

Episode 166 - Crimes of Grindelwald (Part 1)

w/ Bayana Davis and Robyn Jordan

PM = Past Mike
EM = Editing Mike
KS = Kelly Schubert
BD = Bayana Davis
RJ = Robyn Jordan

If there is a mistake or mis-translation in this transcript please feel free to reach out to Mike for clarification! (potterlesspodcast@gmail.com)

PM
Hey, Kelly.

KS
Yeah.

PM
Happy Anniversary.

KS
Happy Anniversary.

PM
Anyway, now, that we've gotten that cuteness into the intro, let's listen to an episode of this podcast.

[Announcement 0:10 – 3:20]

PM
But, without further ado, let's get into Episode 166 of Potterless, the first of four covering the Crimes of Grindelwald, guest starring, Robyn and Bayana from WizardTeam.

Intro Music

PM
Hello, internet, and welcome back to another episode of Potterless, the tale of a 28-year-old man who never had the Harry Potter series as a kid. He read them as an adult. He saw the first Fantastic Beasts movie. It was fine. And then he saw the second Fantastic Beasts movie so that he could try to make jokes at LeakyCon, but it was so bad that he couldn't even make any jokes. My name is Mike Schubert. I'm that grow man and I'm here joined today by two people who might hate this movie more than me, which is saying a lot. It's Robyn and Bayana from WizardTeam. How's it going, folks?

BD
Umm.

RJ
Oh, man.

BD
We're here.

RJ
We're mad at you.

BD
I'm more mad at myself.

RJ
Yeah. Yeah, we did it. We – yeah, we did it.

BD
We did this to ourselves.

RJ
We did. We said yes to this when we had just finished going through it. So, we were like, I mean—

BD
What's one more time?

RJ
—what's one more. But, now, it's been months and we've been able to separate. And then, all of a sudden, my – our calendars were like, "You get to record Potterless about the Crimes of Grindelwald." And we're like, "Trauma, hello."

BD
We're like, "Dang." We did say that.

RJ
Hello, darkness, my old friend.

PM
Hello, Credence, my old friend. So, you mentioned coverage. You two went very in depth with it on WizardTeam. You, like, went through the book and the screenplay and all of that. What exactly did you all do put it in perspective? Because I just watched the movie and took notes. It did take about 12 hours because I kept pausing and rewinding to figure out what happened.

BD
Yeah.

RJ
Yeah.

PM

But what all did you cover? How in depth is your knowledge of this shit?

BD

I don't know about in depth. I mean, like – so, WizardTeam is a close – like, we do a close read of the book. So, it just made – it just was like we should – we should read the screenplay because that's, like, how we've done – that's, like, the format of our show. So, we just might as well, like, read it. And, so, I think what we did and what we, like, set it to our audience was, like, if y'all pay for this, like, we're not gonna buy these. But, if y'all buy – if y'all want to buy them, then send us the money.

RJ

We had a listener send us the money before the show – the episode even went out. Like, one of our patrons. We were recording and said, in the recording, if y'all give us enough money to buy two sets of these screenplays, then we'll do it. And, before we even finished recording, our, like, PayPal had, like, blinked and we were like, “Oh, shit.” So—

BD

Like, dang.

PM

Now, we have to.

RJ

But I do want to say that we started this journey similar to you. We were at MystiCon. And we were in these panels and people were talking about it. And we were talking about it from, like, common knowledge and the things that had come out without having seen it. And we're like, “We should watch it so that we could, at least, have, like, rebuttals based in, like, we've seen this thing and, like, you're wrong. This is not good.” And it took us six hours to watch. We were drinking. And we – there was, like, five of us, I think, watching it—

BD

Similar to that. Yeah.

RJ

—in our hotel in, like, Upstate New York.

BD

Like, we had, like, multiple pauses where we then, like, talk about something else. It would start with like, “What's going on?” And then it would just devolve. And then we forget we were watching it and then we'd go back. So, even like reading it, when we did eventually get around to reading it, a lot of it we had forgotten or, like, didn't remember because we, we didn't really actively watch it first time around. It was definitely one of those things where, like, we had seen Fantastic Beasts and I'd like had talked about it and stuff on our podcast. But we read that first. And it started off where it was, like, mostly like, “This is fine.” And then, towards the end, it's like, “What's going on? This doesn't make any sense.” And then we get

to Crimes of Grindelwald and, in my head, initially, I was, like, more optimistic. Like, it – maybe it'll be one of those things where it's so bad, it's, like, amusing.

RJ
Exciting.

PM
No.

BD
But it just kept getting worse. And, so, by the end, we were just mad and that was pretty much it. Those – yeah.

RJ
Yeah.

PM
Yeah. So, that's, that sums up my experience as well. Like, I saw it the first time. I was upset by it. And then, this time, when I had to actively take notes for it, it was just so frustrating because I had to, like, keep going back and figuring out like what is happening. It's so confusing. I think we should just get right into it and just see how upset we all get. So, the first thing that—

RJ
Pretty.

PM
—the first thing that you see that is new is that this is the first iteration, I believe, of the Wizarding World logo, at least, in a movie, where it shows the big slow zoom in of WB and then it's the Wizarding World. And I just love that J.K. Rowling went from that Oprah interview where she was like, “I'm never doing any Harry Potter stuff again ever” to, like, making this movie. And, like, it's a whole brand, baby. We're just pumping them out now.

BD
Before, before all the like – obviously, like, before all the, like, bigoted stuff about her came out, this was my, like, biggest petpeeve.

RJ
Yeah.

BD
Like, this is, like, the thing that I hated the most about her.

RJ
It was, like, a source of, like, [Inaudible 8:23 - angst] for me because I do think that there's something about having that world and having that world building and, like, going back to it. Like, I feel like, you know, Jay-Z said he was retiring. And, like, he didn't.

BD
Uh-huh.

RJ
And, so, it just feels weird to me.

PM
Oh, cool.

RJ
It feels weird to me when people – when, like, creative people say like, “Oh, I’m done,” right?

BD
Yeah.

RJ
Because we don’t know where your brain is gonna take you, but she actually was correct. She didn’t have any more stories to tell in this world.

BD
She was done.

RJ
Like, she was done. And that, you know, I – personally, I like some of Jay-Z’s post retirement albums and stuff. Like, I’m not, you know, don’t hip hop at me. I’m not that person. But I enjoy it.

BD
Yeah.

RJ
Right. I got – I got – I went to see him and Justin Timberlake. Like, I enjoyed that. I saw him at Coachella. That was lovely, right?

BD
Yeah.

RJ
But, like, she is no Jay-Z. She needs to find a Beyoncé so that she can just show up and go—

BD
Yeah.

RJ
—oof, I see them. Hey.

PM

I was gonna say, like, my favorite Jay-Z post retirement things are everything where Beyoncé is involved. My favorite thing about the whole Jay-Z and Beyoncé, like, post retirement Jay-Z is her Coachella set, the one that's on Netflix and everything, the best part is, like, Jay-Z comes out for one song. He's like, "What's up, guys?" and then just does a whole rap. He's like, "Later, guys."

BD

[Inaudible 9:43].

PM

And that's it. It's like, "I was here."

RJ

Yeah.

BD

And his tired too.

RJ

Yeah.

BD

He hate it. He had the dust to his lungs. He was like, "She got one song out of me. That's it."

RJ

Living hard. He's like, "I'm old now." And that's – but I think that that's, like, fine, right?

PM

Sure.

RJ

Like, I think that it's – and, and I always use, like, the Star Wars model and we can also fight about that. But, like, it would be great if she would let other people play in that world, but she, herself—

PM

Yeah.

RJ

—is tapped out.

BD

Right.

RJ

Which we will see from this nonsense.

PM

Yeah. Because I know Rick Riordan, the guy who did Percy Jackson, I haven't read those, yet.

RJ

Mhmm.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

But I know he, at least, expanded the world and other authors got into the mix. And I think he got diverse writers too, which is extra nice.

BD

Yeah. So, there, there – I've – and I'm like, "I know a lot about this because I bought most of them for my little sister."

PM

Nice. Nice. Nice.

BD

Thanks. I don't thing – I don't know if they're in the same world. But they're, like, all, like, different mythologies and stuff.

RJ

Yeah.

BD

Like, from the cultures of the authors.

PM

Oh, cool.

BD

And they're all – I mean, well, I don't know about all. I've only read one of them. So, like, one of the series so far, Tristan Strong. And it's hell a good. But my sister, who is eight, has read maybe, like, 80 percent of them and she's always like, "When's the next one coming?" So, yeah, it's, like, there's a – there's a way to do it. And, yeah, she just – I think, she just wants the control, and the money, and the—

PM

Mhmm.

RJ

Yeah, she just doesn't have – like, her ego is, like, the biggest problem there because, like, the thing about Rick Riordan too is that he's not writing them, right? It's like, "I made this

really great series about Greek mythology and I'm a white dude. And, so, that makes sense. But, if someone wants to make a series about African mythology, that should not be me."

PM

But J.K. Rowling would be like, "I got this, guys."

RJ

But I could put my name on the top of the, like, thing, Rick Riordan presents, and, all of a sudden, people are talking about it and are – like, the interest in it skyrockets as opposed to, like, some other first time writer, right?

PM

Mhmm.

RJ

Like, using your name. It's, like, the perfect argument about allyship, right? Like, how do you be an ally? You give someone else the tools and then you boost them. She doesn't know how to do that. So—

BD

No, I don't think she really wants to either, though.

RJ

No. Oh, no, she doesn't.

PM

No. No. The other thing is, like, if she really did want to go on and not just be the Harry Potter lady and do other things, that also could have helped her achieve that. It's, if she was like, "Ah, I'll just put my name at the top. I'll still get paid. I'll let other people do the work. And then, if it's bad, I don't have to take any heat for it." You know, like—

RJ

Yeah.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

—it feels like there were so many outs, but she just wanted to keep her hands in everything. And we got this movie.

RJ

We also have to, like, before we really get into it, just say the thing. It's like her post Potter shit is bad. The first two of those Robert Galbraith books are okay. They're like, "These are the first one." It's like a good – it's a good little mystery. It's not changing the world, but it's cute. But she couldn't handle not having her shit be on the top of the New York Times and being a whole movement or whatever.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

Right. Because I know she tried to do the secret thing of putting the pen name, which I don't know if I've addressed this directly in the podcast. But you, you've heard about, like, how Robert Galbraith is, like, the same name as some dude—

RJ

Yeah.

PM

—who believes in electrotherapy gay conversion stuff.

RJ

Really?

BD

I did not hear that, but I've been—

RJ

Yeah, that came out afterwards.

PM

Yeah.

RJ

It's like—

BD

Oh, yeah. No, because I've, I've been – I've been – like, at a certain point, I was just like, "No, I've been a cold turkey, but, like, what?"

PM

Yeah.

RJ

Yeah.

PM

Yeah, it's like Robert Galbraith some other name and he believed in conversion therapy via electrocution and stuff. And J.K. Rowling is so obsessed with names. There is no way that this is an accident.

BD

Yeah. What the fuck?

PM

There's no way that she's gonna be like, "Oh, well, I'm just gonna put together some syllables and make the name Robert Galbraith. Sure."

BD

Yeah.

PM

So, yeah. I mean I, I read that first one and it was fine. This is before I did any Harry Potter stuff. So, it wasn't like because of J.K. Rowling. I was in a book club for work and they did it. And, and it, it was fine. But, yeah, I guess, like, she, she wasn't comfortable with making something and not it being universally beloved. So, then she, like, leaked that she actually wrote them.

RJ

She is the writer because it wasn't selling. Like, I remember the – like, there's one book review before it came out that she was the writer. And it was like, "This is a very good first time author story. And I don't believe that this person is a first time author. And, like, it's a mystery." You know what I mean? So, people have pen names and the person is like, "I feel like this is someone – like an established author." But, beyond that, it was just, like, the craft is there. And it's a mystery novel. Like, it's, you know, whatever. But, like, it wasn't selling and, all of a sudden, "Oh, did you know—

PM

Yeah, it got leaked.

RJ

—she's Robert Galbraith. You know what I mean?

BD

Right.

RJ

Like, that's the ego, man.

PM

Mhmm. Anyway, Crimes of Grindelwald. So—

BD

You see how it [Inaudible 14:24]?

RJ

We don't want to. We don't want to.

BD

We don't this thing.

RJ

We don't want to.

PM

So, the first thing you see in the movie after all the logos and stuff is it says – in the bottom in the little text, it says American Ministry of Magic. Is this not MACUSA? Is it different?

BD

No.

RJ

Can I tell you, Mike, that when – before, when we were precious little beings and we were excited, and we didn't know how shitty she was and how bad the things would be, I went to a TV festival. I purchased a shirt. It says MACUSA. I was like semi excited. I was like, "We doing some American magic, y'all. I own a shirt. It says MACUSA, Magical Congress of the United States." I thought – I thought that that was the thing. They got merch.

PM

And, now, it's just AMOM, American Ministry of Magic.

RJ

They we're like, "Ah, fuck it. No one [Inaudible 15:21]."

BD

They we're like, "Whatever."

RJ

We didn't – we weren't selling enough.

BD

Geez.

PM

Yeah, it was very confusing. What also is very confusing is that Grindelwald is in jail. He's in this jail cell. It says it's New York City 1927. He's in, like, this force field that's keeping him in a chair. And then they're gonna move him from this jail cell to one in Europe. And, if anyone's seen the movie, Con Air, we know that this is not going to work out well. Like, this never works ever. But they're going to move him because he's been there for six months and that's too long. So, we're led to believe that this is six months after the end of the first movie. And, of course, it's like five minutes into the movie and the European guy, who is transferring, he's like, "He needs to answer for his crimes." And then I screamed, "The Crimes of Grindelwald!" They bring him out of his old prison cell and he's in what looks just like a giant prison. And here's my question. Why is there a giant fucking prison in the middle of MACUSA? That'd be like if Alcatraz was just, like, in the basement of the White House.

BD

Yeah, I don't—

RJ

I had the same thought.

BD

Yeah.

RJ

I have the exact same thought. I was like—

PM

That's so dangerous.

RJ

—how many floors? How big is this thing?

BD

How big is MACUSA? You're supposed to be trying to hide it.

RJ

How big is MACUSA? We're in – and, also, though, yes, magic and whatnot. But we are in Harlem, the real estate prices. The property tax alone. I don't know how the Wizarding World works. I just think they put some condos down there. Damn it. And, like, ship them off to Staten Island. What's going on?

PM

I don't get it. It just seems like such a bad idea to have all of the prisoners and people that you have deemed violent, evil wizards. Where should we put them all? How about in the government building with all the people we're trying to keep safe? If there's a breakout, which seems to happen all the damn time, like, there's so close to all the people you don't want to die.

BD

Yeah, it's like she overcorrected from Azkaban or something. Like, just implementation.

PM

Azkaban was too remote.

BD

It was entirely too far. It was just too much to get to. So, we're just gonna put it here. I honestly just don't think she thought about it.

RJ

She didn't.

PM

I guess. Yeah, I think that's probably it. On the flip side, though, since this is a prequel, maybe the reason that Azkaban is, at least, in the movies, like, a big granite cube in the middle of the ocean is that the wizards realized, "Ah, it used to be inside of our government building and that was bad. Let's put it in the middle of an ocean as far away as possible." So,

here's a fun development that I completely forgot happened when I was recapping the first movie for episodes of Potterless. Abernathy turns out to just be evil now even though he had no hints of being evil at all in the first movie. I guess just, in between movies one and two, they decided, "What if incompetent Queenie boss was actually evil?"

BD

Was that who that was?

PM

Yeah. Yeah.

BD

I – wow. Okay. Cool. Because you never—

RJ

Thank you. Can we just blink it upfront, up top? Dear listeners, who have not seen this movie, please don't. Also, you don't know who—

BD

You don't know who anyone is.

RJ

—is who. And they all are dressed alike.

BD

In gray suits.

RJ

In gray three-piece suits, which is like, "Where's the whimsy?"

BD

There's none.

RJ

But Abernathy shows up, like, three or four times and, each time, Bayana and/or I pause it and was like, "Wait. Who, who is that? Oh, that's him?"

BD

I could not tell you who. Unless they're, like, the main people and they're on the poster, I don't know who is people are.

PM

Yeah, he's, he's like the new Peter Pettigrew equivalent. I guess, Peter Pettigrew. He's like the inside man for Grindelwald, but Grindelwald doesn't care about him. I don't know. I think it's so strange to make him evil because there was no hint of it at all in the first movie. If that was there, that could have been cool. Like, if he did one weird thing in the first movie.

BD

Right.

PM

And then, in the second one, it's revealed his evil. It's like, "Oh, that's why he did that weird thing." But he was just awkward and incompetent and just let Queenie get away with saying she was sick all of the time. So, it didn't seem like some great plot reveal.

BD

Right. He was the one who she was like, "Oh, I'm on my period," and he was like, "Eww. No, thanks."

PM

Lady things. Aaah!

RJ

And I was trying to figure out because, like, they do the thing where, like, we're supposed to believe that Grindelwald is this master manipulator type of thing. If he was under some sort of spell and that's how it, like, happened, I couldn't tell you though.

PM

No, they don't do anything on his eyes or anything.

RJ

It seemed like he's, like, actually just, like, a true believer.

PM

Mhmm. Mhmm.

RJ

But, like, he didn't have that in the first one. But, also, who is this man?

PM

Yeah, I mean not very important. He just exists to be convenient.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

So, he hands over a wand and then a small what looks like a key chain. We learn later in the film what this actually is. And then they take Grindelwald away on, like, an evil 1920s Santa sleigh where the reindeer are now Thestrals and the sleigh is an old school, like, black carriage thing. Like, an evil version of the stuff they write in in Bridgerton. And, Abernathy, then we see that he has the Elder Wand and that is suspicious. Then he apparates onto the bottom of the carriage, which is flying away in the rain, of course. And then Abernathy, who's on the outside of the cart, and then Grindelwald, who is inside of the cart, they switch faces and stuff. It isn't exactly clear what it is. But, like, basically, Grindelwald was disguising as Abernathy and Abernathy was disguising as Grindelwald. I don't know when they made the switch. I don't know if it was Abernathy in jail the whole time. I don't know if they actually did

a spell where they, like, changed places. It isn't very clear like a lot of the magic in this movie. We just realized, "Oh-oh. They got the wrong guy." And they don't really explain how that happen.

RJ

I thought it was Polyjuice. But, again, like you said, like, we know—

BD

How would you get that in there? I wish this wasn't a podcast. You could just see—

RJ

How disgusted we look?

BD

I am sorry. Like, I, I, like, forgot. Like, this is one of those things. I just kind of, like, once we were done, I put it out of my mind. And, like as you're saying it, I'm just like, "Oh, right."

PM

Right.

BD

Twisted habit.

PM

So, now, there is a little beast. Because this movie just decides, at any point that they can throw in a beast, it's like they're contractually obligated to do so since it is a Fantastic Beasts movie. They just throw it in at any place.

RJ

Oh, remember we, we, we named it this. And, you know, you thought we were gonna get a fun romp in, like, Crocodile Dundee meets Magic. But we said fuck that. But, also, we named it this. So, here's the beast.

PM

Yeah.

RJ

That's how it feels every time a beast shows up.

PM

Mhmm. It's as if they're on a Food Network cooking show and they have to use the secret ingredient, but it's one they don't want to use.

BD

Yes.

RJ

Yeah.

PM

And they're like, "Oh, fuck. We got to.

BD

Yes, very much tone.

PM

We got to put butternut squash in there somehow. Aah, make a puree. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah."

BD

Jello.

PM

Yeah.

RJ

Ice cream. That's what you do on Food Network. You make ice cream.

BD

You make – you make ice cream out of it.

PM

Mhmm. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

RJ

And it never sets.

BD

They made Fantastic Beast ice cream.

RJ

It's a Chupacabra as well and that means nothing.

PM

Oh, that's what that's supposed to be?

BD

Mhmm.

RJ

Yeah, in the – in the screenplay, it says it's, like, a Chupacabra. But, like – and, like, named Anton or something like that.

PM

Okay. That is not a Chupacabra.

RJ

But you don't see any of that in the movie.

BD

Yeah.

RJ

And they don't say it's a Chupacabra.

PM

No, it's just there. It's very small. I mean leave it to J.K. Rowling to mess up a Latin American mythology.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

But, of course, like, the Chupacabra's supposed to eat goats. That thing is so small. Unless, it's a baby Chupacabra. Like—

BD

I think it might be a baby, but, I can't remember. And it, also, isn't clear where it came from or why it would be in the prison.

PM

Nope.

RJ

Here we go.

BD

Oh, not you having the book next to you.

RJ

Here we go.

PM

Robyn's got a book.

RJ

I hate you. But, yeah, it's a baby Chupacabra.

BD

Aaah.

PM

Oh, baby Chupacabra.

RJ

Part lizard, part homunculus, a blood sucking creature of the Americas is chained to Grindelwald's chair. I wrote, "I don't remember this." See? Like, it's in here. I remember this. And then the things name is, like, Anton.

PM

But, yes. So, what happens is this beast is just kind of, like, there and you're not sure what it is. Like, at first, when it was next to him in the chair, I thought it was like—

RJ

Antonio.

PM

—a security beast.

BD

Oh, Antonio.

PM

Antonio. Thank you.

RJ

It's so racist.

BD

It's awful. It's really bad.

PM

So, when the beast is first there, you see it next Grindelwald's chair. And I thought it was, like, a security beast. Like, the prison had it there—

RJ

Mhmm.

BD

Oh. Mhmm.

PM

—to, like, keep him from escaping out of the chair. But it turns out that it's just, like, his pet, which is weird because he didn't have it before he got arrested.

BD

No.

PM

So, why did they give it to him now? Also, if he's supposed to be Wizard Hitler, why are they giving him, like, a comfort pet? Like, why does he have, you know, a therapy dog? And then, also, they, they bring it with him for this, like, prison transfer. And then it starts attacking the other dude. Like, it's such a wild confusing thing that they don't explain. It makes no sense.

And then – so, Grindelwald breaks out like the other guy gets killed. Blah, blah, blah, whatever. Water gets in. Like, all this bullshit. And then correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't he just throw the thing out the fucking window?

BD
Yes.

RJ
Yeah. Yeah.

BD
Yes.

RJ
He kills it.

BD
Literally.

PM
He grabs Antonio. He's like, "Oh, Antonio." And then he goes, "So needy" and then throws it out the window. Does Antonio just die?

BD
Yep.

RJ
Can I read my note here?

PM
Please do.

RJ
Grindelwald is Newt now? Is Antonio his Nagini? Hated it here.

BD
Not his Nagini.

PM
His Niffler?

RJ
And it says, in the screenplay, "Grindelwald, I know. Okay. I know Antonio." He looks at it with distaste. So needy. He then flings it through the door. He blasts Spellman magically through the open doors and tosses the wand after him. And, so, he kills his needy Chupacabra, who's a baby, and the dude and then throws the wand.

PM

Right. So, yeah, he, like, doesn't necessarily kill the dude. He throws the dude out with the wand and then, like, just before the guy's about to hit the water, he freezes him like Mission Impossible style. And then he falls into the water. I guess so that it's, like, spread the word that I escaped.

RJ

Doesn't he, like, melt a wand too? Did you see that part? I don't remember it, but it's in the screenplay that it melts into dust.

PM

Oh, he – I don't know. He does, like, a wand in the throw maneuver. It's, it's very strange.

RJ

Oh, god.

PM

There's lots of wands turning into not wands in this movie. Like, Newt later does the thing where he, like, holds it to his ear. And that's just not magic we ever see in the new series. So, I don't know why, back in the day, they used to do it.

BD

Yeah.

RJ

Yeah.

PM

So, this whole scene ends. He – basically, he's escaped. Woohoo. We cut to London at, now, BMOM, the British Ministry of Magic. And it's three months later. So, this is nine months after the first movie ended. And we go inside what is supposed to be the same ministry from what we know and love from the book series. And it's just got, like, this giant other statue in there. Like, I guess they changed the statue 70 years later or something. But there's this just, like, giant other statue in the middle of the Ministry lobby. Right off the bat, right off the bat, they get Leta Lestrange in the mix.

BD

No.

PM

I guess to try to like thwart the fact that the first movie was like, "Wait a second. It was all white people." So, like, right away, they're like, "We promise. We promised we cast other people."

BD

Mhmm.

PM

So, she's – right away, right off the bat, she's like, "Hey, I'm dating Newt's brother and we're engaged. And, like—

RJ

And that his black.

PM

And, like – it's like, "Fine." Yeah. It's just like right off the top.

BD

Oh, my gosh.

PM

She, she's there. Then this, like, vacuum machine comes by, which is completely unnecessary. It's like a Rube Goldberg-looking vacuum machine. If you're a wizard and you have all these households employed everywhere, do you need like a Dr. Seuss ass looking vacuum machine to go through the hallways? And what is this needless ambience? It's so strange.

BD

This movie tries to do 50 different things.

PM

Yeah.

BD

Like, I don't know. Because, like, if I saw, like, that vacuum – I don't know – in, like, The Burrow, I'd be like, "Oh, that's so cool" or whatever. But, like – so, it's, like, this weird thing where they, like, throw things in there that you would like if it was not in here. Or, like, the – just don't – it doesn't fit because it's in this. You know what I mean?

RJ

Yeah.

PM

Yeah. Dark ominous movie.

RJ

Yeah, it's very much kind of, like, what we were talking about earlier. It's like she's like, "Oh, this is a cool thing. Put it in here. And she doesn't have an editor."

BD

She's not thinking about what that actually means.

RJ

It's the cantina scene of Star Wars. Just, like, throw everything in here. It's fine. It means nothing. Ambience.

PM

So, Newt is here because Newt, apparently, has a meeting with the ministry to try and lift his travel ban, but the one condition is that he has to join his brother's department in the ministry. So, Newt has this meeting and then he goes into it. There's a couple different people. And, again, of course, I think the movie, trying to course correct, is like, "Okay. Let's have this black guy in the meeting exposition dump at the whole situation."

RJ

That's our grandfather.

BD

It's, it's not. But—

RJ

It is.

BD

—for some reason, I don't remember what this man looks like. But Robyn—

RJ

He looked like our grandfather.

BD

When we did watch it, Robyn was like, "He looks like our grandfather."

PM

He's got a mustache and short hair.

RJ

He was tall and kind of lanky and then old. And he looked like our grandfather. Bayana doesn't remember this, but our grandfather is a wizard.

BD

I don't remember. I can't say whether or not she's telling the truth because I do not remember.

RJ

Our grandfather is a wizard and he's in this movie.

PM

So, he's got speaking lines, which is a nice change of pace from the first movie where people of color could only have, like, disparaging looks at the camera. And he reveals that joining Theseus' department means they want Newt to be an Auror, which feels like such a strange thing because it seems, like, Auror is supposed to be this highly lauded position that is hard to obtain. But, also, Newt would be so bad. Newt would be the worst Auror. So, this makes no sense.

BD

This whole movie is just people telling Newt to do a thing that he – would be bad at and doesn't want to do. So, it's like it's – the whole time you're like, "Why?" He's the other – he's the other ingredient from this Wizarding World shops. The secret ingredient that he does not want. But they are stuck with him now. So, they're like, "We're gonna force him into this, like, Chosen One status without actually making sense as to why he needs to be here." Why – anything, anything he said. Anything to do with him. And, like, him being an Auror doesn't make any sense. Like, there are other people. Is this all that they have? Like, is something going on? What's going on in Britain that they have to find Newt? They need Newt specifically to be an Auror.

MH

Yeah, I mean it's just because it's a Fantastic Beast movie. It just feels like, if you're going to make Fantastic Beasts the movie, just make it, and make it fun, and make it separate. And it's just about Newt and Jacob and that'd be great. And, if you're gonna make Grindelwald the movie, just make it a separate movie.

BD

Right.

PM

Like, you don't have to put them together and make the first movie half and half and then this first movie, like, 90 percent Grindelwald. Oh – and Newt is also here and is somehow the main character even though he does not fit into this equation at all in a logical way. It, it's, it's everything is shoehorned and forced to make it fit the top of the movie Fantastic Beasts.

RJ

Yep. Sorry. I told you. I sent you a picture of the actor because it's our grandfather. Am I right though?

BD

I'm so mad.

RJ

Am I right though?

BD

I'm so upset.

RJ

Am I correct? Bayana, just tell the people.

BD

Ahh. You – mmmm.

RJ

Our grandfather was in this movie.

BD

I don't like this.

PM

Clearly, what you'll have to do is you'll have to email me a photo of your grandfather. So, that I can put it on Instagram and we can have an official vote. We'll hear from the people.

BD

I just don't—

RJ

I don't know if he would be okay with that. I mean I don't even know if—

PM

Okay. Then maybe not. Maybe not.

RJ

—he knows what the internet is, but still.

BD

I'm not saying that Robyn is wrong. I'm just saying that I don't like it.

PM

Yeah, you don't want to be reminded of this movie every time you think of your grandfather. Not gray connection.

BD

Yeah, I don't — it, it's fine. It's fine. It's okay.

EM

All right, Past Mike. Let's pump the brakes before we continue this downhill dunk session of Crimes of Grindelwald. Hey, it's me, Editing Mike. How's it going everyone? Before we continue this onslaught of trashing this movie, let's take a little bit of a break in a segment that I like to call WINGARDIUM AD-READ-OSA!

[30:40]

WINGARDIUM AD-READ-OSA!

[34:50]

PM

So, they talk about Grindelwald in this meeting. And there is, in the middle of the table, I guess, like, a pensive-esque thing where it shows, like, a raggedy Grindelwald. And then he transforms into what Grindelwald looked like in the first movie and then Credence. And I understand that this is a movie and I understand that this is probably here so that the audience understands what's happening. But, just from like a use case perspective in this meeting, everyone in this table knows who Grindelwald is? Everyone at this table knows who

Credences is. And this would be the equivalent if you're in a business meeting and you're talking about some people and then you have a PowerPoint slide just with pictures of the people you're talking about. Like, yeah, we all – we all know. Like, who is this for?

BD

Yeah.

RJ

The thing that is, like, infuriating about both movies but this one in particular is there is that thing – what's his name? Steve Kloves said, like, in the later Harry Potters that he's like, "We're just assuming – like, these movies are made for book readers."

BD

Oh, yeah, that was – it wasn't Kloves. It was a Yates.

RJ

David gates. Yeah. That asshole.

PM

Same director of this movie.

RJ

He's also involved here.

BD

Yeah, he directed it.

RJ

So, that makes sense.

PM

Yep.

RJ

But it was like we're just gonna assume that everyone going in has read the book. And – but the problem with that is that they make these logical leaps that, if you read the book, then like, yeah, you get it. But, also, like, in terms of a movie, it doesn't make narrative sense. Like, a movie still has to have, like, a beginning and, you know, you have to choose characters. They do the same thing with this. Except there's no book.

BD

Mhmm.

RJ

Like, there's nothing.

PM

Yeah, there's no source material.

RJ

They're like, "Oh, you'll just understand motivations and stuff." But they also then add in a bunch of exposition where it's like, "You should actually spend that exposition time explaining motivations. Like why are we here?"

PM

Yeah.

RJ

Not who are these people. Why are we here? Like—

BD

Yeah.

PM

Definitely. So, in this meeting, they reveal that Credence survived. They don't say how. And that he left New York. They don't say how or why. There's no explanation to anything. But, after this is revealed, you get creepy guy who, apparently—

BD

Standing in the corner.

PM

—was standing behind a pillar the entire meeting.

RJ

Welcome to Level 7.

PM

He's standing behind a pillar the entire meeting because he just comes out from behind the pillar and he goes, "Same old, Scamander." And the way he says it – I'm gonna put a clip of it in the episode. It's just so funny

[Audio Playing]

Pillar Guy

Same old, Scamander.

RJ

Mike, you have to also put in a clip of Phil Coulson. And then like – is it the first episode?

BD

Yes, it's the pilot of Agents of Shields.

RJ

Like, premier episode of Agents of Shield where he comes out of the corner and he says, "Welcome to Level 7."

BD

I think it's a GIF.

RJ

It's the same thing.

PM

Oh, okay.

BD

It's the same thing.

RJ

It is. It's the same thing.

PM

Ah, just the delivery of, "Same old, Scamander." It was like who – not only am I asking who are you, but, like, what kind of entrance is this. It felt like I should know who this person is.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

He was not in the first movie at all. And he's just been there standing the whole meeting. Everyone in the meeting knows he was there. So, I guess they told him like, "Hey, before Newt walks in, hide behind the pillar. And then, if Newt denies wanting to do it, you get the job." So, he, apparently, now, gets the assignment of trying to find Credence since Newt didn't want to do it. So, his name is Grimmson. And all the other people at the meeting looked uncomfortable with it as if they don't want to have him on the case. So, what I don't understand is why don't they put someone else on the case. And you could think like, 'Oh, they don't have a lot of aurors.' But then, at the end of the movie, there's like 50 orders.

BD

There's a lot of aurors.

PM

So, clearly, you could get someone else besides Grimmson.

RJ

Also, he's not an auror. He's, like, a bounty hunter. He's like—

BD

Yeah.

RJ

—a magical bounty hunter or something.

BD

It, it makes—

PM

Yeah.

BD

It doesn't make any sense.

RJ

And, also, we have to remind you, listeners, that he is wearing a gray three-piece suit and he looks just like every other person in this room. Who is he?

BD

No one knows. Nobody knows.

RJ

Why is there no differentiating characteristics?

BD

His name is Grimmson. What more do you want?

RJ

He's bad.

PM

Yeah, his name is Grimm son. And what's also strange is that he is so set up and introduced in a way that you're supposed to be like, "Oh, this guy," but you have no clue who he is. And then they never really explain who he is.

BD

No.

PM

You just have to pick up through context clues that he has a bad reputation for being maybe bad at his job, but also maybe just too intense. So – and they never clarify. It's just like you know he's not a good fit, but you don't know why.

BD

Mhmm.

PM

Newt leaves the meeting. Theseus chases after him. Newt says he's not going to do this. Theseus, who has incredible hair, I must say. His hair is fantastic. He chases after Newt. And the way he says Newt is very fun because he goes like, "Neewwt!" Like he really hits the why. Like, "Neewwt!" And then he comes in and he hugs Newt really big. And, when he hugs Newt, which is a sweet moment, he also whispers in his ear that they're watching him. So, he's protective of Newt. Seems like a nice protective older brother. But Grimmson does get

the job. Then we cut to Paris. I'm glad this movie is keeping up the same theme of just, like, every scene is five minutes long and then we cut to another thing because, heaven forbid, you focus on something for once. So, now' they're in Paris. We've got Abernathy and henchmen bringing out people in coffins. So, apparently, like, Grindelwald just wanted this house as the hideout house. So, rather than – I don't know – stupefy or use some sort of magic to make these people go away or forget where they live or whatever, they decided to kill these people to take their house, but then, also, not take him away in body bags but full-fledged coffins. What? Your wizards.

BD

This is how they show that he's more scary than Voldemort. You're not scared? Are you not – are you not afraid?

RJ

This is also where we get THE best – I'm talking, like, move over Citizen Kane. But liner notes in this is just Oscar worthy, "Grindelwald surveys the elegant clutter left by the haut bourgeois family he has just murdered." The elegant clutter, elegant clutter left by the haut bourgeois family he has just murdered. She put that – she put that on, in writing. She wrote that. What the fuck does elegant clutter mean?

PM

I guess like a clutter of expensive things?

RJ

What the fuck?

BD

I mean, yeah, it's all—

RJ

Why does it matter? He just killed them.

BD

They don't speak broke, but they're, they're a little messy.

RJ

Are we supposed to feel like less bad that he murdered them because they're the haut bourgeois with elegant clutter?

PM

Now, I'm not gonna pretend that I know what these words mean. I vaguely know a little bit of French and I can kind of understand when fashion talks about it. But, to my knowledge, haut means fancy—

RJ

Yes.

PM

—elegant, et cetera. And bourgeois means middle class.

RJ

Yes, upper middle class is what is. It isn't—

PM

Oh, that's what it's trying to do? Okay. I, I guess it makes more sense in me thinking that she was just playing like the antonym game where she was like, "Elegant clutter. Haut bourgeois."

RJ

No, I took French. I don't remember much of it. But haut bourgeois just means upper middle class.

PM

Cool. I get – then you know what? They deserve to die. Ridiculous. So absurd. So, now, Grindelwald starts talking and his accent's all over the fucking place. Where is Grindelwald, actually, supposed to be from? Isn't he supposed to be from, like, Eastern Europe?

BD

Yeah. So, he went to Durmstrang.

PM

Okay. It says he's from Hungary. That's what I was thinking. Gellert Grindelwald was born in 1883. It says probably in Hungary or Central/Eastern Europe. This is according to the Harry Potter Compendium, which I guess is the fancier version of the Harry Potter Wiki. But he has this accent where I guess he is supposed to have a Central European, Eastern European accent. But then he also like uses French words because he uses some French words in his bad monologue at the end.

BD

Mhmm. Mhmm.

PM

But, really, for the most part, he just sounds like Johnny Depp doing a British accent.

RJ

Yeah.

PM

So, it, it's just there's no consistency. And, again, I, I'm not talking about the whole Johnny Depp thing here, but, like, specifically, just from his acting, I don't think he's that good. So, like, I don't know what all the hype is if he can't even do a consistent accent that makes sense with the character.

RJ

I mean that is actually one of the most frustrating things, right? Because, like, I always find myself stopping, entering into the Johnny Depp wars because those people—

PM
Mhmm.

RJ
Whoa. On Twitter, don't do it. But—

PM
Oh, god, they love him so much and I don't know why.

RJ
For this argument, abuse doesn't happen.

PM
We're only talking about his acting.

RJ
We're only talking about acting. He's not good.

BD
Yeah.

RJ
We've already known, like, he – you have to pay his salary. And then you have to pay someone because they have to put a headset in his ear because he refuses to learn lines anymore. So, someone is—

PM
Oh, really?

BD
Mhmm.

RJ
—telling him his lines while he's acting.

PM
That's a thing?

RJ
Yes.

PM
Wow.

RJ
It's like, no, he won't – he refuses to, like, remember or learn his lines.

PM

My gosh.

BD

Which is like, at this point, why are you hiring him? Because nobody at – like, who is really checking for Johnny Depp in the late 20 teens?

PM

Apparently, the entirety of Twitter.

RJ

It's like there is – there is a Johnny Depp fan base. They all want to – they're like – to me, they're like the [Inaudible 43:57-relos and the starch]. I don't want it – I don't want them to know me.

BD

Not the [Inaudible 43:59 - Relos].

RJ

It's like – it's like the anti-beehive. Like, I want – I don't need them to know who I am.

PM

Mhmm.

RJ

I don't want any part of it. None of his movies have been successful since The Pirates movie. Like, the first, three, two.

BD

Yeah.

RJ

I think the last one wasn't that successful either.

PM

It wasn't.

RJ

Who's checking for him. And then they had, like, that bullshit excuse that they wanted a big name. And it's like, "So, J.K. Rowling isn't a big name. The Wizarding World isn't a big name?"

PM

Colin Farrell isn't a big name?

RJ

Fucking you have Eddie Redmayne who has an Oscar.

PM

Yeah, that's true. You got Zoë Kravitz for one movie just to kill her. Like, hey got names.

RJ

Right.

BD

They have so many people.

RJ

They have so many people.

BD

Also, like, the fact that they got – like, all those people they got in the original movies and they could only get Johnny Depp. Like, that was their big name after, like, Alan Rickman, Maggie Smith. Like, these people.

PM

Right. Yeah.

BD

Like, wow.

PM

It's ridiculous.

BD

I hate that for them.

PM

So, they talk a little bit about, like, their whole mission statement, which is just this, like, vague wizard purity that isn't very clear. And then they're gonna, like, clean up the rest of the house. And then they go into this other room and you see a baby in the house. And, I guess, to make him look like Voldemort, they, they kill the baby too. But what makes no sense about this killing the baby thing is that, before when his French woman right hand man roll person says something about trying to get rid of all the muggles, he says, "Oh, we're not merciless." And then they just kill this baby for no good reason. It's like you clearly are. Remember when 15 seconds ago, you said that you're not merciless. Like, look at what you just did. You killed a baby for no reason. It's really – it's absurd. It's so silly. Okay. I feel like this is – legally, we've hit the limit of time that we can spend talking and time that we can make people listen to discussion of Crimes of Grindelwald. So, we'll cut it here. We'll pick it up more in the next episode. But—

RJ

Nooo!

BD

Never!

PM

It's an extra episode. But, Robyn and Bayana, thank you so much for joining. If people want to find you doing stuff on the internet, podcast wise, where can they do so?

BD

blackgirlscreate.org and then you can find all of the hundreds of things that we do there. But you can also follow us on Twitter @blkgirlscreate and then Instagram @BlackGirlsCreate because they let you have more characters in your handle.

PM

Sweet. Well, thank you both so much for joining. Listeners, thanks for listening. Thanks to everyone for surviving the discussion. I'm sorry to put you through this, but we had to get it done. And, until next time, as they say in the Wizarding World of Harry Potter before they introduce a bunch of characters that don't matter, Wizard On!

[46:35]

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