



THE REDWOODS

DAY 42 — JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK, CALIFORNIA — 1910 KM

It hasn't been boring. In a relatively short period I've been through rainforests, pine forests, high deserts, and snowy alpine roads, and now, I'm back on the Pacific coast in California.

My first encounter with the redwoods is an otherworldly experience. I have heard of the mythic trees, but I haven't known exactly where to find them. It's late in the afternoon when the main road I'm cycling goes through the forest. As the forest deepens and evening falls, the trees grow larger and larger. Mighty giants rise straight up right next to the road, with trunks as wide as a single lane. Some are nearly 2000 years old. Like little toys, the cars disappear in between the trees as the road

winds down to the sea. Once, these trees grew across the entire Northern Hemisphere, but now they only remain in California where they are protected. It's incredible how much history those trees carry, how much they've seen. Many of them were here long before Europeans arrived on the continent.

Although I'm tired after the long ride, I'm giddy like a child, going off on trails through the woods while the sun sets. The fresh smell of the trees and the fog of the Pacific does me good. I reach Crescent City late in the evening having cycled 132 kilometers—my longest day on the road so far. I couldn't wish for a better welcome into California.

