

# *The Family Bends*

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I.

Evenings, sitting quietly  
with grandpa  
his hands, too much  
for mice and rabbits.

Many mornings  
when the fog would dip its toes into the lake  
my grandfather paced the yard  
with his thumb rubbing over the leather  
of his temple.

II.

One time I knocked over  
his jar of pennies,  
a doorstep  
put there by God.

That night,  
a threnody  
to the make-do movement  
of The Great Depression.

III.

Running  
in circles  
s c r e a m i n g

at the piles of goose shit  
and bits of  
stale bread  
left there by the grandchildren.  
An electric volcano  
stationed,  
waiting to be charged.

IV.

I blinked  
and waited for him to blink  
and when he didn't blink

I started leaking  
and watched as it spread  
like oil pooling on the dirt driveway  
from his 1983 Dodge van.

V.

My rubber-balled head,  
bouncing  
through the wet cement  
of the tepid lake.

Cold white and blue,  
like the flood  
lights of a search party,

folded  
between the pauses  
of trees.