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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.

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