

Andrea Witzke Slot

Panoply

Some days the rigid silhouette of all we are is revealed in plates of glass. Some days we might even touch the strange mesh of armor that keeps us upright and steady and wonder at how little keeps us from flopping into heaps on the floor, like the billowing collapse of a circus tent as stakes are pulled from the ground. And yet, my doctor tells me, we are all disappearing, year by year, even with the bite-sized chalk of calcium supplements. Nothing can halt the slow exiting of cells as they fade from our axial skeletons, the bones that run up our vertebral column, around our rib cages, circling our chests, jutting upward to the skull. The bones that curve around our pelvic girdles. The bones that work their way back out to our hands and our feet. We are all unrehearsed vanishing acts, a case of self thinning out until, one day, we too are hunched over sidewalks, only able to see our own feet moving in front of us. But this is a gradual farewell, announced over long stretches of time, and is, in fact, cause for celebration. We are the progenitors of our own destruction and no outside force can stop us from the dissolution of all that we are, all that we inhabit in this moment, as you read these words, touch another's face, or slip away from the town's cool edge. Don't miss the fanfare. Look up. All around you, people are slowly waving goodbye.

