

## Porky

Every March  
ten sows on our Iowa farm  
give birth  
to a hundred or so piglets.

Every April  
they nurse, squeal, and nurse some more  
until their lamented weaning  
and bloody castration.

Every July  
Dad trucks the young crop  
to the Sioux City stockyards--except for one--  
whom we'll feed and pet every day until

Every November  
Dad fires a .22 bullet into Porky's head,  
slips a noose around his hind legs and hoists him up--  
still warm--on a corncrib rafter, ready for the knife.

Every December  
I hear again-- the gun and his gasps--  
I see the steam and smell his body,  
as snow not quite covers our tracks.

by Arlin Buyert