

## The Folder on My Desktop

There is a folder on my desktop labeled 'Tiny Things.' Inside are hundreds of photos I have taken over the years: close-ups of moss growing between bricks, cracked eggshells, faded receipts left in library books, bits of sunlight reflected in puddles, paint peeling from a wall in the shape of a bird. Nothing dramatic. Nothing anyone would really stop for. But I do.

I have always been drawn to things other people walk past. A crooked sign. A rusted key in a gutter. A handwritten note taped to a telephone pole that says 'Please return if found,' even though it does not say what 'it' is. I started taking pictures when I was about twelve, mainly on an old phone with a chipped case and a scratched camera lens. It was never about photography. I was not trying to capture perfect shots or build a portfolio. I just wanted to remember how things felt.

What started as a quiet habit slowly turned into something more. I started taking different paths to school to have a different experience. I began to write little phrases I heard, things people said while walking past, and quirky little observations.

At first, I didn't think it was a 'real' interest, just something I was doing. However, I have come to see that it has informed the way I exist in the world.

And that, I think, is what passion is. Something you keep coming back to, even when no one is looking. I began to notice how the light changed at different hours, how dust moved in a sunbeam, how a piece of music sounded different depending on the weather.

At first, I did not think this was a 'real' interest. It was just something I did. But I have realized that it has shaped the way I move through the world.

In class, I noticed details others missed. A quiet contradiction in a poem, a minor historical footnote that sparks a bigger question. When I write essays, I do not start with broad arguments. I start with the one moment or image that feels alive and let it build from there.

This way of seeing has made me more patient and curious. It has also helped me listen better, ask better questions, and make space for things that are not obvious at first glance.

I do not know what this interest will grow into. It may stay personal. It may shape how I write or the career I choose. But I know this: that folder on my desktop matters to me. It is full of things no one asked me to collect.

And that, I think, is what passion really is: something you keep returning to, even when no one is watching.