

Pigeonhole Episode 06

[bright ambient music]

Introduction

CHORUS OF VOICES: Pigeonholed, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole, pigeonhole.

[low, deep rumbling slowly rises in pitch]

GRANT MILLER: When I was a kid—

[rumbling suddenly stops]

Have I not told you this?

[rumbling picks up, continues to rise in pitch]

When I was a kid, when I grew up, I wanted to either be a snowman or the moon.

[rumbling gets higher pitch, echoing water droplets pouring]

The thing is, the snowman position was more of a seasonal gig. [laughing] And I just figured that being the moon might be a little bit more sustainable. It really eclipsed the snowman opportunities, you know, as far as what I [chuckles] you know, what I thought would be just something a little bit more tidal.

[distorted, peaceful electronica fades in as rumbling and water fade away]

What I remember saying was that when I grow up I want to be the moon. My dad used to put on an inauthentic accent and say, [fake Russian-like accent] “Maybe one day you grow up to be President.” And...there was a lot of talk about what my sister’s jobs would be, like maybe a doctor. I don’t think she ever wanted to be a doctor. Or a translator.

It never really occurred to me that I would have a professional existence, let alone what it would be.

Well, I don’t remember every seeing anybody like me working in a job. So, it never really occurred to me what I could be. And I think that there’s a certain degree to which I just didn’t think that I could ever have a job.

Because of how discouraging it was for most people to try and become an actor, I got the sense that, as a disabled performer, it would be a non-starter as a career. And I didn’t really want to play the sort of token evil character, the token disabled character. So, I didn’t really pursue professional acting.

[music fades gently away]

Hmm. I...when I wanted to be the moon, these were a few of the qualifications that I thought were being the moon.

[music returns]

One was floating around, and the other was being in space. I think those were two qualifications that really stood out to me about being the moon. But I also don't think I really knew that much about the moon.

[running footsteps crunching on snow run and then jump and land; wet snowballs being tossed and crashing into snow]

You know, I think that the snowman had a certain appeal. There was a sort of community, [children laugh] people coming together to build the snowman. And I just liked that idea of bringing people together.

[upbeat electronica fades in, water pouring]

I sort of left the snowman course, I think, really because you know, you just stand there all day, just kind of waiting to melt. I like to move a little bit more.

[dripping water stops, music remains]

Well, some snowmen have smiles that are, you know, put on with coals, but not the snowmen I knew. Most of them just had noses. [laughs without restraint]

I have said that I am a world-maker, like that's a part of my performance work [rumbling re-enters] is to create worlds. And so, perhaps in some way, rather than becoming the moon, I am making moons.

[rumbling rises in pitch then fades away, music continues softly]

[bright ambient music]

Wrap-up

Every episode is transcribed. Links, guest info, and transcripts are all at whoamitostopit.com, my disability arts blog. I'm Cheryl, and...

TWO VOICES: this is Pigeonhole.

CHERYL: Pigeonhole: Don't sit where society puts you.

[bright ambient music]