

## **BONE NOVEMBER by Karen Hartman**

Unpublished

*Georgia O'Keeffe. A great artist, old becoming ancient. She paints alone in her studio in New Mexico. Top of the play.*

### GEORGIA

1946. I was painting bones. Bones and blue. I folded up my two-dimensional frame and settled into wet weather. I registered. I repaid. I catalogued his truths. I organized three hundred photographic images that once were myself.

Alfred had sorted and framed for other people. He left thousands of his own pieces, unmarked boxes, no sense of era, proportion, or shape. I served our bond three years. I finished the task. I moved to the house in my desert and rendered bones.

Slowly, then fast, I lost interest in what rots. I once gathered flowers, was loyal to bloom, refused visitors during the reign of each plucked subject. I turned to shells, bones, rocks. I have a soft spot for rock.

A pelvis is a bowl. A pelvis in the desert is a bowl of nothing, and the bowl of nothing is enough. Bone again, hollow, what's left after time.

A pelvis is a bowl with no bottom. If you wish this bowl to hold, it will fail. A pelvis is a bowl not for holding, but seeing, seeing hollow, seeing sky. A pelvic bowl lacks flesh, sensation, impulse, reproductive potential, tenderness, viscera, or attachment. Very lively. I paint them for years.

A cloud is a pocket of water. A cloud is between form. A cloud is not liquid or gas. A cloud belongs to Lake George, eastern skies. For all my summers there, I painted not much. I stretched, my body. I showed. That was recorded.

Here are cloudless days, foregrounded only by bones. What's right in front, what's far beyond. I lack interest in middle ground.

A cloud from an airplane window is a series, a flat group of form. From an airplane window a cloud is a lily on water; horizon from an airplane window is lung-colored, lip-colored, against a sharp blue edge. A cloud from an airplane window is ninety-six inches high and two hundred eighty-eight inches wide.

The day the center dropped I was standing at a table, watching hills change color, my red hills with a crevasse between – my red hills that I was rendering gold. I parked myself before these hills at age fifty and did not avert my gaze. That day, no crevasse, parts of hills separated by a dark swath, ladders of hills split as if by a door – I had been dropping doors into paintings for years, sharp-shadowed oblongs, dimension struck flat – a door dropped across my red hill-halves. Two years ago, 1971.

(Something is wrong with the painting. She is losing her sight)

Georgia (Cont.)

I see periphery. I won't paint that.

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*You are welcome to perform this monologue for free!*

*You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).*

*Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH*

[www.karenhartman.org](http://www.karenhartman.org)