

A Ship of Bones

by Harris Tobias

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Lay the old man down, lay him down
His wretched bones are dry and worn
Give the ferryman a coin or
Let the old man drown
Those brittle bones won't walk again
Lay him down, lay him down
Make paddles of his hands
Use his skull to bail
Rig his thigh bones for a mast
And his skin to make a sail
Weave his hair for cordage
Use his knuckle bones for dice
Kiss him once upon the lips
And kiss his eyelids twice
Let him go, let him go
He's done with life

Lay him down, lay him down
The old man's gone ahead
To that strange shore
Where the beach is dark
Where the dead are moored
Let him go, lay him down
He cannot harm us anymore

