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My First Tie

by Kevin Hart

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My father gave me my first tie
When I was all too young.
O long and thin and black it was
And I climbed up a rung.

“I’ll wear it at your funeral, Dad,”
I said, absorbed with black,
My father grew a foot too tall:
“Maybe I’ll take it back.”

He knotted it behind my neck
And I shot up an inch
I looked into a mirror, hard,
And saw my father flinch.

When going through my father’s things —
Stained medals, bric-à-brac —
I found that tie a week too late:
“Maybe I’ll take it back.”