

Bar: I'm Lindsay Barbieri. I go by Bar and I'll say, maybe I'll start with the fact that I moved to Burlington about ten years ago for grad school. And then a couple of years later, actually, is when Meg came to Burlington for grad school.

Meg: That's true. My name's Meg. I came to Burlington also for grad school. All the way across the continent from Edmonton, Alberta. I came to the University of Vermont because it's one of the only places that studies ecological economics. So I ended up in this institute that they have there called the Gund Institute. And we were both studying there.

Bar: And then we fell in love. *[laughter]*

Meg: The first time we hung out we were trying to do handstands. You were trying to teach me how to do, I don't know, all kinds of funny things. But I think fast forward, I think both of us had a pretty hilarious, kind of small Burlington community entanglement of love affairs, not with each other, over the summer. And through that, we were spending a lot of time together and kind of debriefing our different...

Bar: Situations.

Meg: Situations with different lovers around town. And it's a small community...I don't know.

Bar: Yeah.

Meg: It's kind of funny. Because we do have so many like interests and people were already like, "You guys are so in love." And we're like, "What are you even talking about?"

Bar: "We're just best friends."

Meg: "We're just really good friends. We just wear the same clothes all the time. It's ironic, I don't know what's going on."

Bar: "We wake up at six in the morning and go rock climbing and have breakfast together."

Meg: Yeah, and sometimes we cuddle. But anyway, then kind of fall comes around and I think we were both feeling a little exhausted with our various forms of relating with other humans around town. And a really good way to kind of recenter yourself and put a lot of that aside and make some mental space and calm in all of the hubbub of being grad students or whatever, is turkey hunting. I think when I was like, "I really want to turkey hunt," and you were like "I want to turkey hunt!" It was also just a natural progression into, this is the next thing we're doing. But in that, it was the only activity we had that we were sitting still and quietly, I think. I'm not saying that's the reason we fell in love. Like, to you all out there, sit still and quietly with the person you want to be with and it'll happen. No...

Bar: But it gave space. It's...I think it's kind of funny because there's an arc within the story of our turkey hunting experience of, you know, when we first engaged with it, kind of not necessarily having had a lot of experience before and kind of coming, being like—we're bringing our snacks and our, you know, our papers and we're like laying out on a blanket and we're reading and we're snacking and we're eating and we're hunting. And then that was the early season, but then realizing through the arc of getting to know the turkeys and really sort of honing in on the turkeys and their pattern and it just being this really awesome space to share with another person.

Meg: Yeah. Because for folks out there who maybe aren't familiar with turkey hunting, when you go turkey hunting as wild balls full of energy, reading papers and eating snacks and doing handstands in a field, you don't actually see any turkey because they don't come out. I think the turkeys taught us. *[laughter]* Seriously, though, the turkeys taught us to be still and to maybe in that stillness, become more connected with our internal selves and maybe some feelings that we were feeling. And I think for a while we...well, I think we were really into turkeys. I'm like, maybe we were really into each other? But I think we were both really into the turkeys!

Bar: Yeah, I think it was definitely both.

Meg: Anyway, so then one day we're out at this party and we were kind of like, I was like drinking a little. I think I had like a mason jar of gin or something dumb like that. I don't know. And just kind of out of nowhere, because...also it might be relevant, maybe is not relevant, it's not the most relevant thing, but we were both dating men and hadn't really seriously dated other genders at that time, and we both identify as women. So I'm kind of like, a little tipsy and I'm like, "Bar, I feel really connected to you." And then Bar says, "Are we having a moment?" And then I was like, "Nooo!" And then I think I finished my glass. And then we didn't talk about it and we just went turkey hunting the next day.

Bar: I was just I was definitely not quite ready. I was still like, woah, I'm still like, you know, just feeling too energetically pulled in all of these directions and like, had been really appreciating the stillness and the attention, and maybe a little bit of...like not deluding myself, but definitely being like "We're just really into turkeys!" Like we get up every morning at four in the morning, we go out together. We sit together like we drive all over the state. But like in my mind, I was like, no, but "We're just really into turkey hunting." And I think I wasn't quite ready to be like, what does this really mean in this bigger space? Because I think it was this one relationship that felt so good and so stable that I wasn't ready to think about what that could mean if we took it out of like, this really specific turkey/human love affair.

Meg: But the turkeys, thankfully, had taught me a few things that I drew on their knowledges in order to feel okay with the Bar's outright denial of my love. I don't think it was a real denial, but the turkeys taught me patience. And also, honestly, I was just like, "Oh well, I mean, I still want to go turkey hunting and she's still like a very dear friend of mine." So it didn't really change our relationship whatsoever. But then we were due to attend a workshop on decolonial methods in Mexico. So we were essentially traveling to this workshop as part of our research and I was like,

this is funny. Maybe we should talk about this again because we're about to travel together, but also maybe it doesn't matter. Things are fine. But as it turned out, this whole time Bar had actually been wildly in love with me and was just waiting for a full moon to kiss me. *[laughter]* Don't correct me. *[laughter]*

Bar: Yup. We can let that stand.

Meg: Let the record show.

Bar: Let the record show.

Meg: She loved me the whole time I was just waiting for the right lunar alignment in order to ensure the success of that endeavor. No, I'm just joking. I don't know. *[laughter]*.

Bar: That's what happened. *[laughter]*. Yeah, I mean, not to...I think it could be as simple as that. But I do think that being in this space, which was again, like kind of going back to I think what I really love and appreciate about you is our many threads of entanglement from handstands and fun and performative adventures to like turkey hunting and intention and stillness and, you know, being, you know, connected in these really deep and rooted ways. And then also being colleagues and our sort of intellectual paths being so, aligned and intertwined. It's like the whole bundle. And so I think being in Mexico again, as Meg mentioned, we were there for a research workshop. And that was, yeah, there's something really awesome here in exploring what our relationship could be without all of these other socialized identities. Like, if we can kind of tear down those socialized identities then like, what is this? What do we have? What do we have is this really amazing relationship. And I think there was something...yeah of course I'm really sentimental and love following the phases of the moon for all sorts of things. And so it did so happen that the last day of the workshop was a full moon, the first moon in January, so it was the wolf moon. Yeah, culminating on the last day of it and we were about to return to Vermont and our lives. And it was the full moon and so I was like, "I can't, let this moment go!" So yeah,

Meg: The turkeys and the moon brought us together.