

Objects in Space

La Dispute

Yesterday alone I laid everything out on the carpet
Books, kitchen things, objects with specific purpose or none
Arranged them sideways in a grid on the floor there unmoored
Out of context and then considered it
First the whole picture, then everything individually
Humming along at the deadest pace imaginable
One object then another and then the next
And I wondered what they meant there
If they meant anything still

Found notes
Camping supplies
A book you bought in the desert
"Identifying Wildflowers"
Pictures from vacations
From parties
Kitschy gifts we bought from rest stops
On that road trip out West
Objects
Everything itself
And then memory

All of it laid out there
From the dining room
The living room
The hallway and the basement and the kitchen
From that room we called the office
But never used
Even the bathroom
Everything laid out there on the floor on the carpet out of context

And I sat there for hours

Today I moved everything from the floor to the table in the dining room
Placed each thing carefully without reason or at least without one I understood or could describe
There on the table together and when I was done and stepped back I realized what I had made
Keepsakes Pictures Letters Ordinary objects all collected there

A memorial

And I thought of ones on highways or set by gravestones
All the things you see there but don't understand but still bring a remembered thing back vividly
Invoke someone's reality when there together in that place in that way out of context
And I knew I had to take it down before anybody else saw
Tomorrow I plan to put them all somewhere
Those things
In boxes
Side of the road
Attic maybe
All these things that push and pull me through history
To places I once was, places I might've gone, places I ended up going

Postcards

Ticket stubs from one thing or another
A personalized coffee mug neither your name nor mine
Phone cards and old phones
A page from an old calendar I bought once at a thrift store and insisted on hanging
That cycles of the moon print
Photos
Old boots of mine

Put them in boxes

And I sat there for hours
In the living room first
Then in the dining room
Moving things around
Picking things up and seeing where they took me
To what place in history
What moment on our timeline
Where we were, where I was, where I thought we'd end up
In this house or on the highway
Driving somewhere near Christmas
In the desert or anywhere else

And I put them in boxes