Sicily Coast to Coast

It’s time to leave. Roberto will take the flight to Rome, Cristian and I will travel through Sicily with a pickup truck packed with brochures, keychains, strobe lights, stickers, t-shirts, DAN flags, pocket masks, display stands. Our pickup truck is bloody dusty. It appears inevitable, when traveling. Just like letting your beard grow out.



“What kind of music do you like?”

“Anything good.”

We start with a tribute to Prince, the genius who passed away recently. From Palermo to Pozzallo, the first stretch of highway calls to mind Arcadia. The grassy slopes are teeming with herds, and if it weren’t for the tarmac, we could very well be in the midst of the legend, way back in the Age of Bronze. Yet, once again it is gold, like a hidden weaver, that reveals to us the nature of Sicily.





We drive through hills and citrus groves, and the light is that of oceans and deserts, of vast emptiness. We check our GPS and the time. Yes, we can allow for a special detour.



Modica is one of those jewels where time seems to stand still: a triumph of the Baroque in light dusty pink shades. On Corso Umberto I, Cristian says, there’s a chocolatier, one of the best in the world. He’s determined to take me there, just like a dive guide who wants to show you a pinnacle with loads of fish and gorgonian fans, despite having to go against a slight current. Going against the current, in this instance, means that we’re on a countdown to our most important appointment, the one with the ferry that will be taking us to Malta. And we discover only too soon that our GPS and the road signs don’t mix.



In Switzerland, pure chocolate with over 85% cocoa would be blasphemy, but in Modica chocolate works even with 90% cocoa. I won't even mention the cannolis. Meanwhile, the sun has sunk behind the hill and the baroque steeples.

I've never been to Malta. I imagine it is a strange place, like Gibraltar. While we wait our turn on the dock, a strong wind starts blowing from the sea. I start to pile on the layers: a vest, a sweatshirt, a windbreaker… finally they signal us to get onboard. Announcements in Maltese start pouring out of the loudspeaker. It's a really strange language, a mishmash of Arabic and Sicilian. We start drifting away from the dock, the ferry's stern leaving an endless river of froth behind us, white and crisp in the night air. We're finally at sea.