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I'm thinking about Karyn's blog about 'How to Save Your Life' as I leave the house at what seems to be far too early a time for my liking. I'm walking of course – that's not the issue but it's such a miserable walk I think and I can't be bothered to get my iPod and headphones out to at least cushion the drudgery. Bah, humbug!

My quickest route to Brighton station involves cutting up a stair well, through some low rise flats which have long since seen better days. The usual detritus of cigarette butts and empty Special Brew cans get blown across the car park, which the stair well opens out on to. And yet through the February gust of desolation, usually at a point of weakness, greenery battles its way through the concrete and fag ends – quietly and defiantly, like some form of resistance movement. In one corner the weeds have gained a stronghold – militantly, they've amassed a depth of presence over the last year or so, evidenced by last year's growth, now gone to seed, as well as the newer leaves, urged on by the mild weather.

It's 7am and encouragingly light, for what is still technically winter and I pause at the top of the stairs, amazed at the sight of a pair of goldfinches feeding on the dead seed heads. Their bright beauty is almost painful and I hold my breath and cross fingers and toes, willing them not to fly off. For what can't be more than 5 or 6 seconds I watch and allow myself the luxury of really looking: red and gold, black and white; beaks working with precision. And then in a sparkle the moment goes – they've seen me and I'm late for my train.

Dylan Thomas wrote of "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower" and this morning it's a force that makes me stop and look. Really look. And as I continue my walk up to the station I feel my faith is restored – that no matter what, life does go on.

I mentioned this to my friend Jan, who's been going through all sorts of ups and downs recently – she told me about learning to look, properly. The way she described it was the visual equivalent of slowly sucking on chocolate, so that the taste and texture stay with you for longer. And that lingering feeling (I can still picture the goldfinches) is the Universe's way of saying "Have faith, trust me, all is well."

And so that's my tip – choose a moment (or let the moment choose you) and really look, and look again. Stay with looking and allow the colours and textures to seize the sense. And only then, when it's finally melted, allow yourself to move on, your faith restored with the lingering sense.

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