

MARIN SARDY

## GARAGE SALE INSIDE

**T**he typewriter is boxed away now, but I once paid \$300 to get it refurbished to like-new-ness at a specialty shop in Manhattan. That was a decade ago. It's been even longer since I found the thing—we found it, Will and I—on that strange road trip we took through the Gila in our first year together. Stopping at the town called Quemado, little more than a few storefronts, most of them abandoned. As we stood there looking around, we noticed a sawhorse on the sidewalk with the sign stapled to it, the kind you buy at a hardware store, that said *Garage Sale*. And in the spot below where you write in the address, someone had scrawled: *INSIDE*.

So we went in, stepped into a warp, landed in the past—not the true past but a creepy, something-wicked version of it. Scratchy music was playing on a plastic children's record player by the door, and a talkative woman chatted us up while her silent little girl stared, flat-faced when I smiled and said hello. The woman told us that Quemado means *burned*, and that it earned its name from a series of Apache raids that periodically destroyed the Spanish town in colonial times. She said there was a ghost in the back, in the bathroom that doubled as a utility closet. The girl had seen it—a young boy with terrible burns.

The antique typewriter was radiant, a crooked prize, all the pieces there, just the long spool unsprung from the keys so that it fell sideways if you tilted it. It was the only thing I wanted to buy. Everything else was somehow too visceral. It was a floor-to-ceiling kind of place, crammed with knick-knacks and kitsch. Objects calling to us from the TV shows we watched as kids, the