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A Box in Great Aunt Hattie's Attic

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Judith Boogaart *A Box in Great Aunt Hattie's Attic*

A box gathers things.
It protects the fragility
of Great Aunt Hattie's china.
It gives form to the softness
and fluidity of a satin
wedding dress. It provides
a resting place for memories—
faded photographs and diaries
in perfect 1920's penmanship,
spats and muffs in a packet
of crinkled letters nestled
in a green soldier's uniform—
and though the shape
may hint at what's inside,
still hides the contents
in darkness.
A box organizes that which
it contains into neatness.
Its contents are solidified,
conformed, defined, and labeled,
then tucked away somewhere
and forgotten.
Until the young ones find it
while playing in Hattie's attic,
stirring up dust motes, whirlwinds
of questions, and disremembered pain.