

BONES

*"BURY ME AT SEA," SAYS MY MOTHER-IN-LAW.
"I LOVE THE OCEAN." I LOVE IT TOO, BUT THE THOUGHT OF ALL
THAT MOTION WHEN REST IS CLEARLY CALLED FOR
UNNERVES ME.
BESIDES, I CANNOT EAT FISHES EYES; I DO NOT WANT THEM
EATING MINE.*

*WE PASS A CEMETARY AND RACHEL, LITTLE ROOT-BOUND
FRIEND OF MY DAUGHTER POINTS AND PIPES, "MY
GRANDMOTHER'S NAME IS ALREADY ON THE STONE.
I THINK IT'S NEAT TO KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING. RIGHT
NEXT TO GRANDPA."*

*NEAT, I SUPPOSE, IN A STOLID SORT OF WAY ...
BUT WHO CAN CRAVE ETERNAL REST IN STERILE,
UNACCUSTOMED GROUND NEXT TO STRANGERS NAMED
DORIS AND FERD?
I DO NOT KNOW THESE PEOPLE; I MIGHT NOT EVEN LIKE THEM.*

*MY GOOD FRIEND LIL PREFERS CREMATION.
"I WANT TO BE THROWN INTO A GENTLE WIND FROM SOME
BUCOLIC HILL."
BUT I THINK OF MY HUSBAND'S TALE OF A COMRADE IN ARMS
WHO WISHED HIS ASHES SCATTERED FROM HIS PLANE;
AT THE VITAL MOMENT CAME A SHIFT OF WIND AND "WE ALL
WORE OLD HARRY."*

*I WOULD LIKE TO BE BURIED WITH MY DOGS. WHAT BETTER
COMPANY?*

*HERE LIES HUEY, SHOT BY A NEIGHBOR FOR STEALING
CHICKENS.
POOR FOOLISH, GRINNING HOUND, SUCH BIBLICAL JUSTICE
SEEMS EXTREME
IN THIS ENLIGHTENED AGE.*

*AND TESS, WHO SOMEWHERE HAD HEARD DYLAN. FEISTY
EVEN IN EXTREMIS SHE WENT OUT
ON A HIGH NOTE OF STUNNED OUTRAGE.*

*FINALLY RUFUS, DEAF OLD, ARTHRITIC, INCONTINENT RUFUS
SO DEARLY CHERISHED IN SPIE OF HAVING LIVED TOO LONG.
WOULD WE WERE ALL SO LUCKY.*

*I WOULD LIKE TO BE BURIED WITH MY DOGS. WHAT BETTER
PLACE?*

*TRANQUIL THEY LIE IN A SUN-DAPPLED SPOT OF MY OWN NEW
ENGLAND SOIL AT THE JUNCTION OF TWO STONE WALLS.
THERE ARE GRASSES AND FLOWERS IN SEASON
AND CUSHIONS OF LEAVES AND SNOW LATER.*

*I LIKE THE THOUGHT OF OUR BONES MOLDERING DOWN
TOGETHER TOWARD SOME FINE CREATIVE PURPOSE.
RICHEST OF LOAM, BLACK AND CRUMBLY, MORE GRASSES,
MORE FLOWERS, MORE LEAVES.*

*I WOULD LIKE TO BE BURIED WITH MY DOGS, BUT ZONING, OF
COURSE, WOULD NOT ALLOW IT.*