



Artwork by Murphy Elliott

background for writing
"BEAUTY SCHOOL"

In the spring of 2009, while flying from LAX to the southeast, I read a profile on **Dolly Parton** in the *New Yorker* by Lauren Collins ("[Looking Swell](#)") and wrote "Beauty School" soonafter. Collins writes, "If she had not succeeded at music, Parton said, she would have been a missionary or a cosmetologist..."

While "Beauty School" pays homage to one of my favorite songwriters (and one of America's treasures), it also celebrates friendship--in this case, Parton's with fellow country legend **Tammy Wynette**, who went to beauty school and kept her beautician's license updated, y'all! Maybe you won't be surprised to know that Dolly would ask to borrow Tammy's card to get discounts on hair and makeup products.

Collins writes: "When Wynette was dying, Parton would go to the hospital and put makeup on her and fix her hair." Imagining that scene, I knew I had to write a song.