

A Drawer That Never Closed Properly

Open the drawer carefully. It sticks near the end, and if you pull too hard, the handle comes loose in your hand. That has happened before. Inside, the contents look ordinary at first glance. Envelopes folded twice instead of once. A measuring tape with the numbers worn smooth at the far end. Batteries that may or may not still work. This drawer has never been organized, yet it has always known exactly what it holds.

You stand in the hallway while you go through it, half blocking the door, aware that you should be doing something else. The house hums quietly around you. A clock ticks from another room. Pipes settle with a low knock. None of it rushes you. The drawer has waited this long.

There is a photograph at the bottom, nearly missed. The edges are soft, the image slightly bent. It shows a place you recognize without remembering why. The background matters more than the people in it.

Something about the angle suggests the photo was taken quickly, without ceremony. You turn it over.

Nothing written. No date. No explanation. The drawer does not provide context. It rarely does.

Close the drawer partway. Not all the way. That never works. Lean against the wall and think for a moment. This is the part no one tells you about. The pause between finding something and knowing what to do with it. You consider putting the photo back. You consider keeping it out. Both options feel incomplete.

The drawer has always been like this. It collects objects that do not belong anywhere else. A key with no lock. A receipt for something you do not remember buying. A folded note with a phone number missing one digit. None of these items demand attention on their own. Together, they form a quiet record of decisions that were never finished.

You remember opening this drawer before. Not recently. Years ago. The contents have shifted slightly since then. New items arrived without announcement. Others disappeared without explanation. The drawer adapts. It makes room. It does not insist on order, only containment.

Push the drawer closed and listen as it catches, then settles. The handle holds this time. Walk into the kitchen and pour a glass of water. Drink it slowly, standing at the counter. Your reflection in the window looks unfamiliar at this angle. That happens sometimes. You look anyway.

Return to the hallway. Open the drawer again. This time, you remove the measuring tape. It snaps out farther than expected, numbers flashing past before stopping abruptly. The end is bent. It has been used to estimate rather than confirm. You smile at that, though you are not sure why.

The drawer does not resolve anything. It does not offer answers or conclusions. It holds fragments. It preserves possibility. Each item inside suggests a story that never finished forming. That unfinished quality is its function. Without it, there would be nowhere to put the things you are not ready to understand.

Eventually, you place the photograph back where you found it. Not because you have decided anything, but because the drawer feels like the right place for now. You close it carefully, leaving it slightly ajar. That detail matters more than it should.

Move on with your day. Answer messages. Step outside. Do what needs doing. The drawer stays behind, quiet and patient, holding what you cannot yet place. One day, you will open it and know exactly why something is there. Until then, the drawer remains what it has always been. A space for unfinished sense. A reminder that not everything needs to resolve to be kept.