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## Gravity

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## \*Gravity

Mike Vanden Bosch

My father gave me a runt pig, as much to  
teach me the ought of love as to save  
a hopeless sack of bones, nosed by pig

heads from a sow's life-giving milk. I put  
my boy's hands around its wrapped bones  
to stop its shivering, gently rubbed dry its

damp pink skin. Morning and evening I gave  
it warmed milk from a worn-out baby bottle,  
named it Andy after an uncle long dead,

and often cuddled it like a baby. In giving,  
I felt my heart stretch like a womb. My  
warm fingers stirred its pulse; my palms

cradled its fear as if it were my own frailty  
come to roost. I gave to Andy what a child  
could give, and in giving, caught the heft

of love. But pink flesh and blood seeped  
like sunlight through a crack in withered  
wood, me helpless to arrest its gravity.

\* Previously published in *Lyrical Iowa*, 2003