

When we disassemble a home

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We open drawers and closets, cabinets and doors
We look to walls and shelves, pictures and books
We reach into pockets and purses, open books and folders
We take things down and look things up
We hold things we saw daily and examine that which went unnoticed
We find the usual and note the spectacular masquerading as ordinary

When we disassemble a home

We reflect on history and ponder its what if's
We shake with laughter one moment, and tears the next
We clasp the delights and push away the discomforts
We hear the voices, that make the soundtrack of photos
We taste meals made with those recipes, pots and utensils
We breathe the lingering scent of fragrance on the scarf or jacket

When we disassemble a home

We recall the teaching from those pages, books and plans
We feel the softness – or scratchiness – of a hug in that sweater
We see childhood holiday tables set with those cloths and dishes
We journey back to the last Thanksgiving or birthday
We hear the last laugh, argument and silence

When we disassemble a home

We see people who lived there and those who passed through
We see Mom's hand we held wearing that ring we just found
We see younger Dad drafted overseas in that uniform from the closet
We gasp at Grandpa's cursive on the envelope that evokes eloquent missives
 sent to camp
We imagine younger Grandma chasing those autographs in the book
We see aunts, uncles carrying casseroles and platters in holiday entrances
We recall brothers and..... sisters in endless competitions
We see cousins at seder chasing the afkoman all over the house
We see teenage friends backing out the driveway or onto the lawn

When we disassemble a home

We remember item by item, moment by moment, person by person
We are knocked down by a torrent of remembrances too

WHEN WE DISASSEMBLE A HOME

Yizkor Reflection 5784/2023

Rabbi Lisa S. Greene

When we sit at the kitchen table or on the couch of our lives,
When we open the garment bag and catch a glimpse of that tuxedo or
wedding dress
When we discover what's at the bottom of the drawer
When we unearth documents in the folder of family history
When we uncover the box of toys that squeal with laughter
When we find that tiny treasure labeled just for us
When we reach into a pocket and emerge with a dusty lifesaver and folded
handkerchief

When we disassemble a home...
We turn corners and walk in circles –
We note exits and entrances long forgotten
We find that which we want – and that which we'd prefer to have missed
We fear losing memories and hold tight as we can
We think of people we assumed would remain at our side

Today we enter Yizkor to re-assemble our homes
We parse memories one by one...or perhaps in a rush
We return to objects and everyone they evoke
We look back to the past and its people
We realize how those people made us who we are

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