

Remnant Radio

A Radio Pilot

written by

Marianne Cassidy

SCENE 1

FELIX: It is commonly known that if one takes a left at the river Styx and continues on for five infinities, passed the Fourth Circle--while being sure not to mistake it for the entrances to Xibalba or Naraka--one will eventually find themselves standing outside the studio of the greatest radio show known to deities and deceased alike: you're listening to Remnant Radio.

MUSIC: MAIN THEME

SCENE 2

FELIX: Welcome back, dearly-departed listeners, to Remnant Radio. I'm your host, Felix Mire, and I'm joined--as always--by the peerless Adelaide. Say hi, Addie!

ADELAIDE: Hi all!

FELIX: Today's show begins with our usual reminder: you are dead, and everything is fine.

And now, here's a brief public service announcement.

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Hades has asked us to reiterate that Remnants here in Limbo are not to deliberately agitate Cerberus. Remnants are not to attempt to *pet* Cerberus. Remnants are not to even make *eye contact* with Cerberus. We get it, we really do--he's adorable. Puppy dog eyes times six, waggy tails times three. Who could resist? But, seriously. Hades is not liable if you get eaten, and his digestion cycle takes several hundred years. You have been warned.

Time for the news. Loki has been expelled from Asgard for the third time this week after impersonating Heimdall and seducing a valkyrie. We are led to understand this caused a great deal of embarrassment and confusion when she later asked Heimdall to marry her. Loki is now sitting directly outside of Asgard in the form of a chicken, laying eggs and then throwing them at the palace. He is purportedly clucking extremely loudly. Our Norse correspondent is sure Odin will allow him back inside in due course, if only to make him shut up.

News just in: listeners are advised to avoid the Sepulchre of Reconstitution for the foreseeable future.

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ADELAIDE Some listeners may need reminding of the location.
Or even what that is.

FELIX Oh, true. The place where all of us began our un-
life. I realise for most of you it's been so long
since you've been back there that you might not
even know where it is. Regardless, the Psychopomps
Union reports that a newcomer to Limbo is having
some trouble, uh, "adjusting" to their situation,
and is going on a bit of a--what was the word they
used, Addie?

ADELAIDE I believe it was "rampage".

FELIX Ah, yes, that was it. A rampage. Well, I'm sure we
can all empathise--dying tends to be a bit of a
shock--but nonetheless, please give the area a
wide berth while Thanatos and Anubis attempt to
speak some sense into them. It's a delicate
situation.

And now, a safety notice from the goddess Morana:
if you feel yourself being dragged into a mortal
séance, don't panic! We all remember what mortals
are like. Sometimes moving on can be tricky. Or
sometimes they have unanswered questions preying
on their minds.

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Mostly stupid questions, sure, but questions nonetheless. Whether you want to actually respond to a séance is entirely up to you. Who knows-- could be fun! No one down here is going to stop you. But if you get trapped up in the mortal realm as a ghost or--gods forbid--reanimated as a zombie, don't expect a rescue brigade. You're on your own.

ADELAIDE Y'know, I was pulled into a séance once.

FELIX Oh, for real?

ADELAIDE Yup. But they actually wanted my older sister. They were very rude about the whole thing. I tried to explain that the belongings they'd used for the summoning were actually *mine* and she'd *stolen* them from me when we were children, but they wouldn't hear it.

FELIX Typical sisters, typical mortals.

It's time for more news.

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If you're just joining us now, here's our top story of the day: a freshly deceased Remnant-- which we have now been informed is a white, Canadian man in his late thirties--is currently reacting to his new lot in un-life somewhat violently. We have received an update since our initial report: the wayward Remnant is still very upset, and is currently asking when the next bus home is due. It has been explained to him that he's dead, and there are no buses home, but each time this is reiterated to him, he sits down on the floor very abruptly and begins to rock back and forth while humming.

ADELAIDE I think I did something similar when I first arrived.

FELIX You did. I remember it well.

ADELAIDE I stripped naked and went frolicking in Olympus's fountains. A few nyads joined in. It was pretty fun, actually. We put together a synchronized swimming routine.

FELIX Yup. I can still picture the frolicking.

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ADELAIDE And all the while I was wailing that nothing is real, and nothing matters.

FELIX Yes, the post-death nihilism, we've all been there. You were right on the money, though. Nothing matters!

ADELAIDE Nothing matters!

FELIX *(Ominously)*
Nothing matters.

(Long pause)

FELIX Speaking of being dissatisfied with your lot in this afterlife of ours, we have some woe-relieving and spirit-warming news for you today: the Hellfire Spa's grand reopening will take place tomorrow evening! Of course, it's difficult to say when tomorrow will be, or when exactly "evening" will occur, but I'm sure if you follow the bathrobe-garbed deities you'll be right on track. We would like to remind all Hellfire Spa-goers not to look through the heat grates, lest your gaze fall upon the spawn of Satan and you are driven to insanity. The fire has to come from somewhere, after all.

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A note from one of our sponsors: were you killed as part of a ritual sacrifice, consensual or otherwise? You may be eligible for compensation. Contact the offices of Huitzilopochtli on this number:

SFX: GARBLED DISTORTED NOISES

ADELAIDE We have a caller on line 1. They say their name is Zeynep, and they want to respond to our earlier comments about nihilism.

FELIX Oh, brilliant! Put Zeynep through, Addie.

SFX: BEEP

FELIX Hi, Zeynep. What can we here at Remnant Radio do for you today?

ZEYNEP (*Nervously*)
Well, I just wanted to tell you I think you're wrong. About nothing mattering. Just because we die, because we all wind up here for eternity, doesn't mean nothing we ever did while we were alive mattered.

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FELIX Sure. Maybe we did something amazing while we were alive that left a lasting impact after we died. I guess that matters, though not infinitely. The universe will fall victim to its inevitable heat death eventually.

ZEYNEP I don't think that means nothing matters! I think it's the very apparent meaninglessness of our lives that makes them matter. If the universe will one day cease to exist, and this afterlife and all the gods with it, then sure, you could say "nothing matters", or you could say "everything matters" equally. Does that make sense?

ADELAIDE Nope, can't say that it does.

ZEYNEP What I'm trying to say is--everything matters, everything has meaning. Everything matters, but that doesn't mean it's necessarily important. Nietzsche said something like that. As beings with consciousness, we get to decide what matters.

FELIX Doesn't that also mean nothing can matter if we decide it doesn't?

ZEYNEP Well, yes, but-

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ADELAIDE Y'know, I think this is pure semantics.

FELIX Ooh, love a bit of semantics.

ADELAIDE Yeah, like, it's whatever works for you, right? If nothing mattering brings you comfort, then you can tell yourself that. If everything mattering sparks your joy, then you can tell yourself that. It's all meaningless, or it's all meaningful, but what actually materially changes in either case?

ZEYNEP Uh- I'm not-

FELIX Anyway! That's all we have time for, Zeynep.
Thanks for your call!

ZEYNEP Wait, I haven't even started quoting Camus yet-

SFX: BEEP

FELIX Thanks, Zeynep! Anyway! We have another update regarding our disoriented newcomer to the afterlife. The psychopomps have finally managed to get him to move on from squatting around the Sepulchre, and he has now found his way to the entrance to Asgard.

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Unfortunately for him, Loki is currently sitting outside shapeshifting to-and-fro between the various animals capable of making the most annoying noises--our current understanding is that he has turned into a hyena. According to our Norse correspondant, however, the pair are now sitting together on a step and commiserating over their respective misfortunes. Oh, to be a fly on the wall in that conversation.

ADELAIDE Doesn't our Norse correspondant have a mic?

FELIX *(Eagerly)*
You're *right!*

SFX: BEEP

FELIX Hey, Leif, can you get in closer? Maybe pick up what they're saying?

LEIF *Ég get reynt!*

FELIX *(Whispering)*
What did he say?

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ADELAIDE You think I know? I don't speak Old Norse. That's why we have Leif. Anyway, I'm picking up something on Leif's mic.

SFX: MUFFLED STATIC

LOKI (*Distantly*)
Eesh, that's rough, Carl.

CARL Yeah. Yeah, it is.

LOKI They really gave you a parking ticket? For *that*?

CARL They really did. And to make matters worse, I'm now late to my own birthday party. I know my friends were planning something massive, because they'd been avoiding me for months and talking behind my back. I can't believe I'm letting them down like this.

LOKI That's pretty rubbish.

CARL Yeah. Yeah. It is. And now all these freaks are telling me I'm dead, and this is Limbo, and to just stay calm. But, obviously, I've been kidnapped and placed in some Truman Show-esque nightmare, right, Mr. Talking Hyena?

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LOKI Sure, I have no idea what the Truman Show is, but sure, yeah. We can go with that.

FELIX Is this really what they're talking about? I'm bored. I was expecting something more histrionic.

ADELAIDE We don't have to listen. No one's forcing you to do this. This is your radio show. You can just ask Leif to stop recording them.

FELIX But there's no drama in that.

(Pauses)

But, uh, yeah, I'm bored. Thanks, Leif! You can stop now.

LEIF *Mér leiðist líka.*

SFX: _____ BEEP

FELIX What did he say?

ADELAIDE You really need to stop asking me that.

FELIX Ok! Onto bigger things. The latest statistics on godly worship among mortals have been released. Prepare to be both shocked and thoroughly unsurprised, folks at home!

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Christianity is still in the lead, but Islam is catching up fast. Who will win? I'm rooting for Islam, personally. You could argue that it's all for the worship of the same dude, so what does it matter, but if mortals cared about details like that we wouldn't have had the Crusades.

ADELAIDE I like underdogs. I'm rooting for Hellenic paganism.

FELIX I'm sure the Olympians will be glad to hear they have you and the average capacity of a small auditorium on their side.

In more surprising news, a small group of mortals have begun worshipping Fitbits. They believe their Fitbits will precisely determine their time and method of death, and also give them plenty of notice before it hits. It's all very morbid, but I guess you can't argue with science.

Additionally, a new cult has sprung up in Boulder, Colorado, United States. They appear to be worshipping Stephen King.

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Thus far, no deities matching Stephen King's description have manifested in our realm, but keep your eyes peeled for any creepy twins or buckets of pig's blood, as these could be omens of his imminent arrival.

Moving on! There's been a lot of talk about the Rapture lately. Don't worry about it. You don't need to worry about the Rapture.

Back to today's headline: Carl, our distressed newcomer who we've been following since his arrival in Limbo, is currently lying face-down on the floor of Odin's throne room, and making quite the racket, or so we are led to believe. He is apparently groaning, wailing, and asking for his mother. Attempts have been made to explain to Carl that his mother is not yet dead and is, therefore, unavailable at this present time, but he has resisted all attempts at rational dialogue thus far. Hang in there, Carl!

And now, over to Adelaide for the traffic and weather.

ADELAIDE

Thanks, Fee. There is currently a build-up of seraphim outside the Pearly gates.

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They are very rowdy, and don't seem intent on leaving anytime soon. Several of them are shifting into forms beyond our comprehension, and others are shedding profusely. It's a mess of disturbingly-placed eyeballs and feathers up there. We recommend taking alternate routes for the time being.

A turf war has broken out between Naraka and Hell. The Narakiyas are claiming the demons stole their favourite flaming torture rack, and the demons claim they have perfectly good flaming torture racks of their own, so--to paraphrase--"why in the blazes would they steal someone else's"? Regardless, better not get in the middle of this one, folks.

As for the weather, it's moist as usual. Perfect conditions for decaying gracefully. If you've been thinking of starting a mushroom farm anywhere on your body, now would be a great time.

We're expecting a fiery heatwave in the next few hours as prevailing winds push upwards from--you know where.

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FELIX They can't see you gesturing down with your thumb, Addie.

ADELAIDE Well, they all know what I mean. Anyway, back to you, Felix.

FELIX Yes, back to me. We have a treat for you all today. It's time for our music segment!

ADELAIDE (*Excited*)
Oh, my favourite! Who do we have?

FELIX It's a good one! We are pleased to present Mozart's entire life work, played in chronological order, because we have infinite time, and so do you. Today's performance will be delivered by the very best musicians from across history, and conducted by the man himself. Take it away, Wolfgang!

MUSIC: MUSIC TRACK PLAYS FOR 10 SECONDS, THEN FADES OUT

SCENE 3

MUSIC: MUSIC TRACK PLAYS FOR 10 SECONDS, THEN ENDS

FELIX Phew!

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I don't know about you guys, but I'm feeling invigorated. That was the best 202 hours of my un-life, and maybe my mortal life, too. Anyway. Welcome back!

It would seem that during our symphonic reveries, our friend Carl found his way to the studio-

ADELAIDE To be fair, we do advertise our exact location in our intro, for some reason.

FELIX -and is standing directly outside, yelling up at us and waving his arms around. We apologise if this causes any audio interference! We're not sure what he's so het up about, but rest assured, it won't get in the way of our regularly scheduled programming.

And now, a reminder from "them up there" that we shall never enter their immaculate kingdom, so we may as well get comfortable down here.

We've received word that Cerberus has eaten a woman named Florence who tried to feed dry dog kibble to only one of his heads, leaving the other two hungry.

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Don't say we didn't warn you, Florence. No one wants to spend the rest of eternity as three-headed dog doody.

ADELAIDE We seem to have a caller on line 3. He says his name is Carl.

FELIX Woah, wait, *the* Carl? Well, what're you waiting for? Put him through, put him through!

SFX: _____ BEEP

FELIX Hello, Carl. You're on the air. What can we do for you?

CARL (*Emphatically*)
I'm very upset.

FELIX Yes, we've all gathered that. What's upsetting you, Carl?

CARL People keep telling me I'm dead.

FELIX Well, that's because you are.

CARL But that doesn't make any sense!

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FELIX Don't worry, it rarely does.

CARL *(Long pause)*
Can I come up? To the studio?

ADELAIDE Uh, I don't know if that's-

FELIX *(Whispering)*
Ohh, come on. Why not? We haven't had a physical
guest on the show in eons.

ADELAIDE He might be ... I don't know ... dangerous!

FELIX We're literally dead, Addie. What more can he do
to us?

I'm going to take your angry glare and pursed lips
as a "by all means, go right ahead, Felix!"

Come right on up, Carl! We'll get a mic ready for
you! Don't mind the doorguard, his face always
looks like that.

Folks at home, please enjoy this riveting
advertisement from one of our sponsors while we
get ourselves set up over here. We'll be back with
you shortly.

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MUSIC: INTRO JINGLESALESPERSON *(Jovially)*

Had an awkward, uncomfortable, or downright terrifying run-in with a deity? Not sure whether you have a furious smiting in your immediate future? Feeling scared, overwhelmed, stressed? That sucks! Best of luck with that. Not sure what you want us to do about it. Learn to deal with your own problems, wimp.

MUSIC: OUTRO JINGLE

FELIX Welcome back, dearly-departed listeners! We're joined here in the studio by none other than the man himself, Carl. Say hi, Carl!

CARL Look, I'd really rather just get to the point. All that stuff you've been saying--gods, angels, Limbo, all of it. You're all having me on, right?

ADELAIDE I'm afraid it's quite real, Carl.

CARL But I'm not dead! I don't even remember dying!

FELIX We can request a record of your death, if you like. Thoht gives them out like candies.

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Though maybe seeing isn't believing in your case, considering how much you've already seen and how little you believe.

CARL I'm just- I'm- I can't be dead.

ADELAIDE Why not?

CARL There's still so much I haven't done.

FELIX When you think about it, that was always going to be the case. No one can do everything, not even everything they want to do, in one lifetime. Them's the breaks.

CARL Yes, but-
(*Pauses*)
It's not *fair*.

FELIX Really? "It's not fair"? That's all you've got for us? If you're going to have an existential crisis, you could at least try to do something a bit different. Shake things up a little, y'know?

ADELAIDE Fee, you're kicking him when he's down.

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FELIX Right, right, sorry. In other news, Cerberus has regurgitated Florence. Apparently her hand lotion didn't agree with him.

CARL Um, I'm still here?

FELIX The news won't stand still just for you, Carl. Now, is there anything *interesting* you wanted to share with our listeners?

CARL It's ... it's supposed to be my birthday. I think. I don't know how much time has passed.

ADELAIDE Simultaneously all the time ever and none at all.

CARL Does that mean it's always my birthday?

ADELAIDE Simultaneously yes and no.

CARL Then, could we ... throw a party?

FELIX Yes! Good! That's the first sensible thing you've said. It can be a dual birthday/funerary bash. You don't mind, do you? I'm not sure where you're at on the whole "death acceptance" spectrum right at this moment.

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CARL I'm ... not sure, either.

ADELAIDE Look at it this way: funerals are kind of, like, your final birthday.

CARL Huh?

ADELAIDE They're the final celebration of the fact that you were born, because in order to die, you have to have been born. So, final birthday. Right?

FELIX Makes sense to me.

CARL Uh. I guess?

FELIX So, we're decided. Carl is going to have a dual birthday/funeral party right here in the studio, right now. As for when "now" is, well, who can say? But rest assured, dear listeners: you're all invited! Come on down.

ADELAIDE Wait, everyone? We don't have space for that.

FELIX Addie, Addie, Addie. We have infinite space. Nothing in this studio is technically corporeal, not even us. We're all just disembodied consciousnesses floating in the void together.

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ADELAIDE Calm down, the party hasn't even started yet.

CARL Will there be cake?

FELIX There will be much cake. *All* the cake. See? Being dead isn't so bad, is it, Carl? Where in the mortal realm can you acquire infinite cake?

CARL I suppose that's true.

ADELAIDE Let's head downstairs and meet your guests, Carl. I can already hear them arriving.

CARL Oh, well, alright. Ok.

SFX: MUFFLED SHUFFLING, DISTANT MUSIC AND CHANTS OF
 "CARL! CARL! CARL!"

FELIX Aaand they're gone. Let's wrap this up, any of you who are still listening instead of coming to Carl's birthday/funeral--in which case, shame on you, quite frankly.

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Loki has been readmitted into Asgard, under the condition that he not impersonate Heimdall for at least the next few millennia, and that he stay at least 10ft away from the aforementioned, unnamed valkyrie at all times.

Florence is recovering from her ordeal, though she was partially digested by the time Cerberus coughed her up, so she might require more hand lotion than usual for a while.

The seraphim build-up has dissipated, as they are now on their way to Carl's birthday/funeral party. The Pearly gates should now be accessible, but be sure not to enter without an invite. They get prickly up there about that sort of thing.

ADELAIDE Aren't you done yet? You're missing all the fun. Carl is dancing the Macarena with Xipe Totec.

SFX: WILD SHUFFLING

FELIX *(Excitedly)*
That's all we have time for, folks! This is Felix Mire signing off, and thank you for tuning into another day of Remnant Radio. Just remember: you are dead, and everything is fine.

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SFX: _____ MUFFLED SOUNDS OF MOVEMENT

FELIX (*Distantly*)

I haven't missed it, have I? Tell me I haven't
missed it.

SFX: _____ MAIN THEME