

Bone Play (2022)

II.I Towards a New Osteometric Method

(The Oracle enters and approaches the fire. She drapes a blanket over Iris. She sits by the fire and throws a bone in, the silks appear, leaving behind The Scientist, carrying a cardboard file box. She places it down on one of the benches and removes the lid. As she does, a type of low soft static starts to filter through the space, almost imperceptibly. The Scientist removes a clear plastic bag of bones from the box, puts on a pair of latex gloves, and starts removing bones, laying them out as a skeleton on the table. After she inspects the skull she places it down and begins to write on a clipboard. As she finishes a voice booms overhead. The table shakes.)

THE GHOST

What have you written?!

THE SCIENTIST

(startled, she screams, then asks) What?

THE GHOST

What did you write?

THE SCIENTIST

I- uh- I-

THE GHOST

What the fuck did you just write?

THE SCIENTIST

uh- um- sorry *(grabbing clipboard and reading it off)* 37 year old female/ 5'6"-

THE GHOST

WRONG! *(the table shakes again)*

THE SCIENTIST

What?

THE GHOST

WRONG!

THE SCIENTIST

I- I don't understand um- *(she gets up and begins to try to leave.*
We hear a loud slam. She steps and falls back)

THE GHOST

CORRECT IT!

THE SCIENTIST

I- Who are you? What do you want?

THE GHOST

I am the one who knows of these bones.

THE SCIENTIST

With all due respect, what the fuck does that mean?

THE GHOST

You do not know of these bones.

THE SCIENTIST

What does that mean!

THE GHOST

You are making statements on the nature of these bones without proper knowledge of them.

THE SCIENTIST

No, I am drawing scientific conclusions about the person these bones belonged to based on evidence.

THE GHOST

Are you not your bones?

THE SCIENTIST

What?

THE GHOST

You suggested these bones belonged to a person. Are you not your bones? They are your possession?

THE SCIENTIST

What kind of question is that?

THE GHOST

You're right it's not really important, I digress,/ I know these

THE SCIENTIST

/ Look, I really need to get back to work.

THE GHOST

(harumphs) some scientist you are.

THE SCIENTIST

(visibly trying to ignore the voice; she returns to her clipboard scribbles down some more notes, inspects the skeleton once more. For a while it seems the voice has given up. then...)

THE GHOST

I just don't see why someone supposedly dedicated to scientific pursuits wouldn't care if their findings were wrong.

THE SCIENTIST

Okay okay. Fine, you tell me what's wrong about this.

THE GHOST

Mhmmmm okay.

THE SCIENTIST

This skeleton, according to the most advanced carbon dating we have, is dated to be around 11,000 years old. *(she pauses and looks up)*

THE GHOST

Mhhmmmm...

THE SCIENTIST

It was unearthed in the North American continent around 40.75 north south and -11.82 east west, suggesting that whoever this was, was a resident of the then State of Pennsylvania...

THE GHOST

Mhmmmm.

THE SCIENTIST

She has a stature of about 5'6"

THE GHOST

Wrong!

THE SCIENTIST

No! Literally the length of the skeleton from toes to skull is 5 feet and 6 inches, almost exactly!

THE GHOST

That is not what is incorrect.

THE SCIENTIST

I- I don't see what you're trying to get at.

THE GHOST

You seem so certain these bones use she/her pronouns, that's all I'm saying.

THE SCIENTIST

I- *(visibly giving up at the realization)* Are you upset with me for assuming the gender of a skeleton.

THE GHOST

I'm gravely disappointed that I had to lay it out for you like that.

THE SCIENTIST

Who the fuck are you!?

THE GHOST

I told you. I am the one who knows of these bones.

THE SCIENTIST

But what does that mean?! How do you know of the bones?

THE GHOST

It's me!

THE SCIENTIST

It's you?

THE GHOST

Yes.

THE SCIENTIST

So you're telling me you're a ghost. You're the ghost of this person.

THE GHOST

There's that scientific reasoning! *(playfully)* OooOooooOooOo
(the table shakes as they make ghost noises)

THE SCIENTIST

(overwhelmed) I don't know what to do with this.

THE GHOST

Think about it, you have an opportunity so few scientists in your field have! You get the chance to fact check your own findings with the subject! Like, I just prevented you from making a huge mistake.

THE SCIENTIST

Okay sure, hypothetically that's a great idea but what evidence do I provide to my peers to suggest to them that you weren't a cisgender woman? I can't publish in a journal saying "And then the ghost of this person came to me and told me—" sorry, what pronouns do you use?

THE GHOST

They/ them, thank you for asking.

THE SCIENTIST

"And told me they used they/ them pronouns." There is simply no way for me to publish my findings about your bones without gendering you.

THE GHOST

Hmmmm. That is certainly a pickle.

THE SCIENTIST

(gestures an affirmation)

THE GHOST

Then don't.

The Scientist:

Don't what?

THE GHOST

Don't publish your findings.

THE SCIENTIST

Wha- no! I've worked my ass off for the chance to get my foot in the door of golden anthropocene studies and your bones are the

find of lifetime. I can suggest your sex was female and not make definitive statements about your identity, but that's all I can promise.

THE GHOST

You'd really do that?

THE SCIENTIST

Sure I guess.

THE GHOST

You'd study my skeleton, profit off of it, gain fame and fortune, all without giving me the respect of honoring my identity? My reality?

THE SCIENTIST

Well, no that's not what it's about.

THE GHOST

I will haunt the fuck out of you.

THE SCIENTIST

Oh and you're not right now?

THE GHOST

No, no. This is me haunting my own bones to ensure I'm represented correctly. I will haunt the fuck out of *you* if you do this.

THE SCIENTIST

I- Is that a threat?!

THE GHOST

Yes.

THE SCIENTIST

(searching for words) I do not negotiate with terrorists.

(booming laughter; the table shakes continuously)

THE SCIENTIST

Stop it! Stop it! Leave me alone!

THE GHOST

Put my bones back in the box.

*(The woman picks up her clipboard defiantly, she begins to write some more, **The Oracle** stokes the fire slowly, and the silks move at a similar pace, slowly encroaching on **The Scientist** who, once she notices them says)*

THE SCIENTIST

What-? I- What are you-?

*(The silks consume her and sweep her away, **the Oracle** throws another bone into the fire, as the silks come in)*

The Bloop (2022)

Scene 8

The back of the bus, again.

***The Prophet** emerges, rubbing her temples as she sits next to **Eliza** where **The Pants** have just left.*

The Prophet I don't get why people can't just say what they mean. If I have to see another fucking divorce I'm gonna crack my skull open and copy the separation papers in my own damn blood on the windows.

She holds out an embroidery hoop.

Look what I did while you were embarrassing yourself.

Eliza Huh. So that's how you spend your time here. Arts and crafts.

The Prophet Better than being transphobic.

Eliza What?

I-

I didn't mean that, it just came out that way, I wasn't asking about their gender.

The Prophet Bold of you to assume The Pants uses they/ them pronouns to refer to Pantself.

Eliza What do you want?

The Prophet To make you uncomfortable.

Eliza Seriously?

Pause.

Pause.

Pause.

Why did you say I wasn't gay?

The Prophet Why are you asking?

Eliza Because I am.

The Prophet If you say so.

Eliza Because...

Because I've put a lot of effort into making sure that other gay people know I'm queer.

The Prophet What makes you think I'm gay?

Eliza You just kinda seem like it.

The Prophet You also said I dress like a tradwife, and I might not know exactly what that is, but I'm not an idiot.

So what's up with that.

Eliza I'm sorry, I was pissed off.

The Prophet Oh don't worry, the words you say do not affect me. But I'm still struggling to see what you being pissed off has to do with me.

Eliza You said I wasn't gay.

The Prophet No I didn't.

Eliza Yes you did. You did it again literally a second ago.

The Prophet When did I say that?

Eliza I said "I'm gay".

And you said "if you say so".

The Prophet Yeah. I said if you say so. I didn't say you weren't gay I literally said if you say you're gay then you are.

Eliza What the fuck/ that is entirely-

The Prophet /Look argue all you want my logic is sound.

Listen kid, you're exactly the type of queer that I hate. That all of us hate.

Your community despises you.

Eliza What? Wait what gives /you the power-

The Prophet /Just listen for once in your miserable life okay?

We talk shit about you and everyone like you behind your back. We get annoyed when we see the shit you post on the internet, we roll our eyes when you show up to rallies, and then when said rallies are over we go to bars together to drink away our embarrassment over having to call you 'one of us'.

Little GSA gays like you, who are so fresh out of the closet you've still got tags on your clothes, are the bane of any self-respecting queer's existence.

Eliza I've been/ out for two-

The Prophet /ah ah ah. I said listen.

You're entire life centers around these labels you've latched onto, and making sure you're flashing them to anyone and everyone who can read.

And it's okay, it's okay that you're like this because in like two or three years, maybe one if you're lucky, you'll grow up. And then you'll join us at the bars and shit on all the fresh little fags.

But for now, I don't care if you're lesbian or homoromohemidemisemiquaver, tell me your pronouns and if I wanted to fuck you I'd ask.

Pause.

Eliza Can I talk now?

The Prophet You could talk whenever you wanted to.

Eliza You told me to listen.

The Prophet Yeah, but there was nothing stopping you from talking anyway.

Eliza It's important to me that I'm gay-

The Prophet Oh trust me honey I know.

Eliza Because until I found the words for it, I felt broken.

And maybe it didn't have anything to do with us all being gay, maybe it was more about that, about us having experienced being *queer*.

But I don't think you hate us. Because it's like you said, you used to be us. You just hate yourself.

The Prophet Yeah okay Foucoult. Whatever makes you feel better.

Eliza I think you've been alone on this bus for too long.

Eliza leans towards The Prophet, bringing her hand up to her cheek.

At the contact, The Prophet doubles over and screams in pain. Eliza's entire body stiffens and her eyes grow wide as they share in a vision.

After just a second The Prophet jerks out of the vision, falling back while Eliza remains calm, staring into nothing.

The Prophet Oh my God! A piss kink?! Really!?

Eliza What was that? How did I see that?

The Prophet A fucking nightmare is what it was Jesus christ!

Eliza Was that my future?

The Prophet Fuck I hope not. If just for the sake of that other woman dear God in heaven.

Eliza I have to get off this bus.

Roadkill Bambi (2024)

The lights come back up on Portia and Alison sitting in the car.

The sun has set a good bit more (from the last loop).

Portia and eat each other.

-is that deer eat birds sometimes.

Portia pulls out a cigarette, rolls the window down, and lights it.

Alison Why are you doing that?

Portia Cause the smoke bothers you in a confined space.

Alison No.

Portia What.

Alison I mean yes but no I meant like, you're doing like this thing where you're finishing my sentences for me but not like how you usually do.

Portia Like how I usually do?

Alison Yeah...

Portia Oh.

Sorry.

Alison No it's okay—

Portia No— no it's not it's condescending and rude.

Portia You deserve better than that.

Alison

Thanks?

Portia I'm sorry.

I haven't been the partner you deserve and I realized it this weekend watching May and Lindsey with each other. I want to do better for you, I want that, I want what they have.

Alison

Portia It's okay you don't have to say anything.

Alison

No. I guess— I guess we should have this conversation now. Portia I— I've been doing a lot of thinking. And. Uh. I think—

The thing is, I love you—

Portia Just say whatever it is.

Alison — so what we think of as herbivores will actually start to jump across the food chain and eat each other.

Yeah! Exactly! And the craziest part is that it's not frequently...

Alison Well... sometimes—
But that's not what—

Alison I am just wondering where you would be... with the idea of opening up our relationship.

Portia

Alison You don't have to have an answer
right now I- I didn't want
to bring this up this weekend-

Like fucking other people

Alison Like acknowledging that human love is complex and varied and different between
different people.

Portia But you mean we have sex with other people.

Alison Yeah

Portia But we're still a couple though.

Alison Yes!

Portia I'm still... yours?

Alison Yeah of course!

Just not... only.

Portia To clarify.

Portia puts out the cigarette and rolls the window up.

You mean just sex with other people? Or...

Alison Well, I don't know that there's such a thing as "just sex" -

Portia How long have you wanted this?

Alison Um, I've been curious about it for a while.

I brought it up in therapy a couple of months ago-

Portia and Jed thinks it's a good idea?

Alison He thinks it's worth trying if I want to.

And I want to.

Portia I'm sorry...

Alison Okay.

Portia No Alison I am *sorry*. I'm sorry, I know I haven't always been good at holding space for
you-

Alison Portia it's not that.

Portia But I can do better! I want to be better I said so but you have to tell me when things are
going wrong-

Alison Nothing is going wrong Portia it's not you!

Portia How is it not me? How can it not be something about me not being enough to meet your needs?

Cause I get that I can't be the person who meets *all* your needs and friends are important and healthy but for you to say— For you to say you want to have *romantic* relationships with *other* people?

Alison There's more to it than just—
I don't know I can't—!
I don't know how to explain it.
I love you.

I love you. I do.

Portia But...

Alison And I also... I also think I can love other people.

Portia in the same way.

Alison In a different way! In incredibly individual vastly different ways!

Portia But which are also romantic.

Alison Which are also romantic.

Yes.

Portia

Alison

Portia I thought we were gonna get married.

And I thought—

we were gonna foster this little kid with chapped lips and an ~incomprehensibly~ traumatic history.

but we would be good to them.

and then they would love us and you would be mom and I'd be mama.

Portia begins to lose herself in it.

And we would adopt them— and they'd be in contact with their birth family— and that would be hard! But it'd be in an actually really healthy way so it wouldn't be problematic or anything.

And you would drive them to soccer practices and schmooze with all the other neighborhood parents and I'd be the weird one who'd teach them how to compost and set up climbing bean poles...

And we'd have these summer evenings in the garden where I'd have a glass of wine and you'd have bourbon and you'd sit on the porch and read us snippets of poetry from the book you were reading while we got muddled. And after bath time we'd tuck them into bed, and I'd sing them a

lullaby and then you and I would be so. bone. tired. we'd collapse on the couch to watch tv but then I'd just wind up playing with your hair while you fell asleep in my lap.

We were gonna be tan!

And peeling.

And content— not even happy necessarily. Just content.

Alison I never said I wanted any of that.

Portia I know.

I assumed.

Alison

Portia

I'm gonna die.

Purple begins to trickle in from the edges of the stage.

Alison Portia. I'm sorry.

Portia No I mean I'm going to die imminently. I don't know *exactly* when or exactly how but some point probably in the next hour I'm going to die.

Alison This doesn't have to be the end of the world.

Portia Oh but it is.

Just over and over.

Sometimes it takes a little longer. Sometimes you tell me you love me before it ends other times you scream at me.

Sometimes I have time to see the fear hit you when you realize you can't avoid the deer.

I'm not being dramatic.

I'm not being dramatic!

Alison Please Portia.

Portia seriously I appreciate the poetics but you're being dramatic.

This isn't easy for me either. This isn't how I wanted this to happen I wish—

Maybe that's not the right word.

You know— I went over this conversation so many times in my head.

I wish there were a version that ended differently.

Alison looks over at Portia. Then back at the road. Then Portia for a little longer.

Portia you should probably keep your eyes on the road.

Alison I am just trying to see how you are, you don't have to be mean—

Alison looks back at the road, she sees something in front of them.

Oh my god!

She swerves. They clip the obstacle. The car spins out. Alison successfully skids it to a stop horizontally in the road.

—Holy fuck the universe hates me.

Portia *(laughs)* this is soooo unfair!!!!

I have to know this now forever! For the rest of *eternity* I have to know this about you.

Alison I— what? What the fuck? How did you—

Portia I don't even get to pretend there was a future on the other side of this.

Alison I don't. I don't even know what's going on.

Portia Although? ... we're not dead yet...

Alison I— I want to go home.

She goes to start the car. It won't turn over.

Damn.

She looks out the driver's side window as headlights grow quickly on her face.

Fuck!

A truck horn.

Both women jolt to the side. Portia's head smashing against the passenger side window.

The lights cut out.

A silhouetted Stag head flashes large and looming behind the car.

Swallow song.

