

Dear Doctor

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Rating: P14 (*mention of character death*)

Spoilers: Story is set post-JE, so everything up to and including 4x13.

Contents: Rose has a life, a good life with a man who loves her. A man who looks like her Doctor, who thinks and talks and acts like him. And yet can't she just forget the man she met and fell in love with...

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A/N: The whole Bad Wolf storyline just won't leave me alone.

So, every fangirl out there has her own post-JE-story, an idea of what might have happened after the Doctor left Rose and Tenll in the parallel world. As much as I appreciate RTD giving us Tenll and therefore trying to give us at least some kind of Happy Ending, it never made me entirely happy. And it never will. Because Ten is still alone, without his love. And Rose knows it, what to my mind must hurt her.

So here is my idea what might have happened after JE. This ignores the specials afterwards.

Just so you don't get confused - actual letters would of course sound differently. But as said in the first chapter, those will be more diary entries than letters. Please keep that in mind while reading :)

Letter One

It all began with some inconspicuous envelope lying on the jump seat in the console room. He had been alone for some time and didn't pay that much attention to the seat; he didn't even really look at it, he only worked on the controls, left the ship, came back, went to his bedroom or the library or the kitchen or the bathroom, but never did he just sit in this pilot's chair again, like he had done it back when Rose had been still on board.

When once the constant humming of the TARDIS had been comforting and calming, it now roared painfully in his ears and mind; but besides this, there was a deafening silence lying like a heavy veil on his ship. Standing in the console room, lost and lonely, his "it's bigger on the inside"-ship suddenly was overwhelming in its largeness.

Being alone had never been one of his strengths. He had always needed a companion; he needed to know there was someone close to him who was worth it to go on for. To keep fighting for. Someone who opened his eyes for the individual stories and fates out there, while he, with all his knowledge and his 900 years experience of life - and death - often tended to see only the great scheme. He needed someone to remind him that the universe wasn't the bad place he sometimes liked to believe.

They had all been there, on his TARDIS, his *family* - the Children of Time - but they were all gone now. Living their own lives, living a life he could never have. Now it was again just him and his ship, his magnificent time machine that wasn't so magnificent anymore in its silence. They flew through the Vortex, through time and space, tired and yet never resting. Even if he wanted to, he couldn't settle down.

He had made it a habit to just walk through his ship. Watching how it changed, shutting off his sense for the changes and where the rooms were lying, he just opened doors. Sometimes he came across his former companions rooms, the ones who had been recently with him - Donna, Jack, Martha, and Rose, of course.

Sometimes he would enter these rooms, Rose's specifically, close his eyes and try to remember; remember the moments they had shared, the moments when he had watched her sleep, holding her after a nightmare, the feeling of her in his arms the most divine in the whole universe, despite the reason for him holding her.

The hallways were covered in shadows, the light dimmed. It matched his mood, not all bright and shining and happy anymore, but dark and dreary and deserted. The jump seat also lay in the dark, barely seeable - and so was the envelope.

Only by chance he spotted it, one edge reflecting the light, the white almost blinding against the grayed surface of the chair.

Frowning, he took the envelope and freed the letter it contained. His hearts stopped when he recognized the hand-writing.

Dear Doctor,

Four months I tried to forget. Four months I tried to move on, to leave behind what has been. Four months I tried to settle down and live a happy life. Four months - and I have to admit that I've failed. Someone once said the power of forgetting is a blessing. A blessing I am denied.

I've been debating with myself for some time if I should write this letter. You'll never read it, so why write it at all. I could as well write a diary. But somehow writing a letter, addressed to you, helps me to believe that you're not gone. I can at least make myself believe for some short time that I can still talk to you.

You would say now, I'm not entirely gone, because you have the second Me, the human Me, the Me that will grow old with you and never leave you. You may be right. Julian, as he calls himself now, is a great man and I love him. But I will never love him in the way I love you, as much as I love you.

Sometimes I think I don't deserve Julian. He knows that I love you, and that I will never be completely his, yet he loves me. He's perfect and he's what every woman dreams of. Just... not me. Because I yearn for the man who is the same as the one I have, and yet for my heart so different.

We've settled down. Living the domestic life, as strange as it sounds even to my ears. We have a nice apartment in London, half an hour from my parents' house away. Mum and Pete and Tony are a happy little family, and Julian and I try to be one, too. We're both working for Torchwood, naturally, what else should we do? We've seen the universe, working in a normal office with a normal eight-hour-day would be... almost ironic.

I miss you, my Doctor. I miss you and the life we had together. Running through the universe, knowing that, whatever was going to happen, we have each other. That was all I needed to know. That you're there. That there's your hand to hold. Nothing could really scare me back then.

Now I'm already scared of living day after day, with those daily routines, for the rest of my life.

Still, my heart desperately wishes for me finding a way to reach you - or you coming back. I wonder why we hadn't just gone traveling with you. Julian and me, that is. Somehow I feel like this would have been the best solution. On the other hand, I trust you; trust you to do the right thing, to make the right decisions. And if you think leaving us here was right, then I believe it.

I hope you find someone who can travel with you and help you not being alone. Julian told me about Donna and what must have happen to her, what you probably have done to save her life. I'm really sorry, we both are. She was a good companion, she is a great woman, and she would have taken care of you. I begin to understand what your life is really like. And I wish I could do something, anything for you. You shouldn't be alone. You know, it's always... better with two.

Never forget that, Doctor. And also never forget that, whatever happens, at least in our hearts and thoughts we will always be with you.

Yours, Rose

Letter Two

The weather on Algrenid was cold, almost icy, and windy. Seeking a winter planet with three moons had brought him here to this uninhabited planet countless light years from Earth. He didn't know where this sudden impulse, the wish for this sight had come from, but he had followed it without further questions.

But after the past weeks that had been eventful and - as usual - dangerous the silence now surrounding him was almost frightening.

It was something white pinned to one side of the TARDIS that took his attention. Looking closer, he identified the object as an envelope, and grabbed it instantly, already knowing where it came from. *Whom* it came from. And he was right. Written with Rose's neat handwriting, was his name onto the envelope. He safely put the letter into his coat and took a last look at the moons, mourning silently that no one was there to admire the beauty with him. Then he went back inside the TARDIS.

The ship's library had become a well-frequented room since he was alone; back in the old days, this incarnation's first ones, he had spent some evenings there with Rose. Now his only company was the letter from her he didn't ask or wonder about where it came from. He had learned to accept some things as they were - especially when Rose was involved, because she had surprised him more than once. Opening the envelope, he carefully took out the letter, and unfolded it with slightly shaking hands.

Dear Doctor,

Nothing much has changed here since my first letter. Although some weeks have passed, maybe a few months - somehow, I can never exactly tell when I don't count like I did in the first months -, life here is still the same. Suddenly living on Earth again, after traveling with you, feels like an endless repeating of events.

Julian and I live our life like every other normal couple out there. Or we try to. The only difference are our memories. And the little things Julian builds to make our life a bit easier; things probably no one on this planet has. We even have a sonic screwdriver again, which comes in handy quite often.

Also something no one in this planet has is a TARDIS. But that includes us. The piece you gave us died. We tried to grow it, we wanted that TARDIS, even if it would have taken us decades to finally have it fully grown. In the beginning, we - it - made good progress. But then, suddenly from one day to the next, all life energy was gone. It was dead. It is dead.

Neither Julian nor I know what has happened. It was our straw of hope, our only chance to resume at least one part of our - my - former life. Now we will stay here and really go our life step by step. The long, slow path. Somehow a very terrifying imagination.

I had really been hoping that I would get an answer to my last letter. I know it isn't possible, since I didn't even send it - where to anyway? -, but only put it into one of the drawers of my desk. All the letters that may follow will be put there - it's like a drawer to my past. A treasure chest with all the things that remind me of our time together.

The chunk is lying atop the letter; it is the first thing I see whenever I open the drawer, and sometimes I take it and hold it close to me and then it seems that it isn't dead, because I think I can feel it pulsing and humming. It may only imagination, since no one else feels it, not even Julian. It may only wish to find a way back to you. But I cling to the feeling, never ceasing hope. I just can't. And maybe, just maybe, one day there will be an answering letter lying between the letters and the chunk.

It's late, already dark outside; so strange to have day and night again, and to have to adjust to the world's rhythm.

Good Night, Doctor.

Love, Rose

Letter Three

The next letter fell into his hands, in the true sense of the word. Having made some kind of routine of spending time in the TARDIS' library when he didn't feel like repairing something or landing somewhere, the Doctor often sat there for many hours, his ship offering him an infinite stock of reading material. And one day he opened a book, only to have the envelope fall into his lap.

He still had no clue how these letters could reach him. And at the moment, he simply didn't dare to find out. Not because he feared to actually find an answer, one that could tell him more than he was asking; no, more he was afraid to find *nothing*.

He had begun to just hope and wait for the next one. He couldn't define the periods of time lying between the arrivals of the letters, nor could he make out from which pattern they appeared in the different places. He just accepted it as it was, and that maybe some unknown power gave at least him the chance to take a little part in Rose's life.

Dear Doctor,

What I will tell you today should be a happy announcement. Well, it is. But then, it also seems so strange to even think about it. It feels... right and yet so terribly wrong at the same time.

Julian and I are getting married. He proposed to me a few days ago. I have to admit that I needed to ask him for a bit time to come in terms with the whole thing. But in the end I accepted.

I don't lie when I say that I am happy, genuinely happy. But still, there is this part of me that thinks, feels of it as wrong. Like I'm betraying you. And you know what's worst about it? Everyone seems to know it. Seems to know how at least one part of me feels about it. Mum knows it, of course, a mother always knows. Julian knows it, what kind of hurts me, because I hurt him with it, although I don't intend and want to. Even Pete knows; he might not have been present when I grew up, but he is nevertheless the best dad a girl can wish for, and he does his best to help me. Because in some way, he knows all too well how I feel.

Mum immediately threw herself into the wedding preparations. It's still summer here, and we want to get married as long as we can still use my parents' garden for the reception. At the moment, the weather is wonderful and it is said that it will stay like this for another approximately four weeks. So you see, no time for second thoughts.

I don't know if I had some would there be more time. I don't know if I made another decision would I have the chance to. Marrying Julian is probably the best thing to do; not because it is "good", but because, apart from my feelings for you, I love him, really love him. We've experienced and seen much in the past months, and we have shared much. We've gotten closer than I had ever thought possible, since you still possess my heart. But Julian is a fighter, and he would never give up on me. He's the one who understands best how I feel - and how you must feel.

So, the wedding is announced, and in around four week's time, I will be a married woman. I wish you could be here. I know, in some way, you will. You'll always be. And yet I can't help myself but miss you.

Love, Rose

Letter Four

It wasn't curiosity that drove him. It also wasn't the explorer and scientist in him. It wasn't even boredom or frustration about not knowing or understanding something. No; it was the pure and innermost longing to simply see her again that had made him spending days and days trying to find out where the letters came from, how they could reach him at all, and how he could send messages back. But, despite all their efforts, neither his superior Time Lord brain nor the TARDIS could come up with a solution. Re-reading the letters over and over, and finally *noticing* Rose mentioning that the seemingly dead chunk of the TARDIS lay upon the letters she wrote and then stored in her drawer, he suspected a connection.

He buried himself in books, doing research, reading everything he could find about TARDISes and their power. He hadn't landed for days, just flown through the Vortex. He couldn't bear any distraction right now, and landing somewhere, anywhere, would bring distraction. He knew himself. And his luck.

So he sat in the library, the console room, the living room, or he was walking through the TARDIS - but always he cradled a book in his hands, like it was the most valuable thing in the whole universe, like it could be the one book that gave him answers, and he had his eyes fixated on the texts he so desperately hoped would give him the conclusive hint.

Countless days - and yet he hadn't find not even the tiniest wink of a solution. He was far away from reaching her. So far away.

He knew he needed a break. Even the TARDIS was nudging him gently to get some rest, some sleep even, to free his mind, to *reset* it with the help of some relaxing. But he couldn't. He just couldn't. Sometimes he thought he heard his ship sighing.

He was too busy to really understand, to really *listen* to the TARDIS. It was only an empathic, no real telepathic connection, and his ship couldn't actually tell him what really the matter was. And so he had interpreted the pictures of his bed wrong - he knew the moment he finally, after all these days, he entered his sleeping chamber.

And saw an envelope lying on his pillow.

Dear Doctor,

Today's Julian's and my first day as a married couple. It is a strange, but also a good feeling.

Yesterday had been... well, it was a wedding. I think weddings always have to be eventful and loud and stressful. Besides the nice, the beautiful moments of course - and we had quite a lot of them. Thanks to dad - I call him dad now, he is my father, after all, even though not the man who fathered me - being so famous, we had a lot of well-known people at our wedding. Politicians, celebrities, some colleagues; I think it were around 150 people. I had never wanted such a big wedding, but I have to admit that it was okay.

When I walked down the aisle and then stood beside Julian, and we spoke our wedding vows, it left me... a bit confused. Because all the time I saw you - and suddenly I was back in the dreams I had from time to time, when we were still traveling together; dreams of our future, including a beautiful wedding. Back then, it had always been the dreams of a little girl, the girl nothing had remained of after I had been trapped and forced to live in Pete's World.

And yet, in some way, it was my dream wedding.

But, I caught myself thinking just for the fraction of a second: It's not the man from my dreams.

Will it ever stop? Will I ever stop thinking about you? And do I really want to? Every day I thank Julian for his understanding, that he is willing to share me with you, as long as I'm with him. He accepts me thinking about you, dreaming of you, and sometimes speaking about you. He even talks to me about our adventures like it had been him, and I know in some way it was him with whom I traveled.

Our honeymoon we will spend in Australia. It's far away from London, from Great Britain; and even further from Norway. It will be our very own way of exploring a new world, since neither of us has ever been to that continent. We will drive along the eastern and southern coast, from Brisbane to Adelaide, and maybe we'll also visit the Great Barrier Reef and Ayers Rock. At least we have a good three weeks to think about it; and to fill.

But as soon as we get back, there will be the old life. The old new, or new old life, depending on your point of view. Working for Torchwood, living the normal, daily life. I wish we could go on traveling, visit every small corner and niche of the world, every country and city and town, every ocean and lake and river. I wish we could just pretend that we still don't rest, always going on and looking for new adventures, like we used to.

Such a wonderful long time I had to chance to go back. But now that I really need to, I can't.

Love, Rose

Letter Five

As it had turned out, his visit on Plear 6 had been a very bad idea. Two big cities in the east had just started a civil war and his appearance had been thought of as some kind of what was on the Earth known as "Trojan Horse"; that he had been sent by the one party to infiltrate the other. He had been arrested as soon as he had left the TARDIS and it had taken him about three days to escape and find his ship. Mostly because his sonic had been lying on the jump seat the whole time.

Not long ago, the planet had been peaceful, with fewer problems than on most of the other planets. He hadn't been able to find out what exactly had happened; only his cellmates had made some comments, but without giving any real information.

When he had finally reached the TARDIS, his first action after sending the ship into the Vortex hadn't been taking a shower. Although his body was tired and sore, and his clothes dirty, there was something far more important.

Before he had escaped the prison he had been held in, one of the guards - the one who had later also helped him to flee - had given him an envelope. One that looked very familiar, although nothing was written on it. He had stored the letter in his pocket, for some reason not wanting to read it in the prison, with his cellmates around.

But now that he was back and alone, he finally allowed himself to see if the letter really was from the person he hoped it was. And as soon as he had opened the envelope and taken out the papers, he recognized the hand-writing of his Rose.

Dear Doctor,

Ten months of marriage. Ten months! And at least I can say that we've used this time to settle in into our life. As a married couple, as husband and wife with an apartment, with jobs, and all the little ups and downs those are so common. Well, almost.

Apart from some arguments about bad habits - mostly Julian's - occurring occasionally (means: barely; but it took me some work) we rather wonder about problems other couples out there have. But since nothing in our life is normal at all, although we try and pretend else, why should our problems?

Remembering our lives while traveling through time and space, remembering all those aliens and planets and history and future we've seen, makes outsiders of us, in some way. Every so often now we remember together; it has become some kind of ritual. Good old days. Makes it easier. And though you're still in my mind and heart, you don't possess it anymore. I've learned to move on, with the help of Julian. He understands my need to remember; he has this need, too.

So we think about the past and future we've seen; and those strange creatures we've encountered. Julian just recently told me about his - your - first moments after your last regeneration. The fear that I could leave, all those whirling facts that needed to be sorted and settled, and the sensation of the new body. Back then I accused you of being every possible evil alien I knew. I'm sorry I thought you might be a Slitheen - had you really wanted to answer that it wouldn't fit into this body? Maybe you should have, then I would have known it was you!

No, honestly; there are so many memories, but the moment you convinced me that it is really still you, when you reminded me of our very first meeting - I will never forget that. You know, it weren't your words; it were your eyes. I had never seen them before, and yet they were so familiar, and I felt like, for the blink of a second, I could look into your soul. I felt that those eyes of yours would always tell me the truth.

It is Julian's eyes that assure me that being here with him is right. That he is you, or a part of you, and that I can trust him. That I can love him. The hand I held so often might not be this body's, nor is it the body I've hugged and held so close so many times. But the soul it contains is the one of the man I once fell in love with.

And sometimes, just sometimes, I look into these eyes, so open and honest to me, and I see you. You and our past. And then I see Julian's love for me in his eyes, and I remember how often you had looked at me like that. And I know, although you never said it out loud, that you have loved me the whole time, from the very beginning.

May it be too late now; may it have been too late so long ago already; I want to thank you. Thank you for loving me. If only I had known it earlier. If only.

Love, Rose

Letter Six

Messages on his psychic paper never meant anything good; so much he had learned in the past. New Earth, The Library, and all the other places he had went to after his psychic paper had told him to had turned out to be dangerous - holding an adventure that was normally life-threatening.

So he acted very suspicious when he arrived on the planet the paper had told him to travel to - the Venus in the 32nd century.

The Venus was what it was expected to be. A pleasure planet, ruled by women. Some also called it planet of the Amazons, although the women on the Venus were everything, just not warriors. Quite the contrary, being very aware of their effect on men, they used it shamelessly. They seduced men, but every gullible victim - and there were a lot of them - soon had to learn that these women didn't intend to bring the men pleasure. Not at all. The men were only tools for the women's own pleasure. More Sirens than Amazons.

The Doctor was none of these men. He was too old to be naïve, and had traveled too far to fall for sleights of hand. And he was too devastated to let himself get distracted by some superficial females.

The building he had been requested to come to lay in the center of the city. He knew it; he had been there before. It was more a temple than a real building; open to three sides, while the back was a wall of falling water. An oddly shaped pool caught the water; water beings called Leelans named it their home. It was them who had summoned him. The Leelans were something between nymphs and fairies, fragile and small, and they had been the original inhabitants of this planet. Unfortunately, not even the Doctor had been able to prevent the invaders who had taken over the planet from doing so. Just because it had been meant to happen; for whatever reason.

The fairie-nymphs lived in the waters of the planet; the Venusian water contained special ingredients they needed to survive, otherwise the Doctor would have already brought them to another planet. Instead, he had

negotiated with the new rulers of Venus, helping the Leelans to get an own Charta of Rights so they wouldn't be enslaved or oppressed.

Now, from time to time, the Leelans called him to do him favors, as they were able to sense his needs after he had once, back during the celebration after the successful negotiations, formed a psychic link. It was only a weak link, but it was enough to tell the Leelans whenever their savior was sad.

When he approached the pool, one of the beings raised out of the water. Her delicate body glowed slightly; little droplets of water reflecting the light that fell into the temple made it sparkle. She smiled gently at the Doctor, and he returned the gestured, though it didn't quite reach his eyes.

"Sadness and loneliness possesses our savior's heart. So we have a gift for him," the Leelan said, her voice like a soft melody, and reached out for the Doctor. He took her hand carefully, always afraid to hurt or break them as soon as he touched those beings.

Their link strengthened by the psychical contact, the Doctor suddenly received images. Images of his Rose. A collection of memories, of the wonders they had seen - he had seen in her. A tear rolled down his cheek, which was soon accompanied by another, and another. It were tears of sorrow, but also of joy, because the memories and images were so full of life that he almost thought he could touch them. Touch *her*.

In the end, they remained only images. But at least his heart had felt a bit lighter, and may it only have been for a short while. He said his goodbye with a smile - one that now reached his eyes - and turned to go, when the Leelans called him back. Before they vanished back into the water, they pointed to a small altar.

And upon this altar, next to a single pink rose, lay another envelope.

Dear Doctor,

For some time now, Julian and I have been trying to get pregnant. Well, I've been trying to, but you know what I mean. We want to have a baby; to prove our love, to make it visible, and because we want to be a real family. And who knows, maybe he or she would become a genius just like the father. Wouldn't that be cute?

Mum's absolutely excited about the idea; and so is Tony. He might be still very young, but he understood what I told him about being an uncle, and being responsible for his niece or nephew. He is of course thrilled by the idea of having a little playmate.

I wish I could tell him that he will have this playmate soon. But we're experiencing problems. The doctors we've consulted say we're both healthy and there shouldn't be any problems for us getting children. Yet nothing has happened so far.

According to Julian, it is possible for me getting pregnant from him. It... it also would have been possible with you, while you're another species, and since he is half-human, the chances should be even better. Bet we're trying and trying and... still no success.

My gynecologist said that maybe I'm too fixated on getting pregnant and that I put my body under stress with it so I don't conceive. But by now, we're a bit afraid that there might be also other complications no one can think of or detect.

We've already talked about in vitro fertilization, although that will be one of the last possibilities to consider. There are many ways to get pregnant, and though we would like to do it the natural way, we're ready to try everything should it turn out that it won't work the normal way.

I'm afraid we're getting too desperate, that our desire to have a child covers something we simply won't admit. But the desperation we share also is one we've both always felt, for such a long time. Means, he - you - already felt when we were still traveling together. Raising a child, a family.

Oh, Doctor. Just imagine we would have been able to show our child all those wonders out there. The whole universe, the whole of time and space his or her playground. Our child could have given the universe so much. And your race maybe the chance to start anew. Now we'll never know.

Love, Rose

Letter Seven

Rose couldn't know how much it hurt him. She didn't even know that the letters she thought were only mere diary entries actually reached him for some unknown reason. For some reason that would always stay unknown.

But all these words and speculations and pictures she painted, all the possibilities of what could have been, it hurt terribly. It showed him much too clearly what he had missed. That the chances and opportunities he once hadn't used were now gone forever and would never come back.

He wished he could at least answer himself the question why he had never made a move, being in love with her as he was - and is. But even him was his mind denying the answer. Maybe telling her would have changed things. Timelines. Events. He knew better than anyone else that every move and decision could change so much. Or so less.

He had once really thought about it, about unveiling the truth she must have guessed anyways; about telling her. He had wanted to end this farce, stop pretending that there wasn't more than friendship between them. But in the end, he had been too much of a coward.

He was a scientist, an explorer, an adventurer. But he rather was it with people at his side he still had some emotional distance to. And even though he knew that he was lying to himself, that this emotional distance hadn't existed between Rose and him for... well, had never really existed, from the very beginning - he just needed to make himself believe that not acting on his feelings had prevented them from getting hurt even worse. His hearts knew better. But when it came to living, day after day spending his time in the endlessness of time and space, his head had always been stronger than his hearts.

Traveling around was less eventful recently. And that gave him too much time to think. Even the TARDIS was tired of getting repaired, of the Doctor rummaging in her innards because he needed to keep himself busy, that she defended herself with little attacks or intentionally bringing him to the wrong places, even when he was navigating well.

Sometimes, he would just get out where they had landed - as long as it wasn't dangerous and wander around. Sometimes, the places would even make him smile, make him forget for just a short time; would make him stop thinking.

One of the planets he arrived on provided a lively marketplace in a cute little town. He strolled around, guided by the sounds of people chatting and yelling and laughing; guided by a liveliness he hadn't known and experienced for some time. All around him people were offering everything one could think and not think of; they would try to tempt him with special prizes. But he would only decline friendly, politely, and keep walking. He did it for hours and hours - until someone made a really great offer, though he didn't even know it was one.

An old, kind looking woman who smiled secretly at him asked him to carry her bag to her house near the marketplace. And when they arrived, she pointed out to the window sill next to the entrance to her house. Lying on the sill was an envelope. He took it and wanted to ask the woman where she had gotten it from and how she knew it was for him. But then woman was gone. And when he asked around, no one knew her and no one had seen her.

Dear Doctor,

It feels like fate doesn't want to grant us our wishes anymore. Like we've used its gratefulness too often. Last time I told you we won't give up. But now, we've done exactly this. Because we don't have the strength to fight any longer. So many tries, but nothing worked. And I guess we just have to accept that we will never be parents. Not of children of our own flesh and blood at least.

We can't stand the sight of London anymore. And of our apartment. It seems to overwhelm us; it is like London is laughing at us for being so different, and for being unable to have children. So we're moving to Cardiff now. A change of scene, just away from London, and all those things that reminds us - of our time here together. The time I had with you as well as with Julian here. Leaving all that behind, trying to start anew, really start anew, is a need we both had felt so strongly for the past few weeks.

We will work for Torchwood Cardiff. Although the units don't cooperate, their leader accepted our request. They need some personnel anyways. There is no Jack in this universe, but there is a Gwen Cooper; I think you will remember her, she was - in our universe - one of those who helped us when we returned Earth to its right place; the one who looked like Gwyneth. She, her husband Rhys, and Ianto Jones are the only ones working for Torchwood in Cardiff, and they said they could use some reinforcement.

So, we are off to Cardiff; we've already found an apartment there, our furnishings will be moved next week. Today is our last day here; we'll bring everything that wasn't too big to fit into boxes to the new apartment tomorrow. Till we get our furnishings, we'll improvise, but that's okay, as long as we can leave here.

Mum hates it, of course, but she also understands it. And we're not that far away from my parents.

We don't know yet if we'll try to adopt a child. Maybe. It is the only possibility. And at least we could give an orphan a home. But it's still not the same as an own child. I wish we knew what the matter is, why I can't conceive, or why Julian can't get me pregnant.

Not a single doctor can answer these questions. They are all completely at a loss.

Or maybe they're just the wrong doctors.

Love, Rose

Letter Eight

The eighth letter made him frown, just like the first one. But not for the same reason. This time it was because the handwriting was shaky and untidy. And because it was the first letter in a very long time; the last one had arrived something resembling a few months in normal Earth time ago.

So he opened the envelope that had been lying on the kitchen counter under his tea cup with some premonition that made him take a deep breath.

His feeling hadn't gotten him wrong.

Dear Doctor,

Pain is eating me away. Pain consuming my whole body, every single cell of it, consuming my mind. I feel like my soul has been ripped out, feel like a thousand of our goodbyes.

Julian is dead.

He died about a week ago. And no one knows why. Maybe being half Time Lord, half human, never works out, either way. It didn't with Donna. And it obviously also didn't with Julian. It might have taken more time for the process to develop, for his mind to capitulate. But in the end, the result is the same.

Again I lost a man I loved more than anything else.

I should have noticed it, him becoming weaker. It had been progressing over the past months, if not even years. When he had made small, tiny mistakes when building something, or when his memory had gone wrong. But never had I really paid attention to it. And neither had he.

I don't know how to go on.

All I feel is an endless void inside of me.

Like the end of the universe.

Rose

Letter Nine

Reading of his duplicate's death had made a part of him die as well. He might not have cried when he had read the letter, but he had felt that heart-wrenching pain - the pain of losing someone, and the pain of knowing that someone he loved was in such pain. More than ever before he had wished for the chance and possibility to go to Rose and take her into his arms. For the chance to tell her that everything was going to be okay, knowing all to well that it wasn't.

The death of a beloved one left behind wounds that would always result in scars; scars on one's soul and heart that would never heal completely. His precious Rose had been scarred, something he had once hoped to save and prevent her from.

If the Torchwood employees in Pete's universe were only a bit like the ones in his, he knew Rose would be well taken care of. Jack had told him that it was a fine and compassionate team that looked after each other. And then, Rose had still her parents. But despite all those people, he knew it wasn't enough. If one knew the pain of living while losing dearest ones again and again, it was him.

Sympathy and grief led him to a world that was known as a planet of remembrance and deep sorrow. It was a strange world, one of no color apart from its visitors; everything was just black and white, like someone had drained it of all color - the trees weren't green, the sand wasn't golden, the water not shimmering blue. It was just black and white and all the nuances of grey between.

It was one of the few planets where no one lived permanently, but people only came by to visit, to express and show their grief and sorrow, and then leave.

As it was said, sometimes, just sometimes, one would see the lost persons, see them again, laughing, and hear them again, saying words of comfort and love. The Doctor didn't hope for it, but he also didn't doubt the possibility of it happening anymore, as he had for centuries.

The nameless planet was always well visited; so many people had to experience loss and hurt and sorrow in this universe, and so few found consolation among their family and friends; so few had family and friends at all.

For almost every culture of the universe existed a place on this planet. Countless paths led to various clearings within forests, temples, stone circles, church-like buildings and other places; some of them even the Doctor wasn't able to assign to planets and species.

Walking along the pathways, the Doctor was deep in thought; he had no certain destination, but just walked around and observed. He knew his feet would eventually carry him to a place they - or his mind, for that matter - felt to be the right one for him and his situation.

So in the end, he came to stand in front of one of these church-like buildings, clearly an adaptation of the similar earth buildings for those who believed in the Christian religion. He entered the church and found its interior pretty realistic and correctly adapted; to his surprise, he had to admit.

Two candles he lit. One for his duplicate, in memory of a man he knew so well and yet not at all. And one for Rose; because, even though she wasn't dead, he knew she needed support and rescue now. And he feared for her soul, now that she had lost Julian.

It was only when he left the church, he spotted a fleck of color within the grey bushes around. A fleck of blue, to be exact.

A blue envelope, and written upon with white letters was his name.

Dear Doctor,

After we had been torn apart for the first time, and I had found myself confronted with a completely different life to deal with, I had thought I could never feel more lost and lonely than I had been feeling then. Now I know I was wrong. I'm a widow, I will probably never be a mother, I have nothing left of my former life. There's mum, yes, but while I love mum, it was you, and then Julian, who had been my life. And our life together, our experiences. Now I have nothing of all this.

I received... an offer. That's what I would call it. It came to me through my dreams, and I barely took notice of it at first. But it became stronger, more demanding and forceful, until I knew that those dreams weren't just dreams, but visions.

Visions of Bad Wolf.

And after everything it told me, I begin to believe that it was our destiny to meet, and for me to look into the TARDIS's heart, to bound with her and her energy.

I couldn't remember my first "encounter" with it, and so it explained to me how I got back to you with its help, and how you saved me, thus triggering your regeneration. Nevertheless, while the Time Vortex was not inside me any longer, and the heart of the TARDIS back in its rightful place, Bad Wolf remained as a part of me. Maybe it always was. As was the energy of it, only activated by the Time Vortex.

Now Bad Wolf, still powerful, offered me the chance to go back. I don't exactly know what it means - back in time, in space, in the universes - but to be honest, I don't care either. I trust this mysterious being, as I always trusted you.

It told me to return to Norway, and the fateful beach that holds so many memories. I was also told what to do there, what will happen, but I can't explain it. It's not a question of understanding, but more of simply knowing. I wish I could tell you what will happen, but I have no idea. I will have to let my mind and my heart, and somewhere inside me Bad Wolf, lead my way and actions.

There are still some things to do here; some persons to say goodbye to, some... projects to finish. A life to end. It sounds strange, but that's exactly what I'll be doing. Ending my life here. It's the irony of fate - not so long ago, I had to 'end' Julian's life, had to deal with all the formalities that come with the death of a human being on Earth. And now I'm doing this more or less for myself. I just leave out the funeral part.

If it doesn't work, the only hope left for me is that there is some kind of afterlife and that I will be reunited with Julian. Because I know I would probably never meet you there. And some part of me hopes that I'm right about this point. The universe needs you; the people out there, all these worlds you save. It's the greater good, Doctor. And you take part in its survival.

Wish me luck, my Doctor. Pray for me. And that we may be able to see each other again.

Love, Rose

Letter Ten

Another long time had passed since the last letter. And somehow, after it, he hadn't really expected another one. But there it was. There was this well-known envelope, lying right under the screen when he came back to the console room after he had allowed himself some sleep.

Rose's last two letters had been draining him, making him feel guilty that he hadn't realized that Julian might not survive either, that to him the same would happen as it would have to Donna hadn't he acted on time and taken away her memories.

Now the other Him was dead. And he had left Rose with a burden that probably was much bigger than being left behind in Pete's World, to be practically abandoned and dumped, only because he hadn't wanted to have the meta-crisis Him on board. Especially not if Rose had been with them, too. Because eventually, she would have had to make a decision.

He had thought that his broken hearts were a price worth to pay for her happiness. He hadn't wanted anything else more than his Rose to be happy. And despite the initial hurt he had caused her with leaving her in the parallel world, he had known that eventually she would adjust to the life there, and to living with the second Him, and that she would understand that it was the best this way.

He had never even considered the meta-crisis wouldn't work the other way around either. Wouldn't work, even if the original DNA had been Gallifreyan and the mind improved for the requirements of being a Time Lord. Without examining his clone, he couldn't find out what really had happened. So he would never know. And so wouldn't Rose.

He had been surprised to find her last letter without any blames. He had thought she would be angry at him, that she would think it was his fault, that he hadn't cared enough to notice and think of possible problems.

But then, he told himself, Rose knew him, and Rose knew the meta-crisis self knew as much as he did. Had there been any issues, they *both* would have known. But neither of them did.

He closed his eyes shortly before he took the envelope, opened it and took out the letter. Whatever she was writing - he somehow knew that it were the last words he would hear, *read* from her.

Dear Doctor,

This will be my last letter. At least I think it will be the last. I'll try what Bad Wolf told me to do and hope that it will somehow reunite me with you. If not, I'll probably die trying. But aside from mum and dad and Tony there's nothing and that holds me here; that keeps me wanting to go on living here. My three beloved ones have each other; they will be fine.

Not even three decades of life, and I've seen and experienced more than other people will in a whole lifetime. I've seen so many worlds, so many species; I've seen history and the future. You've showed me so much and I will be always thankful for it. You've changed my life; you have made it worth living it.

Looking back, I would never decide differently; I would always follow you into the TARDIS and off to all those adventures. Even if it was sometimes, often, dangerous, life-threatening, it was also the time of my life.

When you had to leave me here, twice, I was devastated. With the devices Torchwood had I could have traveled through time and space, too, but it would have never been the same without you. Yes, I had Julian, and I loved him. But as strong as my love for him was, and as much as he helped me going on - he was never you. And there

were times when I just wanted you back, and our life together; I needed your optimism, always there despite all the horror and throwbacks; I needed your enthusiasm, every time we arrived on a new world, or in a new time.

I had never before realized how much this had become part of my life, a naturalness I thought would always be there. And now I am at a point in my life I know I simply can't go on like this anymore.

My beloved Doctor, when I finish this letter, I will return to Dålig Ulv Stranden, and I will follow the instructions of what we had once gotten to know as Bad Wolf. And while I don't know what will happen, I hope it will bring me salvation, in any way. With Julian gone and you so far away, there is nothing else for me to do than take the last opportunity, one last try to return.

I love you, my Doctor. I always will.

Forever yours.

Rose

A single tear rolled down his cheek when he finished the letter; one single drop of salty water that carried the sadness of a whole lifetime. Even he didn't know what would happen; he didn't know what Bad Wolf had instructed her to do, he didn't even know how it had been possible for Bad Wolf to return.

And now there he was, neither knowing how long he should wait, nor what to expect. He would wait forever for his Rose, but his hearts broke just a bit more with every second that passed, and he didn't know if he could and would live with this emptiness he felt inside any longer. Even for him it became too much to bear.

Rose had never given up, and he owed it to her to also not give up. But even a Time Lord, used to seeing beloved people come and go, used to them leaving him, wasn't able to survive his hearts being torn apart by the pain of losing someone so deeply loved again and again.

His hands held the letter tight, the maybe last valid thing he had of his Rose. He hoped that, whatever had brought him these letters would also bring him Rose. But his hopes were worn out and weakened, and as desperately as he held onto them, he nevertheless feared of losing them.

"My dear Doctor," he suddenly heard the gentle whisper of a voice he had believed long since gone, a voice whose rhythm his hearts were beating with.

And when he looked up, he barely dared to trust his eyes, but he knew that it wasn't a reflection or projection, no hologram, no hallucination, no figment of his imagination. He didn't need the readings on the console display, didn't need to hear the intruder alarm he had installed lately and that only sounded for a few short seconds because the TARDIS recognized the well-known visitor.

No, standing there, inside his TARDIS, true and real and so alive, like she'd never been anywhere else, like she belonged there by the laws of time and space, was the one person he had never dreamt of seeing ever again.

"Rose."

END