

MAG – “Retrospective – Director’s Commentary 2 (Patron Clips)”

Content Warnings

- Spoilers for show to date
- Character deaths
- Physical violence (inc self-injury & SFX)
- Explicit language
- Discussions of: blades, ghosts, human remains, death & murder
- Mentions of: insects, trauma
- SFX: high-pitched sounds, screaming, static

Transcriber’s note: Alex & Jonny generally talk over the clips that have been selected. For ease, we are replicating the main clip played, then presenting their commentary, rather than trying to intersperse lines. The episode in question also continues to play, faded into the background.

ALEX

Hello listener, it's me, Alexander J Newall. And with me today, I have...

JONNY

Jonny. Jonny's here. Hooray!

ALEX

And we are here to do another commentary episode. This one is covering choices made by Patrons. So these are the bits that Patrons really, really, really want us to give low quality, kind of riffing around.

JONNY

It's great. It's going to be insights. I'm going to be saying funny stories, I promise. I promise there'll be a funny story for every one of these clips.

ALEX

Eh, I don't know. I mean—

JONNY

Even if I have to make them up.

ALEX

Yeah. Right. Fictional quips. Here we go. Any last words before we get started?

JONNY

God help us all?

ALEX

No pressure Jonny, but you do also have to get all of these now encyclopaedically correct.

JONNY

Yeah. That's fair.

[CLIP: MAG039 – Infestation]

“**ARCHIVIST:** Why are you still here?”

MARTIN: (Considering) Don’t really know. I just am. It didn’t feel right to just leave. I’ve typed up a few resignation letters, but I just couldn’t bring myself to hand them in.

I’m trapped here. It’s like I can’t... move on and the more I struggle, the more I’m stuck.

ARCHIVIST: Martin...You’re not, uh... You didn’t die here, did you?

MARTIN: What? What? N-No... what?!

ARCHIVIST: No, I just... No, just the way you phrased that...

MARTIN: Made you think I was a ghost?

ARCHIVIST: No... it’s—

MARTIN: No, no... it’s just that whatever web these statements have caught you in, well, I’m there too. We all are, I think. [SIGH]

...

A ghost? Really?

ARCHIVIST: (Tiredly) Shut up Martin.”

ALEX

(Whispered) Why are you still here?

JONNY

You told me to be here for recording, Alex! I don't have another choice.

Oh, it's ghost.

ALEX

Yeah, I know where we are.

JONNY

It's ghost.

Funny story about this is... weirdly for quite a long section of Season 2, Alex actually **was** a ghost. So when we were recording the Season 1 finale—

ALEX

You're not even waiting for the quiet bit; you're just diving right in! Gah...

JONNY

I know this one, it's like, 'Ohhhh, it's funny.' You know, misunderstandings...

To be fair, this is one of the first times in the series that I properly was just, like, 'You know what? I can do a joke. That's going to be fun.'

ALEX

You can't crosstalk over crosstalk, Jonny, you're mad!

JONNY

I'm tripling the crosstalk—

ALEX

You're a renegade

JONNY

Tripling the crosstalk.

ALEX

The thing I liked about that scene is there hasn't been much chance for true levity earlier, because Season 1 has to take itself very seriously. It has a slightly tongue in cheek start where it's like, 'I'm a bit officious so that you know who I am.'

[BACKGROUND VOICES OF THE SCENE BETWEEN SASHA AND ELIAS]

JONNY

The Archivist **is** a bit of a joke in a lot of the ways, but the actual series, the actual horror of it and the interactions have to be quite po-faced.

ALEX

But that meant that it was only once you had a big, you know, 'stuff's hitting the fan' finale that you could then have...

JONNY

Just that moment.

Also. I love comedy that comes out of characters, like, engaging with very, like, high nonsense, like, genre stuff in very real ways.

If you're like, 'Hang on ghosts are a thing.' There's a question of, like, 'Okay, well, it does kind of sound like you're saying the stuff that you say when you realise you're a ghost.'

ALEX

Yeah.

JONNY

So I really enjoy those moments of, like, where genre awareness clashes.

ALEX

I'm really struggling with this, because I haven't heard this episode in about four years, and I can still hear it running just a little bit underneath. And part of me is just there going—

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

‘Why’s Lottie in the pod— Lottie **is** in the podcast! Yes. What? Why is there all this—’

[BACKGROUND VOICES OF THE SCENE BETWEEN MARTIN, THE ARCHIVIST AND TIM’S ARRIVAL]

JONNY

Oh, someone's— Oh it's Tim. This is Tim. This is Tim, turning up. Ah, Tim without his trousers.

ALEX

More importantly, Happy Tim. I got too used to Angry Tim towards the end.

JONNY

Do you remember when we made Mike hold his breath for ages to do the scene and he got really light-headed?

ALEX

He gets really light-headed really easily.

JONNY

Yeah. To be clear, we didn't force him to do this. We were like, you know, if you, like, do the sort of faux-hyperventilating, it gives you a certain giddy energy. And he went a little bit further I think that we intended.

ALEX

That whole scene was— That was a very fun one to record because as well, you got to remember that at that point, we'd never done proper group recordings.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

Those are our first group recordings, and there's elements of, like, discovering that Mike's not allowed to speak at the same time as other performers.

JONNY

Mike's deep bass rumble... Was that the first time we had to just, like, strap a pillow to his chest?

ALEX

Yep! For a chunk of that, I remember we were in post-asbestos flat, and we were all gathered around my table. And we were sat around the table in what was effectively a purely empty room, I'd only really just moved into. And we— Even if I shoved every single piece of furniture I owned in there, it was still basically just a big blank room, which is why it's deliberately built a little bit reverby.

JONNY

Oh, that last one that Alex just told, that was the fake anecdote. The one about Alex being a ghost is real.

ALEX

Oh, was it? Okay, cool. Great.

We're coming into our next one then.

JONNY

Alright, let's see.

ALEX

We're one for one, at least on knowing what we're talking about, which is good.

JONNY

I am strapped in.

[CLIP: MAG078 – Distant Cousin]

“**ARCHIVIST:** I found this in the folder marked 9910602, where Gertrude’s tape had indicated I would find the statement of Dekker himself. There is nothing else in there, but I think it tells me what I need to know. This thing, this “Not Sasha”, it’s tied to the table. It...

I found the tapes.

[TAPE NOISES]

SASHA (RECORDING): I thought it was pronounced “Kah-lee-o-pee?”

ARCHIVIST: They were in her desk. Well hidden, but... If I’d been a bit more thorough, if I...

[TAPE NOISES]

SASHA (RECORDING): It’s just a scratch, Jon. I’ll be fine. Can we begin?

ARCHIVIST: Was there anything I could have done? Could I have...

[TAPE NOISES]

SASHA (RECORDING): Hello? I see you. Show yourself.

[TAPE NOISES]

NOT!SASHA (RECORDING): Hello?”

JONNY

Oh no, I don't remember the numbers.

ALEX

Nice vocal waver.

JONNY

Oh, is this the revelation of the—? This is the revelation of the Not!Sasha.

ALEX

Ohhh!

JONNY

Oh god, yeah, the table.

This is the Archivist’s misjudgement.

ALEX

Hmmm. Yeah.

JONNY

Yep.

ALEX

Here's a genuine fun fact. That whole bit of, “I thought it was pronounced ‘cal-ee-o-pee’” is because we had a big old back and forth—

JONNY

Yeah, we had a big old, I wouldn't have called it an ‘argument’.

ALEX

Lottie, myself, Jonny...

- It's not a ‘cal-ee-o-pee’, it's a ‘ca-lye-o-pee’.
- It's a ‘cal-ee-o-pee’.
- How could it be a ‘cal-ee-o-pee’?! That a s— That's the worst thing I've—
It's ‘ca-lye-o-pee’.

JONNY

I’ve always said ‘ca-lye-o-pee’.

ALEX

It’s ‘ca-lye-o-pee’. And then Lottie was adamant it was ‘cal-ee-o-pee’ and it’s like, ‘It’s ‘ca-lye-o-pee!’

JONNY

Here’s a fake fun fact: Alex plays the calliope.

[ALEX SPLUTTERS DERISIVELY]

ALEX

Alex has the coordination of a toddler. So I sincerely doubt That.

JONNY

To be fair, you did the sound editing on the calliope track. So... in a very real way...

ALEX

Ah, no.

JONNY

No?

ALEX

Well, only sort of. So, that’s a Sam, Sam, the Music Man original.

JONNY

Oh, is it a Sam original?

ALEX

So as a result, I didn't actually generate that. I made it sound worse. He provided a really good track and I went, 'I'm really sorry, Sam, I'm going to have to just bastardise this.'

JONNY

Okay, so you *commissioned* a calliope track, which in a very real way, is that not playing the calliope?

ALEX

You know what, you're correct. The fact that I commissioned *The Magnus Archives*, in a lot of ways, means it's entirely my achievement! And we are all stood upon the shoulders of my gianthood.

JONNY

What we really need to bear in mind here, when we think about the writing of the... Shut up, Alex!

ALEX

I can't remember what comes after this though, to be honest, I should be listening.

JONNY

Oh, I think it's just the Archivist being, like 'I'm going to get vengeance.' And coming up is the bit where he smashes up the table—

ALEX

Oh yeah!

JONNY

—and Michael is like, ‘Mmm, that was stupid.’

ALEX

Oh, here's a question then, cos I know people always clock this line. **Is it** surprisingly easy to buy an axe in central London?

JONNY

Yeah. Just go to Robert Dyas [a UK high street hardware retailer].

ALEX

It legitimately is, right! It's not just me.

JONNY

You can get them from hardware shops, and you do get hardware shops in central London. It's just not something that you usually think to pick up, because there's not a lot of things what need chopping.

ALEX

It’s one of those weirdnesses of UK law as well, where it's like, you can go into the shop and buy it, but you’re kind of expected to teleport it to the destination.

JONNY

Oh yeah. Cos there are laws about what you can and can't carry around.

ALEX

Oh god, yeah. I remember the fan reactions too – ‘Really? Really John? You think you can just take an axe to a table and solve the problem?’

JONNY

I don't know if I'd have jumped to the exact same conclusion, but certainly—

ALEX

Oh, I would have, straight away. Yeah.

JONNY

It's very much like, ‘Okay. Well these things have ties to an artifact. So... destroying the artifact—’ Like, cos the thing is, in your classic ghost story, destroying the thing that is tethering a monster does destroy that, like, tethering a ghost does destroy the ghost.

ALEX

I really, really like, though, that it's the first case of – it’s John acting in a genre-savvy way and then being punished for it.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

And that's why I really, really liked that bit. That tickled me when we were first going over it cos it was just, ‘Yeah, good. Let's punish people for daring to be genre-savvy’.

[CLIP: MAG082 – ‘The Eyewitnesses’]

“**ELIAS:** Statement of Alice Tonner, regarding the crimes and death of Calvin Benchley. Statement never given.

DAISY: Don’t.

ELIAS (STATEMENT): Everyone calls me Daisy. I like that because it sounds so gentle, and I’m the only one left who knows about the scar on my back. It doesn’t really look like a daisy, more like a starburst, but it’s what the doctor said when I got it, so that’s how I’ve always seen it. It makes me feel strong, to know that the soft nickname everyone calls me comes from a bloody wound. And I like to feel strong. To be in control.

DAISY: I’m going to kill you, someday.

ELIAS (STATEMENT): When I was eleven, I had a best friend, and his name was Calvin Benchley. We didn’t hang out at school much because his friends said I couldn’t play with them because I was a girl. But every day after getting home we’d go to the nearby park and play. It was small, just a scrap of grass and dirt, but if you hopped the fence to the south you could get into the cemetery, and if you went the other way you got into an old building site. The fence on that side was broken and jagged, but it collapsed enough that it was easy to climb over it, into the half-built structure.”

JONNY

Oh... It's Elias giving Daisy's statement.

ALEX

Ohhhh, yeah, I forgot we did this.

JONNY

Yeah...

This is, I think Elias’ first major, like, twisting the knife.

ALEX

I remember being really happy with ‘how do we do the superpower thing with Elias?’ Because the connection's quite similar, which is, you have a problem in Season 5, which people never really address, which is, do you have any idea how difficult it can be to have an omniscient protagonist?!

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

No-one has gone: ‘Was it difficult to have an omniscient protagonist?’

You have— It’s so hard!

JONNY

Real difficult.

ALEX

Even then we still have to rely on the crutch of, like, a couple of blind spots.

JONNY

The time we spent working out the exact shape and limits of these blind spots, because we had to have them, because otherwise, like, you can't have any reveals.

ALEX

It was the same for Elias where we were doing it right back when, going, ‘We have a problem, which is if we have a truly omniscient antagonist here, it's impossible to win.’

We had to, yeah, create those blind spots and so on. And the distraction elements and blah, blah, blah. But this one tied to that as well is, we really wanted to have, basically the evil superpower thing of— that was more interesting than just, I can read your thoughts. Because again, if you have omniscience and can do complete mind reading, what's the point?

And I really liked the idea of weaponising memories against people. It's horrible, but I did like it. It came together well.

JONNY

I'm very proud of how Elias ended up as a, like, practical feature of the plots, if that makes sense. And, like, a lot of it always came down to this thing of, like, well, he can see realistically almost anything because there are pictures of eyes, basically everywhere. But he's still one person who is at any given point going to be looking in one place, in a direction, and often out of his own eyes.

ALEX

How retro!

JONNY

Yeah, like, classic.

ALEX

I was going to say, “out of his own eyes”, technically, yes, always.

JONNY

They are his own eyes. I was very careful when I said that.

ALEX

It is odd, once you look at the series as a whole, to think of like the elements that are there, where it's like, ‘His body is just still down there. Chillin’—

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

‘—through all of this, just... just having a grand old time, waiting.’ It’s odd.

JONNY

Yeah, keeping his body down there was something like, kind of new. That was something that actually came quite late. I think I'd originally just conceived of it as, like, a body hopping thing. But then I was like, ‘No, there needs to be something in the Panopticon that, like, is a vulnerability.’

ALEX

Thank goodness we had the mechanism that the tunnels steered people away.

Otherwise Martin’s first foray is:

- ‘I went down in the tunnels.’

- ‘What'd you find?’
- ‘The end of the series, mate. It was just laid out.’

JONNY

Yeah,

ALEX

‘I found Jurgen Leitner, Gertrude Robinson's body, the Panopticon, you know, the list goes on, like, I've basically solved it in a single journey.’

JONNY

It is three different series finales, which revolve around the revelation of something in—

ALEX

And that's not including the fact that he found Gertrude Robinson's, like, arch, first failed thing.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

There's a version where Martin just goes in the tunnel, solves everything and leaves.

JONNY

Well, I mean, I guess, like, it does make sense in the fact that like so much of it is about the Institute and what is lurking in the Institute’s past, which metaphorically is represented by the tunnels.

ALEX

It's like that bit in the Marvel films where they're like, 'Oh look, all of the stones are in one place, at one time.' A lot of our plot was just chilling in the tunnels until it was needed.

[CLIP: MAG099 – Dust to Dust]

“[KNOCKING ON DOOR]

[GERTRUDE GROANS]

GERTRUDE: (Adopts a somewhat frailer voice) Hello?

[DOOR OPENS]

MICHAEL: Ah, Miss Robinson, I, um, I found Mr. Vargas’ statement that you asked for. Well, uh, I found the translation. I, I already had the original but, y’know, I, I, I didn’t think you’d want it in Spanish. [Nervous chuckles] U-U- Unless you speak Spanish?

GERTRUDE: (Somewhat sharply) I do not. And thank you Michael.

MICHAEL: Sure. Um, well, was, was there anything else you needed?

GERTRUDE: Um... No, no. Not at the moment.

Thank you.

MICHAEL: Right, well, if you need me, uh, they’re installing that climate-controlled storage... that thing o-o-over the weekend, so I’m, I’m, y’know, I’m just getting all that together.

GERTRUDE: Yes! Yes, I remember.

MICHAEL: Right.

Well, call me if you need anything.

GERTRUDE: Thank you, Michael, I will.”

JONNY

Ahhh... Another little bit of Luke, this time being lovely.

ALEX

That laugh. Just that subtle...

JONNY

What a nice scene, between two conscientious workers.

ALEX

It's just the hard, cold turn of ‘Yeah. Alright. And now I'm back into full blown mode.’

Michael is played by Luke Booy. And, I think I remember at the time, because obviously we had Michael the monster prior to Michael the assistant. So as a result, we were working backwards from monster.

JONNY

It was, as I recall, a lot harder to get Luke to zone in on the ‘not creepy’. When we explained the character to him, when he turned up to just stab the Archivist, he was just, like, ‘Boom! [SNAPS FINGERS] Yep. Okay. I can do this weird monster.’ Then we had to, like, take what would be like, ‘No, this is— he’s just— he thinks that this is a harmless old lady that he’s working for. And, you know, he’s just being very gentle.’

ALEX

There’s a trick with Luke that he really keys into, which is providing a parallel example. I don’t think I’ve ever mentioned this on audio before. The example that he was given to play towards was, I think it’s called ‘The Man With Thistledown Hair’ from *[Jonathan] Strange & [Mr] Norrell*.

JONNY

I never actually read *Doctor Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*.

ALEX

Doctor Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell, there was a BBC, I think it is, adaptation as well, and it had a very good portrayal of, basically a fae trickster, effectively. And I honestly, I think at some point said, ‘Have you seen this? Can you channel that energy?’ at which point Luke goes, ‘Oh yeah! Okay. Yeah, I got you covered. Great. Here you go.’ And then just clicked in.

And I remember for this one, when he was playing Michael the assistant, he had at that point been aware of some of the stuff I’d done as Martin. And I went, ‘Could you just do Martin, please?’

JONNY

(Laughing) ‘Could you just be Martin?’

Okay. What we got next?

[CLIP: MAG101 – Another Twist]

“**MICHAEL:** Good. Right this way.

[A DOOR CREAKS]

Open it. Open it and all this will be over.

[THE ARCHIVIST TURNS THE HANDLE AND HEARS AN ENGAGED LOCK]

ARCHIVIST: Er, it’s...

[HANDLE IS TRIED TWICE MORE]

MICHAEL: What?

ARCHIVIST: It’s locked.

MICHAEL: It’s not. (Giggles)

ARCHIVIST: Why is it locked?

MICHAEL: It can’t be!

ARCHIVIST: Well, you try it!

[FRANTIC HANDLE TURNING – THE LOCK CONTINUES TO CLICK]

MICHAEL: (Worried) Th-Tha-That-That’s... not—

(Realisation dawns) Oh. Oh no.

[DISTORTED SCREAMS OF PAINFUL AND TERMINAL OPENING]

[THE NEW DOOR CREAKS OPEN]

HELEN: Do you want to come in?

ARCHIVIST: Wh... Helen? H-Helen Richardson? But... But y— Michael...

HELEN: Michael isn’t me. Not now.

ARCHIVIST: What happened?

HELEN: He got... distracted.”

JONNY

Everyone loves Michael.

It’s Michael’s demise.

ALEX

Ohhh, yeah!

Oh yeah, “it’s locked”, that was lovely. I loved that so much.

JONNY

Oh, here it comes.

ALEX

(Wincing) Oh, that’s so loud.

JONNY

Yep.

And here... Is Helen!

ALEX

Hey Imogen.

Oh, of course! And I forgot that right when Helen's first introduced, Helen’s very cold and flat.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

And yeah, that was a whole thing, wasn't it? Where Helen slowly gets more and more affable and joyously trickstery, but at the start she’s so patted down.

JONNY

Yeah. It's all so new and, like, unvarnished in lot of ways.

ALEX

Yeah, I agonised—

JONNY

That was a good joke, by the way, there, Alex. In case you missed it.

ALEX

No, it’s pretty good .No, I appreciated it. It was certainly a ‘portal to humour’.

JONNY

(Deadpan) I don't understand.

ALEX

You’re the worst, just... oh god.

JONNY

I'm just remembering how many times you got me to do the line “Well you try it”, because I wasn't being sufficiently petulant.

ALEX

Oh yeah. Cos that's the thing is, there was a golden period with the Archivist where it's like, ‘More petulant. More, more petulant. More, more! It needs to be ridiculous.’ I genuinely spent, I hesitate to think how many hours, on just that scream and combo alone.

JONNY

Oh yeah, I can imagine.

ALEX

Like hours and hours, because again, it's early enough that I didn't have certain procedures down pat, and there still wasn't huge amounts of help and things like that. You know, when you get a bee in your bonnet and you know exactly how it needs to sound.

JONNY

Speaking of, actually, is it too late to redo it? Just cos I was listening to it right there...

ALEX

No. I am confident. I am confident that I have spent enough time that that's as good as it gets. That is as good as it gets. There are very few moments in this series where I am confident in what has been achieved. That **is** one of them. And I know because I lost—

JONNY

That such a sad thing to say.

ALEX

I lost a lot of sleep on it.

[CLIP: MAG102 – Nesting Instinct]

“François Deschamps has refused our request for a follow-up interview. He did forward us one item, however. [Snorts] I can’t read the French on this one, but it

appears to be a crudely printed wedding invitation. Benoît Maçon is the only name legible on it, as most of the details are obscured by a wide variety of dried stains.

Most helpful of all, though, is the simple fact that Gertrude was in Toulouse in June 2014. The information I found from her laptop doesn’t give a complete picture of her travels, but now I know when to look, and it appears that when she left Toulouse she did not return to London. Instead, it looks like she took several connecting flights, eventually ending up in Wellington International Airport in New Zealand.”

JONNY

It's Beetle.

I think this is Beetle-man?

ALEX

I don't remember.

JONNY

Yeah, man who marries a beetle!

ALEX

Oh gosh, yeah! Or 'Jonny does Kafka' is what I always thought of it in my head.

JONNY

What? No. This is straight romance, Alex.

ALEX

No, I know. But my problem is, is that I do the connection – Beetle to *Metamorphosis* to Kafka story. So as a result, I always connected it in my head.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

I like this one. It was so weird in the best way possible. I really liked this one.

JONNY

This is in the same arc as Monster Pig. There's a point in Season 3 where I really am enjoying trying to, like, see how far I can push ‘weird’ in a way that, like, straddles the line between funny and horrifying, and hopefully keeps it mostly into horrifying, but still also definitely, like, quite funny because it is, like, how would I take the idea of this man is in love with a beetle and make it kind of horrifying.

Especially, like, in terms of how The Corruption works as a power

ALEX

Checking, what’s the scene that comes after?

JONNY

Oh, this is just after the Archivist’s returned from his fun skincare vacation, his spa month. You know, Martin missed the Archivist, the Archivist missed Martin, I guess maybe this is, like, a point that, sort of, is starting—

ALEX

Starting to cement stuff?

JONNY

—that relationship and, like, properly establish it.

But, moreover, a man is in love with a beetle.

ALEX

I mean, was that an intentional parallel that you had? ‘I am in love with a beetle. And then Martin turns up’?

JONNY

I did just think actually. I was like, ‘A man is in love with a beetle and his name is Martin.’

No, that was not an intentional parallel. This is one of those periods where the exact statement— I think the statements actually got shuffled around a little bit between episodes, because, like, it was one where there was a lot of plot, going specific places. There were certain statements that needed to be at certain points.

But yeah, there were certainly— I don't think they were initially written as the same episode, but I could be wrong.

ALEX

You went through that period where you started to divorce the statements a little bit in certain chunks from what was happening, so that you could do that, I remember.

JONNY

Yeah. And there were some that needed to be in certain locations or matching certain plot beats, but there were others that were a bit more free-floating.

ALEX

Sorry. It's just odd listening to you and me talking, and then talking over you and me talking.

JONNY

Yeah, it does— It is a bit disconcerting.

ALEX

It's pretty much a summary of my life at this point.

JONNY

I mean... yeah. Well, no, I mean, you know, not so much now. Not so much now.

ALEX

Ahhh, ahhh.

[CLIP: MAG111]

“**GERARD:** Nice lighter. You a spider freak, then?”

ARCHIVIST: What? Oh! Er, no. I-I never really, uh... I never really thought of it.

I-I’m John. I’m with the Magnus Institute.

...

I-I’m the Archivist.

...

GERARD: When did she die?

ARCHIVIST: About a year after you did.

GERARD: Was it peaceful?

ARCHIVIST: No.

GERARD: Good. Don’t think she would have wanted that.

God, I can’t imagine her dying in bed.

...

So you’re the new guy, then? Following in her footsteps?

ARCHIVIST: I mean some of them. They... don’t exactly lead where I thought they would.

GERARD: Yeah, she was like that.

ARCHIVIST: I-I’m trying to stop the Unknowing.

GERARD: (Exhales) She didn’t manage it, then?

ARCHIVIST: Not before she, uh... I need your help.

GERARD: (Snorts) Do you now?

ARCHIVIST: She thought she’d found a-a way to stop it. I think. If anyone knows what that was, it’s you.”

JONNY

Good ol’ Jon Gracey.

ALEX

That was so much fun to record.

JONNY

I don't even know if I’d call it “fun”. It was just, like, sometimes you'll get a recording and it just flows.

ALEX

Yeah, it was so easy.

JONNY

I recall just doing three takes. Boom, boom, boom.

ALEX

It was lovely. You both just walked in, ‘Do this. Alright. Okay, we’ll do it two more times. Why? In case it might break. Ah, okay.’

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

‘How have you been?’ Like, it was just lovely, straightforward. Really, really nice recording.

JONNY

Jon absolutely nailed the part. I feel— You know those things where it's like, ‘Oh yeah, no, we've got the casting really good on that’? And, like, you feel like kind of a pay-off on that in the studio. Cos you're like, ‘Yes. Really thought that this person would absolutely nail the part. And they did.’

ALEX

I love the weariness, but not— it's not true sadness. It's not ‘Woe is me’.

JONNY

He's not cynical, is Gerry, is the thing.

ALEX

Yeah.

JONNY

He still, kind of, *believes* in the possibility of goodness, even though he himself has, like, seen pretty much only dreadful stuff for most of his life.

ALEX

Yeah. This is someone who's read about goodness and has ‘I'm sure it's out there somewhere’.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

As a sequence as well, I loved you were encountering Gerry out in a North American shack. It was not the person anyone expected you to be meeting on your foreign sojourn.

JONNY

Mmm. It's a lovely episode for me retrospectively because it's one that I feel very, like, 'vindicated' is not quite the right word, but like, I feel that exposition-heavy lore dumps are ridiculously difficult to not make super-boring.

ALEX

Yeah.

JONNY

And in retrospect, 111? We nailed it.

ALEX

I also really like the, sort of, the almost attempt at, like, ransom that Gerry does, if you remember.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

Where Gerry's like, 'Maybe I won't tell you.' It's like,

- 'Well, what've you got to lose?'
- 'What do I have to gain?'
- '[GROANS] Just give me some lore.'

JONNY

Yeah, it's taking the lore dump and wrapping it in a really, actually interesting and fun, new character dynamic.

ALEX

Yeah. I really liked that dynamic. It's one of the ones where, to be clear, there was just no versions of *The Magnus Archives* where that dynamic could be, you know, explored extensively and still really work, but it's one of the dynamics where, if there could have been, I really would have liked there to have been.

JONNY

I mean, it is the thing that dynamic only works so well because of the stuff that means that it could only ever happen in a single scene.

ALEX

I mean, could you imagine it? The Archivist and Gerry, it's got such a *Randall and Hopkirk, Deceased* vibe.

JONNY

Yeah.

ALEX

Going around, solving crimes, one of you's a ghost.

JONNY

One of the reasons it works so well is because of Gerry's role within the wider world and the wider narrative, but that also very much puts a limit, I guess, on how much he can actually be there.

Good scene, I think.

ALEX

Well on that then, I hope this has been an enlightening experience for everyone.

JONNY

Yes.

ALEX

Mostly that it's better to listen to it without a pair of people just—

JONNY

Nattering about.

ALEX

—nattering through the whole way, so you can't hear what's going on.

JONNY

(Nasal voice) I think that the thing we did in this episode was good.

ALEX

(Playing along) I disagree. Discuss.

JONNY

(Nasal voice) I really enjoyed working with all of the actors except for my mother.

ALEX

Right. Okay. I am going to wrap this episode up here.

JONNY

If you listen to this, Mother, I did enjoy working with you.

ALEX

Right. Okay. In that case then, thanks everyone. I think we'll be back next week with some different content, but until then, thanks everyone and look after yourselves.

JONNY

Bye!

ALEX

Bye!