



Emily Emails You...

Hello beloved friends and family. I am reaching out through the inter web to update you on our journey. We are doing something that has never been attempted before, and I know that is leaving you all with excitement, nervousness, and curiosity. This newsletter is meant to scratch your itch and give you a taste of this trip that we are greatly enjoying thus far. It is also for my own personal recollection, as I know that if I do not meticulously document this time in my life, I will be kicking myself later on. The adventure is only beginning and I aim to send out an email every week or two.

I had fun making this but if anyone has any recommendations for a better format to use, please let me know. I'm currently using Microsoft Word and I feel like I'm back in 3rd grade making a class newsletter and cursing my family desktop as Word strangely deletes pictures and you make one wrong move and the whole format is wrecked..

Anyway, we've been having a blast and we've had no serious complications thus far. We're just now leaving the southern parts of America and heading north. We are feeling extremely grateful and full of possibility!

Questions, comments, concerns, requests?

Reach me at emilyemailsyou@yahoo.com or 770-500-0801

Where We've Been



1. **Fitzgerald, GA.** Our first stop! We spent one night at a rather charming RV park in Paulk Park. We saw no other humans while we were there and we ate boiled peanuts for dinner.

2. **Roswell, GA.** Next, we headed to my birth place. We spent one night in Roswell, dropped my car off, unloaded many items into my parent's basement, and tried the new wave of ice cream where they flatten it like a pancake and roll it up. It wasn't very good but that's probably because it was vegan.

3. **Earthsong in Athens, GA.** Now the journey begins! We spent one night at Earthsong, a permaculture cooperative community started by my mom's cousin, Tina. Earthsong is hard to describe. It smells good and feels good and the buildings are all made of wood and clay; things that smell good and feel good. People stay at Earthsong for a variety of reasons – to finish their PhD, to write a book, to build a building, to do research – and I'm just scratching the surface.

Tina has lived a life full of adventure and she was the most uplifting person to send us on our way. She told us, "your lives are only just beginning". What a thought!

I didn't take any pictures but Sam did document me in one of Tina's jackets. She is an incredible felt artist and lucky for her, I am great at modeling.





4. **Asheville, NC.** Oh yeah! Next, we put on our city best and waltzed through Asheville. The main event was going to the Asheville Art Museum, which is pictured behind Sam.



5. **South Mountains State Park, Connelly Springs, NC.** Our original plan was to spend a week in Asheville. There was a miscommunication with our Airbnb host and ultimately our RV did not fit at her campground. So, we had an administrative meeting at a coffee shop (which was also a small bookstore!) and we used our quick-on-our-feet skills to make a new plan. First up, this gorgeous state park where we stayed for two nights.





6. **Johnson City, TN.** Sam's family very kindly let us stay two nights in their driveway on short notice. This was a perfectly rejuvenating visit after our one (1) day of strenuous hiking. Sam's family was incredibly hospitable. His cousin Hannah showed us around Johnson City, which contains the highest concentration of breweries I've ever witnessed. Kathy, Tom, and Hannah – THANK YOU!



7. **Knoxville, TN.** By far our cutest stop yet, Sam's cousin Sara also very kindly opened her driveway on short notice. We had a lovely time with her, her husband Will, and their three funny and sweet kids, Liam, Luxton, and Leo. The kids loved the RV, but they made the very observant point that we do not have nearly enough toys. To all of Sam's family – it was so great to meet you, you are all kind and brilliant and connecting with family is really what a cross-country road trip is all about!



8. Cove Lake State Park, Caryville

TN. After lots of fun and relaxation, we decided we needed to take some time to relax more. We spent two nights in this geese-filled land, and we did nothing besides go on a brief walk, TV (iPad) time, Skip-Bo (the classic game of mathematical cunning), Sam edited a video, and I worked on this newsletter. Up until this point, we had been lucky enough to experience perfect weather. The kind of weather where you don't even think about it because it's just so comfortable. I know the feeling is probably unfamiliar to you Florida folk. It was glorious. But in Caryville we experienced lots of rain and lots of humidity. Lucky for us, our car is our home and it has AC! So we largely stayed inside.



9. Cox's Creek, KY.

Now we are making our way to Chicago! We spent one night at a campsite in Kentucky. It was the perfect place to witness the Perseid meteor shower. Absolute magic. It was hot and we ran the generator all night because we love luxury. Sam wanted me to include this picture of the bathroom he used. You attach a bag onto the seat and poop into said bag. Then you discard the bag. Simple, efficient.

14. **Indianapolis, IN.** Now we are in Indianapolis! On our journey here we stopped at the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest which features the Giant Trolls by the artist Thomas Dambo. If you've ever been to Hulaween, you may recognize these guys. Super sweet, and we monkeyed around on the absolute coolest playground I've ever seen.

We also stopped in Louisville and visited the Frazier History museum. We wanted to go to the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory but the tickets were out of our price range. Thankfully Sam still was able to acquire this picture of him in front of a ginormous baseball bat.





What We've Eaten



Just hot dogs. We're actually only doing this trip so that Sam can work on his brand. We're scouring America from sea to shining sea, searching for hot dog inspo. Wiener Beach may be on a hiatus, but Sam is always working.

On the left we have some dogs from Farm Dog in Asheville. I went with the classic chopped onion and relish, Sam got one with green tomato relish, pork belly, and chimichurri. With a side of beef cheek chili. We were not impressed! The dogs were, disappointingly, microwaved. Rookie mistake. And the toppings were only alright. That's what happens after living with the minds behind Wiener Beach, I actually have opinions about hot dogs.

We were much more pleased with our second hot dog outing at Curious Dogs in Knoxville. They DEEP FRY their 100% beef dogs. And their vegan option is a deep-fried FALAFEL dog. Wow! I felt sooooo bad after, I had to stop walking and sit on a bench for a few minutes. But I'd do it all over again.

Who We've Met

Jay – an incredible shoe salesperson who sold me a new pair of trail running shoes in Asheville, NC. Yes, it's true, I might try to run. I bought Altra's and Sam's Uncle Tom wears Altra's and he runs ONE HUNDRED miles sometimes. So watch out world..

Morgan – Morgan was our Airbnb host for our one night stay in Asheville. Although her campground was no place for our RV, she was incredibly kind. She works as a "household manager" which I think means nanny? And soon she will be working in wilderness therapy. I will never forget her because she had glow in the dark rocks all around her house. She said it makes her feel like her house is enveloped in magic and you can buy this magic on amazon.com.

Wit – Wit is living at Earthsong while he works on his PhD at the University of Georgia. He had a very social dog named Bernie. Wit is studying the ash borer, an invasive bug that is killing the ash trees! Noble work.

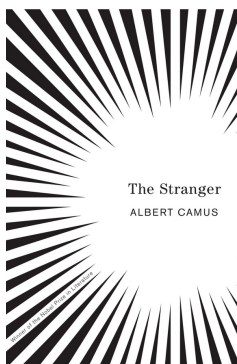
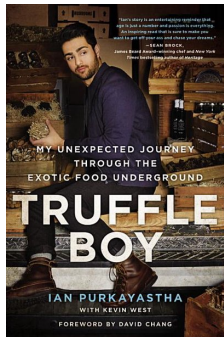
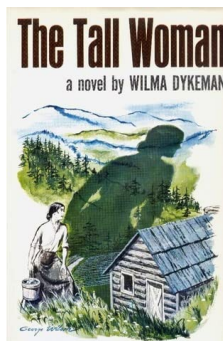
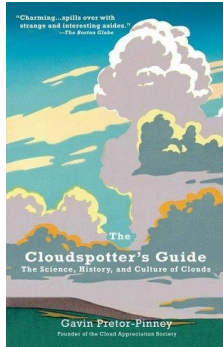
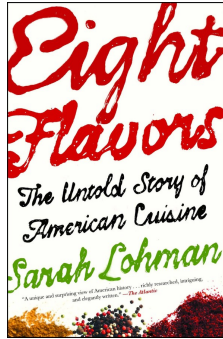
Patrick – Patrick, an anthropologist, also lives at Earthsong and he oversees vaccinations for the surrounding area. Noble work! He showed us his collection of arrowheads and prehistoric artifacts from the area.

What We've Watched



- One million hours of The Blacklist. The premise of this show is an FBI most-wanted criminal, Raymond Reddington, approaches the FBI and is like “let me help you find the bad guys that you don’t even know exist”. And he only gives them vague hints and mysterious parables, but nonetheless, he always shows up right on time to save the day! The show is a fun mix of crime, soap opera acting, and a sense of “there’s no way these characters could get in so many gun fights and still be alive”.
- There was a heat advisory in Kentucky so we decided to kill time by going to the movie theater for the first time since covid! We saw “Old” – the premise of which is three vacationing families spend the day on a private island and to their shock, realize that they are aging rapidly! They all experience a lifetime of aging effects in one single day. Spooky! I did enjoy the movie but I would not necessarily recommend it. It seems like one of those movies that is unsettling just for the sake of being unsettling. The cast is all the ‘National Geographic Future Human’ kind of beautiful, and there is an unexpected twist. The movie seems to ask the famous question, “when is it okay to sacrifice a few for the sake of the many?”.
- We watched the most amazing display of birds with Kathy, Tom, and Hannah. We think they were starlings, and they pretty much covered the sky as they flew in a massive group from tree to tree. They would collectively swoop towards one tree, sit there for a while, and then somehow nearly all of them would leave the tree at the same time and go perch on another tree. Apparently, no one is sure why they do this, but it may have something to do with strength in numbers, protecting each other from predators. I think it looks just plain fun.
- We watched two deer frolic very close to us on our hike. I believe deer to be some of the most majestic creatures out there, so this was a good sign.
- I watched a cicada get absolutely mauled by a wasp. This cicada had no chance, it was pinned down from the start. And seemingly it was killed for no reason, the wasp held it down until it stopped buzzing and then flew away.

What We've Read



Sam is currently working through a number of books (he hops around quite a bit). He has been enjoying contemporary nonfiction. As his head is typically in the clouds, he is reading *The Cloudspotter's Guide*, a book which meticulously describes each type of cloud, full of historical and cultural asides. *Truffle Boy* is the autobiography of Ian Purkayastha, a 23-year-old from Texas who has made history by building an empire as an exclusive, self-made purveyor of truffles, caviar, and other high-end foods. Sam's favorite so far has been *Eight Flavors*, a thoughtful gift from his Aunt Kathy. It describes what the author considers the eight quintessential flavors of American food. Sam is currently on the chapter about black pepper.

I read Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. Published in 1959, the novel is a classic in the world literature canon, famous for illustrating a Nigerian clan's first encounter with Europeans from an African perspective. Disputing the claim that the people of Africa had 'savage' religion, backwards culture, and needed to be 'civilized' by Europeans, Achebe shows the complexity and rich beauty of the Ibo culture, and the deeply traumatic effects of colonization. "Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly, and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten" (7).

I also read *The Stranger*, a 1942 novel by Albert Camus. I found it to be gripping and deeply unsettling. A man who seemingly cares about nothing accidentally (sort of) kills a man, and you feel bad for him but he's also super frustrating. Camus as a philosopher is interested in "the experience of the absurd", which he describes as the silence of the world when we search for meaning. The main character of *The Stranger* is pretty anti-meaning, entirely ambivalent, and nearly emotionless until the end of the novel. And I have to say, he is not super likeable.

I'm currently reading *The Tall Woman* by Wilma Dykeman, a gift from Sam's Aunt Kathy. It is a gorgeous novel that tracks the life of Lydia MacQueen, a North Carolina woman who gets married right before the civil war, and then has six kids (so far) with her war-traumatized husband, and her dream and effort is centered around starting a school in her town. She's a badass and she says things like "you see that ledge over my spring? I've seen it cracked by the stem of a little vine that had to come up to sunlight through it. There's nothing strong enough to stop for long the strength of growing things. And children are stouter than any vines" (178).

What We've Learned



There is a convenient website called rvdumpsites.net that shows you where you can dump your poop all across the US. Here is us doing our very first dump! It was a visceral experience. Imagine a snake swallowing a few rats. Add in the aroma of sewer and you can put yourself in our shoes.

The North American Reciprocal Museum Association (narmassociation.org) is awesome. You become a NARM level member at a local museum and then you're able to get into thousands of participating museums across the US for free.

In the ancient Greek Olympics, there was not only athletics but also artistic competition. This was also the case from 1912 to 1948. We saw some pieces that were awarded medals at the Asheville Art Museum.

The keto diet was first created as a treatment for epileptic kids. It is an effective treatment for a portion of epileptic patients, but it is not a healthy diet for the average human! (creds to the podcast Maintenance Phase)

Sam's Aunt Kathy works with medical students by acting as a patient and presenting them with various prompts/scenarios. She is the coolest mix of an actress and a public servant, making the healthcare system a more human place. I didn't know this job existed!

I learned how to make my own cold brew coffee. It is incredibly simple and delicious.

Sam learned about the nuances of Kentucky Bourbon at the Frazier Museum in Louisville.

I learned that not only are there dry counties and wet counties (in terms of alcohol legality) but there are also "moist counties" where some restrictions apply.

Sam taught me, very thoroughly, what a transmission does.

We learned how duck and guinea eggs taste, thank you Tina!

The moon is moving away from the Earth and in 5 billion years it will no longer influence the tides and the Earth's axis.

Pennsylvania has a law that any wildlife that is killed because it has been deemed a public nuisance must be donated to food banks.