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Time Capsule Home

Grace Leonard

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I'm sure the neighbors wonder
About this house
That is simply that now—
A house, not a home.
A car pulling in
Is foreign to this driveway
So long absent of mailmen and friendly visitors.
But we pull in to check on the place
As one would an invalid or ill friend.
This structure, so long deprived of the human element
Is more like a memory that can't really be lived in anymore.
Opening the front door
Is like flinging open a photo album
Decades old, faded and well used.
Reeks of the will to hang onto the past
And losing the battle.
Dank basement, old sweater, mothball closet smells
Mingle, cling to everything.
Years have peeled away
Since this couch was bought,
These pictures were taken,
Those dresses were worn.
In this quiet vault
With doors locked and curtains shut,
Like it or not
Passing hours have aged this space
Mildew and tumbling bricks
And dust and faded shades
Are akin to
Age spots and wrinkles
And balding and rickety joints.
There is a determined loyalty
In the delicate perfume bottles
And the four-poster bed
Like a dog that only has eyes for one master.
In a new home they would blend
Adjust to the morning light
And the hum of activity—
But these collected fragments of a life
Have never been allowed to move on.
We lock the front door,
Close the book.
We drive away
But leave this time machine
Frozen here, gently stifled, stored away
For when we want
To step into this passed generation again.
But time loosens all grips,
The pristine in-the-moment nature of things
Falls through our fingers
As we scramble to recall before
The edges blur and lose detail.
We desperately cling
To what is left,
Though a constant forward motion
Fades more than memories.

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