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Days Spent Fixing Up

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My father's hands were calloused and cut,
rough-worn with work
for he was and is a working man
raised by an even more working man:
Grandfather Earned-His-Place XV
as you kids
would be better to remember.

My father's hands were calloused and cut,
and I watched them labor and flex
at the ends of his impossibly
strong arms
until there was “Can I help, Daddy?” and
then a mistake:
something dropped
something broken
then his hands were getting a whole new bruise.

So, my Father's hands were calloused and cut,
and then they shook with his voice
“Logan … go.”
When I left I could hear him
cussing,
banging,
punching things. For every word
I gave him,
He gave himself another from anger.

Maybe that's love, I guess. It isn't
some rose, I'll tell you that,
and I'll tell you another thing:
that man never tried to hide me from anything
more than from his own violence. And
every time I left
that door and heard
slide-bang-clatter
him throwing something,
that felt a lot like love.
A little like being scared shitless and running to mommy, but a lot, a lot like love.