

## **Pig of Passage**

My grandfather's cracked hands shield  
his eyes from the shock

of evening sun. He loads his pipe  
with more tobacco, cups the match

as the sun starts to fail. We sit  
on the porch of his double-wide

and he tells me he'll learn Spanish  
when pigs fly. He wants the mustached man

on Fourteenth who boasts fresh tomatoes  
from a wooden cart to hightail it back

over the Rio Grande. Me, I'm too busy pressing  
crescents into the wood with my fingernails

to tell him Lord Brabazon of Tara hitched  
a pig in a wicker basket to his plane

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1909 and took it for a spin  
around Leysdown. I know my grandfather's

never excelled at manners, was raised  
buck naked in the creeks of South Wisconsin,

thinks his pilot license or hearing aid should command  
respect. I can't help but notice the bloat

of his scabbed knuckles, can't help  
but wonder if he brought grandma

magnolias as she lay in the hospital, forgetting.  
I wonder if the caress of his thumb

against her wrist felt more like it was cocking  
a revolver, if he listened as the next round

spun into place with a click.

**Brian Czyzyk**

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