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Hangers

Martin Malone

You pick your way through his last things,
aware that you are struggling.
And here's this, just wood and metal pins.
What else off which to drape a ghost?
Rubberstamped 23116988: one brother,
conscript, Private, standard-issue.
Failing to clear some sense of anniversary,
you put it back on the rail and close the door,
then polish a cap-badge, put his medal
in your pocket and head for the beach;
thoughts of your last conversation worn
against the silence. How it ended, hanging...