

Autopsy of a Suicide

Fold Dad's shirts. Fold sleeves back, then fold them under. Crease, smooth, fold. Hands know how to do this. Touch the collars, the buttons, the wrinkles. Fold the blue cotton, and then the faded white tee. Everything smells like him, like old newspapers. There is the smell of sweat from the heat of the island, there is Old Spice. Head and Shoulders shampoo. You will never breathe these exact things again, but you don't think of that, you're folding shirts.

Touch the black leather of his shaving kit, the metal teeth of the zipper. *Memorize these things.* Like, the strands of hair stuck in the zipper. And inside, his hair brush, black boar bristles matted full of dark curls. This is what Dad's hair looked like-- remember this for later. There is a toothbrush, some Arm & Hammer toothpaste. He liked the taste of baking soda. White paste, white brush, nothing fancy. Pick up a few yellow plastic razors, but do not think of blades. Do not think of Dad's throat, Dad dying. The razors are yellow. They are used and dull, every one of them rusted.

Hold the two broken sandals: brown woven leather, gladiator-like. Touch the patches of duct tape on the sides that hold everything together; pick at the residue of foot powder stuck between the woven texture, the bits of sand. These sandals could only be his. Let your fingertips trace his footprint— fourteen years pressed into leather. Touch the toes, the heel, and the sole, know there were toes, a heel, a sole. You touch their imprints. He was here.