

Skeleton Land

I have vision, and the rest of the world wears bifocals—Butch Cassidy

If you followed the sound of the wind chimes, you found yourself here:
The last frontier, with skulls tattooed on the rocks and roses
tattooed on your wrists.

If you've touched the Atlantic, felt its pull and progress—
And you've chosen to come here:

You followed sadness, like me, and found the half-blood orange
that hangs above the red cliffs.
You cherished the slice of petrified Juniper tree, the skull of a coyote.

You've walked on concrete and chose the dunes,
the chasms...

And at the peak of two tectonic plates,
you feel your bones separate from your soul, you flex your fingers
and touch the ground, hear its voice:

Isn't it easy?

We've come here to settle in the past, you and I,
as the untouchable future flies only with the UFOs overhead.

Gold basks in every river so they all shine,
winking at extraterrestrials and cowboys.

This land knows the weight of oceans and so do the fossils,
But the seas have ebbed and they're left,
baking in the emptiness of red dust, in deep cliffs melted by erosion.

The water you know is held captive in a saguaro
reminds you of something you never forgot:

That you can pan for flakes of gold like those before you,
But you'll soon be humbled too, in Valley of Death or Mojave.

To them you're just a chance, a happening, an existence,
alone, under a dripping star sky.

But there's the dark, beating blue moon part of your chest that drips too:
and finally you can hear the wolf, the shadow of the owl, the guitar—

You're alive in the land of skeletons.