

Kristin Robertson

Hyoid Bone

Lonely versus *lonesome*,
seeking a companion or pitifully forlorn,
distinguished at the point of ossification,
which is adolescence, when the human body's
only bone not connected to another
hardens at the neck's midline.

Evolved from the fish, its gill arches,
this horseshoe behind the tongue helps us
speak when it itself has no one to listen —
omega fallen behind the pack,
wolf pup vulnerable to bears.

Last night they found the runaway,
her young body in a split-leather backseat,
miles from the lightning flash
of her truck stop. The only way
to fracture the body's hyoid,
forsaken ϵ , is to strangle it.