

## Bones

Spite, a sad kind, the way I am leaning –  
a dark line – your brittle bones  
passing in the world beside me –

it tells all – the Lord atop my shoulders –  
how once inside you'll move with me  
into the after for all to see,

once alive you'll never need  
the twig and branch you give to me;  
a cold love, inside the hills  
to be bones and nothing more –

all you are is skin to me,  
and bones and nothing more –

When a bluer sky is slid beneath  
the crack at our bedroom door  
I stretch and moan and move for you –  
I am bones and nothing more.

Picture

At night, of late, I watch molding take  
the edge away and men fingering their belts.  
Flailing, they dig into their waistbands,

later, they will watch their babies  
and pretend to sleep.

soap and hot water  
have scarred my hands  
but still I can be your beautiful  
wife dressed in gray leggings

muscle and vein  
have twisted my ankles  
so picture me  
something like a bee

inside a small room,  
and frightened.

## Close Reading

neighborhood morning what a bleak day across the  
grid. holy roller quiet streets with distant thunder  
and birds that talk amongst themselves. this is our  
day of debt. strawberries for breakfast so sweet  
may have mistaken them for small red clouds,  
and the nights are so-dark reminders of being  
buried alive. Come, revitalize

the summertime might coo, physically sick  
as it were – nausea all across the bedsheets;  
wondering if there is something  
inside of me, and hiding it.  
I feel dizzy and awkward at standing, all  
my knees and feet in separate places

missing passports. the days are losing weight  
and diameter; the artist walks in the room,  
across the room, disappears outside the room  
and the artist now has no palms or poems to tango.  
Last week

was dense like a heavy cut of fish. we  
closed early, live music in the background  
and worms eating by the roots of plants.  
Need Money? they ask, those deep deep  
hands shucking oysters downtown.  
prescription pain pill users wanted – that's  
what makes us all so happy, all kinds of separate  
pieces local cheap and heavy. Landlord  
and crusader moving state to state licking  
tremors off many a-thigh in his day-to-day,  
hands crept to the small of a back. Tastes like

prison meals, he says, like something got  
on credit. there, there, hush now.

View from a Cold Window in North Carolina

It is so cold  
That when cold boys look out  
Over the fields  
And talk about bicycles

their voices are small  
as hollow tin cans

and they forget  
they have had no supper,

they forget the moon that  
has left them,

that their father is gone,  
and lumps of hills

like those found in bodies  
can hide their red faces.

There is a fiddler with a spindle  
beard sitting in the window,

there he sits on blistered wood,  
with dirt for fingers –

he can see the stars  
even when the farm is low  
and green

and the asphalt road  
snakes around  
the tiny town

as if the whole blue world were made  
Inside of it.

## Looking Glass Rock

Six shades of blue,  
a glimpse of sharp peaks  
and I am so far behind,  
so far behind that  
I could still flush red  
like a birthday cake

and you would fall  
off Looking Glass  
and I would be a gasping shape  
like a burlap sap empty  
for whoever will keep me.

Surely when your life passes  
into so many things,  
I will then be so alone  
as I never have been,

and my voice will be  
a cracked cup,  
a chamber door,

and so I think  
I will just slide right off,  
I will just leap right off

and never look again  
I am so afraid of the cliff  
at Looking Glass.