

The Family Bends

JASON TALBOT

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.