

Close to the Bone

by Travis Alabanza

In thousands of years when they dig us all up
After we have truly gone and ruined it all
They will place all our bones in a pile
Except mine.

Mine will be placed in a box, just to the left
It will be in a box labelled male, for bones that are distinguishably male

They will say that they can tell by my bones that the way I walked, the way I
breathed, the way I shook my head, the way I spoke, the way I dotted my I's and
crossed my T's, the way I sipped my juice, the way I had sex, the way I asked for
help, the way I hugged my friends, the way I walked outside, the way I waited for
the bus, the way I called for attention, the way I said no, the way I dressed, the
way I tried to love, the way I took drugs, the way I tweeted, the way I had written,
the way I had escaped, the way I had erased, the way I had screamed, the way I
wished for more, the way I surrendered, the way I crumbled,
The way that my bones lay there,
That I was male.

That just from one glance at my left to remain pile of bones I had testosterone
coursing through any possible part of my body

That they were always right
That these bones were most definitely, categorically, without a doubt, with
much
surety,
They were male.
And I will not be able to say anything
Because it will just be my bones
I cannot argue back at them anymore
For they are just my bones.
But if you could do one last thing for me,
Please leave this note next to my bones and let it say clearly:

"If it has been thousands of years and you are still trying to gender me,
I am glad I am not here.
Because I could not withstand another slow death that gender brings.
I am sorry you are still clinging male to me
I am sorry you can still not see possibility beyond projections
I had hoped rebuilding after fires and floods
You would leave behind all the things that were not working
But I am gone.
and gender is not.
So clearly you have got this all wrong."