

Ellie's Diary

Dear Diary, it's been a while since I've written and so much has happened since the last time I wrote anything down, that I don't know where to start. But here goes.

O.M.G. I finally did it. I ended the long-term relationship I was in with my ex. His sullenness, his criticism, his questioning every time I left the house were really getting to me. Then when I found out, quite by accident, that he had been lying to me and going to visit another woman on the evenings he was supposedly going out with his buddies, I knew it was time to end the relationship. I don't think he believed me when I told him that I wanted to separate, sell the house and go our separate ways. I don't think he believed I had the nerve or strength to actually go through with my decision. But I needed to get away, to re-acquaint myself with who I really was. I had to know if I was strong enough to make it on my own. So, I packed all my stuff, my furniture, my books into a storage unit and moved out. House prices being what they were in the city, I moved to a small town with Max and Molly. I refused to leave the dogs with him because I knew they wouldn't get the attention they needed. But although I bought at a good price, there are still so many things I must look after and do and need.

Note to self: buy a hammer.

For one, I have no appliances or air conditioning or T.V. service yet. I admit I'm not much of a cook, so a stove isn't that vital, but with no refrigerator, I'm keeping my yogurt in a cooler with a bag of ice. I've been going to a local grocery store daily to buy that bag of ice. I wonder if the clerk, who is getting to know me quite well, thinks I'm having a party every night and need the ice for drinks. I don't

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explain and let her think what she wants. I wonder if I should tell her the truth. My fridge and stove should arrive in about three weeks. Until then, I guess the clerk lady will have to put up with me. The dogs don't mind going for a walk every evening, and it's getting to be a pleasant routine. I'm getting to know the neighbourhood and it's nice just to do ordinary errands without the questions and accusations.

Laundry will be a challenge without a washer or dryer. One rainy day last week, I decided that we should all go to the laundromat. I didn't want to leave the dogs alone in a strange new house because what if they got separation anxiety and ended up barking the whole time I was gone? The dogs relied on me for everything before – food, water, walks and hugs. They have kept me grounded, and even slept with me these past few months after the ex moved downstairs and rarely spoke to me when he was home. We were strangers living in the same house, there was no conversation, no warmth, no harmony in my life. All I wanted was to just have the awkwardness over with. So many times, I thought of just taking the dogs and driving away.

But I digress. Back to my adventure at the laundromat. There we were, in the rain, driving to the laundromat. They thought this was the best road trip ever and were so excited to be going for a ride. As soon as I stopped the car and opened the door, Max jumped out and began hopping around like it was playtime. Molly at least, waited for me. In we walked, me carrying my laundry basket and detergent, purse, umbrella, trying to control two excited dogs straining on their leashes wanting to investigate all the new smells. Surprisingly enough, no one in the laundromat took notice of us. And while my clothes were in the washer, we explored the neighbourhood. Max and Molly didn't mind the rain, and how appropriate it was to be raining. How did Mother Nature know that was what I needed? As I walked, I felt as if the droplets could wash away the past and let me get on with my life. Was it the renewal I

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needed? It was as if the universe understood my uncertainties and showed me that everything would be all right; all will be well. The universe was tuned in to my inner self. I could get maudlin here and say the rain washed the tears from my face, but I won't.

So now, here we are dear Diary, in this beautiful house with cathedral ceilings in the living room and adjoining kitchen, newly renovated and filled with boxes, lots and lots of boxes. The movers were so nice and patient. They told me after they had emptied their truck that they carried in over two hundred boxes. But many of the boxes were small – the ones with books. And with six bookshelves to fill, there were lots of books. Boxes, boxes everywhere and not a place to sit. Sorry, Mr. Coleridge, my attempt at a bit of humour.

Second note to self – buy a cordless drill.

I have pictures to hang, a day bed to put together, and a yard full of weeds. If I dwell on everything that needs to be done, I get overwhelmed because it's all up to me alone now, and I wonder sometimes if I made the right decision. I have no curtains yet. Although I must say, the bed sheet I put up across the living room window with push pins and paper clips looks quite nice.

Well, I think that's all for now Diary. As I sit in my favourite rocking chair and write this, Molly is asleep by my feet and Max is sleeping in the hallway. I can hear the wind rustling the leaves on the trees in the backyard in harmony with the insects as they perform their nightly opera. It's peaceful. I'm glad I'm here, and with God's help, I believe I can do this. Good night dear Diary, thank you for listening.

Third note to self – go shopping for window blinds.