

Land
Of
Honey
And
Milk.

1996. Spring. My first official spring in California. Everything feels unusual to me. After spending 19 springs in the state of Washington. Hazy. Unusually warm. Such a spring had never existed before. For me. All 18 springs I had experienced before were cold. That is what I remember. A time of true transition. Trying to figure out what day might be acceptable to wear a Tshirt. Never an exact science. But here. What was this weather? What was this? It felt like summer. Already. We all had no cars then. We were new to this city. New to this state. So it was extremely rare to ride any automobiles at this time. So I remember, quite clearly, certain moments, instances of riding cars. It was a different feeling in this state. Perhaps all combined, this was that famed west coast car culture that had been glorified through the years. Such weather. Driving. And of course, windows that had to be open. On this day. In this first spring for me. I am a passenger in a friend of a friend's Oldsmobile. I remember this. Not the cool kind. The shitty, got it from mom and dad kind, from probably 1982 or so. Right when American cars became absolute shit. I think it was a Cutlass Ciera. Still not sure what this car name means. Did not know then. Still do not know now. A recent google image search shows me this car has not aged well. It was not cool then. And sadly, has not become cool now with age. I remember the sound system he had. Or perhaps I remember

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the poor quality of it. He definitely had slightly blown speakers. Or perhaps one blown speaker. I think it was the rear left one that was hissing. Just a tad. But enough to add to the atmosphere. But I did not mind. It kind of felt right. And the differentiation between bass and treble was poor at best. I imagine there might have been just two sliders for bass and treble. And in compensation for no amp or woofer, he had dialed them to maximize only bass. Pushing the default Cutlass system to its maximum capabilities. No treble. At all. No treble necessary here. We are listening on this day to 106 KMEL, yet another new phenomenon for me. In Seattle, we had a quote, unquote hip hop station that made much effort to be identified as a hip hop station. But this quote, unquote hip hop station, well, they not only played hip hop, they also played Blind Melon and Pearl Jam. I guess this was Seattle. Then. At the time. Here. A different state. A different city. Different people. KMEL felt different to me. They actually only played hip hop. Or music that you could readily identify as the same slice of bread. I was, growing up, again, the quote unquote, white washed kid from Seattle. So, even experiencing this broadcast station became part of a kind of cultural acclimation. Part of something new. Something different. These were the days of CD and radio. So it was nice. This new kind of radio. On this day. In spring. Where the sun feels like it

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will never go away. The song "California Love" comes on the air. And, I, having no prior experiences with California, my first spring season in this state, feel something absolutely atmospheric about this song. Something magnetic. Indescribable. Probably exactly what they wanted white kids to feel. And buy their records. I never knew where Inglewood was. Had never been there, or seen it. Not yet at least. So I never knew if it was truly up to no good. But listening to this song. At this moment. Felt like something. And I was reminded again, that I was in this kind of magical country. A magic nation. A magic state. In a magic spring. All for the first time.