

# That Does Me Good

*by* William Owen

Your clothes had been burned and your skin washed. They kept your boots at my firm insistence. I saw them write your name on the card. The card was black, and the ink was black. The writing was shallow and scratchy. The box they filed the card into was black and so were all of the others, laughing a little to themselves and smiling up at me with clear wax on their lips. I could feel my teeth grinding, wearing down the enamel. They had silver dust spread on their eyelashes.

When you woke you told me a dream you'd had of being on a sunset watching a bathtub floating on the ocean. Then you realized the bathtub had to be real and the water wasn't, that the ocean was part of the blazing image, that it was the skin of something and the sun was the things head. They say you aren't supposed to dream under anesthesia. The applesauce in the cup had already been eaten. Someone said you'd professed a love for one of the nurses, the pale girl. You were able to walk, and asked for a steak once we were outside. The pale girl was waiting for the bus. She had been fired.

Put on your red cap my boy and lace up your boots, we have the night and we have our knives to wet.

