

THE DOCTOR IS DEAD

by é boylan

Episode Six--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 6: roots

VI. roots

*some minutes later
in the same room*

(Music: #10 OPEN ME)

MEMORY

TURN OFF THE LIGHT FOR ME
REVEAL WHAT ISN'T IN THE LIGHT

IN DARKNESS, OPEN ME
SONGBIRD, WON'T YOU SING FOR ME
SING THE SONG OF WHAT YOU SEE

MEMORY AND ROOK

INSIDE ME

ROOK

HERE, UNDERGROUND,
I THOUGHT I FOUND
A HOME THAT FELT LIKE EDEN.

HERE, UNDERGROUND,
I LOOK AROUND,
BUT I DON'T SEE AN EDEN.

NIGHTINGALE

Are you ready to try?

ROOK

I think so, I
want to see what's inside now
the root of what I missed before

NIGHTINGALE

You might see more than roots, I think the imprint of the person who, who shared our feeling, who passed through, I think they might still be inside.

ROOK

I'll try to find them

NIGHTINGALE

Try
Try without trying to understand

ROOK

LISTENING TO YOU,
NOW I TRY TO LISTEN WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT I'LL SEE
INSIDE THIS BOX IN FRONT OF ME
INSIDE

NOW, LISTENING TO YOU,
NOW I TRY TO OPEN WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT WILL OPEN
FROM INSIDE
FROM INSIDE ME

BUT
HERE
INSIDE THE COFFIN,
THE LID NOW OPEN.
I TRY TO SEE
INSIDE

NIGHTINGALE

Describe what you can see

ROOK

INSIDE, I SEE A TREE
AND IN THE TREE, A SONGBIRD
THE SONGBIRD ISN'T ME,
THEY SING FOR A WORLD THAT WILL NEVER BE

FROM INSIDE, GROWS A TREE
THE TREE GROWS FROM THE COFFIN
ITS BRANCHES WELCOME ME BUT
WHY SHOULD IT MATTER TO SEE A TREE, IF I'M

LISTENING TO YOU,
I SHOULD SEE AN ENDING,
BUT I DON'T IF I DO
IT'S HARD TO TRUST MYSELF, NOW

NIGHTINGALE

why?

ROOK

knowing what I know
trying not to trust what they have taught me

NIGHTINGALE

so stop trying
listen to yourself

ROOK

I do. I hear myself. I hear myself and I sound
Abstract or, uncertain

NIGHTINGALE

Is that what you see inside? Uncertainty?

ROOK

What?

NIGHTINGALE

Listen to yourself. Uncertainty isn't nothing.

ROOK

It isn't anything.

NIGHTINGALE

It's in-between. It's inside the coffin and inside you.
Listen to yourself.

ROOK

to me...

NIGHTINGALE

Sing what you can see.

ROOK

LISTENING TO ME
LISTENING TO ME
LISTENING TO ME
NOT THE SONG
THEY TAUGHT TO ME.
SING THE SONG OF WHAT I SEE, AND I SEE

A SONGBIRD IN A TREE
SHE SEEMS FAMILIAR TO ME
INSIDE THE COFFIN SHE
SINGS OF A WORLD ONLY EDEN COULD SEE

FROM INSIDE GROWS A TREE
FROM INSIDE EDEN OPENS
SHE OPENS WHAT I SEE
BUT I CANNOT I CANNOT OPEN ME

I CANNOT I CANNOT I CANNOT SEE ME OPEN
I AM NOT I AM NOT
I AM NOT YET ALL I WANT TO SEE
I SEE WHAT ISN'T THERE
BUT MIGHT BE THERE

NIGHTINGALE

What might be?

ROOK

I MIGHT BE
I AM BECOMING ME
AND IN THE DARKNESS, EDEN SHOWS ME

NIGHTINGALE

What?

ROOK

I SEE A WAY TO SEE
I heard you, now I need for you to turn
TURN OFF THE LIGHT FOR ME
REVEAL WHAT ISN'T IN THE LIGHT
SO I CAN SEE

NIGHTINGALE

Okay, I'm going to the lamp
We're turning off the
Your flashlight, too, I guess

ROOK

Thanks

NIGHTINGALE

Even I keep the lamp on. Procedure and all that.
Are you...are you sure?

ROOK

I'm sure, I guess.
As sure as I can be in darkness

Nightingale switches lamp off

ROOK

IN DARKNESS, I CAN SEE
WHAT MIGHT BE
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE

IN DARKNESS, I CAN SEE
IN THE MIDDLE OF
THE ROOM, A TREE

NIGHTINGALE

A tree

ROOK

IN DARKNESS, I CAN SEE
THE COFFIN IS THE ROOT OF SOMETHING

NIGHTINGALE

What?

ROOK

IN DARKNESS, I CAN SEE
THE ROOT OF HOW WE LEAVE

NIGHTINGALE

Why would we leave?

ROOK

IN DARKNESS OPEN ME, SO I SEE
WE AREN'T IN TOTAL DARKNESS

NIGHTINGALE

Rook, why would we leave? Do you feel the person who

ROOK

Yes

NIGHTINGALE

The imprint of

ROOK

Yes, I, my eyes are taking a second to adjust, but

whispers begin

I see us, leaving the same way she did

NIGHTINGALE

Who is she?

ROOK

I don't know.

NIGHTINGALE

You mentioned Eden. Is she Eden?

ROOK

Maybe. Is that who you hear?

NIGHTINGALE

I think

I do, yes

ROOK

Do you hear her leave? That's how this imprint began.

A longing I can see, both here and
inside me.

A familiar thing I see.

(Music: #11 MY BODY IS A TREE)

MEMORY

MY BODY IS A TREE

NIGHTINGALE

I hear

the wood sings

MEMORY

MY BODY IS A TREE

NIGHTINGALE

You see- the root she planted sings to me

MEMORY

MY BODY IS A TREE

NIGHTINGALE

Hollow inside, space enough for a body

or a memory, and I listen

MEMORY

MY BODY IS A TREE
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM
MY BODY

MY BODY IS A TREE
AND I'M PLANTED IN THE ROOM
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM
I'M THIRSTY
HE CARRIES WATER IN HIS ARMS, WATER FROM THE SINK
I DRINK
IT TASTES LIKE
WHAT HE THOUGHT I WAS
WHAT I THOUGHT I WAS
WHAT HE CALLED ME
MY FATHER PLANTED ME AND HE PLANTED ME TO BE MY BODY
MY BODY IS A TREE, IT'S THE BODY HE GAVE ME
IT'S THE COFFIN THAT YOU SEE
BUT I SEE
THAT UNDERNEATH MY ROOTS
IS DIRT
MEMORIES AND DIRT
MEMORIES I BURY
IT FEELS LIKE
I SHOULD TRY TO GROW
FURTHER DOWN BELOW
TO BE.
MY BODY IS A TREE
BUT I GREW BEYOND THIS ROOM.
THAT'S ALL I REMEMBER

NIGHTINGALE

Yes
Eden, she
We knew that she had left, we knew she disappeared, but, she left something of herself here...
This tree is a map of her memory. Here, planted here.
The Old Thing only looks like a coffin because that's what we were told to see. But it's a tree.
How did Swallow find this place? Why did she—

ROOK

Nightingale

NIGHTINGALE

What?

ROOK

the light

NIGHTINGALE

I turned off the light

ROOK

The light above us

NIGHTINGALE

There is no...I turned off the

ROOK

moonlight peaking through, between the ceiling tiles

NIGHTINGALE

There's a crack/I never saw before

ROOK

A light I couldn't see before, my eyes adjusted to the dark, so now I
Nightingale.

I thought the tree I saw was just an imprint, an abstraction, but do you see

NIGHTINGALE

little tendrils,/the roots

ROOK

the roots from above.

A crack where the roots have grown through.

And below us

NIGHTINGALE

The roots of a coffin

ROOK

Nightingale.

Where are we?

Swallow opens the door

SWALLOW

Songbirds.

NIGHTINGALE

Director Swallow, we,/uh, we
door closes

SWALLOW

Yes.
We've reached our deadline.
So tell me, songbirds: How does it end?

ROOK

How does it—?

SWALLOW

Now.
Tell me, songbirds. Tell me the ending.

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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