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Bookmarks

Kimberly Waggoner

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Bookmarks

Lately I've started marking pages in a book
with flowers, pieces of paper from wherever
I'm reading. This habit I picked up
from you, I'd always admired your books stuffed
with reminders of people and places loved.
Your worn copy of *Ulysses*, for one,
marked with Cadbury's
Dairy Milk wrappers, foreign
telegrams and old photos.
The book you gave me for my birthday
is filled with dried flowers,
memories of two weeks away
in France. Petals from a pink rose,
a gift from a street vender on the St. Michel,
serve as bookmarks, alongside
countless sprigs of lavender, basil,
rosemary, mint,
a whole litany of others
I don't recall the names of.
Four days in Paris, then the rest in Provence.
I recall the beautiful, simple meals
outdoors, framed by mountains
and a smokey-violet sunset, red wine
from the neighboring vineyard and long conversations,
mostly French with some English
for my benefit, we'd talk and drink
till late, not wanting the night to end.
I find myself sorting through pages
of books, chapter by chapter,
struck by smells that linger and
memories of the place so vivid.
It was luxury,
pure luxury,
and I adored every moment.