

Encounter

Linda Sillitoe

Absently, I opened the medicine cabinet
in my folks' house (searching for a comb),
then stood stunned as you wafted out
like a genie, so generous with cologne
and aftershave, I glanced behind me.
The room wavered like my knees.
Staring into that worn square of shelves,
I wondered, *Has she kept everything?*
Two years later, even your shaving brush
bristles from its cup amid the scents
of you spruced up, agenda laid, ready to go.
Alone, does she press this latch to summon you,
who left without giving notice? Will it
ever become easier to let you out the door?