

K Y L E A D A M S O N

The Standard Operating Procedure for Wounded Enemy Combatants

During the fading hours, I stand
guard at a makeshift infirmary beside

broken bodies held together by sopping
bandages. When bleeding fighters scream,

I never tell them to stop. I never tell
about the strategic drops of blood

bombing the floor like laser-guided
hailstones—skies darkening for necessary

clamor before silence With each blast,
sulfur smoke collects in the floodlights,

a certain fog of fuss. I never tell
of the capture or details. By orders,

I standby until the subjects expire & watch
the maimed drain & contort on cots until

zipped into leather bags, carried away
by tall men into a cold room. Blood

lingers like a silent witness in a fixed trial—
I am a butcher with immaculate hands.



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