern California have been a happy dream. Good Morning is still Good Morning, but Southern California is Southern California and I like Southern California. Yesterday, we spent most of the day just lying around in bed.