

Two Poems

Emily Moore

Cattails

My dad at thirty—rugby shirt and jeans,
his hair still wispy in the breeze—
rustles the tufted canopy
with windy, boyish ease.

I listen to the whirr of planes
that dot the ice-blue sky like stars,
breathe summer—marshland, gravel, hay—
as he snaps hollow, waxy stalks,

returning to the path with reeds
aloft—two freed-up feather flags
for us to wave all afternoon.

His legacy: cattails, balloons,
the memory of each fleeting gift
seed-light or ribboned to my wrist.

Vineyard Hospital, 1981

My father watched his father die
weekends when I was four.
He drove me to the hospital
three hundred miles North

inside a backseat blanket nest,
then spread crayons on the floor
of the gray-green waiting room
and I hunched down to draw.

My grandfather was fever sick,
my father scared and young,
like my classmate Sarah was
the year she lost her mom—

Sarah in her checkered dress,
beloved, hay-blonde, motherless.

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