

DOUG RAMSPECK

i climbed into my body today

& carried myself into the funeral home

my dad was there

bodies have always perplexed me i think of a raft floating
on a choppy sea

we hold on

or maybe our bodies are fields & we have only this botany of the self

our mud & our grass

as a child i thought sometimes about my dad's skeleton

how it waited patiently beneath his skin hiding & sometimes
when i reached up to touch his ribs

there it was the hard comfort & reality of bone

i was nine the first time he almost died

the honda went off the road

& i was sitting beneath a gathering of stars while they lifted him

& my dad used to carry me on his shoulders

& i would duck so as not to bump my head

& he had an adam's apple too large for his throat

a living thing longing to get out that quivered when he spoke

& my dad used to say *first rotate your hips which rotates*
your shoulders that's how you hit a home run

& the second time my dad almost died it was a heart attack

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he was up on a roof when it happened giving an estimate
to repair a leak

& we sat in his hospital room & felt guilty that our bodies functioned

& it was raining this morning when we woke

& that rain fell against the body of the house

& more rain fell against the body of the car as we made our way
to the funeral home

& more rain fell against the bodies of our umbrellas as we made our way
across the parking lot

then stepped inside

& my dad was there

& i said when i reached down to touch him

dad