

WELCOME TO FOSTER'S

EPISODE 2

“Haunting”

Written by Imogen Cassidy

[Title Music, with lyrics]

FEMME SINGER (VERSE)

**It's not the money or the time,
It's not my heart on the line,
It's not the spirits or the wine.**

MASC SINGER (VERSE)

It's that I know it's mine.

[Verse repeats once with both voices singing together under episode titles]

ANNOUNCER (NINA NIKOLIC)

**Rusty Quill presents: Welcome To
Foster's. Episode two, Haunting.**

[Music continues]

CHORUS

**Time, time, time, it's time,
Time, time, time, it's time,**

MASC SINGER

It's not my heart on the line, not this time.

[Music ends]

**1. INTERIOR, DAY, ANNANDALE TERRACE HOUSE
(FLASHBACK)**

The entrance door opens to a busy street. TIM and YOUNG JILL enter, struggling with heavy luggage.

TIM

So uh.... your room's upstairs, on the top floor, opposite mine. Office is in the middle.

YOUNG JILL

Uh huh.

TIM

Do you want... (grunt) let's get your bags up there anyway.

The wooden staircase creaks and luggage rubs against people and walls as TIM and YOUNG JILL head upstairs. TIM opens the door to a living area.

YOUNG JILL

This place is...

She places down her bag.

TIM

Small. Yeah.

YOUNG JILL

I was gonna say cool.

TIM

(real surprise)

Oh?

He drops a bag to the floor. YOUNG JILL starts to walk around, checking the place out.

TIM (CONT.)

Never thought of it that way.

YOUNG JILL

It's old, right?

TIM

Yeah this part of the city was established...ooohh early eighteen hundreds? I think? Well, that's what the ghosts say anyway.

YOUNG JILL opens some net curtains.

YOUNG JILL

(delighted)

You've got ghosts?

TIM

(chuckling)

Not in the house, no. But I get local call outs.

YOUNG JILL

Do you get poltergeists?

TIM

A couple. They're a lot weaker than they are in the movies, though.

TIM starts walking towards YOUNG JILL's room.

TIM (CONT.)

Most of the time they just want a cup of tea, to be honest. Why you get so much cupboard rattling.

He opens the door; YOUNG JILL moves to come look.

TIM (CONT.)

Ah, this is you.

YOUNG JILL
(unimpressed)

Oh.

TIM

**There's a wardrobe and a... I got you a
dressing table and the bed's made up and
you can put your...**

YOUNG JILL
(furniture is no longer cool)

A dressing table?

She places a backpack down.

TIM

(cannot fathom teenage brain)

**I mean, that's what... uh. You had one in
your room at your parents' I-I just figured.**

YOUNG JILL
(happy)

(small laugh) It's cool, Tim.

**Beat as YOUNG JILL walks through and opens a sash window. Bird
calls and traffic noise floods in.**

TIM

**I'm sorry I couldn't keep you in the same
school but, the area...**

YOUNG JILL

**It's okay. Honest, Tim. I didn't like anyone
there.**

TIM

Jill...

YOUNG JILL

**Plus they made us take French and you
said the new school has woodwork...**

TIM

Yeah. Um.

YOUNG JILL

Can I see the office?

TIM

You want to?

YOUNG JILL

Yeah!

TIM

Sure.

**They head back out the rooms and downstairs, opening the office
door.**

YOUNG JILL

Wow. That's a lot of paper.

TIM

**Oh ah... yeah. Um. I used to have an
apprentice you know? To sort all that out
but...**

YOUNG JILL spins around enthusiastically.

YOUNG JILL

I can be your apprentice!

TIM

(scoff) Jill, you're twelve.

YOUNG JILL

So?

TIM

Think there's laws against child labour.

YOUNG JILL begins rifling through a mound of paperwork.

YOUNG JILL

You can pay me pocket money or something. Look at all this...

She does a noisy paper-flip through a large stack of files.

TIM

Oh ah technically those files are confidential.

She pulls out pages at random to scan.

YOUNG JILL

Do people really get possessed by demons?

TIM

It's not very common but...

YOUNG JILL

Oh wow, you can summon water spirits?

TIM

So... yeah I guess now's as good a time as any to start you on the basics.

YOUNG JILL
(deflating)

Oh.

She stops rummaging.

YOUNG JILL (CONT.)
Lessons?

TIM
Well the whole point of you...

YOUNG JILL
(quickly) **yeah I know.**

An awkward pause.

TIM
You know they didn't want you to leave,
Jill, it's just that your mum doesn't have
any magic and your dad...

YOUNG JILL
I had to go.

TIM
Jill I...

YOUNG JILL
It's safer.

TIM
(gives a helpless sigh)

Beat.

YOUNG JILL

Okay, so if I'm gonna have to do lessons with you, we may as well start.

TIM

Maybe we'll head down to the park eh? At least for the first few. While the weather's good.

They start walking to the office door.

YOUNG JILL

Is the park big? Can I get a dog?

TIM

(exasperated new parent noises)

[Music transition — quick drum solo with heavy compression]

2: INTERIOR, DAY, JILL'S CAR

JILL is driving with MARK in the passenger seat to her left. Sydney traffic can be heard through the glass passing to the right side. JILL seems tired of the day, while MARK is active but bored.

SATNAV

(quiet, in background)

At the next intersection, turn right.

MARK

Bet you twenty bucks the guy's just paranoid.

JILL

Why do you always want me to bet on these things?

MARK

(scoff) gotta supplement my meagre income somehow.

JILL

I'll have you know I had at least three other people apply to be my apprentice. Two of them might've even been qualified.

MARK

(laughing)

You were lucky to get me.

SATNAV

Turn right.

JILL

(not quite agreeing)

Mm-hmm.

MARK chuckles again as **JILL** slows, indicator on. They are silent until **JILL** is through the intersection.

MARK

So, ten bucks then?

JILL

You're playing percentages.

Beat.

SATNAV

Your destination is on the right.

JILL

(crosstalk) Oh, missed it.

MARK

Five bucks?

SATNAV

Recalculating route.

JILL

(sighs) People want magic to fix their problems. They get satisfaction out of calling us, we get paid. It doesn't matter if they're imagining it, they're paying for peace of mind.

MARK

Half the time if they're imagining it you tell them and don't charge!

JILL

I'm not going to take money for work I don't have to do. I charge them for the call out and that's enough.

MARK

(annoyed)

(sigh) We're glorified pest inspectors.

JILL

Sometimes. Doesn't mean the work we do isn't necessary.

MARK

I just... (sigh) you know I'd like a haunting to be legitimate for once. I figured working for a private wizard would be more... I dunno. Exciting. Lost cats and

**sad bastards and people who think things
are magic that just aren't...**

JILL

**Yesterday you were almost scratched to
death by a possessed cat!**

MARK

You said it wouldn't hurt me!

JILL

**I might have... understated the danger. To
help you calm down.**

MARK

Crikey, Jill.

JILL

**Panic doesn't help any situation, you
know that.**

**Annoyed scoffs from MARK as JILL pulls the car to the side of the
road and flicks the indicator on, before doing a U-turn.**

JILL (CONT'D)

God the turning circle is awful. (sighing)

MARK

I said that yesterday!

JILL

(annoyed)

Not that awful.

Beat. JILL guns the engine, getting up to speed again.

JILL (CONT'D)

So what exactly...

MARK

(crosstalk) I'm bored! That's all. Where are all the demon summoners? Black magicians? Where are all the-the blood ritualists and cultists? Sometimes I think we need to start up a good dark brotherhood just to get some... someee...

JILL

(heavy, deliberate sigh)

MARK

Oh, don't look at me like that. I'm not going to. Really, I'm not. (sigh) Jill, you've got to lighten up sometimes.

JILL

I'm. Light.

MARK

No, you're like a lead balloon. I don't know how Gloria puts up with you.

JILL

It's my boobs.

Beat.

JILL (CONT.)

Light enough?

MARK

I refuse to answer that on the grounds that I might incriminate myself.

SATNAV

(crosstalk) Your destination is on the left.

They're quiet as JILL slows the car down.

SATNAV (CONT.)

You have reached your destination.

JILL

Gah! Ah not again. (deep sigh)

She moves about, checking behind her as she reverses the car.

JILL

Goddammit!

MARK

You need one of those rear camera things.

JILL

I'm fine at parking when I don't have you in here with me.

MARK

(laughing)

Evidence to the contrary.

JILL

(sighing) Shut it!

Slight snort from MARK as JILL pulls the hand brake up with a bit more force than is necessary. There is a pause.

MARK

Eeh.

Beat.

MARK (CONT.)

Bit of a dump, yeah?

Seatbelts unclick.

JILL

It's just a block of flats, Mark.

They open the car doors to suburban traffic and birds. They walk up a concrete path.

MARK

Doesn't really look like the type of place to have a legitimate haunting though.

JILL

Ah-you'd be surprised. Got a case in a building just like this one a few years back. Turned out someone had murdered his mother and she was haunting him.

MARK

Grey lady haunting?

JILL pushes the buzzer of an intercom. It has the gritty buzz of an older system. There are a few seconds of quiet.

**GRAHAM
(via intercom)**

Hello?

JILL

Mr Edgers?

GRAHAM

Yes?

JILL

It's Jill Foster. You know from the...

GRAHAM

**Oh you're from the agency! C-come up,
co-come on up, please.**

**The buzzer sounds again, and the electric door to the flat complex
unlocks with a click. JILL and MARK begin walking up a
reverberant concrete stairwell.**

MARK

Smells like cat piss in here.

JILL

It's number twelve. Four floors up.

MARK

**So what happened with that haunting?
Was it a grey lady?**

JILL

**Oh, much more feisty. (chuckles) Blood
dripping from the walls, ectoplasm out
the taps, causing merry havoc with the
building manager, he was out of his mind
when he called. Turns out she was
wasting her time.**

MARK

Who, the ghost?

JILL

**Yeah. Her son, the guy who killed her?
Well, he died right afterwards. Accident
with a spade, trying to bury the body. The
only one who didn't know was her. Once I**

explained she was happy enough to leave.

MARK

Ghosts are weird sometimes.

JILL

They're people. You get all sorts.

They exit the stairwell onto the exterior corridor for the fourth-floor flats, both out of breath. JILL knocks, clears her throat, and GRAHAM opens the door.

GRAHAM

Ms Foster. Thank you for coming so soon.

JILL

Oh it's no problem, Mr Edgers.

They enter the flat. Once the door is closed, there is very little sound from outside; wood creaks from flooring and furniture.

JILL (CONT.)

So, ah... can you tell us which rooms are the most affected? We can get started on narrowing down whether a simple cleansing or a more involved eviction would suit your needs.

Beat.

JILL (CONT.)

Ah, Mr Edgers?

GRAHAM

I ah... I don't think you understand my problem exactly, Ms Foster.

He opens the sitting room door and ushers them in. A clock ticks quietly.

MARK

There's a ghost, right?

JILL

Oh, I'm sorry, this is Mark Wilson, my apprentice.

GRAHAM

Nice to meet you.

MARK

Sure.

JILL

You said you were having problems with a haunting?

MARK and JILL take a seat on overstuffed furniture.

GRAHAM

(fluffing about)

Would you like a cup of tea, or coffee? I can make.. um, ah, I'm sure I've got something you can eat as well if you'd...

JILL

Mr Edgers?

GRAHAM

Right. Um. So. Okay. There is a ghost. Yes. At least... well.

Beat.

MARK

Yes and?

GRAHAM

I don't actually want her to go away.

MARK

Huh?

JILL

**Why don't you tell me exactly what it is
you're looking for, Mr Edgers.**

GRAHAM

**My wife, she died two years ago Ms
Foster. In this room.**

MARK

**(wondering if she died in the chair he's in)
Oh.**

JILL

She's been haunting you?

GRAHAM

**Yes-ah, on and off. For the first year she'd
come every day. We'd talk. She seemed
very calm! It was as though she'd never
left.**

MARK

Oh, huhuh.

JILL

Mark can you go to the car please?

MARK

But...

JILL

Go get my kit, and... call Dempsey while you're down there? I forgot to order more treated wolfsbane.

MARK

Jill, I...

JILL

Just go, please.

MARK lets out an annoyed sigh as he stands. JILL and GRAHAM are quiet as they listen to him leave the house.

JILL (CONT.)

I'm sorry, Mr Edgers. He's... relatively new to the job.

GRAHAM

He's your apprentice?

JILL

Hard to find them these days. Magic doesn't pay that well. Professional magic, anyway.

GRAHAM

My brother-in-law did the training. Ended up in the police force for a while.

JILL

He was a wip?

GRAHAM

(laughing a little) I never did understand what that was supposed to stand for. Wizard In the Police? Work in Progress?

JILL

It really depends on if it's a wip saying it or not. The least charitable one... pfft... (with a chuckle) well let's just say there are pigs involved.

GRAHAM

(still chuckling) My brother-in-law hated every moment of it anyway so, he might have used the less charitable name once he left.

JILL

He couldn't help you with this?

An awkward pause.

GRAHAM

He didn't believe me when I told him. About the ghost. She never turned up when he was here, I figured it was because he... well he didn't come round much when she was alive, you know? People get older, they get busy and he was... it was a lot. When she got sick.

JILL

(gently)

How did she die?

GRAHAM

She had breast cancer. They caught it too late. They tried chemotherapy, radiotherapy, the healing stones — everything. In the end, she just wanted to be at home.

JILL

Does she know?

GRAHAM

Excuse me?

JILL

Oh. Um. Does she know that she's dead?

GRAHAM

Does that matter?

JILL

Sometimes. Most of the time if you get a violent haunting, it's because a spirit has left something unfinished — whatever it might be. Those ghosts know they're dead and they're angry about it, they're not likely to sit down and have a cup of tea to talk about things, (slight chuckling) if you know what I mean.

GRAHAM

Oh I, I imagine not.

JILL

(losing track as she explains)

No, they're far more the type to throw your stuff around or drench it in

ectoplasm or... (back on track) oh, never mind. Um. Your wife, if she's doing the sorts of things she'd normally do it's possible she just... doesn't know she's passed.

GRAHAM

I never asked her. I, I didn't want to frighten her. It was just so amazing to see her again.

JILL

Oh, it's all right, Mr Edgers. I understand.

GRAHAM

Can you do anything?

JILL

When a haunting fades, it means her time is done. I can't force her to stay if she wants to go. Trying to keep her here would be cruel.

GRAHAM

(breaking down)

But I can't... I can't do this without her.

GRAHAM sobs.

JILL

Okay.

GRAHAM

Okay?

JILL

I can help but...

GRAHAM

I can pay. I know it looks like I don't have much money but it's... we're fine. F-Fine financially. I just, haven't been keeping things up as well since Judith...

JILL

It's all right, Mr Edgers, don't worry about that. I'll send you an account when we're done.

GRAHAM

Oh thank you, Ms Foster. Thank you so much.

A magic shimmer gradually fades in.

GRAHAM (CONT.)

What do you need? Do I have to do anything?

JILL

Close your eyes.

Magic shimmer increases against a whispering background, up to a calm tone that then fades away.

3: EXTERIOR, DAY, OUTSIDE GRAHAM'S FLAT

The calls of suburban birds, televisions on in the flats, people, traffic. JILL is just leaving, closing the door behind her. MARK walks towards her as she steps out of the flat.

MARK

What did you tell the poor bastard? Did we at least get a call out fee?

JILL
(flat, tired)

Yeah.

They walk towards the stairwell.

MARK
(scoffs) damn! you look like shit. What did you do?

JILL
What I needed to.

They enter the reverberant stairwell.

MARK
(suspicious)
You didn't even need your kit. Huh. I was right wasn't I? He's just paranoid. Imagining things. Bloody normals, they blame everything on magic when it's just their own—

JILL
(annoyed)
You don't know this business at all, do you Mark? What did you think when you found out you had the talent? That you could fleece people like that poor man for money and ignore the pain he was in?

MARK
Hey. That's not... that's not fair.

JILL
(tired)

No. No I guess it wasn't. I'm sorry Mark
I'm just...

MARK

God, you didn't summon her for him did
you?

Beat.

JILL

You were right. The ghost was never
there. But he's sensitive enough to
summon the memory of her. He'd just...
run out of energy. Of the power to do it
anymore. So I lent him some of mine.

MARK

You gave him some of your power?

JILL

An infusion, yeah. Not much, it's not like
he needs a lot to manifest a memory of
his wife. It's so near the surface with him
already.

MARK

You call me irresponsible.

JILL

I never said—

MARK

I can't believe you'd give your power
away to a — (scoffs) to a sad sap like that.
For Christ's sakes Jill, it's dangerous on
top of anything — what if he decides to
go off on one, summon something more

destructive than the ghost of his dead wife, you're the one telling me I need to be more careful!

They stop walking as JILL spins around to confront him.

JILL

You honestly think that man is going to up and use whatever power I gave him for... what? Evil? He's just tired and sad and lonely, Mark, and I could help him with that. I even charged him for the privilege!

MARK

(big scoff) Yeah and that's not hypocritical of you.

JILL

I don't know what you wanted me to do!

MARK

Nothing! Let him be lonely! Let him learn to live with it the way everyone else has to when they lose someone.

JILL

I could've done that. Yeah. But I didn't. I chose to help him. I'm sorry if you think me helping him was beneath you, but you're not the one who did anything, in the end, are you?

MARK

(shouting)

You sent me out!

JILL
(shouting)

Because you had no compassion! All he wanted was help and you were turning up your nose at the colour of his carpet from the moment you stepped in there. We don't get to pick and choose our clients, you get that, right? Sometimes you're going to be asked to help someone you don't think deserves it.

Long beat.

JILL (CONT.)
(tired)

I think our ideas of who deserves it and who doesn't might not match up that well.

Long beat.

MARK
(downbeat)

Can I drive back?

JILL

Yeah, sure, whatever. Just, try not to kill anyone on the way.

JILL passes over the keys to MARK.

[Music transition — chorus sings “it’s time, it’s time”]

4: INTERIOR, EARLY EVENING, BUSY CAFÉ (FLASHBACK)

The warm hubbub of a popular café near a busy street.

TIM
Congratulations, kid.

JILL

Can I have wine?

TIM

You're still only seventeen.

JILL

Parental permission! And I look older.

TIM

Just because you've dyed your hair and have a piercing doesn't mean they're not going to ask you for ID. And I'm not encouraging alcoholism in a newly minted certified magic user.

JILL

Ergh, you're no fun.

WAITRESS

Can I get you drinks?

JILL

Yes I'll have...

TIM

Two cokes, please.

JILL slides a menu card across.

JILL

And I'll have the big breakfast.

TIM

(exasperated)

It's 7 PM Jill.

JILL

And I want eggs.

TIM

The special, thanks.

WAITRESS

Thanks.

TIM and JILL are quiet as the WAITRESS collects the menus and leaves.

TIM

So, what did they get you to do?

JILL

On the practical? I had to catch a minor mud spirit — one that was clogging up the pipes under Oxford Street.

TIM

Build your own spirit box?

JILL

They had unimbued ones. I just had to spell it. Easy.

TIM

(pleased)

Ah that's good. You can spell up ours after school tomorrow. Nixies have been playing up in the area again.

JILL

(increasingly happy)

I can... spell?

TIM

Well yeah. If you're serious about being my apprentice, you can start doing some of the scut work at least and maybe help with the—

JILL gleefully laughs, pushing back her chair to go hug TIM.

TIM

Oh-ouph! Easy, easy now kid. It's only gonna be part time until the HSC is done, yeah? I promised your mum you'd—

JILL sits back down on her chair.

JILL

I thought she wanted me to go to uni?

TIM

(sighing)

She still wants you to do that, yeah but, I figured even if you do go you'll still need work right? Gotta fund that university lifestyle.

JILL

(groans) I don't want to...

TIM

You're still taking the year off, right? So don't worry too much about it now, huh? You can work with me for a year and then when you're eighteen, you'll be old enough and ugly enough to tell your mum about what you want to do next. Maybe you'll be better at that than I am.

JILL
(grumbling)

I doubt it.

TIM
Jill?

JILL
She wants me to be something I'm not.

TIM
(noncommittal)
mmm.

JILL
Don't think she's got the right to be
dictating what I—

TIM
Hey. Hey, we've talked about this.

JILL
(sulky teen groan)
Hhsh-mmmm!

TIM
This is supposed to be a celebration.

Beat.

JILL
(quiet and hesitant)
They didn't ask me to do anything with
fire.

TIM
(awkward)

It's not... they don't have to cover every...

JILL

I know you know some of the people on the board.

TIM

(blows air out his cheeks) You know I wouldn't do that. Your fire spells are fine. We've tested them. You've been trained.

JILL

But, it's so... so much harder than everything else.

TIM leans forward to JILL.

TIM

And that's fine. Every mage has their strengths. You're brilliant at summonings, great at reading the aether, you've got a lot of talent, Jill. Most of the crap you've seen about our lot throwing fireballs around is crap that they put on TV to make things more dramatic.

JILL

(small voice)

But... I should be able to put them out.

TIM

It's not your job. Doesn't have to be anyway. (brightly) That's why the fire brigade exists, kiddo.

Footsteps as the WAITRESS arrives with food and drinks. Glasses, cutlery and plates are placed onto the table.

TIM (CONT.)

Thanks.

JILL

Thanks.

TIM

Eat your stupid big breakfast and be happy you passed your cert, Jill. You'll be making big bucks in no time.

JILL

You gonna pay me more?

TIM

(snorts) In your dreams, girl.

[Music transition — bass plucking part of the theme music]

5: INTERIOR, MORNING, KITCHEN, SUBURBAN HOUSE

OLIVER and OLIVER'S DAD work around each other in the kitchen-dining area, prepping coffee and toast. Distantly heard is a cacophony of birds in full morning chorus.

OLIVER

What site are you at today anyway?

OLIVER'S DAD

Back at Vaocluse. Some rich bugger's building a mansion or something, you know how it is.

OLIVER

Sounds fun.

OLIVER'S DAD

Pays the bills. Where's the interview?

OLIVER

City. Um... Bond Street?

OLIVER'S DAD

Oooof. If you get it you'll be a city kid.

OLIVER

I'm twenty-two, Dad.

OLIVER'S DAD

Hmm. City. Kid.

The clinking of a spoon placed in an empty cup.

OLIVER'S DAD (CONT.)

At least the trains go regular there.

OLIVER

**I'm not gonna get it. But the interview
experience will be useful.**

OLIVER'S DAD

Pay?

OLIVER

**It's all right. It's not the best. Not the
worst.**

OLIVER'S DAD

Well the travel won't be too bad.

**OLIVER'S DAD pours boiled water into a cup, pausing before he
broaches the next topic.**

OLIVER'S DAD (CONT.)

**You're sure this is what you want to do,
Ollie? It's... people don't... it's not...**

OLIVER

**It's what I'm good at, dad. Pretty much the
only thing I'm good at if ya... well if you
listen to anyone.**

OLIVER'S DAD

**That's not true. You're a good kid. Always
were a good kid. Never got into as much
trouble as Luni, that's for sure.**

OLIVER

Mum didn't tell you all of it.

The scrape of buttering toast.

OLIVER'S DAD

**Huh sure. Not like we talk much. At least
not anymore. She's okay with this too
though?**

OLIVER

She's okay with it. Anyway, I'm twenty...

OLIVER'S DAD

**Two. Yeah. You're a grown man now. Hard
to believe when you're so short.**

**OLIVER
(chuckle)**

Dad.

OLIVER'S DAD

Magic, though. I just don't know, Ollie.

OLIVER

Not like I'm going into the police. They're the ones that deal with all the nasty stuff. The stuff I'm likely to be doing will just be... catching sprites. Getting rid of ghosts. It's like... it's like plumbing, dad.

OLIVER'S DAD

Doesn't pay as much as plumbing, as I said you'd be welcome on the—

OLIVER

I like it.

OLIVER'S DAD

(breathes through teeth)

OLIVER

I'm good at it.

OLIVER gets his shoes on.

OLIVER'S DAD

I guess I know what that's like. Finding something you're good at.

OLIVER

Yeah.

OLIVER zips a bag as **OLIVER'S DAD** bites down on toast.

[Music transition — cymbals and drums tap from theme music]

6: INTERIOR, EVENING, AMENA'S APARTMENT

Various chat-type notifications come from computer speakers. A door buzzer rings in a nearby room, and **AMENA** stands up, exiting her computer room. She uses a walking stick to aid her movement.

AMENA

Hello?

JILL
(via intercom)

Hey, it's me.

AMENA

Hey, come on up.

AMENA undoes a door chain, then unlocks and opens the apartment door. A nearby hallway door opens. A plastic bag rustles as **JILL** raises up what she's carrying.

JILL

I brought Thai.

AMENA

Legend. Come on in.

JILL walks down the hall and into the apartment.

JILL

How is it today?

AMENA closes the door.

AMENA

Just joint pain. Went for a walk yesterday and body wants to tell me all about it in detail. Thanks for coming round though, really. I was considering just eating fridge cheese for dinner.

JILL

Oh, there's nothing wrong with fridge cheese.

AMENA

That's what I tell my mum.

JILL

**She still think you can just fix everything
with diet and exercise?**

AMENA

(sighing) You know how it is.

JILL places the takeaway down on a kitchen bench.

AMENA (CONT.)

So. You said you wanted a consult.

JILL

Yeah.

AMENA

Recent death? It's not...

JILL

**No... I know he's not... not available. I
understand.**

AMENA

Is it for a case?

JILL

**Kind of. Sort of? Call it a follow up, I
guess? I just wanted to make sure she
was... okay with something.**

AMENA

How long ago?

JILL

Oh. Um. Two years? Died of breast cancer.

AMENA

That's stretching it a little bit. Most will move on after a year at most.

JILL

Yeah. I know. I just wanted to see if there was anything keeping her... Just wanted to make sure, that's all.

AMENA

You look tired, Jill.

JILL

Been a weird couple of days.

AMENA

(laughing a little)

Aren't they always though?

AMENA walks towards her computer room.

AMENA (CONT.)

I'll go ask Iggy about your friend. You know where all the plates are and everything right? What was her name?

AMENA pauses walking.

JILL

Judith Edgers.

AMENA

Any other details?

JILL

She was forty-seven, married to Graham Edgers. They lived in Allawah.

JILL starts prepping the food.

AMENA

Is he still?

JILL

Yeah. Um. I guess if you can get in touch with her I can give her a message from him but that's not why I wanted to check. He's... he's fine. It's for me, not him.

AMENA

I'll go check.

AMENA walks into her computer room.

JILL

Thanks for this Amena.

JILL continues getting plates, cutlery and glasses sorted, and dishing out Thai food. From the computer room comes a flurry of notification beeps and boops while AMENA types.

JILL (CONT.)

(calling out)

Everything okay?

AMENA

(calling back)

Yeah, just... they're all riled up tonight I don't know why. Gimme a sec.

JILL

No worries.

JILL continues plating food while AMENA types for a few seconds more. AMENA then walks back into the kitchen area.

AMENA

Sorry about that. Don't know quite what the issue is but everyone seems excited or upset about something. Iggy calmed them down enough for me to get some answers. (changing topic) This looks great. I'm starved.

JILL

Nothing better than a pad thai, I swear.

AMENA

So. Iggy said — eventually — that Judith Edgers was around for a few months, then moved on.

JILL

(sighing)

Oh. Okay. That's... that's good.

AMENA

Does it help?

JILL

It does. Thanks Mena. I owe you one.

AMENA

(chuckling)

You brought me Thai. Consider the debt paid.

They both laugh.

[Music transition — five lead guitar notes from the theme music]

7: INTERIOR, DAY, JILL'S OFFICE

Muted footsteps from the stairwell before the door opens.

JILL

Mark? Mark are you in yet?

JILL walks in further, putting her keys and bag down, then plays the answer machine via speaker as she takes off her jacket.

ANSWER MACHINE

You have two new messages. Message one.

GLORIA

Jill I swear to God your bloody phone, I love you honey but it's literally on the sideboard. It's just an excuse for me to drop in and see you on the way, isn't it?

JILL laughs quietly at GLORIA's message and starts opening mail.

GLORIA (CONT.)

That almost makes it okay. Almost. I'll be there at two, so I hope you weren't expecting any calls.

ANSWER MACHINE

Message two.

MARK

**(downbeat, like a relationship breakup)
Hi, Jill. Um. I'm not coming in today.**

JILL stops opening mail. She sighs as the message continues.

MARK (CONT.)

Or again, to be honest. I was gonna tell you last week but things were busy and then I just... (sighs) well I'm sorry. I guess. Maybe... something that's not so face to face will be better for me? At least now you won't have to keep trying to teach me to drive. And I guess we both knew this wasn't working out. Anyway I'll send you the email, formal... thing so you can be official and take me off the payroll or whatever. Um. You'll find someone else, I'm sure. Bye Jill.

JILL sighs heavily and flumps down into a desk chair.

JILL

Shit.

[Music — End Credits, instrumental]

ANNOUNCER (NINA NIKOLIC)

Welcome To Foster's is a Neon Inkwell podcast distributed by Rusty Quill Limited and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-Alike 4.0 International License.

This series is written and created by Imogen Cassidy and directed by Chris Magilton. This episode was edited by Elizabeth Moffatt, Lowri Ann Davies, and Meg McKellar, with title track and music from Sam Jones, and additional music from Nico Vettese.

The series features Nina Nikolic as Jill Foster, Tim Sefo as Oliver Long, Harrison Keen as Mark Wilson, Sebrina Thornton-Walker as Gloria Foster, Hannah Aroni as Sylvia Price, Michael Bache as Brian Hewlitt-Smith, Isabelle Houghton as Young Jill, Alice Magilton as Marie, Zara Moffatt as the Nixie, Shakira Searle as Amena Malouf, Faryaal Jabbar as Rashida Baqri, and Chris Alosio as Tulele.

Additional voices by Lowri Ann Davies, Lee Davis-Thalbourne, Maia Harlap, Filloyd Kennedy, Chris Magilton, Matt Malachite, Elizabeth Moffatt, Cooper Mortlock, Hamish Plaggemars, Brooke Scobie and Dallas Tipau.

The production would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this series is set, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. We pay our respects to elders, past and present.

Neon Inkwell is produced by April Sumner with Executive Producer Alexander J Newall and Showrunner Elizabeth Moffatt.

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