## WILLIAM WOOLFITT

## **Body Servant**

The boy thinks the soldier is kind: he offers two crab apples the size of a man's thumbs. *For you* he says in Cherokee; when the boy comes close, he crouches, asks the boy

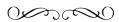
to trim his blond muttonchops with scissors. Each morning after that, before the soldier leaves the stockade and goes out to collect, the boy meets him at his quarters, the boy

trims, combs, and oils him, stands on a stool and brushes the soldier's clothes. The soldier gives him buttons, tobacco, a misshapen peach. Once, the soldier hands him soap, a cup of water,

a knife, teaches him to make lather, leans his head back, exposing his bristly neck. The boy saves salt pork fat, begs his mother for a small rag, asks the soldier if he may

polish his boots. Stooping down to rub soiled leather, the boy sees flakes of rust, dark wisps, knots of human hair.

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## ABOUT WILLIAM WOOLFITT

William Woolfitt is the author of *Beauty Strip* (Texas Review Press 2014) and *Charles of the Desert* (forthcoming from Paraclete Press) and the curator of *Speaking of Marvels*, a blog that features interviews with authors of chapbooks and novellas (chapbookinterviews.wordpress.com). His poems have appeared in *Notre Dame Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *West Branch*, and *Colorado Review*. He received a PhD from the Pennsylvania State University and is an assistant professor of English at Lee University. He lives in Cleveland, Tennessee, and can be found online at williamwoolfitt.wordpress.com.

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