

It was a beautiful reminder
of an ugly holiday. Crumpled
yellow envelope encrusted
with so many stamps, there was
barely enough room for the address.

From the pictures I imagined
Nicaragua to be idyllic. It was
underwhelming, poverty
and coffee apparently; the best part,
the stamps, sent back home.

"This is the last thing I have
from my time in Tibet"
he says, pulling the note
from his wallet.

"It's funny how that time of
eschewing materialism is
immortalised in money"

It was a long drive from a hard place.
She arrived with nothing to give. I said
what about the shattered fragments
of your window? She said
I suppose that will do.

When they broke into her car they left
the tobacco, the money, they took
the EPIRB – so easy to find. She called it
the glass from the grey zone: a reminder
of the crunchy space between black and white.

Retrospectively it's hard
to tell where one memory stops
and another begins.

The sunglasses were borrowed.
The wedding was someone else's.
The story I'd heard before.

It seemed fitting that they ended
up here; in this collective receptacle
for things we no longer need

but cannot bear to throw away.

It was a memory I'd claimed as my own;

a crotchless two piece
all cheap red satin, black lace
fluff around the nipples.

Only she would make a gift of second hand underwear.

Pausing, her nose crumpled, a familiar hesitation

"Didn't I lend you those?"

Only she would ask for them back.

"It's interesting how much is in them,
these things we carry around."

The acquisition - an expired health care card.

"I only lived at that house for two weeks,
but I kept the address."

Orchard Road, Coconut Grove. I nod. I know the place.

It's history reads like a list of consequences;
too many pimples from good times in Berlin,
multiple STD checks, a mental health care plan.

"It's expired now, so I can't use it."

Times change.

She didn't want to enter the museum.
Not alone; said she was too afraid.

I'd never thought of her as fearful
Always saw her as strong.

One of those women who mimic
the desert; warm and impenetrable.

The crowd was busy.
Our exchange was fleeting.

She left the toothbrush.
It was from her grandpa,

Circa 1964: a reminder
of how gross he was.

What happens to memories we cannot throw away?

The Museum of Intimate Memories offers audiences
the opportunity to liberate their keepsakes.

In September 2014 a tiny pop up museum opened it's
doors in Alice Springs, with patrons invited to exchange
their mementos for a private tour. Initially assembled
from the detritus of my own life, the collection quickly
expanded to hold ephemera from friends, strangers and
the occasional nemesis.

This catalogue is the memory of that museum. Selected
artefacts have been rendered in drawing – slightly
removed from their original selves. The writing too is
reflective of the essence of the private exchanges –
much of the detail removed so only the meaning and
connection remains.

The entire process of creating this work has been an
exercise in intimacy and exposure; from the crowd
funding campaign to the construction of the museum
and the one on one interactions with museum patrons,
I have been overwhelmed by peoples courage and
generosity. To my collaborators, supporters and patrons
– thank you – I could not have done it without you.

Find more memories at
themuseumofintimatememories.tumblr.com