

The witness. Being a rather absent-minded and philosophically eclectic defence of the Tenth Doctor

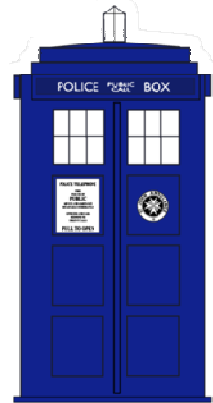
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August 8th, 2012

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My first (and possibly only) fic (so to speak) in the Doctor Who fandom. Written for and dedicated to athens7, because of our discussions of Ten, and because of The Handbook.

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Most things are in a perpetual state of change.

Space and time, for instance. They snake their way into existence along a wandering, weaving, wriggling path which leaves behind a soft iridescent wake; it's a wonder how humans orient themselves by them, however rough the parameters and limited the number of dimensions they can use.

It is only natural that you also change. Ten times reborn already, and counting-- each time a bit younger, haven't you noticed? Each time with a heavier load of not-memories. Each time with a slightly different TARDIS.

Now this is a thought. Time and space change; you change; the TARDIS changes. Companions come and go: didn't you have a niece, once? Even sonic screwdrivers change-- more ergonomical, these days. Your relationship with food also changes, evolves; didn't once a spilled teapot save your life?

Yet always, forwards and back, left and right, up and down and sideways, there are time, and space, and the TARDIS, and you.

What's the point, you ask yourself.

You've been called a self-righteous, self-pitying douchebag with a God-complex the size of California, twisting into accusations all those moments when you felt you were doing pretty well. (You do your level best from your very personal standpoint, because what else could you ever stand on in the whirl of the light-years.)

You take the accusations seriously. Some of them, you know are true. You are well aware how and why you have used your diversity as an excuse to remain uninvolved. "I'm not from here. I'm only passing through."

Yet you have the nagging feeling, piercing through all your lives, that there *is* a point. That your limitations draw a closed line which has a meaning, and more important still, a function. You are forever caught between the horns of a paradox: you should not interfere with the immense breath of the universe; and you care for each of the wonderful and mysterious, crawling, crowding, individual lives.

There must be a sense in this.

There you are, you and the TARDIS; and there he is, The Face of Boe, your one-time friend who had a bright smile and a soul straight and true as an unsheathed sword. What's your business, being alive? Is there even a business, being alive?

Perhaps, you think, you are the witnesses.

Perhaps you are there to learn something which no-one else could ever learn.

Perhaps, you sometimes think, the universe is also there to learn...?

Perhaps the universe knows as little about individual lives as they know about the universe.

Perhaps you are there to teach it (him? her? they?) as well as to learn.

Perhaps your job is whispering in the ear of the universe "you also shall end".

Perhaps you need to learn how irrelevant individual lives are on the scale of forever, and perhaps the universe needs to learn that it is the miracle of individual lives that gives meaning to the brutal fact of existence.

Be it as it may. There are no fixed places or times in the universe. The best one can do is sniffing one's way around, and there is no finer nose than that of the TARDIS.

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