

The Stories I Want to Remember

A Six-Week Collection of Life’s Funny and Unexpected Moments

THE INNER LISTENER

Publication details

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Cover and interior artwork: original design for THE INNER LISTENER.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Welcome

A five-minute job can turn into an afternoon of rearranging a cupboard. Something you searched for can turn out to have been in your hand. Small incidents like these can be worth keeping.

This is a place to keep those stories in your own words. Funny, unexpected, peculiar and perfectly ordinary moments all belong here. A story does not need a punchline or a lesson.

The collection is for you. Nobody else has to read it. If you choose to share a story later, that choice can come later too.

You will find 42 invitations across six chapters, with two pages for each story. Use them in any order. A few lines, a sketch or an unfinished account can be enough.

Choose incidents you enjoy remembering. You can pass over an invitation, change a detail or use a different small story. There is no requirement to be entertaining.

A PERSONAL COLLECTION

Make this collection yours

A name, a working title or a rough date can help make this collection feel like your own. Every line on this page is optional.

My name or initials

A working title for my collection

A date, a season or a time period, if useful



How the pages work

1 **42 story invitations, six chapters**

Each chapter holds seven stories and a page for extra details. You can move between chapters and leave any invitation unused.

2 **Two pages for each story**

Begin the story on the left. Continue on the facing page, where you can try the optional detail or write straight on.

3 **A suggested six-week pace**

One chapter a week gives you seven invitations to choose from. The pages are undated: take longer, write several at once or follow no schedule.

4 **Your own version**

A short paragraph, a list, dialogue, a map or a drawing can carry a story. Approximate words and dates are welcome. You do not need to get every detail right.

5 **The story index**

Use the index near the end to write the number of a story and give it a title you will recognise later.

Choosing a story

An actual scene

Choose one occasion rather than a summary of your whole life. A drawer, a queue, an outfit or a conversation can provide enough material.

A first detail

Start with what you can picture: where the scene began, what you were doing or the line you remember saying. The rest can arrive as you write.

Your own voice

Write as you would tell the story to yourself. You can be amused, matter-of-fact or uncertain. There is no need to make the incident sound funnier than it was.

Your choice

Keep to incidents you want to revisit. Names and private details can be left out. An invented nickname is fine; a blank page is fine too.

A few memory sparks

One ordinary cue can bring back a scene. Try whichever of these happens to be nearby, or leave this page for another time.

An object

Something you carry, keep, mend or use for an unofficial purpose.

A place

A familiar shop, a particular seat or the route of a small errand.

A sound

A ringtone, a household noise or music attached to one occasion.

A phrase

Something you heard differently, said with confidence or now repeat to yourself.

A small plan

A task, an outing or an experiment that developed a story of its own.

A title or a few words that came to mind

EXAMPLE STORY

A five-minute job with other ideas

Illustrative example · a fictional entry

The invitation: Remember a small job that grew extra steps. Follow the chain of events.

I decided to tighten one cupboard handle before making tea. The screwdriver was behind a tin of paint. Moving the paint revealed a shelf I had meant to sort out, so I emptied it onto the floor.

An hour later, the paint had a new home, three jars had labels and I had found a packet of seeds. I was looking for a pot when I remembered the cupboard handle.

I made the tea. The handle was still loose, but the shelf looked exceptionally ready for visitors.

EXAMPLE CONTINUATION

A little more of the story

Illustrative example · a fictional entry

Optional follow-up: At what point did the five-minute job become a different sort of job?

The exact moment was when I said, “While I am here…” That sentence seems to have its own set of plans.

The handle got tightened the following day. First I had to fetch the screwdriver from its excellent new home.

A sketch, a diagram or a caption could go here

AN OPTIONAL STARTING PAGE

Titles waiting for a story

Sometimes a title arrives before the details. Leave a few possible titles here, or use the space for the first words of a scene. You can return to it at any point.