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# Thingamajig

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# Thingamajig

by Virgil Suarez

For years after I arrived in the United States from  
Spain, and to Madrid from Havana, Cuba,

I would not know words like this one,  
English words that sound like a type of dance,

and I mention it here because I think each time  
of my grandfather's farm, the barn in San Pablo,

the granary, some type of mill where water ran,  
but you had to pump it first, where old tractor

parts hung from the rafters like the carcasses  
of dead animals. Crows and sparrows nested

in the holes of stirrups, saddle mounts, crooks  
and crannies, and the smell of molasses, o sweet

it was, thick, rich, and we fed it to the pigs  
mixed in with *palmiche*, seeds from the palms

that grew around the house. The chickens nested  
here, brooded until the chicks hatched. I found

milk bottles from ancient time, or so I thought,  
and the toads hopped in too when the rains came,

thundered on the tin roof like spooked horses.  
Frogs croaked from their hiding places. Engine parts

shone in the ray of light that snuck in through cracks,  
these broken boards on the walls. I came here

to have adventures, I knew, to get away from other  
cousins who were bigger and meaner than I was,

then when I heard my grandmother calling,  
I sat atop the broken-down tractor and pretended it



was a tank. It could have easily been a tank  
from the Bay of Pigs Invasion, sure, and the parachute

billowed over the entrance was a man-of-war, a membrane  
from an angel's wing, a white cone of moondreams?

Some things, a world gone ablaze with their uselessness,  
so many still unnamed, so many not forgotten, not yet.

