

"Super Shooter"

That's what the Wear-Ever Company called it:
The "Super Shooter electric cookie, canape, and candy maker."
Put on one of the attachments.
Fill it with dough, or paste.
Out comes a star, or a swirl, or
some other custom shape.
I read the box: "It triggers
a whole new era of ease,
convenience and versatility
in the kitchen."

Well, sort of, since the gadget just sat,
in it's unopened container,
on the shelf above the basement door.
Mom never made canapes
that I can recall,
or seemed to care much
about the shape of her cookies:
a lot of time and effort saved that way.

I can't say how long
that carton had been there
before I took it down
to paint the stairwell.
but the cardboard
was yellowing, and brittle.

I still have a few keepsakes,
like the broken travel alarm clock
which lived in the dining room
for twenty years (give or take).
Mom said not to throw it out.
It was still useful, you see,
because she could set the dial
to remember when the time came
to take her medication again.

It was all useful, and could not
be discarded, everything
she accumulated
for four decades—like
the blender, base now cracked,
that had moved with us

from the old apartment,
the sacks of styrofoam packaging,
the collection of lids for absent jars,
the checkbook from 1964,
and the Montgomery Ward catalogues
of similar vintage—so useful
that we decided just
to leave most of it in place,
down in the basement,
after she died. But now,
with Dad in the nursing home
the place is to be sold.

No one who knew this house
guessed how much
we took to the dump.
The closest anybody came
was half of the four tons.
The crew I hired to do most of the work
told me it was the biggest
single hauling job they had ever handled.
I said we were going
for the Guinness Book of Records.

It's been two years since Mom's body
was hauled away
to the Howard University
Medical school, but only now
does it occur to me
that I have to tell her "goodbye."

Steve Bloom
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