LANDON GOFREY

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ELEPHANT

Let’s have drinks, shall we? It’s such a nice day. We’re civilized people after all. The lawyer just sent a nice bottle of bourbon. Small-batch stuff from a place in Kentucky that used to be a still in the woods. I imagine that’s actually the case for most distilleries. Did you know that Appalachia isn’t pronounced with a long a sound? Appa-lat-chia. Appa-bat-chia. Appa-cat-chia. Appa-shut-your-trap-chia. Oh, look. The ice bucket’s full. Isn’t that one of the great pleasures in life? One finds ice right when one needs it? The Mona Lisa, penicillin, an ice bucket filled by unseen hands—how lovely life can be. How something de la something. Well, let’s have drinks, shall we?
JOKE

It is like having a book out from the library.
It is like constantly having a book out from the library.
—Lorrie Moore

Do I miss our running joke about being brainwashed by the Diffi-Cult? Dressed in the ascetic garb of our high school teachers—brown corduroy suit with high-water trousers or brown woolen A-line skirt, brown turtleneck sweater, flat gladiator sandals laced to the knee—one falls in love, engages in arguments about the meaning of endlessness vs. the meaninglessness of endlessness—adding the double-suffix -lessness to everything: everythinglessness—bangs one’s head against the wall instead of chiming a gong, walks through streets paved with books, envies that American movie star who, in her twenties, couldn’t tell a TV interviewer where she’d been to high school—oh, enviable erasure! In the Diffi-Cult, one remembers everything—especially the unattainable rememberlessness.
JUNK DRAWER

*Death is the opposite of everything.*
—Susan Sontag

After I die, please let your new wife throw this detritus away. Allow these things to become holes in your heart. I promise you won’t need my desiccated rubber bands, extra buttons to the ratty cardigans I wore around when cooking gardening reading that you’ll have given to a charity shop, tags from my pied dog lost in Vermont so many summers ago, local merchants’ logo-screaming magnets I wouldn’t let you put on the refrigerator, the odd champagne cork, notes about errands I either did or didn’t do, and the rest of it, all the flotsam and jetsam from the ocean of moments we weren’t paying attention to because like everyone else we thought this world would last forever. Let your wife change the drawer liner and lay in her own provisions for the duration, until such time as this little kitchen-corner-tucked coffin’s opened for the next viewing.