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The Pig Saga

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THE PIG SAGA

We were proud of the boar. We castrated him to fatten the hams even more. Each day the little globes of his eyes guessed where the slop would go, the hidden tusk would graze my wrist. He didn't flinch at hurting me: it was important to be first in a pig's world. I watched the destruction in his jaws — fish, apples the crunch of centers in the teeth, the blow and push of his nose.

It had to be Fall: we heard ways pigs were killed, guns, knives, a moon not whole but getting full. We read the specific times and days; it had all been done before. Nights I dreamed the whites hovered under the flames of his ears, his body in a long overcoat. Nothing could make me kill this pig I said. We took the customary charge and the slaughter house cut the head. In four days I picked up his heart and the halves of his face, each eye attached to my movements still.

Cooked and opened I put them on a stump out back. And the eyes guessed
again what was next: my finger
dug in the sockets, the orbs
circling like sprinklers
scanning and escaping my grip.
Even the blade that took his masculinity
could not clip the chord
that made us so alike.
And still toward dusk
I got them out, my treasures,
the sweating flexible eyes.
My forefinger was stiff
as a hunter's horn and my hand
danced and winced in the night.