

Cary's Bone

Cary Grant in Thinking Man pose on a scaffold underneath an incomplete Brontosaurus. His dress: a long, flowing white lab coat worn as a fashionable wrap, concealing his suit. His problem: he needs the intercostal clavicle to make the dinosaur whole. The intercostal clavicle: a bone. Cary Grant, cloaked in dress, needs a bone for completion.

It's 1938 and the film is *Bringing Up Baby*. The glamorous leading man: Grant. The robust leading woman: Hepburn. Not the chic Hepburn. But the one whose signature masculine-yet-casual style broke Hollywood's dress code time and again: Katharine. The plot: to get Cary from glamorous to robust. He can't do it on his own, he needs Katharine, and she has to help him find his bone.

(Cary's bone arrives in mail. Once it is in his hand he does not release it until he showers. He carries it while he walks, while he shops, while he drives. He is only complete with his bone. He is only a man with his bone. With his bone he is complete. With his bone he is a man.)

Katharine, dressed in a simple white bathrobe with Roman typeface initials embroidered on left sleeve, finds the intercostal clavicle wrapped in narrow box on bed in an adjoining room to where Cary is showering. A conversation through walls.

What's inside the box?

The intercostal clavicle of a Brontosaurus.

Ah, it's just an old bone.

Yes, it is *just an old bone*. Now please hand me my clothes and go away.

She has sent his suit to be washed and pressed. He begs her not to leave him here like this. Like this as naked. Like this as incomplete. Like this as a man who is not a man without a suit, without a woman, without a bone.

(A silhouette of Cary dressing)

Cary enters shot wrapped tightly in a long, flowing, marabou-trimmed robe. He follows

Katharine into her bathroom, he wants her to help him dress. He needs clothes. He can't dress himself. At least not in anything besides frilly negligee. He can't dress himself in anything besides frilly negligee because he is not yet a man. He is not yet a man because he is without woman, without his bone. He has to be defined. To be defined, as a man, he must have woman, must have bone.

(Katharine ignores his request to help him find clothes)

Cary capers throughout home searching for clothes. He is interrupted by a buzz at the door. It is Mrs. Random, Katharine's aunt, and owner of the home he is in. This is their first time meeting:

Mrs. Random: Well who are you?

Cary: I don't know. I'm not quite myself today.

Mrs. Random: Well, you look perfectly idiotic in those clothes.

Cary: These aren't my clothes.

Mrs. Random: Well, where are your clothes?

Cary: I've lost my clothes!

Mrs. Random: But why are you wearing *these* clothes?

Cary (jumping up and flailing his arms): Because I just went *gay* all of a sudden!

Katharine tells her aunt Cary is insane, suffering from a nervous breakdown, she tells her his name is David Bone, and that he's the only man she ever loved. She is in love with a man named Bone. A man whose name is Huxley not Bone. A man without an identity. A man whose identity can only be created by a woman, by a bone.

It's 1938 and during the height of the Motion Picture Production Code crackdowns. But it was before *gay* meant *gay*, when it meant *happy* (when did it *stop* meaning happy?) The original lines for Cary's response to "But why are you wearing *these* clothes" are as follows: "I...I suppose you think it's odd, my wearing this. I realize it looks odd...I don't usually...I mean, I don't own one of these." He ad-libbed. He was part of the Hollywood elite, he knew the slang. The general audience still thought it meant happy. The Production Code still thought it meant happy. Was this when it stopped meaning happy? When it was used as

slang for the first time in a motion picture? When it was used in conjunction with insane? Is this when gay went from happy to disabled?

(Cary loses his bone. A dog snatched it off the bed and buried it somewhere in a plot of 26 acres. A series of misadventures ensues while searching for his bone. Of course, Katherine helps him search. He has to be defined. He has to be defined as a man. To be defined as a man, he needs a woman, he needs a bone, he needs a woman to help find his bone. The bone is presumed lost. Cary falls out of Katharine's world. He can't be defined as a man without his bone. Without his bone he is no use to her as he is not a man.)

Cary Grant in Thinking Man pose on a scaffold underneath an incomplete Brontosaurus. His dress: a long, flowing white lab coat worn as a fashionable wrap, concealing his suit. His problem: he needs the intercostal clavicle to make himself whole. The intercostal clavicle: the traditional masculine identity. Enter Katherine, with bone.

(He can now be defined as a man. A woman has found his bone. He tells he loves her.)