

Talking to Myself (Can You Hear Me?)
A Brief Reflection on Witnesses, Change, Identity, and Fear

If years like 2020 have taught us anything, it's that mankind will persevere in the face of doubt and danger. Those who lead this defiant act of survival and thrival, through means of activism found in poetry, plays, and prose, are known as willing witnesses.

In today's climate, being a willing witness requires strong personal and political conviction — more importantly, an alignment between the two. Where there exists a lack of alignment — an incongruence — between the personal and the political, the private and the public, there also exists a conflict in identity. Out of this conflict arises a fear which creates the reluctant witness (who hinders rather than helps). This is not to say that a reluctant witness will stay reluctant forever; one can just as easily gain courage as they can gain fear — it just takes a little push.

Only the willing witness can lead us through the nine circles of Hell that is 2020 and back into the light and the stars where we belong. As I have learned throughout quarantine and my GESM, that can just as easily be you or me.

Alternate Beginning: “*Abandon all hope, ye who enter here...*” - *Dante*

An Alphabetical Index of Inner Thoughts

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*The format of this poem was inspired by Eve Tuck and C. Ree's "A Glossary of Haunting," which I read in AMST 301: America, the Frontier, and the New West

"There is a ceaseless motion between these domains; boundaries blur" - Tony Kushner

L.A. Insomnia (Unironically written at 2 am)

Drifting in and out of wormholes
Swimming through galaxies and
Cartwheeling across dimensions.
My brain can't keep up
With the tangled spaghetti noodle
That is Time.

My sunrise and sunset are the opening and closing of my laptop.
Blue light replaces moonlight, sunlight, every light
It hurts
My head, my eyes
Yet still I rise
And open the laptop once more.

Sometimes I close my eyes
And remember the late nights back home
When sleep came easily and quietly
And the fog crawled in through my windows
And wrapped around me like a blanket
And the clean, sweet breeze
Tasted of nectar and calm.

Now that mountain fog is wildfire smoke
And that sea breeze is a white pill — "melatonin"

And I lay in bed

And

Fall

And

Fall

And

Fall

And

Fall

Through wormholes, and galaxies, and dimensions
But never fully asleep.

“The private... is a place of resistance...” - Tony Kushner

A Good Silence

I was never good with silence —
My thoughts are far too loud
But your silence is
A good silence
Everything is better
I'm better
At thinking when you're
Thinking
At writing when you're
Clicking your pen and muttering under your breath
At laughing (and meaning it) when you're
Laughing too
We'd take a break
Put on some records
And dance
Awful as we are
And fall asleep
On the floor
A screen doesn't do
Our friendship justice.
Is being in the same room as you
Too much to ask?

Zoom

Hundreds of people
Life contained in tiny boxes

But which one is mine?

“...the political is a realm of conscious intent to enter the world of struggle, change, activism, and growth, even in the face of the fearfulness” - Tony Kushner

Kaleidoscope (aka A Saccade, but in Thoughts)

pen to paper nothing is that a bee? it's been a while little friend, flower petal lazy loops i wonder what it's like to be a bee i wonder if he knows things have changed everything has changed pen to paper something

empty head not so empty heart i guess it's a start i guess i don't know i don't know anything but at least i feel something i wish more people felt something it's better to have an empty head than an empty heart

i think the universe might swallow me do you ever feel too big and too small all at once mirrors are scary but not as scary as windows when there's nothing to see and the earth is so still anything can happen anything at all i think i might swallow the universe

i can see the hollywood sign from my roof it's not what i imagined but then nothing is why doesn't it rain in los angeles i think we could all use some rain right now i can hear people from my roof it's good to be reminded that i'm not the only one

i think we're going to be okay.

Alternate Ending: *“...And we came outside and saw the stars again” - Dante*