

## **MAG – “Season 5 Q&A, Part 1”**

### **Content Warnings**

- Spoilers for show to date
- Food
- Hospitals
- Discussions of: gore & body horror, vocalised suffering
- Mentions of: physical violence, death, apocalypse, surgery

*Transcriber's note: For ease of reading, most small speech noises and the frequent laughs/chuckles have been omitted from this text.*

### **ALEX**

Hello, everyone. Welcome to the Season 5 Q & A. I'm here – Alexander Newall, director and professional tagalong. And with me today, I have two people. Do please introduce yourselves. We haven't established an order, so it will be fun to watch who fights for it.

### **ELIZABETH**

I'll introduce myself then – Elizabeth Moffatt, another professional tagalonger for Season 5. Doing the sound design for that season. So there we go.

### **JONNY**

And I'm Jonny, Jonathan Sims and I am apparently the only one who's meant to be here. Everyone else is just tagging along behind me.

### **ALEX**

We're changing things up a little bit for these final set of Q & A's, in that there's a decent number of sound design ones, and it would be the height of hypocrisy for me to have claimed to have done everything. Cos I didn't, not even a little bit. That'd be nonsense.

So what we're going to be doing, is we're gonna be splitting out a little bit, where in this first Q & A we're going to be answering a lot of the questions that Elizabeth is going to be better placed to answer because they're highly technical, require perfect wording in the responses, and just generally sound like a lot of work.

And if there's one thing I've learned over the years, it's Elizabeth is the best person for me to give all the difficult work to, because I'm rubbish at that.

**ELIZABETH**

Oh, thanks Alex.

**JONNY**

Sorry, Alex, are you saying that I'm not going to be able to talk about how I soundscaped everything?

**ALEX**

Oh no, you can, but we're just going to have to, you know, let people conclude whether anything that you or I say has any truth to it whatsoever.

**JONNY**

What I did was I combined the tracks with high pass filter.

**ALEX**

You're actually doing okay so far, you're not doing bad.

**JONNY**

The thing you've got to remember is if the spectrograph is too wet...

**ALEX**

“Wet” wasn't great.

**JONNY**

...then the audio sound will be bad.

**ALEX**

You know what? In fairness that wasn't complete jibberish. And I'll leave it at that.

Okay, cool. I'm going to go ahead and jump into the questions at this point.

As always, we have an enormous, just frankly, ludicrous amount of questions. We will get through whatever we can, but people need to be aware we aren't going to get through everything. It's just— It's not physically possible. So with that in mind, I'm going to start with a nice kind of fluffy one to get people going.

From anonymous: Now that it's over, what will you miss most about your time working on Magnus?

**JONNY**

I think what I will miss most is having a regular excuse to do a project with some really cool people, a lot of whom are very good friends of mine. I mean, I still see Alex a little bit, but fundamentally he's very busy. And, you know, so am I, and so is Elizabeth. And, like, we're all very busy on all sorts of other stuff, and, like, having that time every couple of weeks to just, you know?

And it's only like 10, 15 minutes catch-up before you dive into the actual recording, but it's a really nice way to hang out with really cool people.

**ELIZABETH**

For me, I think it's yeah, hanging out with people doing something very creative. And because I just really, you know— Once again, I was a fan of the show, so... having something that I was very passionate about during the process of it, right. So like, finding those projects that you really just want to be involved in, that you love on all the different levels is really quite a special thing to have. So I think for me, it's that.

**ALEX**

So for me, I think the thing I'll miss most about *Magnus* is I've never felt such profound relief as when something comes out and is good. And I know that sounds odd. That's not like a pure joy moment, but it's the idea of 'you made the thing and it's out', and then it's not what you feared. It actually is being received well, and it's just this little thing that's out in the world on its own doing its own thing. That is a very specific experience that you can't really replicate anywhere else.

So I think I'll probably going to miss that the most.

**JONNY**

Fundamentally, like, it's really nice to have it complete.

**ALEX**

That's the thing with, like, this question implies like, 'Oh, I bet you're really, really, really sad that it's over'. It sort of implies that a little bit, and I'm honestly, I'm not sad it's over. Because it's rare that you get the chance to complete— like, put a nice bow on something.

**JONNY**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

So I struggled to put myself in the headspace of nostalgia because it's like, 'Ha ha! Look! It happened!'

**JONNY**

It's like doing a big painting.

**ALEX**

Yeah. Yeah.

**JONNY**

'What do you miss most about doing the painting?' And I'm like, not a lot. Look at it. It's finished.

**ALEX**

Exactly. Yeah.

Here's one I can dive in to. This is a lot more me. Rebecca: What will you **not** miss about working on the show?

**JONNY**

I would say getting up on a Saturday morning to record, but given that I overslept by a half hour today, right before this exact recording, I haven't been fully released from that one yet.

**ALEX**

For me it's, yeah, it's the late nights. It's the life tax. It's what I call the blood debt that you pay to your creative project, to which is just, yeah. Put the time in. And you got to, because otherwise it won't exist. That is true for all shows, but it's nice to have completed one, and remove one blood debt from my long infernal contract.

**ELIZABETH**

I think for me, it would be— I think this would be true of any project that you worked on in this way, but it's that anxiety of having done some work and you think it's good, but then you've got to wait until you find out whether anybody else thinks that you're any good, right?

I think there's always that thing, right? When you create something, be it an individual thing or, you know, something that's in a group. I think at least the group thing, you've got more of a sense that it's good as you're going through it. Whereas when you're just doing something by yourself, you've got to have a lot of faith in yourself, I think, to create something and be, 'Yeah, that was fantastic! It's going to be so well-received.' You've always got that anxiety, I think.

**ALEX**

It must've been really rough for you at the very, very start of Season 5. Because we were just inventing the new style, like no precedents, no real rules beyond it's gotta be good, that must've been very tough.

**ELIZABETH**

Mmmm.

**JONNY**

And an author who was pathologically unhelpful, when you were asking questions.

**ALEX**

Just profoundly, profoundly antagonistic in the stage directions

**JONNY**

I wasn't antagonistic, I was unhelpful, there's a difference.

**ALEX**

“It goes weird.” Full-stop.

**ELIZABETH**

I think it's different though at different parts of it. I think whenever I started to do a deviation where I'm like, ‘I haven't talked about this with Alex, but I'm going to do this. And I really hope that he's not going to hate it because if not, I've just burned a lot of hours doing this specific thing.’

Like, even episode 200, where I'm like, ‘I'm going to make a dark ambient album, and I really hope Alex doesn't mind.’

**JONNY**

Ah yeah. And you did.

**ALEX**

But, luckily it turns out Alex is well into dark ambience as a thing. So, [CHEF'S KISS] perfection.

**JONNY**

Oh no, it's great, mate.

**ALEX**

Now, we've got a couple of fluffs out of the way onto some more specific, crunchy questions. From many, many people: How did you create the kissing sound effect in MAG200?

So... effectively, there is a way of doing it, which helps mitigate a lot of problems, which is basically, you snog your hand. You snog your hands on either end of a digital call.

However, I have a confession that I need to make here, which is, and I don't know how much of this is just myself and how much of this was already prefaced by Elizabeth, which is: Jonny, I gotta confess I cut pr— if there was anything that wasn't my part of the kiss.

**JONNY**

Well, I was going to say, I don't think I actually did the hand kiss. I don't, I don't recall.

**ALEX**

You did a little one—

**JONNY**

Did I? I don't remember doing the hand kiss.

**ALEX**

—and it was all teeth and tongue, Jonny. It was all teeth and tongue.

**JONNY**

Ah. Oh well.

**ALEX**

It was like you were eating a watermelon. It just, it just didn't work.

**JONNY**

Fair enough. I'll be honest, I have no memory of it.

**ALEX**

From my perspective, I know it ended up being mostly just me snogging my hand, but Elizabeth, I know that you were the poor, unfortunate soul who was forced to listen to us 'macking' and then make it work.

**ELIZABETH**

I wasn't. Nico was the one who added it in.

**ALEX**

Oh is it Nico? My mistake.

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**JONNY**

Ah, did Nico construct the kiss?

**ELIZABETH**

Don't take away his vocal cut editing, my friends. It's— He was the man in charge of that specific kiss noise.

**ALEX**

In Nico's defence, I heard that and went “That's actually alright!”

**JONNY**

Question being, are kisses vocal?

**ALEX**

Ah, hah, okay.

**JONNY**

Mmmm.

**ALEX**

Depends on the kiss, right? It's a very different kiss— It's like, you've got your— You know what, I'm just going to do it down here. If you, if you don't like specific noises, by the way, obviously stop listening.

There's a difference between your gentle—

**JONNY**

Yeah, cos... Yeah, cos if you kiss and you're like [SIMULATED ‘OMM, OMM, OMM’ KINDA KISS]

**ALEX**

There's a difference between your little gentle, you sort of [SIMULATED QUICK PECK] and your [EXTENDED SOUNDS OF SIMULATED OVER-THE-TOP VORACIOUS KISS]

**JONNY**

Yeah, there's a vocal kiss. That's a kiss that falls under the purview of the vocal cut.

**ALEX**

Like those are different kisses. I like to think that the John/Martin kiss, it was a little bit rushed because the world was ending. So it might've been a little bit, you know, slightly less vocal in the cut, but don't hold me to that.

But I've got to give my kudos to Nico, kisses is difficult to edit.

**ELIZABETH**

He picked a good one.

**ALEX**

He did. I think he picked the only good one, but he did it.

**ELIZABETH**

Because it wasn't too gross. It wasn't graphically gross.

**ALEX**

It was fine. It was okay. It was alright. I will say that I'll always try and bury a kiss under an explosion when I can.

**ELIZABETH**

I did the stuff I really enjoyed, which was what I think of as the wet work.

**ALEX**

Go on? What's the wet work?

**JONNY**

What do you think the wet work is, Alex?

**ALEX**

We're currently on the topic of kissing, so I dread to ask!

**ELIZABETH**

Your wet work! It's your classic wet work: your murder, your gore, your stabbing, your punching. Yeah. That's, that's the things that I really like to do.

**ALEX**

I definitely think kissing should be added to the list of things that count as wet work.

**ELIZABETH**

I mean, it could be. Oh actually, yes, urgh.

**ALEX**

Next question is from big old duck: The soundscaping in the finale is incredible. Is there a part of the episode's production that you're particularly proud of?

I gotta defer to Elizabeth on this one.

**ELIZABETH**

Ooh, okay. So the difficult bit was the explosion, and it wasn't the explosions, it was trying to figure out how to do a tape squeal that sounded reasonable. Cos I struggled to find any samples of, like, just tapes making that kind of noise. So I had like three tiny samples, which were about three seconds each, which I was like, 'I'm

going to have to loop a lot of this and move it around a lot.’ So, that was the difficult bit.

And then actually the statement that was just a load of fun. Like, it was so—

**ALEX**

Ohhh, I really, really liked the soundscaping of that statement. I really did.

**ELIZABETH**

Well, it was the only one where we got to do one, which actually sounded ‘nice’.

**ALEX**

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

**ELIZABETH**

Deliberately. It was— it sounded nice. Whereas everything else I'd had to do all season was like, grim and miserable and full of wet work. So it was really good for being able to do that. And I do have a great love of— There's a dark ambient artist, Pete Namlook who has these beautiful albums, which have those sort of animal sounds and then goes into like, full on music. And I was just like, ‘I'm going to channel him a little bit’ because I just loved that primordial sounds that— I'm not making all these sounds, like, I've found these sounds, I've collected them together, I'm incorporating them. And I tried to incorporate loads of the pre-existing things that we'd worked with, so that it had that flow of like, this wasn't all new, right?

So, like, we had, sort of, the coffin sound, we had sounds from The Buried. All sorts of things that came from different episodes. And then I just really enjoyed

doing that. It was really nice. It wasn't super hard, like some other bits and pieces had been. So, no, loved it.

**JONNY**

Also remember Elizabeth, and I don't know if you know this, but with most music, the actual person putting together, they don't make the sounds either. They often will use external things, like a guitar.

**ALEX**

There's no such thing as guitars. The instrument mythos is cute, but it's not a real thing.

**ELIZABETH**

It's always just someone's voice that has been warped enough times.

**ALEX**

The grand conspiracy!

I have to say, I think you're underselling yourself as well on the finale, which is: it's not particularly sexy-like statement to give, but it's very different— Like, the compression is very difficult to go, 'Cool! Have an extended quiet conversation in the middle of a collapsing death tower of doom that's on fire, exploding and also magic.'

It's really quite difficult to generate all of that and still be able to hear what the heck is going on. And you did a really, really good job with that.

**JONNY**

Cos the thing is, with the finale, it's a really good visual image. That I was like, 'Hey, do this using only sound.'

You nailed it!

**ALEX**

We had to cheat that so much. Like certain elements are way quieter than they should be, and others are way louder. It works. It comes together flawlessly—

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

—but that's really difficult.

**ELIZABETH**

But I do remember going, 'Nailed it. Just added all the explosions.' And then it's like, 'Okay, I need to add tape squealing.' And I'd done everything, I'm like, 'This is definitely collapsing. This is great!' And then I'm like, 'I need to add this tape stuff.' And then I started to add that and I'm like, 'Oh God, it doesn't interact with the explosions anymore! Very well.'

So I had to go through and adapt all the explosions again. And I was like, 'Why did we have to have this whole tape thing the entire way through this entire, like, 200 episode series.'

**JONNY**

Yeah, sorry to spring that on you.

**ALEX**

All of that on top of sneaking in extra secrets.

**ELIZABETH**

We don't talk about the secrets, Alex.

**ALEX**

We don't talk about the secrets.

**ELIZABETH**

Secrets.

**ALEX**

But I'm going to say it just to set people off: there's secrets in 200.

**ELIZABETH**

Well, there's secrets in another episode as well, but—

**ALEX**

There are secrets in another episode as well. There are two secrets that Elizabeth found a way to invent that I'm particularly impressed by. Good luck finding them.

I'm going to bounce on the next one. From many people: If you were to continue the series or do a spin-off in the same universe, what would you have in mind for it?

## **JONNY**

One of the things that's fun about this particular ending is can do a spin-off in whatever universe might be fun. I would probably do something— It probably'd have to be a prequel and it would be, I think, entirely different characters.

There are some very compelling characters that would be fun to dive into a little bit more people like, oh, you know, Gertrude and Adelard Decker, and that whole, like, previous generation.

The problem with that sort of sequel is that in the original series and, you know, in most original series that have these sort of prequels, the way that the past is dealt with is very deliberate. Gertrude and Decker and Salesa and all this, sort of, previous generation, they are specifically written to be highlighting and contrasting and interacting with the actual story that's being told.

When you start to expand that out into what has to stand as its own story, then that whole aspect starts to collapse a little bit. And in my eyes, the prequel would never be able to be as good as it could be, because it's hamstrung by all this stuff that's in the original series, and the original series would be slightly lessened by the fact that there's all this additional stuff that has been built up that was not in mind when it was written.

So like, I think a lot of the obvious spin-off stuff, probably not particularly interesting to me.

## **ALEX**

You also have the prequel problem, which is that everyone always says do the prequels and then we'll know the whole story. And it's like, 'No, you need to understand, to do a good prequel, you're also going to need a bunch of characters

that existed before the prequel that you can use to compare and contrast again.’

It's—

**JONNY**

Yeah

**ALEX**

It's a bottomless pit. There's not an end in that dive.

**JONNY**

And if you ever did get all the answers for all the characters, it's incredibly sterile, it's incredibly boring. It's just this, like, weird, perfect artificial thing that feels incredibly fake.

But yeah, I would probably— I've had various thoughts, but I think it would probably be some alternate dimension thing.

Also, you know what? Okay everyone, let's do a series of Joshua Gillespie just not noticing creepy things.

**ELIZABETH**

I think we came up with the perfect other series that we should have done for it. And it is the prequel. It's Gertrude, the Welsh version, played by Lowri, who the entire way through we don't know why she sounds Welsh until the final episode where there's just some magic that happens with turns her into, like, RP English, right. Which, um...

**JONNY**

Turns her into my mum.

**ELIZABETH**

That's the entire, most important part of that story arc, is that we get that change, but it's never explained until the last episode.

See, I've been giving this a lot of thought. And I figured out what will work as a spinoff, in the same universe even, which is tricky because I'm like, normally that's really, really difficult to do. Prequels and sequels in same universe can work. Spin-offs in the same universe that aren't hack is difficult.

I want to do an intimate office comedy horror from the perspective of the other tenants in the building that the Magnus Archives is housed. They have no interaction with any of the people there, but it's just a tight little office comedy going on, where all this awful stuff keeps happening to the other tenants. I think that would work.

**JONNY**

Yeah. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are sharing a building with the Magnus Archives. Yeah.

**ALEX**

Absolutely! I think that would work. And I've been thinking, how do you do same universe, I think that would work.

**JONNY**

Oh, actually thinking about it. I also, like, I am fascinated actually in the world that we have left behind, post-Magnus.

**ALEX**

See, I'm deliberately dodging giving that answer for the simple reason, it's the one that I think has the actual most potential.

**JONNY**

I largely want to mention it because I discovered a bunch of post-post-apocalypse memes on Tumblr, which are amazing. They are in-universe memes. Created by people who have come out of all the fear dimensions.

**ALEX**

Oh, that's such a good idea!

**JONNY**

And they are astounding! They're so good. There are accounts which are like in-universe posting about someone's like, 'Oh yeah, I'm having some real problems with like my boyfriend, because he was in space and he was contemplating the bigness of the universe, but I was in a war dimension. I got shot a lot and it's really driving a wedge between us because he's like, "Oh no, mine was really scary." And I was like, "How many times did you explode?"'

**ELIZABETH**

God.

**ALEX**

Okay. Yeah.

**JONNY**

Great stuff.

**ALEX**

You've got to link me to that. I wasn't aware of this as a thing.

**JONNY**

There's a few posts I've seen and, ah, they're great.

**ALEX**

I'm going to go on then to next question from Marie, which is: What was the most challenging aspect of creating the series, full-stop. Just across the whole lot, what was the most challenging aspect?

**JONNY**

The constant forward roll of it all. And it's something that I didn't really notice until I started doing a lot of other writing. Cos like, you're writing a book or you're writing— Most projects, you reach the end and you're like, 'No, this doesn't really... This detail doesn't quite gel or I'm not feeling so good about this in relation to X or Y that was earlier in the series.' You can go back and change it. You can tweak it. Like, it is an entire thing that you can change the earlier bits to suit the later bits.

**This** sort of rolling production? You can't go back once an episode is out there. It is now in the world. It is now locked in place. So there is very much this feeling of like, you are running in front of a boulder desperately trying to build little bits of scaffolding or little bits of pathway to try and guide this increasing momentum thing towards quite a narrow goal.

And like you knew what the goal was going to be the first— like, right from the start. But actually trying to manage that momentum and figure out, oh, which pathways you need to trim.

**ALEX**

You're still steering an avalanche.

**JONNY**

Yeah. You're steering an avalanche the whole time. And it's exhilarating in a lot of ways. Also really difficult. You're always ending up with things where like, you're like, 'Well, this particular thing, I'm not a hundred percent on that ending for; I know this storyline or this character, but you're, like, there's no other way to do this based on what it has gone before, based on the momentum that's coming towards it. If we dive too deep into this one, then it's going to like completely divert everything. And the path of the story isn't going to go right.'

And that's not even taking into account production changes and production concerns. Like, I don't know, a massive pandemic that further cut off a lot of the tools that you have to actually guide that avalanche.

**ALEX**

And the burden only gets bigger. Elizabeth, what do you reckon?

**ELIZABETH**

The most challenging bit is, well, we just made a commitment really. And when I say "we", really Alex made a commitment to the audience that he was going to deliver. So, you've got that triangle of quality, time and money, and we really tried to hit quality as well as, as much as possible.

**ALEX**

Just do everything, just be all things to all people at all times is— That's the goal, right?

**ELIZABETH**

So my thing is, when I think about it as a production crew, there's only one person that if they had disappeared, you know, if Jonny had disappeared, we would have maybe had, had to have gotten another writer to come in or something like that, but it wouldn't be the same series, right?

If something had happened to Jonny, that might've been the end of *The Magnus Archives*. My thing is that, if something had happened to Alex, we would have finished it, but we would have finished it about three years from now. So...

**JONNY**

I mean, yeah.

**ALEX**

But you'd have finished it on **your** terms, Elizabeth.

**ELIZABETH**

And then people would have maybe drifted off, because like it was taking so long and, and it's a good thing. Like, we really committed to delivering a— quite a few episodes in a set period of time. And I love that we did it, but it does mean that you have that boulder, that constant drive to, like, get things done.

And the reflection time is shorter. But, I mean, I wouldn't have changed it just to finish the series in three years' time.

**ALEX**

I mean, to follow on, like, from what you're saying, I can materially state, this is it. This is the maximum amount that you can make of this type within this time period. And I can say that definitively. If you think you can do more than this in

the same period, you cannot, it cannot be done. It's not a case of more resources, more money, more people, or any— Like, there is a material limit. And I pretty much think we hit it. I really don't know how we could have squeezed any more out. I really don't.

**JONNY**

And if you think that you should try to do the same amount yourself, don't. Save yourself! Don't! Don't do it.

**ALEX**

I'm going to move on then to a crunchy SFX question. Oh, a literally crunchy question, from Ben Phantom: What sound was the grossest to make?

Interesting question that. That's what was the grossest to make? Not what is the grossest sound?

**ELIZABETH**

I mean, clearly the grossest sound is kissing, I think that's well-established.

So I didn't make that many sounds myself. So what I guess the question really is, is what was maybe the grossest sound to construct, inside the story? Oh, is it 194? Where there's an old man who's, like, in someone's shoulder.

**JONNY**

Oh god, yeah.

**ELIZABETH**

It's probably pretty hard to pick up on actually, but there's lots of little mouthy sounds and, like, him coming out and, sort of, crawling towards the couch. And

that was constructed out of, yeah, literal mouth sounds. There's an eye noise of someone who's pushing their eyeball and has recorded that.

[DISGUSTED SOUND FROM JONNY]

There's, you know, the classic melon hits and other gore things, like celery breaks and all those. But I, I remember the eye sound of someone— Yeah. It's a sort of squishy sound that you can kind of hear, which sort of flows through.

I think it's all very subtle for if you're listening, but that's the one where I was like, 'Oh yeah, this is, this is quite a collection of weird noises.' And then of course the, the surgery hospital was lots of also gore sounds, but then you would just add those cutting noises and then suddenly it sounds very, very graphic, but of course they're completely unrelated sound effects. But yeah, no, my favourite is probably the recording of someone pushing their eyeball.

**JONNY**

That's amazing.

**ALEX**

Mine's going to get a little bit of a real answer here. Like a little less of, like, a soft one for me, where normally I joke around is... Cos we have to make quite a lot of use of, like, other people's recorded foley and Creative Commons sound effects and so on because of that production cycle that we talk about, there's a few elements in *Magnus* where it's like, you know, human suffering or... a thing based in a hospital or whatever, okay, where you have to do a trawl, you know.

You have to look for the effects that are going to match. And it tends to be one of three things, especially on like, if you're looking for 'human suffering' as a, as a

sound effect, it tends to be a combination of: One – “Oh no! Argh! Ooh, argh!” which is dire and that's— it just takes ages to trawl through that.

You tend to get some people who are doing really amazing work and you're like, ‘You should not be doing this as a Creative Commons. You should just go off and do this professionally. This is, you're very good.’ And then there's the last type, which is where it's like, with very little warning you'll go, ‘Here's a recording of my actual brain surgery’ and you're like [MISC GROANING NOISES] and I never use the last type, like, ever, but it's still like [GROAN] and you stumble on it. Yeah. That's pretty... a visceral response, I think for me.

### **ELIZABETH**

That's one of those things, actually, because I remember trying to— You'd think screams would be easy to get, right? Like, cos I remember early on, we were trying to, but, but getting screams and also getting people suffering noises, there are a couple of good sound effects that I managed to source from a few different spots, but one of the ones that I was very careful around as well was like, every so often we had a young child.

### **ALEX**

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

### **ELIZABETH**

And when I was looking for those, I was like, ‘Okay, so I do want like the sound of a, quite a young child here.’ I think that's for Peers, which is like 189, that I want to make sure that the description has context around it. Like, you know, ‘This is my son that is just about to be fed.’ And I also looked for that sound where they, the kid had been crying a little bit, but then they're, they're being soothed. Right. So I

found it very, like, I just couldn't pick a sample where it was, they're just crying, they sound miserable.

And then that scene with the sample, I was like, 'Oh god, I...' I just, for those, I was like, 'Okay... So I will find one where you can hear that they've just finishing up crying.' That's the other thing, cos it's, so— Sometimes with babies, you can tell that they've been soothed, but they're doing the wind down. Yeah. I do remember, sort of, with children particularly, I was like, 'Okay, so I just—

I can't bear the sound if I don't know it ends well.

### **ALEX**

In earlier seasons as well, like, I did a little more. I, again I backed off a lot on Season 5. I would often use a child 'happy cry' out of context, because with the right tweaking, a kid going [JOYOUS SCREAM] followed by "It's that Christmas present I wanted, waaargh!", it's close enough that you can make it work.

So like, the Unknowing, a lot of the yells are very happy children. There you go, there's a chunk where there's like, you know, lots of people crying "Ohhhhh" in the background, a chunk of it's just kids being really happy. Cos it's like, 'Ah, recording of Christmas Day' or whatever. Cos yeah, I really struggled with that, I think, as a thing.

### **JONNY**

I think the most disgusting sound is whenever Alex talks! Boom! Got 'im!

### **ALEX**

Fair play. With that I'm going to bounce on to the next question, cos that's just a sick burn, yo.

**ELIZABETH**

You're so hip Alex.

**ALEX**

Thank you. I'm down with the yoot. Rosemary cat asks: How'd you go about soundscaping the more subtle scenes?

So rather than quote things get weird unquote, basically how do you do subtle and how would you suggest someone go about learning that process?

**ELIZABETH**

Good question.

**ALEX**

I have a useful tip to get started on the learning, which I thoroughly recommend and no one ever seems to do. Find some feature films that you like – find some TV shows less so, unless they're really high-end – slap on a pair of really good headphones, plug them into your TV or whatever you're using to watch them, and then watch films with headphones on, to listen to the sound design. And when you start actually critically evaluating what you're hearing, you can very quickly break it down. Very quickly.

And you can also go, 'Hang on a minute. That's foley cos they're walking, but they're walking like 300 feet away and there's no camera. And I can hear the crunch, crunch, crunch. Oh, look, it's slightly out of sync.'

Like, it'll destroy films forever, but you asked how to, you know, get better at the editing side. That is a thing that I actively did, actively encourage others to do, just proper headphone listening to really high-end sort of film, and listen, properly

listened, to the sound and deconstruct it. You will learn a huge amount for free very quickly.

### **ELIZABETH**

It's very similar to video in that what you capture dictates very much, whether it's going to be any good. If you film something and your mise-en-scene is, like, terrible, there's no amount of editing that's going to get around that. And then for sound design, for SFX, you need to have the right samples because if you've got a sample of someone doing something very close, and in your story they're very far away, it gets harder and harder to change that. You can do some EQ. And then, of course, the opposite is also true, where if they're far away, you can never get rid of that echo in a room. So you really need to select what you're starting with, because it just gets very hard to manipulate.

I mean, you can manipulate sounds. You can make them sound a bit more further away. You obviously can add echo and reverb, but removing those kinds of things that already exist, it's impossible.

For Season 5, you know, there was a lot of layering of sounds because we don't have so much bass, but there's lots of also, like, subtlety, right?

So like, for example, the last hospital scene, which is in a reception. Okay, so that wasn't recorded in a hospital. Any of the hospitals' scenes that we have, there's only, I think, three samples that actually come from a hospital. One is me walking in a hospital. One is a blood pressure monitor. And I think one is latex gloves, which they said was recorded in a hospital.

But that was another thing, I kind of tried to avoid like recordings from hospitals, because there is literally a brain surgery sample for a sound where I'm like, 'I don't

know where this comes from' and I tend to probably over-layer. So I just go for as much sound and then Alex can just be like, 'I don't like all these sounds, Liz.'

**ALEX**

It's never that, it's just that 'Liz, I need you to understand that, like, we've hit the material limits of the human ear.'

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah, I'll add in the bugs.

**ALEX**

The human ear cannot discern 7,000 layers. It'll have to be 6,999.

**ELIZABETH**

Look, so, you know, like with the hospital reception, it was like, 'Well, what's the classic thing is, a certain type of phone, office phone noise, that you'll get in hospitals.' They tend to have a lot of reverb. You'll get people shuffling about, you'll get quiet murmuring, you'll get a vending machine because almost all reception areas for all lobby areas might have that. You could, if you wanted to, depending on your storytelling, you could have distant ambulance that comes close, if they've got the A&E nearby, your people rushing by, you've got trolley noises. So you've just got to, I think, think of all the things that could be in that environment and which ones sell that the best.

And also for us - am I going to need that sound later on? I only wanted to use phone sounds as limited as possible because if you just keep adding phone sounds then suddenly all your environments sound like the same.

And for example, even with Helen, I was like, ‘She’s in that hospital, I’m going to put her in a lift because we’ve always got doors opening.’ Like, ‘I am getting a lift in!’. Because that’s just a different sound for people to kind of enjoy that Helen might just, you know, pop out of an elevator rather than out of it, like, a squeaky door again.

That would be what I’d say is just trying to think of those environments. And then, yeah, we just, we definitely go for a style where we have lots of light, little cloth noises and lots of— and very squeaky chairs, like probably more squeaky than your normal chair, but like, you know, you just, kind of, need to double up what happens in the real world to kind of sell a scene, I think, so...

**ALEX**

I think you and I saw eye to eye on one thing as well, which we kind of take implicitly, but other people might benefit from hearing, which is: yours might be slightly different, but we still visualise the scene, which is for me, if I’m soundscaping a scene, I’ll read the script, see what’s happening, blah, blah, blah, and then I will sit, I will literally sit, close my eyes and play that film in my head.

**ELIZABETH**

Mmm.

**ALEX**

And then I will plunk myself in it as if I was in a VR environment and go, ‘Right. If I was sat in this scene, watching it play out, what would I be hearing?’ And that’s how I generate my list of layers that I would expect.

I don’t know if it’s quite the same for you, but I know that you work quite visually as well.

**ELIZABETH**

No, I definitely need to see what I'm making. So, even like my vision of Annabelle's web, I have a very specific vision of what that is. And I've made sounds where I'm like, ah, that goes with that. And Jonny had a different vision as well.

Like Jonny's script was like, 'Giant spiders in the background, you know, like in the distance crawl around' and I'm like, 'They're not going to be heard.' So, like, they'll be in the film.

**ALEX**

I disagree, don't sell yourself short Elizabeth, those 50 layers of purely silent, giant spiders crawling around in the background were some of your best work.

**JONNY**

I could hear them

**ELIZABETH**

So I had my own, sort of, vision of what was going on. And like, I remember, like, Anil came along and was like, "What is this tape noise?" And I described it so specific. And then Alex was like, 'Ah, probably just like, allow people to imagine their own thing', which is really what I'm going for as well. But I personally needed to have something where I was like, 'Ooh, that reminds me of this thing over here.' And it doesn't bother me that people interpret it another way, as long as it's still a big, giant web in that case.

**ALEX**

They just need to know that they're wrong, and that you are the one with the definitive vision.

**ELIZABETH**

Oh, yeah. Oh my god, yes. When the film is made, those things will be in there and they'll be super creepy.

**JONNY**

Have you not heard about this critical concept, death of the soundscaper?

**ALEX**

It's the hot new thing.

I'm going to jump onto the next one, bit of a fluffier one. Submerged Lambent asked: In the vein of *The Magnus Archives* being... ending up as a grim soufflé, what unfortunate desserts would you allocate to each of the other individual seasons?

**JONNY**

Which one's the bloody tiramisu?

**ALEX**

So let's go through them in order. So you got Season 1, right?

**JONNY**

Yeah.

**ALEX**

So Season 1's a comparatively plain, subtle dessert with a little bit of a kick at the end.

**JONNY**

It's a cookie. Like—

**ELIZABETH**

No...

**JONNY**

No? Oh, it's ice cream.

**ELIZABETH**

It's a Victoria sponge cake with shark teeth.

**ALEX**

I'm with Elizabeth. I'm with Elizabeth.

**JONNY**

Okay, no, you're right, you're right.

**ELIZABETH**

You eat the sponge cake, and then you realise that there's teeth in the thing

**JONNY**

It's a Victoria tooth cake.

**ALEX**

Oh that's vile, I love it. That! That. Okay, okay.

**JONNY**

I'm going to say a Victoria sponge tooth because a sponge tooth sounds just a lot nastier.

**ALEX**

Okay. Understood. Season 1 is a Victoria sponge tooth. Okay. Season 2, Season 2. So we've got Not!Sasha kicking around, it's a lot more about, sort of affair. So you got that paranoia vibe. So it's, it's got an odd flavour to it.

**JONNY**

I think it's like a mousse or a sorbet or something like that, like...

**ALEX**

I'm with you on something a little bit more liquid, a little bit more moussey, but it— something that has like a surprise citrus running through it or something.

**ELIZABETH**

I think it's going to be a Heston Blumenthal thing where it's like, you think you're eating a cake, but actually it's fish sauce.

**ALEX**

Ohhhh.

**JONNY**

No, I think, I think it's some sort of evil crème brûlée.

**ALEX**

Okay. Here we go then. So, what it sounds like to me, is that Season 2 is a crème brûlée—

**JONNY**

A crème brû-slay!

**ALEX**

—but then it turns out that it's not a crème brûlée, it's like, I don't know, a type of cheese that looks exactly like a crème brûlée, including the container or something.

**ELIZABETH**

Thin layer of crème brûlée, gravy underneath.

[JONNY SHUDDERS AUDIBLY]

**ALEX**

There it is. There it is. Season 2. Okay.

**JONNY**

This isn't a horror dessert, this is just a bad dining experience.

**ELIZABETH**

Wouldn't that be the worst though? Like, you'd go to have your dessert or you're like, 'Ah, this is going to be so delicious', and then it's just gravy.

**JONNY**

People enjoyed Season 2. Like, you know?

**ALEX**

Yeah. You just stop before you hit the gravy.

Okay. Season 3. I think this is a dessert that has to have some spice running through it. Like, I'm thinking chocolate and chilli, kind of vibe.

**ELIZABETH**

You know those *Nailed It* things where it's, like, someone wants to make the beautiful, like Cookie Monster. And then actually, you know, they just make this horrifying thing. I feel like it's got that vibe to it.

**JONNY**

What are you saying about Season 3?

**ELIZABETH**

It's the interior. So the exterior looks nice, once again, the interior— Like, it's a rainbow cake where it just all turns, like, to worms in the centre.

**ALEX**

It's got to have a big, messy finish as well. It can't be something you can eat easily. It's got to be something that makes a mess.

**JONNY**

So, you know, sometimes in funfairs, you'll find those stalls that sell you, like, just a big bag of tiny ring doughnuts that they've just fried up.

**ELIZABETH**

Ah, I love those.

**JONNY**

Yeah, they're great, but there's always like way too many of them.

**ELIZABETH**

No, there's never enough.

**JONNY**

They're a lot more filling— 'Oh, these are tiny.' And then you're like, 'Oh no, I've eaten too many doughnuts.'

**ALEX**

Oh, you didn't go for the double XL extreme. You never go for the double XL extreme.

**JONNY**

And they've always got like a little bit of cinnamon on them. That, but they scream.

**ALEX**

Oh, I've got it. Okay. Yeah. I like doughnut bag if—

**JONNY**

It's a screaming doughnut bag.

**ALEX**

—the very last doughnut at the bottom, there was way too much cinnamon in the bag, like way, way too much. So that the last doughnut in the bag is just effectively the cinnamon challenge in a doughnut.

**JONNY**

That is it though. That is what actually happens.

**ALEX**

Yeah. I'm going to accept doughnuts as Season 3. Okay. Season 4, I have a hot take on here. It is the tiny little mint, cos you've got just a little bit more space,

which is then followed by another heffing great dessert that you didn't know was coming.

**JONNY**

I'll be honest, Season 4 for me has to be the tiramisu. I love tiramisu and it's got layers, you know, Season 4 has layers.

**ALEX**

But it also is over-dense. So it's a tiramisu that didn't quite come out right. It's a little bit heavy.

**JONNY**

It's an evil tiramisu! Obviously!

**ALEX**

What do we think, is it just lightly radioactive or something?

**JONNY**

I'm aware, I say 'tira-MEE-su' and a lot of people say 'tiramisu', I don't care.

**ALEX**

I need you to know, I really appreciate you acknowledging that. Cos I'm literally fiddling with my cable in an attempt to not engage with that at all.

**JONNY**

I know; it's just how I say that word.

**ALEX**

Elizabeth, save us. I've got a boring tiramisu, what's missing from this? What edge does it need for Season 4?

**ELIZABETH**

Well, Season 4 as knowledge. Knowledge and Lonely. So, knowledge and Lonely is what comes up. So what's the loneliest thing you can eat? Ah, it's gotta be— have some ice cream in there, like a tiramisu with an entire tub of ice cream on top.

You've just had the worst day. You're just and— I'm just going to have some ice cream. It's just— I'm sorry, it's a classic trope. But the thing where you're like, 'I'll just have some ice cream.'

**ALEX**

It's the *Bridget Jones's Diary* ice cream tub, but it's full of tiramisu instead.

**JONNY**

Or, it's just a normal size, like, family tiramisu that's like, oh, this will serve eight. And you're just having to eat it alone because no-one else turned up.

**ALEX**

Oh, okay. Here you go. Yeah, that I'm with, I'm with, okay with that.

**ELIZABETH**

Or like a trifle, you know? Cos you get the trifle, you're like, 'This is, I mean, I'll just have a little bit with my flatmates or something', and then it's like, they've actually gone away and you're eating an entire trifle and it's a lot of custard.

**JONNY**

To be fair, a tiramisu is just a trifle, but good.

**ALEX**

So what Season 4 is, is it's just a family-sized dessert eaten alone. That's what's Season 4 is..

[AGREEMENT FROM THE OTHERS]

**JONNY**

Cos it is quite dense and there's a lot in.

**ALEX**

It keeps going. You know what? I'm legitimately proud with how well we got through that. Those are some good answers.

Right. I'm going to bounce on to the next one, but I respect your creative visions there. Okay. Bit of a, a more crunchy one, but nice straightforward answers. From Gerry's Oedipus Complex: Did you choose specific episodes or clips for the cacophony of tapes in MAG197? Or did you just keep layering any old stuff until it sounded right?

**ELIZABETH**

I chose specific episodes.

**JONNY**

I think there were one or two that I requested, but then you were like, 'Are there any others that you want?' and I was like, 'Go crazy.'

**ALEX**

It's also worth factoring in that we have had issues with raw and vocals from, like, earlier seasons that just, are technically recoverable, but buried in the depths of like semi-destroyed hard drives and very difficult to recover.

So Elizabeth's range of what she was able to pick from is quite narrow in certain ways.

**ELIZABETH**

It wasn't actually so bad, because you just do, like, a noise reduction on the tape sound effect. The problem is more the music, but once you brought the volume down to like minus 24, actually the music wasn't so bad either.

**ALEX**

That's good to know.

**ELIZABETH**

What I used for Annabelle's area, it was 12 episodes from Season 1, 10 episodes from Season 2, 12 episodes from Season 3 and... 15 episodes from Season 4—

**ALEX**

Oh my gosh, Elizabeth...

**JONNY**

That's a whole season's worth of episodes.

**ALEX**

Of manually selected audio. With specific time codes. Each processed so they can be blended into it. This is a really good example of invisible work that makes it work, but no-one would have anticipated.

**ELIZABETH**

But it's done in a way where it's like— Okay, so there's one episode which has Web. And then the rest of them are all the other Fears. So they're all episodes which are for certain fears. So there is... Extinction only has three references, and then everything else is more like five or six. The total amount of samples I think, is six times eight. So that's like 42, right? She does maths.

Yeah. So it's something like 42 plus 1, which is the Web one.

**ALEX**

48. You underestimated yourself.

**ELIZABETH**

Because I thought if people ever want to know, it will matter to them that it fully covers all the different Fears. Right? So that each fear is literally being played as per what The Web is talking about. Right? That it's drawing the different Fears along.

I guess the other thing is to cover off the other— Because I think someone did ask on Discord once about other things to do with the tapes.

So, the tape that rewinds for the episode before that, is Grifter's Bone. I think I use Grifter's Bone because like it's literally an episode about being discordant and there's lots of tape rewinding, which is just Grifter's Bone.

So for the episode before that where Annabelle shatters the camera, that's 160 run in reverse. And then for the end of 200 for the explosion, that's 160 running fast to the point where you hear the, like, really harsh static sound. And that's the end of 160 where the world is being destroyed or whatever you want to call it, transformed, because I thought that was a good episode to use for around The Web, because it was obviously the one that transformed the world.

**ALEX**

So the answer is 'Yes, specific episodes were used.' Good luck decoding it all. There's a lot in there, but it's all lore-correct, which is the important thing, which I quite like.

**ELIZABETH**

Mmhmm.

**JONNY**

Elizabeth traditionally is being much more hot and accurate on the lore than I have.

**ALEX**

By a vast margin!

Okay. Nice specific one, at least, for this one. From Jack: In Season 5 was the SFX of destroying avatars, so the smiting sounds, was that meant to sound like old sci-fi serials, like *Flash Gordon*? Was that something that Jonny specifically requested or was that something that we, production-wise, just decided on our own?

Everything up to this point in the series had been deliberately quite verisimilitudinous insofar as it was either 'let's make it sound like a thing' or 'let's

make it sound like a tape’. Couple of exceptions, like the Unknowing, but for the most part, it was quite analogue, I guess. And I wanted the smiting to have a bit of a fresh sound to it that people wouldn't have heard before

Also, people forget that if you go back and listen to previous seasons, there's a rule in *Magnus*, which is when the world is normal, it's in mono. So, that means it's a single flat plane and it's all on the one place. The second that things are not normal. so when the world has gone wrong, specifically the Unknowing and post-apocalypse and so on, it splits into full-blown stereo. So while they're in their bubble, in the cabin, it's in mono, but once they head out into the world that goes into stereo, and if you listen on headphones, you'll spot suddenly there's panning and all that kind of thing.

So for the smiting as well, we had a lot more scope with which to work within. I confess I did kind of deliberately try to make it a little bit *Flash Gordon*-y, but not in a way that people go, ‘Ah, how kitsch!’ but more, a little— just so it was a little bit more distinct. But what I would say is, although I generated the initial sort of ‘smite suite’, which is six or seven layers of various types of static, I definitely handed it over to you, Elizabeth, to start making it actually work in the season later.

So I strongly suspect it would have been modified to suit as time went on.

### **ELIZABETH**

Well, yes. Cos we obviously changed it. If it wasn't a smite, cos we had about like five smites, right? We murdered five baddies.

### **JONNY**

About that.

**ELIZABETH**

And we made someone an avatar, right? In the ant episode, and that was like, okay, so you need to have the build, which sounds the smitey kind of sound, like the build-up of John's power. So I have two concepts; it's like there's what's John's building power and then the lens, which is doing the smiting. If the lens isn't focusing, which is two sounds in my brain, then you need something else to add that. It was adapted to suit, if we were doing something different like that, or pulling down Elias slash Jonah from the ceiling.

**JONNY**

It certainly wasn't something that I specifically requested. Like by this point, if I ever did, I long since stopped trying to anticipate what the sound might actually be like, and just described what was happening in-universe. So it's something like, 'Oh, they are torn apart' or, you know, 'they are unmade'. Or also— I forget the exact phrasing.

**ALEX**

In your defence, the stage directions that you gave for smiting were actually quite useful.

**JONNY**

Oh yeah! Good work, Jonny.

**ALEX**

Okay, we're on our last two questions. Last two questions now.

**JONNY**

Alright, let's do it.

**ALEX**

From basically everyone: What was the most difficult domain in Season 5 to soundscape?

**ELIZABETH**

So, I think the first hospital, I remember there was some painful moments there. I think the domains themselves, like if you're talking about just environmental sounds like, 'Oh, this is a prison', those aren't so tricky. It's more the character action that is the hard stuff.

So, I mean The Vast, 195, I had gotten all the sound of, like, people kind of swimming to do the underwater noise. Then I processed it into an mp3 to check out the sound. And all of that turned into sounding like plastic. Like, it just, the mp3 just crushed it all. So I had to go back and redo the underwater sounds because, like, some of them were fine, but a lot of them weren't. So I was like, 'Okay, so these ones here sound fine. So I need to go back. Do my samples so that they sound like that' because sometimes yeah, they're going from the project to even a wav file can change how much you're getting out of it. And then going to mp3, like, yeah.

I remember the Peers episode that was trying to get the sounds of, like, a really burly parliament that the UK has, right? Those like, jeers. So it tends to be more like certain elements in each episode would be the difficult bits.

Yeah. The underwater one just was frustrating there, but actually as an episode, I really love it. And then that first hospital, just because there was a lot of figuring out how I was going to do those scenes with the therapist, there was just a lot of different transitions between different scenes and, you know, Helen coming in and this, that, and the other thing, and a hug slash kiss even was in there. I think.

**ALEX**

Again, I had a lot less on the soundscaping side. I struggled a lot this season with, and it's not even their fault. Frank Voss, because of pandemic and everyone's recording in different spaces and so on, it just so happens that the space that they are able to record in, is particularly, sort of, reverberant, quite resonant, which as a result meant that you can take the vocals to a certain point.

Like Elizabeth was saying earlier, you can't magic stuff away or add extra stuff that isn't there beyond a certain limit. So there was a certain amount of Season 5 where it's like, some of those scenes are a lot more interior than they were written. There's a couple of them where it's like Basira and the Archivist are like out overlooking the, sort of, meat plant or whatever. And it's like, that's in a cave, they're huddled in a cave or something, because otherwise it doesn't work. That's where they are now, do-do do-doo.

There was a lot of executive decision-making on my end, where characters were just teleported into similar, but not quite identical spaces sometimes—

**ELIZABETH**

Oh yeah.

**ALEX**

—just to get that right.

And it's no one's fault. It's just the realities of, you know, recording in this situation. But that was very frustrating because Elizabeth had provided something that was literally flawless and then I'd go, 'Elizabeth, I'm going to warn you now, I'm gonna make your work actively worse in order to mask something that's not your fault.'

So, sorry. I find that quite difficult because, you know, that's real work and you're making it actively a little bit muddier, that hurts, that hurts physically to do.

**ELIZABETH**

I think my favourite, like, thing that I found quite funny was Jonny writing in the Epoch script, 'distant, horrible, seagulls', me, like, working to be like, 'Okay, I got distant, horrible seagulls', and then Alex getting it and going, 'It sounds like the beach, it's gone.' Okay. Fine.

**ALEX**

Yeah. Sorry. Seagulls. No, you get one or two.

In that case, then the last question, the last, last question of this Q & A – there will be another one after this, but it's not going to be as SFX-focussed – is from Mr Gay Shoes: If you could change one thing about *The Magnus Archives*, what would you change?

[JONNY BURBLES]

I know what I'd change, dead easy: Gertrude wasn't shot three times.

**JONNY**

No.

**ALEX**

I was right. Done. Done!

**JONNY**

It's one of those things that, like, if I started changing it, there's so much that would be like tweaked and changed and reshuffled and this sort of thing.

I can't think of like, a single, specific thing that I'm like, 'Ah, I wish that this was specifically different.'

**ALEX**

If you pull at threads, the whole thing can just unravel into just— It stops being a tapestry and starts being a pile of thread again.

**JONNY**

It's very much like, 'Oh well, I wish that like I'd done more with this character. But if I'd done more with that character, then that would have completely unbalanced this whole arc. And that's fine, actually, because thinking about that arc didn't really have as much of a narrative landing as I'd like. So what I'd like to do is to take that arc and integrate with...' and suddenly the whole structure is being revised.

So, there's certainly, within the writing of *Magnus* itself, there's plenty of stuff that I would change, but I don't think there's a, like a single specific thing that is the one thing I would alter.

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah. It's a difficult question because you're like, the most important thing was having something entertaining that ended well, and I think we did that. Like, there's very few perfect works of art, right?

**JONNY**

And now there's one more!

**ELIZABETH**

Exactly. And now there's one— There's little things that, like, potentially I would go tweak. I like to think of her as 'knife-wife', but because I really thought that Alex was just going to throw that out because he had said no knife-wives. I would have made that a little bit tidier and made that a little bit nicer.

But at the same time, all sorts of little things that you could say you might want to tweak, or you might want revisit. But I think the overall thing is that— I guess in some ways I was always a bit sad about Tim dying, but I was also kind of happy because Mike left the studio, so I wouldn't have to compete with, like, levelling him.

**JONNY**

Wow...

**ALEX**

Mike is a nightmare to level with other people in the room.

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah, yeah, he's fine by himself. The moment you have other people, he's all over their mics.

**JONNY**

I still remember recording with him in a corridor with, like, five of us squeezed in there, everyone just in front of Mike to dampen his resounding bass **and** him holding, like, three different cushions.

**ELIZABETH**

Yeah. I think actually the recordings were rank. It would have been amazing if we had been able to get those recordings really perfect, because I think that was something that stressed us out. So without that stress, that would have been pretty sweet.

**ALEX**

I have to agree with that one. I think we could have— It's one of the only things across the whole series when I'm, like, in any other timeframe, I think we could've made it materially just that little bit better. And there's not many points throughout the whole thing where we can say that, but I feel like that about that. That sounds like a negative. The real takeaway here is, is it perfect? No. Would we want to change some things? There are many things that we *could* improve on. Would it still exist at the other end? Probably not.

**ELIZABETH**

Well, this is the thing, like, to get that perfect show, it would have been coming out three or four years later.

**ALEX**

Yeah.

**JONNY**

It's 60 hours. It's like 600,000 words.

**ALEX**

It's fine. It's fine..

**JONNY**

Are there a 100,000 of those words that I'd like to be different? Yeah!

**ALEX**

Jonny, it's fine. We'll take 2015 to 2020 to draft the scripts for *The Magnus Archives*. Then 2020 to 25, we'll redraft. 2025 to 2030, we'll do vocals. And then by 2050, you've got **the** perfect show.

**JONNY**

Yeah.

**ELIZABETH**

I think going for the 'almost perfect and out' so that people can enjoy it is still the better option, I'll be honest.

**ALEX**

Oh, I disagree, I disagree. *The Magnus Archives* sequel coming May 2167!

**ELIZABETH**

The original podcast vapourware.

**ALEX**

On that point I think that we're done on this Q & A. There will be more, but it's going to be a lot more story-focused, I think. I think we'll free you from this ongoing Q & A-based purgatory, Elizabeth.

**JONNY**

Godspeed Liz!

**ALEX**

Free yourself whilst you still can.

**JONNY**

Run free!

**ELIZABETH**

Hooray!

**ALEX**

Tell our story!

**JONNY**

Live your life!

**ELIZABETH**

I'll run out into the streets and then be like, 'Oh, that's right, I have to stay indoors.'

**ALEX**

Thanks for your time, Elizabeth. We'll see everyone soon. Bye everyone!

**JONNY**

Bye!