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From THE OCHRE WORLD

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"An American," Maximus wrote, "is a complex of occasions." And occasion—he would have known this—means to fall toward. To fall, as my wife and I fell, yesterday, toward coffee and a pleasant bookstore. As we fell, this morning, toward—in the local newspaper—a photograph of that bookstore. A photograph that must have been taken shortly before we arrived, that commemorates absence, that attends to everything not photographed—racks of magazines and books, crumbling adobe neighborhoods, telephone wires swaying with intense, casual conversations, memories swelling in the lilacs, flowing in the acequias, blood-spattered priests, jailed Pueblo leaders, cache of longing under the plaza grass, longing shaped into earrings and pottery, longing inscribed in racks of blankets, vested in theaters and galleries, scribbled in margins, entwined among arbors and portals. These Americans strolling the tax-sheltered streets of Santa Fe—*what is the real name of this place?*—are a complex of occasions. Are *falling*, and the photograph says, *Lovely*. And the photograph says, *Here is the generous life upwelling*. And the photograph says, *It is time to write the diary of your days. Among the gathered blossoms, in the morning courtyard, in the casual isolation you want to call privacy.*