## War Nurses and Lost Fathers - For Memorial Day

by Myra King

You tell them anything they want to hear,

my mother, a nurse, says, when I have come of age to know such things

> I have been mother to a hundred soldiers holding their hands barely knowing their names

I strut my childhood invincibility tough as tanks from my father's regiment coffins of steel, they and I, closed in

release comes only in fragments, from someone's

## words, unpinned

your father would have felt nothing, not like those poor souls I nursed alone while shells bloomed overhead leaving their roses in the ground

and the papa,
I have never known,
will grow
in mind until
our ages merge
and the last candle is
blown out,
on wishes unmade.