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Sore Subject

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Sore Subject

By Nicco Pandolfi

Your hands are works of scar cartography,
contours carved by years of wind and salt,
souvenirs of the rough caress of the sea.
Your blade does its work dance,
barely keeping up with your deft dips
and rolls as silver tears silver
and separates flesh from its frame.
Steel taps bone, keeping erratic time
like the senile cuckoo clock that hangs
in a sun-forgotten corner of the Crow's Nest
back home in Portland.
Funny how the homespun barmaid
slipped from your sure hands
after decades of practice at catching alewives.
Looking up from your graceful filet,
you cast a stern glance at my idling fingers
and grumble that the fire won't make itself.