

WELCOME TO FOSTERS

EPISODE 4

“Dead Internet”

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
Fosters. Episode four, Dead Internet.

[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, MORNING, JILL'S OFFICE

An office near a busy urban area. Despite this there is the odd chirp of birds from outdoors. OLIVER flips through pages, types, and makes the occasional frustrated noise like clicking his tongue.

Muted footsteps on the stairwell, and then the office door opens. GLORIA walks in, closing the door and approaching OLIVER.

OLIVER

Oh hi.

GLORIA

Hey! You're the new guy.

OLIVER

Yeah?

GLORIA

I already like you more than the old guy.
Jill not in yet?

OLIVER

She just went to get coffee.

GLORIA

She forgot her phone. Again. It's a thing
she does. I'm Gloria by the way, she told
me your name but like a chump I forgot it
immediately.

OLIVER

Oliver. Oliver Long.

GLORIA

Lovely to meet you.

GLORIA reaches inside a purse to place **JILL**'s phone on the desk.

GLORIA (CONT.)

I swear I'm going to put it on a lanyard
and tie it around her neck every—

The office door opens again. **GLORIA** spins to see **JILL** walking in.

GLORIA (CONT.)

—Hi babe!

JILL

What are you... oh. Erm, again huh.

GLORIA

I was telling Oliver that I'm going to tie it to you.

JILL

I'd still somehow manage to forget it and you know it.

As JILL talks, she pops a coffee out of a takeout tray passing it to OLIVER. Paper crumples as she places down a croissant in a takeaway bag.

JILL (CONT.)

(warm and enthusiastic) Hey Oliver, got you a mocha and a croissant! You're not allergic to nuts are you?

OLIVER

(crosstalk) Ahh..

JILL

Oh, Debbie says Ian wants us to put the wards in after the lunch rush which is pushing it I reckon considering how much fun the nixie had last time but there isn't much you can do about Ian when it comes to squeezing money out of him.

Beat.

JILL

What?

GLORIA walks towards the office door.

GLORIA

I've gotta go, I'm on lunch today. Try not to leave the phone in the office when you leave?

JILL

I only do it so you feel needed.

GLORIA

Mmm, of course.

GLORIA closes the door as she leaves.

OLIVER

She seems great.

JILL

She is. Whatcha up to?

OLIVER

Oh. Well. I've been trying to find some things but I'm afraid... well.

JILL

What?

OLIVER

The filing system. It makes no sense.

JILL

What filing system?

OLIVER

Exactly.

JILL

(faux contemplating)

Hmmm.

OLIVER

You wanted me to take notes on the McGuinness case? For Rashida. Well there's a reference on the file about a case in nineteen eighty four that had the same type of demonic possession and I can't find the file because...

JILL

Oh. Stuff from the eighties is in the archives, that was Tim's system, not mine.

OLIVER

What system did he use?

JILL

(laughing) Chronological. By number.

OLIVER

What?

JILL

He started from one and went up according to when he got the case.

OLIVER

Um. Uh... how did you ever find anything?

JILL

If it's from the eighties, I generally don't.
But from what I remember eighties cases
are around the two hundreds. Tim hadn't
been going too long by then.

Most of our people aren't that interested
in what happened in the past, they're
more concerned about getting stuff done
now, if you know what I mean. It's the first
time Rashida's asked for something like
this.

Beat.

OLIVER

You really should cross reference the files
though.

JILL

(laughs) That's why I hire apprentices.

OLIVER

Is that also why you lose them?

JILL

Eeehh, cheeky. You're still new.

An alarm goes off on JILL's mobile phone.

JILL (CONT.)

What the... oh. Oh!

OLIVER

Sylvia Price!

JILL

Come on!

They hurriedly start moving.

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

2. INTERIOR, MORNING, PRICE & BOONE LOBBY

JILL and OLIVER use the call button for the elevator. The doors open and they step inside. JILL is slightly out of breath.

JILL

What floor is she on?

OLIVER

The top one?

JILL presses a button and the lift starts moving.

JILL

That seems obvious now that you say it out loud. Do I look all right.

OLIVER

You look fine.

Beat.

JILL

Your collar's crooked. Here.

Beat while JILL adjust OLIVER's outfit.

OLIVER

I haven't worn a suit since tinamatua's funeral. Lucky I packed it.

JILL

I'm offended you didn't wear it to the interview yesterday.

OLIVER

Ah, the nixie would have ruined it.

The lift stops, and the doors open. They step out into a lush reception area in front of SYLVIA's office.

BRIAN

Ms Foster. Mr Wilson.

JILL

**No, this is Oliver Long. Mr Wilson uh...
has moved on. I mean. He left. A month or
so ago.**

BRIAN

Your website says...

JILL

It's been a busy month.

BRIAN

You look familiar.

OLIVER

**Oh um. Yeah. I did an interview here.
About a month ago.**

BRIAN

**That's right! For the magical assistant!
Well. I'm pleased you found other
employment, Mr Long.**

OLIVER

Thanks.

BRIAN

She's expecting you. Please go in.

BRIAN leads them to **SYLVIA**'s office, opening the door for them. Ramp up the expensive to eleven, this is pretty much an entire flat of an office. **JILL** and **OLIVER** enter, the footsteps quieter on the carpeted floor, door closing behind them.

SYLVIA

(distantly from her desk)

Ah. Ms Foster. Good of you to come on short notice.

She stands and walks towards them.

JILL

I'm sorry I couldn't make it yesterday.

SYLVIA

No rush, no rush at all. I doubt time will have much of an impact on our problem. Not any more in any case.

JILL

Can you tell me exactly what the problem is? This doesn't feel like the kind of building that gets bothered by unruly spirits.

SYLVIA

(laughs) Oh, the foundations are very old, but we have maintenance staff for that sort of thing. This is a little more specialised, which is why we contacted you.

SYLVIA leads them back out to the reception area.

JILL

Oh?

SYLVIA

Come through.

They walk up to a security door. SYLVIA swipes a card then keys in a code; an electric door opens. The three of them walk through to another, even larger carpeted room.

OLIVER

Holy.... uh. Wow.

SYLVIA

Magnificent, isn't it? I've been working on this collection for nearly twenty years.

OLIVER

That's... that's...!

SYLVIA

Saoirse Cuddon's spellbook. Yes. The original. A gift from my father when I graduated high school, probably what prompted me to start the entire collection, if I'm honest.

JILL

(increasing alarm)

You've got... this is pretty much every seminal magical text in existence! How...? why did the council...?! They let you...?!

SYLVIA

The Council of Magi are very happy to have the texts looked after, Ms Foster. You'll notice that the room is hermetically sealed, each volume preserved as perfectly as it can be with the very latest technology. It is extremely expensive to

properly look after magical texts as I'm sure you're aware.

JILL

Yeah. Yeah I suppose it does make sense the Council would want to outsource it.

OLIVER

But you're... you're not an adept, are you?

SYLVIA

(amused, but with an edge)

One does not have to be an adept in the arcane to appreciate its history, Mr...

OLIVER

Oliver. Uh. Long.

SYLVIA

Mr Long.

JILL

All these texts though. Locked up in your office.

As SYLVIA talks, she picks up a book as one is wont to do in a library, but places it down again later.

SYLVIA

The library is open to anyone who applies to view the texts, Ms Foster. Of course, you need special dispensation from the Council to access restricted materials, which is part of the reason I called you in. And in any case all of these are originals. The Council retains perfectly legible

copies of their own, and they need far less meticulous care than the volumes you see here.

JILL

Okay. So. What did you call us in for?

SYLVIA

I'm afraid I've been robbed, Ms Foster. One of the books is missing.

JILL

Stolen?

SYLVIA

Yes.

JILL

From in here?

SYLVIA

Unfortunately, yes.

OLIVER

Um. Did you call the police?

SYLVIA

(with some contempt)

I never deal directly with the police, young man, especially not the Magus department. No, I asked Brian to call in a consulting adept on this and he came up with you, Ms Foster. Highly recommended. For discretion.

JILL

Discretion?

SYLVIA

You did some work for one of my employees, Ms Paine? A couple of years ago now.

JILL

Arietta Paine?

SYLVIA

(unsure of actual details)

Yes. There was some... demon trouble?

JILL

Yeah. Yaaaah, I did. Well, I'm glad she still thinks well enough of me to recommend me to you.

SYLVIA

She said your handling of the matter was satisfactory.

JILL

Mmmhmmmm.

OLIVER

What?

JILL

I'll tell you later. Okay, so you're not keen on attracting attention around this theft, so you've hired me instead of going to the police. Your choice, and, and I respect it, but, you have to know that the wips have a lot more resources than I do, and if I do find out where this book is or who took it,

all I'm really able to do is tell you, or bring the police in to try to get it back.

SYLVIA

If you can find the book, or the person who took it, I can deal with anything else.

JILL

Mmmm. Yes. I suppose you can. So.

Distant footprints as BRIAN comes to the entrance of the library. He clears his throat.

SYLVIA

Yes Brian?

BRIAN

Ms Price we have a call coming through from Logistics again regarding the storage of the—

SYLVIA

Again? Fine. I'll come and talk to them. (to JILL and OLIVER) If you would be so kind as to stay here, Ms Foster, Mr Long. I won't be a moment.

She walks out the room, sealing the door behind her. OLIVER and JILL are silent until the door shuts.

OLIVER

Can you believe this place?

JILL

It's a lot.

OLIVER

They're all originals! Saoirse's spellbook is meant to have some of the most potent fire spells ever transcribed! It's been out of circulation for nearly a hundred years. I'd kill to be able to get a look at it.

JILL

Mmmm. I wonder.

JILL moves closer towards the door.

JILL (CONT.)

Audiamus quid dictatur

Despite her dodgy Latin, whispering voices rise and fade, then SYLVIA's voice comes through, with a shimmery distortion.

SYLVIA

They have to be contained. It was built specifically for this you don't have to... it's not as though they can do any more damage to themselves at this point! Make certain that they...

There is a magical distorted thwap sound and JILL falls to the floor, knocking some books off the shelves.

JILL

Ouch.

OLIVER

What happened?

OLIVER strides over to help.

JILL

(makes hissing sounds as though she's burned herself)

Anti magic field kicked in. (pained sigh)

**Makes sense for a room full of ancient
texts I should have anticipated it.**

OLIVER

What was she talking about?

JILL

No idea.

OLIVER

Why did you try to eavesdrop?

JILL

**My curious nature. Anyway, (pained
noise) we're supposed to be investigating
here... I thought we might find something
out that could help.**

OLIVER

**Surely she'll give us all the relevant
information? She wants the book back,
after all.**

The library door slides open again.

JILL

(noncommittal sound)

SYLVIA

**My apologies. Are you all right, Ms
Foster?**

JILL

Me? Oh. I'm fine.

A short beat as JILL unzips her bag, getting out a notepad, and flipping through to a blank page. There is the scratch of pencil on paper whenever SYLVIA provides a useful data point.

JILL (CONT.)

Oh. So. Ah... I'll just take down a few details. What's the name of the book?

SYLVIA

It's "Honorius's Necromantic Codex". Not the most original of titles I know but then again it wasn't written with the intent of being a New York Times bestseller.

JILL

(polite chuckle) Ah, when was it stolen?

SYLVIA

I'm afraid I don't actually know. I don't check every shelf every time I visit the library, you understand.

JILL

So, when did you discover it was missing?

SYLVIA

Yesterday. I was having a delightful discussion with Nigel Haberfield, you know he hosts Saturday Morning Snack Time on the...

JILL

(unimpressed)

Yeah, I know him.

SYLVIA

Of course. Well, he brought up that whole business about banning necromancy back in the seventies and I thought I'd have a look through the collection to refresh my memory. That's when I noticed the volume was missing.

JILL

You said anyone was allowed to access the library if they went through the... proper channels?

SYLVIA

Yes. There are a few forms one has to fill out and a small background check, but it's really very easy to—

JILL

I assume there's a record of everyone who has done that, over the past, say... twelve months?

SYLVIA

Of course. I'll have Brian forward it to you.

JILL

Can you think of any reason why this particular volume might have been stolen? And none of the others?

SYLVIA

I've only really looked through it the once. But, from what I remember it was more dense than the other necromantic texts. Older too. I don't know if that helps.

JILL

And there aren't any copies of it in the Council library?

OLIVER

Why wouldn't there be?

JILL

Necromantic texts aren't held there, because of the ban.

SYLVIA

Indeed.

OLIVER

That means there's no way we can find out what's in it?

SYLVIA

Unfortunately not. I know it held some necromantic rituals but, not being an adept myself I couldn't tell you any of the details.

JILL

Had anyone else applied to examine the book?

SYLVIA

Only the highest members of the council would be allowed to view it. I did have Brian run a check and no one has requested this particular volume since I acquired it six years ago.

JILL

Where did you find it?

SYLVIA

It was in the library of a deceased estate in Katoomba—obviously the owner missed the amnesty when the ban was first enforced, or wasn't aware of its nature. The library was extensive and there were only a few magical texts in it.

JILL

How did you...

SYLVIA

I have a few agents in the antique book market who keep an eye out for these sorts of things for me. The collection wouldn't be what it is today without them.

JILL

Hmm.

Beat as JILL writes.

JILL (CONT.)

If you could give me the name of the library owner that could be helpful? You're certain you don't want to involve the police?

SYLVIA

I would very much prefer to avoid them.

JILL

Okay. Oh, I don't know if it'll help but some kind of plans for the room? I'm assuming it was specially constructed. There's only one entrance, yeah?

SYLVIA

Just the one and it's under constant surveillance.

JILL

How's the surveillance monitored?

SYLVIA

We have a security station; Brian has the details of the employees who monitor it. I must admit to being very disappointed in them. Some restructuring may be in order.

JILL

Okay so we'll talk to... Brian? On the way out.

JILL, SYLVIA and OLIVER walk towards the library door.

SYLVIA

I'll include the plans and the list of employees with the list of visitors. I'm assuming your rates are the same as on your website?

As JILL talks, the door whirrs open to BRIAN waiting nearby. They walk through towards him.

JILL

Oh yes. I'll send you the bill when we're done.

SYLVIA

Brian if you could provide Ms Foster with what we discussed?

BRIAN

Of course, Ms Price.

SYLVIA

I don't like being stolen from, Ms Foster. I would appreciate it a great deal, if you could bring my property back to me.

JILL

I'll do everything I can, Ms Price.

SYLVIA

Well then, I must admit to being very busy and this has taken up far too much of my time. I wish you the best of luck, Ms Foster.

SYLVIA retreats to her office.

BRIAN

Ms Price said you would be wanting a list of security personnel and the plans to the library.

BRIAN passes over some papers.

BRIAN (CONT.)

And a list of those who've applied to access the library from the past twelve months.

JILL starts paging through the papers.

JILL

This one... um... Martin Briggs? He's listed as having left?

BRIAN

Indeed. He left quite abruptly about a month ago, without notice.

JILL

You underlined him...?

BRIAN

Under the circumstances I thought it was relevant, considering he did have access to the library.

JILL

I'll have to look him up. That said, with the amount you've already done you and Ms Price could probably handle this investigation yourselves.

BRIAN

Ms Price is very busy, Ms Foster.

JILL

Yes. She said.

BRIAN

As am I. Do you require someone to escort you out?

JILL

No. We're good. Thanks.

JILL and OLIVER move to the elevators. We follow BRIAN as he walks into SYLVIA's office, closing the door behind him.

SYLVIA

Yes Brian?

BRIAN

I'm beginning to think she might not be the best choice.

SYLVIA

How so?

BRIAN

The wards went off. She tried to magic in there while we were discussing... logistics.

SYLVIA

It's important that we hire someone who is serious about their work.

BRIAN

It's also important that she not succeed.

SYLVIA

You worry too much, Brian. If Ms Foster can manage to uncover enough information to stop us in two days, more credit to her.

BRIAN

But...

SYLVIA

She won't. Stop worrying.

[Music transition — lead guitar from the theme music]

3. INTERIOR, MORNING, RECEPTION AREA OUTSIDE SYLVIA's OFFICE

OLIVER looks through some of the pages from **BRIAN** as the elevator arrives and doors open.

OLIVER

Oh, wow.

JILL

What is it?

They step inside the elevator, **JILL** pressing the button.

OLIVER

I know this guy. One of the security guards.

JILL

What was his name... uh... Marvin?

The doors close and the elevator heads down.

OLIVER

Martin Briggs. No, not him. This one.

OLIVER taps on the paper.

OLIVER (CONT.)

He's ah, yeah... that's... he's my cousin.

JILL

You get on with him?

OLIVER

Yeah? Haven't seen him since school though.

JILL

Good.

Beat.

OLIVER

**So why did you try to listen in back there
in the library?**

JILL

**Remember what Rashida said? About
things getting weird lately?**

OLIVER

Yeah.

JILL

**Well, that spirit in the national park said
the dead were restless. The text that's
been stolen is a necromantic text, right?
So, perhaps it's connected.**

OLIVER

Makes sense. What were they saying?

JILL

**Something about storing something.
Keeping it "contained". She seemed
pretty agitated about it.**

OLIVER

**Nothing to do with this whole business
then.**

JILL

(not so sure)

Mmmm.

The doors open and JILL heads towards the reception desk.

OLIVER

Where are you going?

JILL

**Bear with me. (towards reception) Um,
excuse me?**

RECEPTIONIST

Yes?

JILL

**Hi. Jill Foster. I just had a meeting with Ms
Price. Could you point me in the direction
of the security monitoring station?**

RECEPTIONIST

It's... just over there, but—

JILL

Fantastic! Thank you!

JILL is already walking briskly away; OLIVER follows.

RECEPTIONIST

I don't think you're...

JILL

**I'll let Ms Price know you're doing a great
job!**

**RECEPTIONIST
(in background)**

I think...!

OLIVER

What are you doing?

JILL raps on the security monitoring station's door.

JILL

Hopefully we'll be lucky.

The door clicks open.

TULELE

**Sorry ma'am, this area is restricted I'm
afraid if you could...**

**Beat. In low heels the RECEPTIONIST is rapidly arriving from
behind them.**

TULELE (CONT.)

Ollie?

OLIVER

'Lele! Hi.

RECEPTIONIST

**(out of breath) Hey, Tulele these folks
aren't...**

TULELE

**Ah, don't worry, Jen, this is my cousin.
He's just... coming in to say hi.**

RECEPTIONIST

Oh. Oh okay. If you're sure?

TULELE

All good.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh.

TULELE

I'll see you later, Jen.

The **RECEPTIONIST** departs. **TULELE** ushers them through the security door, closing it before embracing **OLIVER**.

Eeeeeey, what are you doing here? I thought you were up in Queensland?

OLIVER

I was. Um. 'til about a month ago?

TULELE

Well, why didn't you call? How's your sister?

OLIVER

Ah she's good. Um. This is my boss? Jill Foster.

TULELE

Oh hey, ah, nice to meet you. Are you why Ollie's wearing a suit?

JILL

Ah yeah definitely. Strict dress code for all my employees.

OLIVER

Yours is nicer.

TULELE

Yeah it's hot as, though. What are you doing here?

OLIVER

Um...

OLIVER gestures with the paperwork provided by **BRIAN**.

JILL

This won't take long, Mr...?

TULELE

Tulele's fine, Miss.

JILL

Call me Jill.

TULELE

Why are you introducing me to your boss, Ollie? You trying to set me up? I told your sister that ah...

OLIVER

Nah, nah, nah—we're here for work, ah 'Lele. Jill's um...

OLIVER fidgets with the papers nervously.

OLIVER (CONT.)

Jill's a wizard.

Beat.

TULELE

(reserved while processing)

Oh. Right. Yeah.

JILL

We're, here about the...

TULELE

Ah you're here about the robbery.

OLIVER

Sorry, 'Lele.

TULELE

Nah, nah nah, bro, you're right. I know what it's like.

So, what do you wanna know? That creepy Brian was down yesterday asking for a list of all of us and our shifts.

JILL

Did you know about the theft?

TULELE

Not until yesterday. And look, I dunno what happened or how, you can see here...

TULELE sits at his desk and the other two move around to view his screens.

Every room up there has at least three cameras and all of this is recorded. Brian got me to download the last twelve month's worth for the library so he could give it to someone else to review.

JILL

Someone else?

TULELE

I think he thinks one of us did it. Or he wants to pin it on us.

JILL

Not a fan of Brian I take it?

TULELE

You've seen him, yeah?

JILL

Mmm hmmm.

TULELE

(laughs) Yeah. Anyway, none of us know what the deal is, we've never seen anything weird up there, and I know it's magic but... sorry... but what the hell are we supposed to do about that? We don't do magic security, just the regular stuff.

JILL

You don't?

TULELE

Nope. We're just guys.

JILL

Interesting. Did you know Marvin...

OLIVER

Martin.

JILL

Martin Briggs? Left a while ago, without notice?

TULELE

Eh? Nah, I never heard of him.

JILL

Brian wanted us to look into him. You never worked with him at all?

TULELE

Well... we do shifts, right, and we only really see each other on hand over. I don't remember a Marvin. Or a Martin. Could just have been a casual rather than full time maybe?

JILL

Mmm. Well. Thank you for your time... Tulele. It's nice to meet some of Oliver's relatives.

OLIVER

Oh, we're not related.

TULELE

Oh we just, went to school together.

JILL

But, you said..?

TULELE

It's a thing.

Chair wheels roll as TULELE stands up.

TULELE

Hey Ollie, catch up for a beer later? I'm off at four. You still got the same number?

They share a forearm shake.

OLIVER

Yeah. That'd be great 'Lele.

4. INTERIOR DAY, JILL'S CAR

JILL is driving with OLIVER in the passenger seat to her left. Sydney traffic can be heard through the glass passing to the right side.

OLIVER

Well. That was interesting. It was good to see 'Lele again.

JILL

Mmm.

OLIVER

Any ideas?

JILL

A few. We can head up to Katoomba, talk to the neighbours of the guy who died...

OLIVER

Uh... John Morrisson.

JILL

But that'll take a whole day so, I figured we should probably try a few other things first.

OLIVER

Like?

JILL

Look into this mystery guard, Marvin.

OLIVER moves as if he's going to correct her but doesn't.

JILL (CONT.)

And there's someone I think you'll enjoy meeting. Siri, call Mena.

MOBILE PHONE

Calling Amina Malouf.

The phone rings and is quickly answered by **AMENA**.

AMENA

Jill? Hey. What's up?

JILL

Are you free? Got a little job for you.

AMENA

Sure. Can you come here though? Not up for leaving the house today.

JILL

No problem. Need us to bring anything?

AMENA

Coffee would be grand.

JILL

You got it.

JILL hangs up.

OLIVER

So who's Mena?

JILL

She's a medium.

OLIVER

She talks to the dead?

JILL

Yep.

OLIVER

Huh.

JILL

I can smell your skepticism. May I remind you that you work for a private consulting wizard and the days of people not believing in ghosts are long gone.

OLIVER

No one calls us wizards anymore.

JILL

(with humour) Only because they're cowards. Anyway, Mena's awesome, and talking to the dead is very useful in our line of work.

OLIVER

I always thought it was just... you know, pretend. To make money.

JILL

There are lots of fakers out there. Not just mediums.

OLIVER

Yeah.

JILL

But Mena's the real deal.

OLIVER

**How does she do it then? Crystal ball?
Tarot cards?**

JILL

(laughs) No.

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

5. INTERIOR, DAY, AMENA'S FLAT

AMENA is ushering JILL and OLIVER inside. They shut the door behind them. AMENA uses a walking stick to aid her movement.

AMENA

Sorry I was a bit slow, not doing fantastic today.

JILL

Oof, sorry Mena. Need a hand getting...

AMENA

Nah, it's all right. I was going to go shopping later but I think I'll just get delivery.

OLIVER

Are you all right?

AMENA

Fibro. Bad day.

OLIVER

Fibro?

AMENA

Fibromalygia. It's all right I don't need my chair or anything but I'm not up to much.

JILL

Here. Might help a bit.

JILL passes AMENA the coffee. Paper rustles from a café takeaway bag.

AMENA

God yes. Smells great.

JILL

Oh, this is Oliver by the way, new apprentice.

AMENA

Nice to meet you. (to them both) So what did you need?

JILL

**Just got a case from Sylvia Price.
Thought I could ask Iggy a few questions,
see if he can get us in touch with some
relevant people.**

OLIVER

We're really going to talk to the dead?

AMENA

That's what I do, friend.

OLIVER

How... do you do it exactly?

AMENA

Discord, mainly, these days, although I started out on MSN Messenger.

OLIVER

I'm sorry, what?

AMENA

(chuckle) You didn't tell him?

JILL

I thought it would be better to show him.

OLIVER

Are you telling me you talk to the dead... on the Internet?

AMENA

Can't talk to them in person, can I?

OLIVER

Nooooo...?

AMENA

Iggy's one of my mods. He's been dead a couple of centuries but surprisingly enough the longer they've been dead the better they are at the Internet.

JILL

(still amused)

Oliver, you're gaping.

OLIVER

I just...

AMENA

You thought I'd have a crystal ball or something? Tarot cards?

OLIVER

Well...

AMENA

Trust me. This is way easier. Or at least it would be if my internet didn't cut out all the time.

AMENA leads them towards the computer room.

OLIVER

So what, can I join the server? Like, can I talk to the dead too? Is it something just everyone can do?

AMENA sits. She types as they speak. Various chat-type notification noises come from the speakers.

AMENA

You can join the server, sure, but they won't talk to anyone but me.

OLIVER

That doesn't make sense. If I type into the chat room I should be able to—

AMENA

I can see where you're coming from, logically, but it doesn't work like that. Come on, you're an adept, you know magic and technology do weird things when they're mixed.

OLIVER

You said Iggy was one of your... what... mods?

AMENA

Mmhmm.

OLIVER

That's...

AMENA

Weird?

OLIVER

Kind of. They don't teach about mediums in Cert 1.

AMENA

(snorts) Lots of stuff they don't teach you in Cert 1.

OLIVER

Mmm.

AMENA

Sorry I had a few DMs I needed to clear.

She stops typing and turns to them.

AMENA (CONT.)

What did you want to know?

JILL

A necromantic text has been stolen. We don't know what it's for or what spells might be in it, but you know that necromancy is mainly used to...

AMENA

Raise the dead, yeah. Although it doesn't usually work very well. So you just, wanna ask around? See if the dead have noticed anything?

JILL

Specifically I guess have any of them been... (small throat clear) raised lately.

AMENA

(pained) Ohhh. I'll ask.

AMENA types. Notification bing in response.

AMENA (CONT.)

Iggy says some folks have gone quiet lately. That's not so unusual, the dead don't stick around forever, there are other places to be. But he says a few more have gone missing than usual, he's just going to try to put me through to one of the ones who—

The computer fans start whirring at full speed while digital distortion feeds through the speakers. An ungodly and very spooky electronic screech is central to the noise.

JILL, AMENA, OLIVER

(pained noise) Ohh!

JILL

What the...

AMENA

Gah! That's...

JILL

Turn it down!

OLIVER

(pained) Ahh!

JILL

Off! Mena!

AMENA

(big breath in) Okay!

OLIVER

(pained relief) Ohh!

AMENA turns the audio off; the computer fans continue to whirl at top speed while the computer makes irritated clicks and scratches.

AMENA

Okay.

Iggy's typing, he'll give us a rough idea of what's going on.

OLIVER

What the hell was that?

AMENA

I don't know! Never had that happen before.

JILL

Is your computer all right?

AMENA

Better be, or I'm sending you the repair bill. Okay, that's a long message from Iggy, Jill you might wanna...

JILL

Okay.

The computer settles back to a quiet hum while JILL reads.

JILL (CONT.)

**Did you teach Iggy the word "poggers"
Amena?**

AMENA

**He likes to watch Minecraft streams with
me, okay?**

OLIVER

What's happening?

JILL

**If I'm deciphering Iggy's unique mix of
18th Century Australian slang and
internet memes correctly, that was the
sound of one of the living dead.**

AMENA

Oh. Well; shit.

JILL

Didn't sound happy about it either.

AMENA

**Definitely sounds like someone's using
that book. Iggy says he used to dabble in
necromancy when he was alive, do you
know what the book was called?**

JILL

I wrote it down somewhere.

JILL's patting her pockets for her notebook.

JILL (CONT.)

Ah, Rheese's Dead Stuff, or something...

OLIVER

Honorius' Necromantic Codex.

JILL

(happy she can stop the search)

That's the one.

AMENA

**He's asking around to see if anyone
knows it.**

JILL

**See if he can find John Morrisson—that's
where Price got the book from.**

AMENA

Will do.

OLIVER

**So someone's stolen the book and is
using it then.**

JILL

Certainly seems that way.

OLIVER

You don't sound convinced.

JILL

**Seems a bit weird that's all. If someone's
out there raising the dead why haven't we**

heard about it? Shambling corpses aren't exactly discreet.

OLIVER

You've got a point.

AMENA

Bingo! Here's John Morrisson!

JILL

You found him!

AMENA

Yep. Bit of a nerd it seems. He knows what was in the book though, let me just.... oh. Oh, well, that's not great.

JILL

Mena?

AMENA

Standard necromantic text—how to raise corpses to do your domestic duties, stuff like that—but there's a big ritual in it that's super bad news.

JILL

What sort of ritual?

AMENA

He says it's to make a lich.

JILL

Oh. Great.

[Music — End Credits, instrumental]

ANNOUNCER (NINA NIKOLIC)

Welcome to Fosters 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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