

Catalog of Disappeared Things

by stephen hastings-king

He runs a mail-order business from a storefront and distributes a catalog of disappeared things. Because the things are disappeared, overhead is low.

When orders come he packs up boxes and brings them to the post-office. He sends them certified mail.

At night he buys the postmaster dinner to thank him again for losing them.

You cannot expect to receive disappeared things.

A Selection of Disappeared Things: obsolete words; minuets and quadrilles; dire wolves and pallid grey mice; passenger pigeons and giant Antillean rice rats; insular cave bats, dwarf elephants and Peerages, dormant, extinct, forfeited and abeyant; fossil remains of large, bird-like animals not found elsewhere, such as the Aepyronis, remnants of whose eggs are strewn over the beaches of the extreme south; concaveness, as in fishes and many reptiles; rectangular and anthropoid coffins derived from a cast of his own body and the sort of mummy-coffin that has a face carved on it, extinct languages, such as Zuñi and Spanish and Athapascan; a hortus-siccus of extinct cryptogamic vegetation and giant lemurs.

