

Uneasy Structure

by: Kelsey Hontz

And when you examine the bones of my family, you will see that we have always been ghosts.

It's in the uneven tilt of the eyes, the cranial structure that keeps them gazing through you, off to some other ethereal plane listing slightly to the left. It's in the thin wrists that, no matter age or gender, can be completely encircled by the shackles of anyone's hot fingers. It's in the flatness of the feet, the sound they make slapping lightly along the muddy ground, and the tilt of the pelvis that knocks us off-balance.

If you were to peel back our generational skin, expose the marrow beneath, you would see laid out before you a xylophone skeleton, playable and pliable but hardly suitable for habituation, and yet—the family name endures.

When I was born the elders said “let's stop now,” and when my daughter was born I swear I heard their wisps dangling on my earrings, but of course they weren't alive to see her because these raggedy structures don't hold us up to weather past fifty-five years. I'm writing this entry with a cast on my leg and a bandage wrapped tight around my shoulder, feeling avian and hollow. I just want my sweet girl to know where her clattering bones come from, to explain why, when she looks at the family tree, she will only see the family graveyard.



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