

# A man named Scott Yarbrough talks to a man with a name tag reading “Scott” at a Jamba Juice

He proceeded to tell a story of a time he visited England on a school trip. It was during his ninth grade year. At the time he was attending a private school, on scholarship, in the northern half of California. The school went all the way from junior high to high school, and those that were more well off, or adventurous, or both, attended the school starting in the sixth grade. This made up the majority of the student body, and as a result, if you didn't go to the school starting in the sixth grade you wouldn't be there when the culture and community was established. One would have to perform being rather outgoing to find a place within the existing culture, or so Scott, the employee, thought. He was neither very outgoing, nor good at pretending to be outgoing, and so at the onset of this trip to England he was already a slight out-cast in the group.

This disparity between himself and the group only grew throughout the trip, until by the midpoint, it was as if he was positioned on the far side of a lake, his classmates on the other end. Close enough that he could see, but far enough that they appeared very small, their individual characteristics, and humanity difficult to make out. In order to approach the group, and therefore make them appear normal sized again, he would not be able to walk in the direction that they were. Instead he would have to walk either to his direct left, or direct right. Intuitively not knowing that he was approaching the group, but intellectually knowing that he was making progress. Losing them between the trees while walking, their faces and body and even number even more difficult to make out then when still.

Scott realized something about the nature of England while there. It was maybe two thirds of the way through the trip, and they were visiting a museum of anthropology. He walked among the dimly lit artifacts, preferring less to study any individual piece, but more to try and get lost in the environment. Or at least appear lost to an on looker. Not the kind of lost that induces panic, concern, or fear, but the slow and methodical lost of a poet. It was in this state that a certain bone, or what appeared to be a bone, caught his eye. There were many bones in the museum, but this one was special. It related to the mystic. The bone knew some yet undiscovered fundamental truths about the nature of humanity, reality, the life of Scott. *How has the museum failed to realize the significance of this artifact?* Scott thought to himself. He pictured the museum staff, handling the bone with great care, placing it into the display case with white gloves.

They understood that this object was of great importance, because they handled it with such great care, but they didn't *know* that this object was of great importance. They didn't feel it, viscerally and intrinsic, like the

ivory tusks of some great beast. They knew not of its importance by any means personally. To them it was just another object. Another room. One that they would forget, by the time they get home to their girlfriends or spouses or roommates. He thought of the museum curator, director, boss of the employees with white gloves. They were the ones to mandate the care with which their subordinates handled this object. They too didn't understand the importance of this object, asking not for knowing of the object's importance, but for fear of the fragility with which they maintain their position in the world of the academics. For fear of their legacy.

Perhaps they recall the story, now mythology, of the museum curator at the Ashmolean Museum, also in England, who around 1755, seeing that it was getting rather musty, elected to toss the last remaining stuffed dodo into the fire. Destroying some of humanity's collective knowledge of the bird, and all of his personal legacy.

And so the museum curator, or director, or boss of the employees with white gloves, asked his subordinates to handle the object with care. Concerned more of the fate of their legacy and personal mythology than the object itself, and thus not realizing that this bone, currently on display, is not only mystical, but of a significance beyond the ability for any person to fully conceptualize.

The bone's first and true possessor likely understood something of its importance, although he or she knew this not in its presents, but its absence from the body. Fading into the background like breath or the thoughts that creep back during moments of stillness fade into the background of thought, distorted when recalled to the foreground, the transcendence from the subconscious to conscious fragmenting it, forcing the corners to be filled in with the unstoppable material of the mind that fills in all cracks.

The second and shortest possessor knew its importance in the manner most similar to Scott. An archaeologist, or anthropologist, working on a dig site, perhaps in the southern east Indies, or a receded valley in the French countryside. Scott pictured a woman in her late forties, cargo shorts and a hat that domesticated only some of her curly hair, dusty from the dig. She's careful and methodical with her work. It's a habit that she's cultivated intentionally, taking a certain pride in the monotony of the craft. One day something appears in the dirt. It's not the first time she's had a discovery or potential discovery, and it's just then edge of the fossil. Based off of looks alone it could be a rock, but our archaeologist, or anthropologist, knows that it's of importance. She feels the same magnetic pull to it that Scott does. Perhaps even more as she's made it her life's work to cultivate such moments.

As Scott looked at the bone from across the dimly lit room, he felt a connection to both these people, the ancient human and the archaeologist. Perhaps, Scott thought, they were one in the same, a single entity rediscovering itself years after the fact. Or perhaps they created each other. The archaeologist finding herself through the bone, and the bone finding itself through her.

He looked around the room. He was alone. He began a slow, methodical walk towards the artifact. Watching it grow as he moved towards it. Never taking his eyes away. As he approached the artifact became more clear, more real, but with it was the plaque, stating what it was to the museum goers. At once he could make it out.

Ulna (left)  
Homo Erectus  
10,000 BCE  
Cast Reproduction.

*Cast Reproduction*, thought Scott, *there's nothing so spectacular about that*. He looked at the bone again, trying to retain some of the mystic he had felt before. None. Gone. It was like waking from a dream, the thoughts and experiences so real one second, and then gone, their memory close, tangible, but ephemeral and impossible to attain. He took a step back, this time electing to watch the object as he moved in reverse. Fixated on it, waiting for it to change. When he got back to where he had been standing he reevaluated how he felt about the object, and to his surprise and bemusement, the mystic sense was back. It had transformed in his backwards gate to something magical, that had secrets yet undiscovered. *Perhaps this*, Scott thought, *was the reason the museum employees neglected to notice its magic*. It retained no magical characteristics up close. And he made a mental note to not judge them as harshly, and perhaps to not judge all museum employees as harshly in the future.

"I realized something about England that day" Scott said to his name counterpart across the counter, "I realized that the geometry of England, in the allegorical sense of the word, is non-Euclidean"

This, he went on to explain, had implications beyond the bone that became a fake bone that became a bone again. It had implications to his relationship with his classmates. In the United States, when he watched them from across the metaphoric lake, they were real and large and as knowable as himself. The only difference being that he knew himself and did not know his classmates, but while in England, with its non-Euclidean geometry, his classmates stood across that lake, not just far away, but smaller. Their faces hard to make out not because of their distance, but because in England they were in a way that's concrete, damn near impossible to move. Their humanity difficult to distinguish because from afar it was virtually nonexistent.

Of course, he could always walk around the lake, and meet up with them, but doing so wouldn't make their personhood more visible, it would make it more real.

And with this Scott's story was done.

It occurred to Scott Yarbrough that this man's story might be a lie. He got the sense that the Scott before him was a line in counterpoint to him. If Scott Yarbrough was the music of speech, then Scott of Jamba Juice was the music of poetic euphemisms, and tall tales. Falsehoods, made less to reveal a deeper truth, than for its ability to engage an audience. Scott of Jamba Juice could not be both a line in counterpoint and have told an honest story, so Scott Yarbrough decided that the story was a lie.