

The man became drowsy, slid under his sleeping skins, and soon was dreaming. And sometimes as humans sleep, you know, a tear escapes from the dreamer's eye; we never know what sort of dream causes this, but we know it is either a dream of sadness or longing. And this is what happened to the man.

The Skeleton Woman saw the tear glisten in the firelight, and she became suddenly soooo thirsty. She tinkled and clanked and crawled over to the sleeping man and put her mouth to his tear. The single tear was like a river and she drank and drank and drank until her many-years-long thirst was slaked.

Then, while lying beside him, she reached inside the sleeping man and took out his heart, the mighty drum. She sat up and banged on both sides of it: *Bom, Bomm! . . . Bom, Bomm!*

As she drummed, she began to sing out "Flesh, flesh, flesh! Flesh, flesh, flesh!" And the more she sang, the more her body filled out with flesh. She sang for hair and good eyes and nice fat hands. She sang the divide between her legs, and breasts long enough to wrap for warmth, and all the things a woman needs.

And when she was done, she also sang the sleeping man's clothes off and crept into his bed with him, skin against skin. She returned the great drum, his heart, to his body, and that is how they awakened, wrapped one around the other, tangled from their night together, in another way now, a good and lasting way.

The people who cannot remember how she came to her first ill-fortune say she and the fisherman went away and were consistently well fed by the creatures she had known in her life underwater. The people say that it is true and that is all they know.

