

Witnessing the Critic

A practice sheet to use with the audio

Use this while you listen. You are not here to argue with the critic, or to work out whether it is right. You are here to watch it - to notice what it says and how it works, from where you sit as the one listening. There are no right answers. Write down what you catch.

The critic is talking. You are the one listening.

Pictures or words?

When it gets loud, is it showing you a scene, like a movie playing, or running as a voice, words like a narration? Either way, you are the one watching it, not the thing on the screen.

Pictures or words?

The exact words, or the exact image

Now get it down as it came, not a summary. If it uses words, write them line for line. If there are no words and it shows you a picture instead - you ending up alone, with nothing, out on the street - describe that scene in detail. Whichever it did.

Its tone

How it says it, not what it says. Cold, urgent, flat, sneering, reasonable-sounding.

What it does to sound true

Watch its methods, not its message. Does it repeat the same line until it feels like fact? Use big words with no room in them - always, never, ruined? Push you to act right now? Note whatever you catch.

Which of the four is loudest

Judge / Underminer / Comparison-Engineer / Taskmaster. Just name it, no need to explain.

Where you feel it in your body

When it speaks, what does your body do? Chest, throat, shoulders, jaw. You don't need to change it. Just notice where it lives.

You can hear and observe the voice while it is talking

You do not need to obey it, and you do not need to argue with it. It can keep talking, and you can keep watching it, from where you sit as the one listening.