

Poetry Porch: Poetry

Things My Father Held

By Elaine Sorrentino

With purpose and dedication, he held
a baseball bat and glove
a sacred gold ciborium
training sessions for Eucharistic ministers
and the key to my mother's heart.

In forty-three proud parent years, he held
three squirmy newborns
a cumbersome *Voigtländer* camera
its blinding flash attachment
and his opinion of my boyfriends.

Ecstatic to be a homeowner, he held
strings of Christmas lights
electric hedge clippers
the accidentally sliced clipper cord
and a mortgage (gleefully burned).

The eldest in his family, he held
a weighty opinion
his temper at unreasonable requests
his grieving father
years later, the executor position.

A deferential soldier, he held
back tears at Auschwitz
his tongue when he disagreed with superiors
a military-issued rifle
in a photograph he never shared.