

## **Skeleton**

1

My skeleton  
sits across from me

holding out  
his yellowed fingers  
in a pleading Oscar Wilde kinda way

He is dirty  
    dressed  
in blood – still

tendons connect us  
across the divide  
of the living room

living room

    living room

I kneel – am praying – the  
dusty brown curtain is stained-glass

Lighting the old orange candle  
that smells like candy

I look into his sockets  
as if  
    he is a priest

My eyes – jewels  
    cracking  
under pressure

2

I push  
the swing  
goes forward  
  
up

away from

In that gravity-less space where I am left  
watching the chains  
the seat  
the passenger

You feel the pull of it – no?

Like you were going to drag behind – like  
some rednecks tied you to a truck...

I draw three coins

clarity  
peace  
dissolution

and look at the space

waiting

for the swing – the body – to come back  
like a camera on auto-focus – the sun is a ring  
is a ring

is a ring

burned into memory

and the grass is very dry here  
worn down to the quick

Here comes the swing – carrying the bones

I Force = Mass x Acceleration

My palms go white from the press –

The skeleton raises it's narrow white arms

mouth agape

teeth shining

kicks out its femurs

jumps from the swing –

3

Then  
my skeleton asks about dead relatives  
asks me to lie back  
put my head in the basin  
allow it  
to wash my hair

There is tapping on the window

like impatience – like a blind cane

like the wind – like an unshut gate

*Tell us about your day dear Tell us about your boyfriendgirlfriend Tell us about what you do for a living or where you live Tell us anything really What do you think about the weather or the telly or that whatsherface who stole soandsos man...*

My mouth  
is unshut  
the water tastes  
of foam

One twig finger – along the line of my ear

inching  
near the canal – Q-tip probe

The feeling that that bone has gone there before –

4

Diatomaceous earth looks like flour

feels like talc  
pumice  
enticing  
soft – you could leave footprints

Have you ever rubbed talc into the cracks of your feet – felt

that

odd dryness

of fossilized algae

– Alfred Nobel

invented dynamite with it

those lost German oceans so

pent up with all that sun –

Pumice is volcanic glass – like

rolling

on

bones –

A bit of Berlin Wall sits on a shelf – it has

a pink side

a green side

The streets of New York are covered

in bones

but you'll never have enough to make a chicken.

5

My skeleton

sits at the mirror

Putting on make-up

The delicate pinked bush – it runs over slicing cheekbones

The room is bathed in candle

wrapped in roses

the whispersound of a fan

He stares

those dark sockets

those endless dark

He is Joan Crawford –

sprays his ribcage with perfume

Eye shadow purple

as a bruise

Teeth part in what passes for a smile

My skeleton turns

stares into the doorway

where I watch him

6

The sun is bright – blinding – bakes stone

Skeleton holds a hand to its forehead  
stares into the sun –

It bends  
    extending  
one arm down and  
grabs the knob of bone at its ankle

From the heel

or some secret place

    Skeleton pulls

a thick  
    gray

rope of tendon

stretches it – extends it

And  
looking at me – dark void dark hole  
behind the teeth –

Skeleton gently  
offers it

    a lover offering his hand

That rope-worm thing a hose waiting for me

Its eyes  
or the darkness where there should be eyes

    flashes red

I take his tendon – my tendon –

wrap  
the cold cord around my arm  
and drag the bones through the yard

7

At night  
the skeleton sits  
cross-legged  
on my chest  
staring at my chest

Like a cat  
at the slightest noise  
it turns to look  
for source  
    for danger

Its hip bones  
dig in  
to ribcage

Pile of bones  
watching  
pile of bones

8

My skeleton cannot speak  
it mimes the lyrics to Firework

A back and forth motion from it's breast bone  
hands back and forth back and

Like that I think

I hold my skeleton's hand  
and we watch the sun rise

The horizon turns purple then pink then white hot

I feel my heart beating – hold  
the skeleton fingers to my chest

It stares at the indents of bone on flesh  
moves closer

stares

Thinking baby make them go ah ah ah  
leave them all in awe awe awe –

9

Skeleton walks along the edge of the world  
which is the edge of the roof of a childhood home  
now vanished

One hinged foot in front of the other  
pressing down on the calcaneus he is tracing the line

His arms stretched out he is a figurehead a sail a cross

10

We're in a grocery store

The skeleton wants to push the cart

Since I am boneless –

I fit myself

into a jar

that he can put in the child seat –

He wants to buy moisturizers :

Have you pressed your tongue to bone : they  
are porous are sucking are chalk

And he wants to buy bleach :

Recently skinless : he is black /  
red

the color of adobe

We go up and down every aisle – we  
do not buy anything