

## MAG – 111 – Family Business

### Content Warnings:

- Undead
- Spousal violence
- Blood
- Body horror

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro]

**JONATHAN SIMS**

Rusty Quill presents: The Magnus Archives. Episode one hundred and one.  
Family Business.

[Tape clicks on.]

**ARCHIVIST**

Right, so I just... read it?

**JULIA**

He's the last page.

**TREVOR**

(Snorts) Good luck. I guess.

**ARCHIVIST**

Ah, you're not staying to... I dunno, keep an eye on me?

**JULIA**

It's not a... Trevor doesn't like using the book. I don't either. Makes me feel off.  
Dead should stay dead.

**ARCHIVIST**

S-So... I mean, why keep it around?

**TREVOR**

‘Cause sometimes talking to the dead can stop you joining ‘em. Come on Julia.

**JULIA**

Ah, just give us a knock when you’re done.

**ARCHIVIST**

Sure.

**[Footsteps]**

Sure...

**[Door closes.]**

Right... **(Sighs)** Okay.

**(The Archivist takes a deep breath before reading from the book.)** “His consciousness faded in and out like the tide. He tried to refuse their drugs, though for what purpose even he could not have said. Perhaps he was simply trying to push away the smell of disinfectant and grief that rose from his hospital bed. She was there sometimes, the one he had followed around the world. There was almost sadness in her eyes. He felt himself begin to slip, the icy certainty of what was happening seeping through his flesh, and as he fell away for the final time, he felt that all-consuming fear. And his only thought was to cry out for his mother.

But with the last vestige of his stubborn will, he refused. She would not claim his last moment.

He was silent.

**[There’s an ominous rumble.]**

And so Gerard Keay ended.”

Gerard? Gerard Keay?

**GERARD**

You’re new. Did you kill them?

**ARCHIVIST**

Uh... who?

**GERARD**

The Hunters. They had this book. Are they dead?

**ARCHIVIST**

N-No.

**GERARD**

Then piss off. I told them I'm not talking.

**ARCHIVIST**

Sorry, what?

**GERARD**

(Tired) I'm not their bloody Monster Manual. I'm done.

**ARCHIVIST**

I-I-I didn't— I mean, that's not what this is.

**GERARD**

No? They didn't hand me over for you to use, like I'm a bloody dictionary they keep in a special box?

**ARCHIVIST**

Uh... Yeah.

**GERARD**

Like I said. (Pause) You got a cigarette?

**ARCHIVIST**

Uh, oh, yeah. Here. C-Can you smoke it?

**GERARD**

Ugh. I guess not. Yeah... 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.

**GERARD**

No.

**ARCHIVIST**

What? W-Why not? If, if it happens, if the Circus—

**GERARD**

Yeah, the world changes in horrible ways. For you. I'm a book.

**ARCHIVIST**

You can't be serious.

**GERARD**

I'm dead serious.

**(Laughs)** It hurts. Being like this. And it's not like any pain you can feel when you're alive. It's... it hurts to exist. To be dead and still here. And those two want to keep me like this, so I can answer questions about their Dracula of the week. So, no. Help me, or you go to your little apocalypse with nothing.

**ARCHIVIST**

Fine. What do you want?

**GERARD**

I want to go away. I want you to take my page and burn it.

**ARCHIVIST**

I-I-I can't do th— They'd know! They'd kill me.

**GERARD**

Tear it out and take it, then. Do it somewhere else.

**ARCHIVIST**

B-B-But if they check the book—

**GERARD**

Guess you better hope they don't.

**ARCHIVIST**

Gerard, please...

**GERARD**

You want answers, you tear out my page now! So I know you can't back out.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Sigh) Okay.

**GERARD**

Okay.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Exhales) Ready?

(Gerard inhales.)

[The sound of tearing fibres as the page is ripped out.]

There.

**GERARD**

Thank you.

**ARCHIVIST**

Well, you've probably killed me.

**GERARD**

Dying isn't so bad. It's staying dead that sucks.

**ARCHIVIST**

Well, these nuggets of wisdom are certainly worth it so far.

**GERARD**

Relax. They won't notice.

**ARCHIVIST**

So?

**GERARD**

Okay, you got questions.

**ARCHIVIST**

Just one. How do I stop the Unknowing?

**GERARD**

No, I don't know.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Incensed) What?!

**GERARD**

Okay, okay, I don't know exactly, but... me and Gertrude went all over, tracking clowns and skinwalkers, trying to find a way to mess it up. I didn't find much, but Gertrude, she figured a few things out. She reckoned it could be delayed, but nothing we could do beforehand would actually stop it properly. Even the Dancer could be replaced. But, once it starts, then it might be vulnerable.

**ARCHIVIST**

Vulnerable to what?

**GERARD**

I dunno.

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh, goddamn it!

**GERARD**

But she did say she thought she had something that could do it.

**ARCHIVIST**

What?

**GERARD**

Well, not long before I ended up in the hospital, she told me that if something got her first, I was... There's a storage unit on an industrial estate up near Hainault. She said she rented it under the name Jan Kelly, and hid a key for it somewhere in the Archives.

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh. Uh, I-I think I found that.

**GERARD**

Well, it's in that storage unit. Whatever she thought might disrupt the ritual, stop the Unknowing, that's where it'll be.

**ARCHIVIST**

But you don't know what it is?

**GERARD**

No. When I asked her she said she'd show me when we got back to London. Mind you, she had this weird look in her eyes, like it was some kind of a joke.

**ARCHIVIST**

I mean... it wasn't, w-was it? A-A joke.

**GERARD**

I don't think so. Gertrude didn't make jokes.

**ARCHIVIST**

Well, worst case scenario I suppose I... continue to have nothing.

**GERARD**

I guess. So... uh, you're the Archivist now?

**ARCHIVIST**

Whatever that means.

**GERARD**

Can't help you much there. Gertrude was always kind of cagey about it.

**ARCHIVIST**

Sh-She never showed any... er, abilities, or talked about... I don't know, destiny? Like she was... becoming something?

**GERARD**

Hmmm... Well, she could make people tell her stuff, sometimes. They'd suddenly get real talkative, and lay out whatever she needed. She didn't do it often though. I don't think she liked it.

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh, er, I can do that, too.

**GERARD**

Huh. Do you like it?

**ARCHIVIST**

I-I don't know. I never really thought about it. Yes, I... I suppose I do.

**GERARD**

Hmmm.

**ARCHIVIST**

Did she read statements?

**GERARD**

Sometimes. If she was getting shaky. They perked her up, I think. Feeding the Eye, you know? I'd sometimes hear her through the wall, just reading into the air, feeling it all.

**ARCHIVIST**

She... she didn't use a tape recorder?

**GERARD**

Not when I was with her. She travelled light. Left things behind.

**ARCHIVIST**

Kind of sounds like you didn't... trust her.

**GERARD**

Yeah, I didn't. I wanted to, I really did, but it was always the work. Sometimes she just reminded me of my mum. Did you ever meet her, my mum?

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Flustered)** Erm... Not in, not in person, it was er... O-Only by reputation.

**GERARD**

Huh. Well, she was also, um, 'goal-orientated'. Ruthless. But at least Gertrude tried to do something worthwhile with it. My mum only had her ambitions. She'd never have even admitted it, though. She was too proud for that. She saw herself as real working class, always said the occult was just a club for rich boys playing politics with things they didn't understand. Reckoned her tradition was less the academic and more the, uh...

**ARCHIVIST**

V-Village witch?

**GERARD**

**(Laughingly)** You sure you don't know her?

Yeah. But deep down what she wanted wasn't all that different from the ivory tower idiots she hated. Y'know, I think, secretly, she dreamed of starting a little mystic dynasty of her own. With me.

**ARCHIVIST**

Like the, the Lukases? Or the Fairchilds?

**GERARD**

Well, Fairchild's just a name, they're not really family. The Lukases, though, yeah. Thing is, it's harder than it looks. What's out there... doesn't care about blood.

**ARCHIVIST**

Well, I-I mean, except for the vampires...

**GERARD**

Yeah, obviously except for the vampires. But they care about your choices, your fears, not your parents. Families are just useful 'cause they can push you in the right direction. And the Lukases are very good at that.

**ARCHIVIST**

And I imagine they're not... reluctant to remove any members that might put that legacy at risk.

**GERARD**

Right. You know, for a group that worships a power of loneliness, they never seem to have any problems breeding, or finding spooky singles to marry them. Just one of those things, I guess.

But most times you try to put your descendants on the path to worship, it doesn't go great. Just takes one stubborn heir to freak out about the truth, and the whole thing comes crashing down.

**ARCHIVIST**

And... that was you?

**GERARD**

Yeah. Turns out not everyone grows up caring about power and knowledge like my mum.

**ARCHIVIST**

What happened?

**GERARD**

I tried to abandon her.

**ARCHIVIST**

I see.

Do you... want to make a statement?

**GERARD**

(Laughs) Why not? I'll try to make it quick, before the Van Helsings get bored.

**ARCHIVIST**

Right. (Coughs) Right.

Er... Statement of Gerard Keay, deceased, regarding the death of his mother, Mary Keay.

Statement taken posthumously from subject, June 30th 2017.

Statement begins.

**GERARD [STATEMENT]**

My mother spent her whole life feeling cheated. She used to tell me with a kind of sneer that “destiny is for lords”, and I think in her own way she actually believed that. You know, she felt we weren’t important enough for a destiny. But she never forgot that she came from a noble house: Von Closen. All wrapped up in mystery and power. At least, that’s what my mum believed. I was never able to find much on them, at all. Nothing that would say there was anything special about them except, y’know, maybe their connection to the Magnus Institute and Jonah Magnus. But she’d never accept that. To her, her ancestors were these ‘powerful sages of terrible gods’, their ‘destinies stolen from them by an idle dilettante’. **(Snorts)** Least that’s how she told it to me.

I remember that Jurgen Leitner was the first man I ever really hated. I’d never met him, but that was the name on the books that my mum spent all her time reading, and half the time when she actually looked at me, it was to teach me about one of them. She idolised him, I think, almost as much as she despised him. She thought he’d managed what she always dreamed of: using these entities, without being bound to them. I think she saw him as some kind of sorcerer. So she studied those books that she could find, but she always came back to this one, this unnamed catalogue of the trapped dead. It was her first, she always told me, and would probably be her last.

I never knew my dad. Not really. He worked in the Archives like you, but quit once I was born. I think he wanted to help raise me. But mum didn’t need the help, and after me she wasn’t able to have kids again, so she killed him in his sleep to practice her bookbinding. I guess she failed. I always thought he was in here, but when I eventually got hold of it, there wasn’t a page in there.

She did her best to look after me, and bring me into this world she inhabited, but she wasn’t a caring mother or a skilled teacher. My struggling at her lessons infuriated her. I mean, looking back now I can see that her knowledge was basic at best. But I was a kid. I could only try to avoid her temper, and learn my weird lessons, writing out nonsense, and pretending I understood paradoxes that most adults couldn’t handle.

We travelled a lot. Between her day job as a rare bookseller and her... vocation, it wasn’t often we stayed in London for more than a month. We met with things that almost made me throw up I was so afraid, and she’d talk to

them like old friends. It was awful, but I suppose in many ways, it worked. Whenever I tried to run away the ‘real’ world seemed so... ignorant I could never be a part of it. So I did my best to find my place within the world of my mum. As an idiot teenager I hunted Leitner’s books with the best of them, even found a few. I’d bring them home, and watch her eyes light up. But it was always the books that she was happy to see. Eventually, I grew old enough and wise enough to see her obsession for what it really was: hubris. She lived her just carefully enough not to be destroyed by things she studied, but that was it. The things out there weren’t like taming fire, they couldn’t be contained or used for light or warmth. The best you could hope for from them, would be that they don’t spot you, and instead my mum chased after them, obsessed with others who had tried to stare at them without being blinded: y’know, Flamsteed, Smirke, Leitner. Idiots who destroyed themselves chasing a secret that wasn’t worth knowing. And the worst thing was, she marked me as a part of that, without my understanding. Or consent.

Our relationship, such as it was, it quickly went downhill. But I never managed to leave. I just couldn’t bring myself to finally cut that cord and abandon her, no matter what she said. And I think she knew that. I think she knew she had me trapped. But it was a hollow victory. She also knew that I wouldn’t continue her work, that whatever destiny she had tried to write for the Von Closen line, died with her. I think that might have been what finally pushed her to do it. To try and take full control of the book. I remember the smell when I came back to the shop that day, the heavy blood smell. She had just finished writing on the third sheet she’d hung on that old fishing wire, laced between the shelves, and she was on the edge of passing out. She wouldn’t stop, though. She wouldn’t give in. She thrust a razor blade and a marker pen at me, and begged me to help her finish.

Everything was red, every possible shade of dark, and wet, and drying crimson. I turned to run but I slipped, fell to the floor and I crawled, panicking, down into the street. I managed to stagger to a coffee shop across the road, and I just sat there in shock until the police arrived.

Between the blood on my clothes, eyewitnesses who saw me leaving, and the fact the mutilations were so awful the judge said it was “inconceivable to suggest they were self-inflicted”, it seemed like an open and shut case. And

honestly, there was a part of me which thought a life in prison was an alright price for freedom. Trouble was, whatever dark ritual my mum tried to do? It worked. She had bound herself to the book, and was able to manifest almost at will. How she removed it from police custody I don't know, but it left enough of the other evidence 'contaminated' that my case was judged a mistrial. I was later told there wasn't enough evidence to charge me again. Apparently several witnesses had withdrawn their testimony. I wasn't going to be imprisoned, but... I was a long way from free.

She was waiting for me when I got home. The half-finished ritual had left her... damaged. She was powerful, but... erratic. Of course she blamed me for her new state, said if I had helped her she would have been completely beyond death. But as she was, she wasn't going anywhere.

For the next five years she haunted my life. I did what she asked, but whenever her form faded for a few days, I would take what little revenge I could: I burned books, I covered leads. I occasionally fled to somewhere I thought it'd be hard for her to follow.

In the end it was Gertrude who saved me. She came to me when I was desperate, nowhere to go, and she offered to help. I just had to make sure I took the book while my mum was fading, and brought it to her, and then she would free me. I didn't really believe her, I don't think, but I did it anyway. When she returned the book to me a week later, her pages burned and mangled, I think I actually cried with relief. I never even considered that my mum might have taught Gertrude how to make pages for it before she was destroyed.

**(Sigh)** I think you know the rest. I joined Gertrude's work for a few years. Didn't realise how ill I was until it finally caught up with me. Then I died.

I think... I think I finally understand why she brought me back. I just don't understand why she left me behind.

**ARCHIVIST**

What was Gertrude's work?

**GERARD**

What?

**ARCHIVIST**

I-I mean, I— Sorry, I-I know a lot about what Gertrude did, but I don't really know why she was doing any of it, or w-what her intentions were.

**GERARD**

Same as you. I think.

**ARCHIVIST**

Stopping the Unknowing?

**GERARD**

Not just the Unknowing. All of them.

**ARCHIVIST**

There are more rituals...

**GERARD**

That's what she said.

**ARCHIVIST**

W-W-What do they do?

**GERARD**

I mean... they change the world. They make it new.

**ARCHIVIST**

An apocalypse.

**GERARD**

Kind of. How much do you know about these things, the Eye and that?

**ARCHIVIST**

I don't— Uh... they're, they're malicious. Many consider them god-like and they have the power to affect the world in unnatural ways, but they cannot directly exist within it, so they rely on avatars or, or servants that they corrupt and... sometimes monsters that they create. They use their power in ways small enough to stay hidden, a-and I think... I think they feed on our fear.

**GERARD**

No, they don't feed on it. They are it.

**ARCHIVIST**

What? W-what do you mean?

**GERARD**

I mean what I said. These things, these forces, they are our fear. Deep fears. Primordial. Always looking for ways to grow and spread.

**ARCHIVIST**

No... B-B-But that doesn't— I m-mean, it doesn't make—

**GERARD**

What? So you thought it was coincidence that unknowable alien consciousnesses from beyond our universe just so happen to basically be all the things we're terrified of?

**ARCHIVIST**

I— How?!

**GERARD**

No idea.

Smarter people than me have died trying to figure that one out. I mean, maybe they appeared out of nothing the first time something felt afraid. Maybe they're older than that, and they just got inspired by all the things that we dread. Did they made themselves from our fears, or are they why we're afraid? I really don't know.

**ARCHIVIST**

But, but not everything they do inspires fear.

**GERARD**

And if you're having an omelette for lunch, not every moment is spent eating the omelette. Some things take preparation. Especially if, you know, your spatula has a bit of free will. And sometimes I think bits of them just... ooze into the world without any purpose at all. Or sometimes they're summoned.

**ARCHIVIST**

Fears change. Fears are-are-are cultural.

**GERARD**

A lot of them, yeah, but others are deeper than that. And when our fears change, so do these things. But it's not quick. Gertrude reckons they've basically been the same since the Industrial Revolution. She and my mum both liked to follow Smirke's list of fourteen.

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Disbelievingly)** Th— I mean, there are a lot more than fourteen things to be afraid of in the world. Where do you draw the line?

**GERARD**

Hmmm. I always think it helps to imagine them like colours. The edges bleed together, and you can talk about little differences: "oh, that's indigo, that's more lilac", but they're both purple. I mean, I guess there are technically infinite colours, but you group them together into a few big ones. A lot of it's kind of arbitrary. I mean, why are navy blue and sky blue both called blue, when pink's an entirely different colour from red? Y'know? I don't know, that's just how it works. And like colours, some of these powers, they feed into or balance each other. Some really clash, and you just can't put them together. I mean, you could see them all as just one thing, I guess, but it would be pretty much meaningless, y'know, like... like trying to describe a... shirt by talking about the concept of colour. O-Of course, with these things it's not a simple spectrum, y'know, it's more like—

**ARCHIVIST**

An infinite amorphous blob of terror bleeding out in every direction at once.

**GERARD**

Now you're getting it.

**ARCHIVIST**

Like colours, but if colours hated me. Got it. Christ, I need a cigarette.

**GERARD**

Yeah, well, you can wait. Don't know how much longer we have.

**ARCHIVIST**

Hang on, if these entities are all based on our, on our fear, the-the-then what, what about the, the rest—

**GERARD**

No. There aren't any god-like powers of hope, or love, or indigestion, or whatever. At not that I've seen. Just fear. I don't know why.

**ARCHIVIST**

Fine. So... so, I know a, a few... but what are they, these fourteen?

**GERARD**

Robert Smirke divided the beings into fourteen distinct Powers, each comprising a variety of smaller terrors, some direct and practical, and some more abstract.

**ARCHIVIST**

R-r-right. I know The Eye. Fear of being watched, right?

**GERARD**

Being watched, being followed, having your deepest secrets exposed. Needing to know, even if your discoveries might destroy you. The feeling that something, somewhere, is letting you suffer, just so it can watch.

**ARCHIVIST**

Is... is that me? Is... is that what I do?

**GERARD**

You're the Archivist, you tell me.

**ARCHIVIST**

Ah... Ah. The Spiral is the fear of madness, right? That worry that your world isn't right, th-that your mind is lying to you?

**GERARD**

Yeah, pretty much.

**ARCHIVIST**

And The End is fear of death.

**GERARD**

Simple, but always there

**ARCHIVIST**

The Stranger is the, the unknown. The uncanny.

**GERARD**

That kind of creeping sense that something's not right. That guy you saw that might be following you, might mean you harm.

**ARCHIVIST**

Isolation.

**GERARD**

Smirke called it The Lonely. The feeling that you're just... alone. Maybe there's no-one else there at all, maybe you just can't connect.

**ARCHIVIST**

Then there's... burning, the, uh, the Lightless Flame.

**GERARD**

The Desolation. Fear of pain, fear of loss, fear of unthinking or cruel destruction.

**ARCHIVIST**

Does it... watch over, um, war as, as well? Or is, is that The End?

**GERARD**

I mean, I think they both get a lot out of war, but you're thinking of The Slaughter. It's not cruel, exactly, or unstoppably like The End. It's just pure violence, not targeted or premeditated, just... unpredictable violence. And you don't know when, or even if it's coming. Sometimes it's aggressive, like a frenzied killer, but sometimes it's calm, like an army firing shells into a village.

The Slaughter's not that common in peace but, well, you know, there's always a war somewhere.

**ARCHIVIST**

Right. And, and then th-there's, uh... Vertigo. The fear of, the fear of falling.

**GERARD**

The Vast. Vertigo, agoraphobia, the dread of deep water, of our own insignificance before the universe.

**ARCHIVIST**

And on the other side, claustrophobia?

**GERARD**

The Buried. Small spaces, crushing, you can't breath. You're at the centre of everything, and it all pushes down on you. If the Vast is like losing yourself in too much space, the Buried is being trapped without enough.

**ARCHIVIST**

Darkness?

**GERARD**

The Dark, yeah. That's an old one, and one of the deepest. I mean, who isn't a little bit afraid of the dark? Of what might be in it?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah. And there, um... I think Filth, it's, it's disease, but also insects?

**GERARD**

The Corruption. Ooh, it's a nasty one, that one. Just... disgust. Rot, decay, infection. That feeling of your skin crawling or itching, being touched by something that might burrow inside you.

Swarming and hollowing you out. Leaving you full of holes.

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah. Not spiders, though?

**GERARD**

No. They belong to The Web.

**ARCHIVIST**

Which is... spiders a-and control. Your, your will not being your own.

**GERARD**

Yeah. Being manipulated or pupeted. The worry you're caught in a trap you can't see.

**ARCHIVIST**

Yes. What about meat? How does that work?

**GERARD**

Ah, The Flesh?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah, I-I mean, are we really so afraid of being... eaten? Of our bodies being all twisted up, i-i-is that... I mean, some people sure, but... how is it one of the fourteen great fears?

**GERARD**

What? You think people are so special it's only our fear that counts?

**ARCHIVIST**

Wh— No...

**GERARD**

Everything feels afraid sometimes. Sure, maybe it's not as complicated or... existential as our fear, but it's real. And there's, what, twenty billion chickens in the world? A few billion pigs, cows... How many of them are dying of old age? All that terror, it has to go somewhere. So it does.

**ARCHIVIST**

And when something formed out of an animalistic fear of the slaughterhouse reaches out to, to people...

**GERARD**

Things get weird. Yeah. It gets mixed all up with human neuroses: bodies, gore, y'know, that nagging worry that deep down we're just electrified meat squeezing air at each other.

**ARCHIVIST**

Good lord.

**GERARD**

I think it's quite new. Only just beginning its, uh, ascendance when Smirke labelled it. Before that there just weren't enough animals for it to be a fear of its own. Back then I think the only animal fear was The Hunt.

**ARCHIVIST**

The Hunt is also animals?

**GERARD**

Yeah. Been a long time since humans had any proper sense of our place on the food chain. I mean, we haven't been 'prey' for, what, thousands of years?

**ARCHIVIST**

But, I mean, hunting, killing each other. That-That's just how wild animals work. I-I-It's... natural.

**GERARD**

So's death. But we're still afraid of it.

**ARCHIVIST**

I suppose. And again, when an animalistic fear touches a human...

**GERARD**

You get the Predator's granddad out there.

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Considering)** This is, uh... No, I don't have time. Tell me about the rituals.

**GERARD**

Well, they all have one. Most of them, anyway. Takes centuries to build up to a level of power where they can try it, and if they fail, it's back to square one.

**ARCHIVIST**

Okay, but what do the rituals do?

**GERARD**

They... kind of ‘shift’ the world, just enough for the Power to come through. Merge with reality. Some say, or well, they guess, that it could bring others entities through with them. I mean, I doubt The Buried would be bringing through The Vast, but you know.

**ARCHIVIST**

But what does that actually mean. F-For the world? ‘Merging with reality’?

**GERARD**

Okay, well... You know how I was just talking about the Hunt and the Flesh?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yes.

**GERARD**

Well, think of it this way: right now all the entities have to act like a hunter, they pick off the weak ones around the edges, the ones that wander to close, and the rest of the time they have to just graze on whatever fear we all passively give away.

**ARCHIVIST**

And if one of the rituals succeeds?

**GERARD**

The world becomes a factory farm.

**ARCHIVIST**

Why would anyone want that? I-I mean, there are people, or they used to be people, who are trying to do this. Why?

**GERARD**

I dunno. Power, maybe? Or they’ve just got close enough to their patron or whatever that they also feed on it. I guess maybe some people just have a weird relationship with fear.

**ARCHIVIST**

And Gertrude wanted to stop them. At any cost.

**GERARD**

She worked out they'd all be happening quite close together. She'd already been doing it a while. And the Unknowing was the next on her list. That and the Watcher's Crown.

**ARCHIVIST**

The what?

**GERARD**

Uh, the Rite of the Watcher's Crown. It's what she called the ritual for the Eye. She didn't tell me much about that one, just that she knew how to take care of it. To be honest, when she was going through this stuff, that was about the time I thought I had found Leitner, so I wasn't much in the mood to listen.

**ARCHIVIST**

Leitner?

**GERARD**

Yeah. Gertrude reckoned he was alive somewhere. Said she thought she'd found him. I tracked him down, but it... well, it wasn't him.

**ARCHIVIST**

Y-You're sure?

**GERARD**

It was just some pathetic old man. Couldn't have been him. He was so scared of me, I just... just let him go.

**ARCHIVIST**

Are you alright?

**GERARD**

I think... I think I'm ready to go. I'm done. Hide my page, and when you're out of here, burn it. Please.

**ARCHIVIST**

I will. Thank you, Gerard.

**GERARD**

Gerry.

**ARCHIVIST**

What?

**GERRY**

Gerard was what my mum called me. (**Embarrassed laugh**) I always wanted my friends to call me Gerry.

**ARCHIVIST**

Thank you, Gerry. Uh... I dismiss you.

(**Gerry sighs.**)

[**There's static as he fades.**]

Oh. Alright

[**The book is closed.**]

(**The Archivist clears his throat.**)

I'm ready!

[**Footsteps and a door opens**]

**TREVOR**

All done?

**ARCHIVIST**

I... Yeah. I-I think so.

**TREVOR**

I'll get it back in the box.

**[Footsteps]**

**JULIA**

Did he tell you what you needed?

**ARCHIVIST**

I don't— Maybe. He told me... a lot.

**JULIA**

Yeah, he does that.

**ARCHIVIST**

I mean, I-I feel like I knew so most of it, but...

**JULIA**

Hearing it all laid out, right? Like a punch to the gut.

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah.

**JULIA**

You need a drink?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah.

**[Footsteps]**

**JULIA**

You find anything about the Stranger? Stopping that... The Unknowing?

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh, er, I think so. I hope so.

[Liquid sounds]

**JULIA**

So what's our next move?

[Footsteps]

**ARCHIVIST**

Well, mine's a flight back to London. I-I-I think you said that would be a problem for you, you two?

**JULIA**

Yeah. To be honest, if this thing is as soon as you think it's gonna be, and back in England? Well, I'm not sure how much 'elp we can be.

**ARCHIVIST**

You've already done... so much more than enough.

**JULIA**

Yeah well, you brought us Max Mustermann's head. I think we're going to have a lot fun with that. Plus, if you do save the world...

**ARCHIVIST**

I suppose we'll call it even.

**JULIA**

More or less.

**ARCHIVIST**

Thank you, Julia. I mean it.

**JULIA**

Well, it's just killing monsters really, isn't it?

**ARCHIVIST**

How about that drink?

[Tape clicks off.]

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Outro]

**JONATHAN SIMS**

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