

SKETCHBOOK ADVENTURES

Prompt 25: Listen up – Taking note of memorable sentiments

In the spirit of the notion that everything you have should spark joy, from the book *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, I recently went through my overflowing bookshelves and created two piles: keep and donate. The hardest thing about doing this wasn't letting go of books I'd read and loved in the past or that had changed my perspective on the world or made me laugh or cry or marvel at the loveliness of the world. The hardest part was thinking about losing all the passages I'd underlined in my books. When I read, I always do it with a pen in hand and when a line or paragraph moves me, I underline it. When I was younger and time was on my side, when I'd finish a book I'd go through it and type up all the passages I'd underlined on note cards. I kept these note cards in a wooden box and when I was feeling down I'd go through them to remind me of the beauty of the written word and the world. Sometime in college, when balancing work, school and home life took over, and I could no longer spend whole afternoons meditating on the beauty of language and writing, I stopped doing that.

When I was cleaning out my books I thumbed through them and read the underlined parts and made a promise to return to my index card chronicling before I got rid of a single one of them. Since I often use quotes in my art and illustrations, in a way spending time doing this was a part of my work, and I tend to prioritize work on my to-do list. I went through the quotes and I began putting some of them on pages in my sketchbook and doing drawings and collages on the page.

Taking note of memorable sentiments is one my favorite sketchbook prompts. Capturing words and phrases that elicit emotion and wonder in me makes me feel a little less alone in the world and a little more amazed by it. When you choose a quote for this prompt, you don't have to stick to books. You can illustrate a line from a movie or lyrics from a song. If you're having a hard time finding something, try reading, watching movies and listening to music with a pen and paper handy. In a few days you'll have a bunch of wonderful phrases and words to choose from. Revisit the hand lettering chapter and think about the type of font you want to use and experiment with different writing styles. Then add other elements like collage, drawing, watercolor, image transfers and stamping. Or keep it simple and let the words stand on their own.



I WANT A
ROOM FULL OF
BALLOONS



LIFE WAS EASY WITH YOU HERE, AND WHEN YOU LEAVE,
IT WILL BE HARD AGAIN. THE DAY FELT LIKE
A BIRTHDAY, OUR FIRST, AND WE OURSELVES
WERE THE GIFTS, TO BE OPENED AGAIN & AGAIN.
- M. JULY