

**THE DOCTOR IS DEAD**

by é boylan

Episode Five--Transcript

## INTRO

### NARRATOR

Now.

*a chord*

Welcome, listener. Welcome to now. Now, you have chosen to hear *The Doctor is Dead*, a contemporary fantasy for queer imaginations.

*a chord*

Wherever “now” takes you, I invite you to stay, make yourself comfortable, and listen.

*Chime begins*

What you are about to hear is a story of entirely unfamiliar people who abandoned the familiar long ago. The story you are about to hear does not begin on the surface of our world, but far below, within the roots of our belonging. Here, the world is very much different, and yet painfully the same. But here, some extraordinary individuals have begun to Recall and Reveal a new beginning. It sounds like this.

Episode 5: between them

V.      **between them**

*back in the cold room  
with the Old Things  
some hours later, the record reactivates:*

NIGHTINGALE

Just because you see an end, doesn't mean there isn't more to see

ROOK

I don't get why you're upset about this—isn't it good news? We wanted answers, now/we have answers.

NIGHTINGALE

This is a complication, not an answer

ROOK

Tell me if I'm wrong—you heard an imprint of a funeral. You heard about the doctor who died.

NIGHTINGALE

I didn't just hear about/them, I heard from their coffin...

ROOK

He died, a community fell apart, folks who depended on him, depended on the guy who gave them everything. He was all the answers, until he died and couldn't answer anymore. No one took up his office, not even his own kid. From what I see, the Doctor ended with the man who died. And that's it. This coffin is proof—Swallow will be thrilled!

NIGHTINGALE

Mark: Please strike personal comments on the director/ from the record.

ROOK

Oh, come on. I am describing the brief. That's our job—to make the director happy! I'm happy! I'm happy we got what we wanted.

NIGHTINGALE

Rook, when you first opened the coffin, you thought, you, you, you thought you saw something else

ROOK

I was just describing the

NIGHTINGALE

You saw something beneath the surface, something moving, the root of a tree?

ROOK

I was Revealing the imprint of an ending, sometimes/imprints change while you look at them...

NIGHTINGALE

And as you described this, I suddenly couldn't hear anything. The sound stopped. No more imprint.

ROOK

Yeah, it ended.

NIGHTINGALE

No, no, not ended. Transformed.

ROOK

okay

NIGHTINGALE

The silence isn't an ending.

ROOK

Okay

NIGHTINGALE

The emptiness isn't, it isn't, it isn't an ending. It's the space between the life someone lived and something after the life. Between something we know and something we don't...

ROOK

Between...huh.

I'll have to write that down later, you're like a poet/sometimes

NIGHTINGALE

Rook.

ROOK

I mean, it doesn't really affect our narrative, but it's interesting.

Right now, I mostly care about the Before and After. That's the only record we can sing.

NIGHTINGALE

Maybe, but only the coffin knows for sure.

ROOK

The coffin doesn't know. It's just a thing.

NIGHTINGALE

But it carries knowing. When the Doctor died, something passed through this wood. Something, it it began here. And if it's as simple as you say, why is the body missing?

ROOK

Okay.

NIGHTINGALE

Do you see my point?

ROOK

I can barely see your face

NIGHTINGALE

Rook

ROOK

No, I get it. Totally. Due diligence. “Dispel all doubt.” I’ve read the handbook

NIGHTINGALE

Mark: please amend Rook’s previous remarks regarding report conclusions. We will instead continue to collect observations, and, um

ROOK

Why don’t you try,  
you know

NIGHTINGALE

What?

ROOK

Now that it’s open, you might as well try feeling inside for yourself

NIGHTINGALE

Oh

ROOK

You could, if you’re comfortable with that

NIGHTINGALE

I don’t, I don’t know. Maybe.

ROOK

NIGHTINGALE

Look, if we’re going to pursue every possibility  
if we’re going to look for a beginning  
we might as well exhaust any variables

from our previous attempts

Right

I mean

your hands are tools, right?

And we still don’t know how they might amplify  
something or,

Right

Yeah

you know what I mean?

NIGHTINGALE

Yeah, yeah, I—

I don’t mean to sound stubborn when I say

ROOK

You're principled. You know more about this room, you know more about the Old Things here than anyone. And you definitely know it's a risk to touch something for too long, or too often

NIGHTINGALE

Yes

ROOK

And you're good at avoiding risk

NIGHTINGALE

Yes

ROOK

But we don't have time to play it safe. I respect you. And I respectfully suggest you try making contact again.

NIGHTINGALE

it's just that

ROOK

As your partner

NIGHTINGALE

it's just that

ROOK

I see you

*turns on flashlight*

NIGHTINGALE

Please, could you turn off the

ROOK

Nightingale

NIGHTINGALE

What

ROOK

Trust me

NIGHTINGALE

I

ROOK

You're going to breathe in this moment and you're going to trust me, okay?

NIGHTINGALE

I don't  
Could you turn that flashlight away from me, I don't

ROOK

I can see

NIGHTINGALE

I don't know

ROOK

I can see you, Nightingale. I can see you in this moment and in the next

NIGHTINGALE

in the  
in the next/I

ROOK

I can see you trusting me. You've already begun to trust me.

NIGHTINGALE

That's not how things begin./I don't hear it.

ROOK

I'm the one who sees what's coming  
and that means I see all possible endings in you.

NIGHTINGALE

But, uh, but it might

ROOK

It might. And we won't be able change that.  
But right now, I'd like you to feel inside this coffin.  
Will you do that for me?

NIGHTINGALE

Okay.

ROOK

Thank you, Nightingale.

NIGHTINGALE

Okay, I. But.  
Didn't we  
Didn't we say this all before?

ROOK

There's no "before." Only now.

NIGHTINGALE

The light, before, you used the light, you made me

ROOK

Now.

NIGHTINGALE

Now, I. Now I. uh.

Mark: I approach the coffin, now. It.

It feels like a Revelation. An ending. You want to Reveal an ending in me, Rook, but I. There's something more than that. The wood is no longer loud, I can bring, my gloves removed, I bring my fingers close, almost touching the surface as I. as I. as I agree to the possibility of trusting you. The way you say. I, I, I do trust you.

But.

ROOK

Nightingale. Don't stop.

NIGHTINGALE

Mark: I bring my fingers to the surface inside. It feels, as before, smooth. And I. There's something there. Here. Not entirely gone.

A, a vibration.

ROOK

Really?

NIGHTINGALE

It is low it is, it is hidden away but. But, like.

Mark: I feel a sound that wants to be heard but the sound is too low to hear

ROOK

You can hear the sound

NIGHTINGALE

I can feel it. Not hear it. It passes through my

ROOK

Okay.

NIGHTINGALE

through my fingertips.

ROOK

Okay.



NIGHTINGALE

You say I trust you.

ROOK

You do. It's okay to trust me.

NIGHTINGALE

No, I mean. You say I do. You only say what you can see. What I can't see.  
That isn't trust, it's faith.

ROOK

Nightingale, please. Describe the vibration.

NIGHTINGALE

You're asking me for faith.

ROOK

What does the vibration feel like?

NIGHTINGALE

It feels, this isn't. This isn't me. The voice that passes through me.

ROOK

Nightingale

NIGHTINGALE

It isn't me, it's something I Recall

ROOK

Nightingale, you're shaking./Mark: Nightingale's body is shaking.

NIGHTINGALE

It isn't me, it's not my voice, but I Recall a voice who shares this feeling with me. Neither of us like being manipulated.

ROOK

I'm not

NIGHTINGALE

You can't see my trust like you Reveal an ending  
You can't just tell/me to

ROOK

I'm only asking

NIGHTINGALE

No

ROOK

I'm only asking us to end petty conflict, to finish what you started. You've been keeping both of us in the literal dark.

NIGHTINGALE

You don't get it

ROOK

No, I don't. Tell me, show me!

NIGHTINGALE

Okay. Come here.

ROOK

what

NIGHTINGALE

I'll show you. Come here

ROOK

Okay. I'll be right there.

Mark: Nightingale's body has begun amplifying some voice other than their own

NIGHTINGALE

Now. Now, Please. Come Here.

ROOK

Mark: approaching Nightingale, they ask me to

NIGHTINGALE

Give me your hand

ROOK

I don't

NIGHTINGALE

Please

You want my faith?

I'm offering you communion.

ROOK

You mean contact?  
You're not wearing your gloves, are you sure you want to—

NIGHTINGALE

Please

ROOK

Okay. Mark: I am deciding to  
*a low chord*  
*a gasp escapes Rook*

Mark: I feel it now too, it's something. Not me, but.

NIGHTINGALE

Listen to me.  
*another chord*

ROOK

Nightingale, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to.

NIGHTINGALE

Listen to me

ROOK

*another gasp*  
I...  
I can't

NIGHTINGALE

You can- it's how we feel. What's passing through us is our feeling  
*another chord*  
We fit inside.

ROOK

It feels like us, but isn't us.

NIGHTINGALE

We fit inside the imprint. Listen.

ROOK

I don't understand.

NIGHTINGALE

So listen.

**(Music: #9 BETWEEN THEM)**

NIGHTINGALE

HERE, IN THE DARK,  
I LISTEN

HERE, IN THE DARK,  
IS EVERY VOICE  
AND I LISTEN

THEY SING AT ONCE, I HEAR THEM NOW  
AND I TRY TO KNOW THEM  
BUT I DON'T KNOW THEM,  
SO I LISTEN

YOU TRY TO LOOK,  
YOU TRY TO SEE;  
YOU DON'T LISTEN.

YOU THINK YOU KNOW—  
I KNOW YOU DON'T.  
JUST LISTEN.

HEAR ME IN THE DARKNESS!  
HEAR ME IN THE LIGHT!  
KNOW YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ME,  
BUT HOLD SPACE FOR ME!

ROOK

I CAN'T HEAR YOU IF YOU HIDE.  
I CAN'T SEE WHAT ISN'T IN THE LIGHT.  
I KNOW I MIGHT NOT KNOW YOU,  
BUT IN DARKNESS, WHO WILL HOLD YOU?

NIGHTINGALE

I HEAR YOUR WORDS,  
I HEAR YOU TRY,  
SO I LISTEN,

BUT YOU DON'T SEE  
YOU CANNOT HOLD ME  
ONLY WITH YOUR

NIGHTINGALE  
EYES!

ROOK  
THAT DOESN'T MEAN  
I DON'T WANT TO TRY,  
BUT YOU CAN MEET ME IN THE

HOLD ME IN THE DARKNESS!	LIGHT
HOLD ME LIKE IT HOLDS ME!	
HOLD ME LIKE THERE IS NO “ONLY	
LIGHT OR DARKNESS!”	LIGHT OR DARKNESS!”
DARKNESS CAN LIE,	DARKNESS CAN LIE,
BUT SO CAN THE LIGHT	BUT SO CAN THE LIGHT

NIGHTINGALE

WHO CARES IF WE'RE “HONEST?”  
HOLD ME IN THE DARKNESS!  
SO HONESTY IS LONELY  
IN THE FLOURESCENT LIGHT.  
I AM NOT JUST MY BODY  
AND I AM NOT YOUR SIGHT!

I AM NOT—I AM NOT—  
I AM NOT—I AM NOT—  
I AM NOT—I AM NOT—  
I AM NOT “ONLY”  
I AM NOT—I AM NOT—I AM NOT JUST WHAT YOU SEE AND—  
I AM WHAT ISN'T THERE

ROOK

BUT YOU *ARE* THERE!  
I'LL HOLD WHAT IS THERE.

NIGHTINGALE

IT'S HARD TO HOLD  
WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE.  
I AM BETWEEN  
WHAT YOU KNOW OR WHAT YOU DON'T;  
THERE IS A SPACE BETWEEN THEM.  
I AM THE SPACE BETWEEN THEM,  
NOT WHAT YOU KNOW OR WHAT YOU DON'T.  
I AM THE SPACE BETWEEN THEM.

*whispers crescendo*  
*they disengage*

Mark: I, I,  
I have released my grip, I.  
My hands

ROOK

Oh

NIGHTINGALE

My hands are in the air.  
Rook, I'm.

No contact.

*closes coffin*

The coffin closed. No contact.

ROOK

Hey.

NIGHTINGALE

*elated, distracted:*

The imprint we felt, the beginning of something. I can hear it again. This room is full of noise again.

ROOK

Hey, stop a second.

NIGHTINGALE

Mark: Now that we have reestablished contact, we might be able to discover—

*the record stops*

uh. Why did you

ROOK

Hey. I hear you.

NIGHTINGALE

What?

ROOK

Off the record. I hear you. What you're saying...I didn't hear you before, but I think now, I.

*a moment*

Sorry.

NIGHTINGALE

Yeah.

ROOK

I'm

I didn't.

NIGHTINGALE

Yeah, I know.

ROOK

Not like I *totally* get it, not like I get *all* of it, but that's not the point. This isn't what Eden taught us. Beginnings, endings. I don't think the others, Swallow, I don't think they know there's something in between.

NIGHTINGALE

They do.

ROOK

But this is,  
this is something the record can't understand. It's something I couldn't understand until you asked  
me to stop trying.

NIGHTINGALE

You asked me for faith.

ROOK

I didn't/mean to

NIGHTINGALE

It doesn't matter what you meant.  
Faith is what they taught you. They taught me too. Swallow doesn't listen to us, she swallows us,  
extracts the pieces that fit together. But the imprint we just felt is a feeling belonging to you.  
We share that feeling.

ROOK

They felt it too.  
Whoever passed through this coffin.

NIGHTINGALE

Yes.

ROOK

I want to look inside again.  
Together this time.

NIGHTINGALE

Okay.

ROOK

Between us, I think  
Between us, I think  
Between us, there is something that I've never seen  
and I think I'd like to try

## OUTRO

### NARRATOR

*A chord*

*The Doctor is Dead* is written, composed, and directed by é boylan.

*A chord*

Sound mixing and editing is by Katherine Cartusciello and Jay Eigenmann, with sound design and engineering by Charlie Freedman.

*A chime begins*

The voices you hear belong to marcos rené ospina, Genesis Adelia Collado, Joshuah Dominique, é boylan, and myself, Chris Okawa. Music is directed and performed by Sofia Geck, along with Kasey Blezinger, Yuka Tadano, and Matt Wong. Production management and coordination is by Lauren Durán Grajewski and Dinah Rokhinson. This audio presentation is produced by Musical Theatre Factory and made possible, in part, by generous support from The National Endowment for the Arts, the Jerome Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, Musical Theatre International, and listeners like you.

Next week: we'll return with another installment of *The Doctor is Dead*. If you liked what you heard, please support us by telling your friends and by leaving us a rating or review- and most importantly subscribe to hear what's coming next. Until then, thank you for listening.

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