



Fortune's Bones: The Manumission Requiem (Coretta Scott King Author Honor Books)

Marilyn Nelson

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There is a skeleton in the Mattatuck Museum in Connecticut. It has been in the town for over 200 years. In 1996, community members decided to find out what they could about it. Historians discovered that the bones were those of a slave name Fortune, who was owned by a local doctor. After Fortune's death, the doctor rendered the bones. Further research revealed that Fortune had married, had fathered four children, and had been baptized later in life. His bones suggest that after a life of arduous labor, he died in 1798 at about the age of 60. Merilyn Nelson wrote *The Manumission Requiem* to commemorate Fortune's life. Detailed notes and archival photographs enhance the reader's appreciation of the poem.

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