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## Gifts

Todd Fuller

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## Gifts

There's a steamer trunk in the attic,  
Full of Grandpa's war-time trinkets,  
His over-the-years memorabilia, Red Cross  
Maps of Rome printed on dirt-cheap paper,  
1943 Soldier-issued booklets on German  
History and Mentality. Each week he mailed  
A little something home: pieces of Czech  
Crystal, poems he'd written, matchbooks  
From cafes in Madrid. Each week Grandma  
Waited at the post office all day Saturday  
For small packages addressed to Mrs.  
*Millie McCloud*, and one time he sent  
A sniper's bullet that caught him square  
In the shoulder and said in the letter, "It  
Tumbled me over, about five or so feet."  
And everybody in town had a look-see,  
Heard Grandma tell the story: That's  
*A real I-talian bullet they took outta my  
Ernie*. Ten years after he died she  
Took me up to the attic and let me unfold  
A Nazi flag, told me the story behind  
A pair of gold Soviet cufflinks, let me  
Hold an R.A.F. pen. For hours we sat  
Cross-legged snooping and meddling,  
Carefully opening paper bags, sometimes  
Whispering "God, this belongs in a museum,"  
And when we were done, she grabbed an old  
Shoe box, gathered what would fit inside  
And said, *Don't you dare tell your Ma*.

by Todd Fuller

