

©Rusty Quill 2023

The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 11
"Marked"**

**Written by Jonathan Sims
Edited by Alexander J Newall**

**02-08-2023
Draft 1.1**

ANNOUNCER

This episode is dedicated to Stuart Pollock - I humbly dedicate this episode to the talented folks at Rusty Quill, and to supporters of good art and content everywhere.

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus Protocol.
Episode Eleven – Marked**

[Music]

**1. EXT. THE SIDE OF A MOTORWAY - AFTERNOON, DRIZZLY
(CELIA'S PHONE)**

A busy motorway nearby. CELIA is asleep on grass. She starts to make slightly distressed noises as she stirs. A lorry roars past nearby and she awakes with a start.

CELIA

Hhng!

She looks around, momentarily disorientated. Then realization sinks in and she lets out a noise of frustration.

CELIA

Christ, not again.

She starts to slowly, painfully get to her feet.

CELIA

(to herself)

Wonderful. Perfect.

A thought strikes her suddenly and she starts patting down her pajamas, letting out a small cry of triumph as she pulls out the phone.

CELIA
(to herself)
Yes! Ok, phone in the pocket works.

She starts tapping the screen.

CELIA
(to herself)
If it had signal.

She sighs in helpless frustration.

CELIA
Shit.

She stretches and starts trudging off towards the motorway.

CELIA
Hold on, Jack, I'm on my way.

2. INT. OIAR OFFICES – NIGHT, DRIZZLY (COMPUTER)

SAM is tapping morosely away at his terminal. He stops, lets out a sigh of low-key misery, then resumes tapping.

ALICE enters, carrying coffees and a bag of pastries.

ALICE
Good morning, brackets night!
How're we hanging?

SAM
(not great)
Great.

ALICE

Well, luckily your best friend in this or any other world, the one and only Alice Dyer, has bought you a fancy coffee and a discount pasty.

SAM

(struggling to play along)

Not *the* Alice Dyer? From such hits as “well at least it wasn’t both legs” and “who needs grandparents anyway?”

ALICE

The very same. Here. Oat milk latte with hazelnut syrup – god’s final curse on a fallen world.

SAM

I’m telling you it’s nice.

ALICE

It’s chemical warfare waged upon the tongues of the foolish. Besides, I’m sweet enough already.

Sam grudgingly chuckles.

SAM

Clearly.

ALICE

And for a pastry you got a choice of cinnamon swirl or pain au chocolat. Fair warning, they’re both a bit stale so there’s not much in it.

SAM

You don’t need to do this, you know. I’m fine.

ALICE

Oh really? Fantastic! You just spit that coffee back out then and I can go get a refund.

Beat

ALICE

(cont.)

I do get it. Facing your past is tough. Finding out there isn't any past left to actually face... that's even tougher.

SAM

Yeah.

ALICE

But at the end of the day, when all's said and done, you just have to choose...

Beat. Sam is expectant despite himself.

ALICE

Cinnamon swirl or pain au chocolat?

Sam exhales. She got him.

SAM

Cinnamon swirl. Please.

ALICE

Nah, you took too long. You get pain au chocolat.

SAM

(sarcastic)

Curses!

Alice hands him his pastry.

Beat.

ALICE

**You actually wanted the Pain au
Chocolat didn't you?**

SAM

What can I say? You're predictable.

ALICE

Dammit.

**They chuckle, then Sam slips back into his low mood as he eats.
He sighs.**

ALICE

(cont.)

They're not that stale.

SAM

**I can't believe it all turned out to just
be a waste of time.**

ALICE

**Oh yeah, massively pointless. Train
tickets cost an arm-and-a-leg too.**

SAM

Jesus, all right.

ALICE

**What? You're the one who says they
don't need empty platitudes. I
thought I'd maybe try harsh truths.**

SAM

**Well, can you maybe try something
else?**

ALICE

**Like changing the subject maybe?
Where are Celia and Gwen? I've got
a mocha for Celia and I was really
looking forward to pretending I**

“accidentally” forgot to order Gwen anything.

SAM
They're not here yet.

ALICE
Did they call in?

SAM
I didn't get anything. Might have gone through to Lena.

Beat.

SAM
Hey, are you alright? You keep glancing at the door.

ALICE
Hm? Nah, it's nothing.

SAM
It's not nothing. You're on edge.

ALICE
It's stupid.

SAM
So?

ALICE
I just... I dunno. When I left the coffee shop, it felt like someone was following me.

SAM
What did they look like?

ALICE
Well. I didn't actually see anyone but it wouldn't be the first time, London's creep central.

SAM

So how can you be sure you were followed if you didn't see anyone?

ALICE

I'm not sure. That's why it's bothering me so much.

SAM

Sounds like maybe you were more bothered by that "soggy ruin" than you admit.

ALICE

Don't joke about that, mate. I was dreaming about it all day. It'll be nothing. I'm just jumpy.

SAM

I could walk you home this morning if you'd like?

Beat.

ALICE

...Yeah, actually. If you're offering.

SAM

I am.

ALICE

Cool.

Beat.

ALICE

(cont'd)

'Cause I worry about you. You're too delicate to be safe out there without me watching your back.

SAM

Of course.

Beat.

ALICE

Anyway. You know what'll take our minds off it?

SAM

Classifying unspeakable horrors all night for no discernible reason?

ALICE

You know it.

Sam hits a button and CHESTER starts talking.

SAM

And we're off...

3. INT. CYBERSPACE (CASE FILE – EMAIL NARRATION)

CHESTER

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 6th 2020.

Subject: Re: Padstow civil cemetery exhumations

**Hi Alison,
You asked for a quick email of confirmation when the work began, just to say everything has proceeded as anticipated. It's taking longer than usual to dig due to the cold snap, but we've already accounted for that in**

our timelines. We also did some load testing of the ground near the cliff edge, and it looks like there's only a few graves where the erosion means we won't be able to use the Bobcat, and that's few enough that my boys can do that by hand.

The first few days have gone smoothly, and several units have already been reinterred at Newquay with no problem. David, the medical examiner, seems happy enough with all the precautions we're taking, and while we've certainly had our fair share of lookie-loos, there's not been any sign of the protestors you were so concerned about stirring up. I guess it helps that no-one's been buried here for over a hundred years, so it's not like we're pulling up granddad. The sailors sleeping here haven't seen mourners since Queen Vic.

On a personal note, I'd just like to say thank you for using us to do this job. I know we can't have been the cheapest company to put in a bid, but as local lads we've been coming to this graveyard all our lives (even if just to sneak some booze as stupid teenagers), and now that the cliff's finally giving up the ghost (if you'll pardon the pun), it feels right for us to be the ones taking it apart.

Anyway, let me know if you have any other questions. Otherwise, I'll drop you a line in a couple of weeks when

job's done.

**Regards,
Gordie.**

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)
Date: January 12th 2020.**

Subject: Re: Exhumation pause

**Hi Alison,
Bad news, I'm afraid. Well, odd news,
at least. David suggested I keep
updating you with what's going on,
as we've had to stop work for a day
or two while an expert comes down.
It shouldn't impact the timetable too
much, so the original budget should
cover it, but we can discuss all that
later.**

**I don't know if you actually saw us
retrieving any units during your visit
the other day, but for context, the
containers they're buried in are of
really varied quality. I'd say just
under half were buried in decent
coffins that are still in good enough
shape to remove and transport
unopened. For others though, the
wood has rotted to the point where
it's pretty much impossible to keep
the boxes together and some were
just wrapped in oil cloth. This means
we're seeing, touching and moving a
lot of human remains directly.**

Don't worry, this isn't about a health and safety thing – we have all the right gear and David's making sure we follow procedure. It's just that one of the graves had a body in that was too well-preserved for the age it should have been. Or at least, most of the skin was in extremely good condition. The back was completely covered in this complicated tattoo of a ship sailing across an open sea towards an open horizon. It was really impressive.

Unfortunately, David thinks we need a second opinion and to run some tests to confirm that this body is as old as it should be, as obviously if it's been buried more recently than 1908 then that technically makes the cemetery a crime scene, and we have to shutdown for god know's how long.

I'll be honest though, I'm glad of the break. Taking up all these graves is starting to get to me a bit. I almost feel sorry for doing it. The waves are so close and getting closer. If I were a sailor buried here, I'd take some comfort in that.

As you can see I'm getting morbid. Short break will do us all some good I think. Will update you when I hear word

**Regards,
Gordie**

To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)

From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)

Date: January 14th 2020.

Subject: Re: Exhumation pause

Alison,
Can you give David a nudge for me?
He's still working on that body we found and he's stopped responding to my emails. I got him on the phone, but to be honest he doesn't sound like he's in any real rush to complete the job and while he's worrying about salt water and tattoos, we're out here sat on our hands and I'm paying the lads by the day. It's almost enough to make you dream of sailing away for real. Like that poor fella's tattoo. Saying that, I had another look at the photos David attached and I'm starting to think I might have been wrong about it. When I first looked, I thought it was hopeful, a crew sailing towards the sunrise. But looking again, the sun is lower than I thought, and there's a shape in the water behind the ship. I think they're being chased by something. Creepy eh?

Oh, and speaking of tattoos, you remember you wanted an update on local sentiment about the move? Well, I don't know if this counts as resistance – hell, I don't even know if

they're local – but there's someone started poking around the site asking questions. Big snake tattoo up their arm and a bunch of other ink. Wouldn't give their name, but claims to be a big deal "online". Don't really know what that means, but they've been asking questions about the body.

According to them the tattoo is an "Oscar Jarrett", and that's a big deal to some folks in that community – something to with Sutherland Macdonald whoever that is. Dunno if that's quite what you were worried about but thought you'd want to know. They're kinda giving the boys the creeps. We were thinking of calling the police if we saw them again but I know you're worried about backlash so we'll hold off doing that for now.

You should visit the site again when you get the chance. The salt air will do wonders for your mood. It's weird, I've lived here all my life, but spending all this time out on the cliffs, it can still reach you y'know? The waves crash so loud you can hear them in your dreams.

G

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 16th 2020.

Subject: Re: Re: Exhumation pause

I just wanted to reach out to offer my condolences. I don't know how close you were to David, but this sort of thing always hits hard, even it's just a colleague. If it's any consolation, he's with the sea now. The deep will care for his bones.

G

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 17th 2020.

Subject: Re: David's passing

**Dear Alison,
I should first offer my formal apology. I was unaware that my emails were coming across as in any way unprofessional, and shall forthwith attempt to acquit my communications in a manner more becoming of one corresponding with a government official.**

My thoughts and opinions on maritime matters will no longer be included in my emails. In addition, I should be most grateful if you could see fit to provide myself with appropriate authorisations to contact

**the medical examiner's offices to follow up with the cadaver that has been causing such consternation. Yours sincerely,
Gordon Alan Johnson**

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 18th 2020.

Subject: Re: Re: Re: David's passing

Look, I was not "making fun of you" but I'm not sure what you want. I'm emailing an employer about my work and am getting accused of my emails being "unprofessional". That's the best I can manage. I haven't been sleeping much recently. Weird dreams. Shapes in the water and that. And before you say that it's "unprofessional" to tell you that I'm just giving an explanation, That's all.

I need you to contact the examiner again, he's dragging his feet. Besides, I want to see the body again. I dug him up, he's my responsibility. I just need to see it. I need to know what's in the water.

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 20th 2020.

Subject: Re: Examiner's office break-in

It wasn't me. I swear it was that creep, the one with all the ink. They want to keep it for themselves. I saw them, I saw them hanging around the office when I was waiting. Waiting so long just to see it, just to know what's in the water. And they took it. They think they're smart, but I saw them I know where they're staying and if they think they deserve it they're wrong. It belongs to the deep. I'm going to go get it and I'm going to find it and if they try and stop me I swear the ocean will claim us all. I can taste the salt and spray. It's waiting in the water.

**To: Alison Leshi
(G.Leshi@cornwallcouncil.gov.uk)**

**From: Gordon J
(hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk)**

Date: January 20th 2020.

Subject: Re: Re: Examiner's office break-in

**There was a problem delivering your message to
"hello@padstowgroundworks.co.uk"**

This email address is no longer in service.

4. INT. OIAR OFFICES – NIGHT, DRIZZLY (COMPUTER)

SAM

Alice?

ALICE

Hm?

SAM

Is there a way to cross reference cases?

ALICE

What do you mean?

SAM

I just got another case about tattoos.

ALICE

And? You already know the page to check the scores.

SAM

Yeah... but I just thought it might be worth noting somewhere that they might be linked. There's this tattooist, and I think they might be-

ALICE

What have I told you about thinking?

SAM

Don't?

ALICE

That's right.

Beat. Alice sighs.

ALICE

(cont.)

I don't think there's any way to mark cases as connected. They all come in standalone, that's just how it works.

SAM

Yeah. I get it.

ALICE

Besides, I thought we'd established that we aren't interested in any more creepy investi-[gations]

GWEN enters hesitantly.

ALICE

Christ on a peddlebike, what happened to you?

GWEN

(setting up at her desk)

Tube was delayed. Points failure.

ALICE

And that's why you look like the "before" picture for a sleep clinic?

GWEN

I have been having some trouble sleeping. Not that it's any of your concern.

ALICE

Oh, but I am concerned. So very concerned. I can't decide if you look more like a bog witch with caffeine withdrawal or that Cheddar Gorge mummy.

SAM

She's allowed to be a bit tired Alice.
It's fine.

ALICE

Woah there, we talked about this
Sam, no need to be so savage, we're
here to help. Now, Gwen, if you had
to rate your mattress on a scale of 1
to that big medieval wheel they used
to torture people with-

GWEN

Can I *please* just get some work
done, you-

She spots the third coffee.

GWEN

(cont'd)
(surprised)

Hang on, did you get me a coffee?

ALICE

Uhh...

SAM

Yeah. You like mocha?

GWEN

Yes.

She takes the coffee carefully. Beat.

GWEN

Thank you, Alice.

ALICE

I... Sure. Whatever. Don't get used to
it.

A slightly awkward silence.

GWEN

Is Lena in yet?

SAM

She went into her office about an hour ago. She hasn't come out since. Why?

GWEN

Nothing. We need a debrief on a... meeting I had.

SAM

Right, well I think-

The door bursts open and CELIA hurries in.

CELIA

Sorry, sorry! I know, I know – there was an emergency at home I had to- I'm sorry I'm late!

GWEN

Do you have any idea what the time is?

ALICE

I'm sorry, are you joking right now?

GWEN

I have responsibilities now, Alice. I need more of an explanation than just a "home emergency".

ALICE

You arrived literally one minute ago!

GWEN

And I gave a full explanation for my lateness. Which, I might add, I didn't actually *need* to do for a subordinate.

CELIA

It's fine really-

ALICE

No, it's not. You don't owe her anything! In fact, you should take her coffee as reparation.

CELIA

One of my radiators sprung a leak and flooded the lounge.

GWEN

I see. Well that's understandable but don't let's make a habit of it shall we?

CELIA

Of course.

GWEN

See, that wasn't so painful, was it Alice?

Alice takes a breath for a devastating putdown.

SAM

Let it go.

ALICE exhales and sips her coffee instead.

GWEN

Luckily, I don't think Lena's noticed, so you should be ok. She's not as laid back as I am.

Alice chokes a little.

CELIA

Good to know.

GWEN

Great, well if that's everything you all really should get to work otherwise you'll never get out of here. Don't let me keep you.

ALICE

(muttered)

I'd like to see you try...

GWEN

(already departing)

I'll be in Lena's office if you need me.

She walks off.

Beat.

CELIA

You ok, Alice? It honestly doesn't bother me.

ALICE

I can't believe she drank your mocha!

5. INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE – NIGHT, DRIZZLY (MANAGER'S LANDLINE)

LENA is sat at her desk typing. Gwen knocks then immediately enters.

LENA

Ah. You're back I see. How did it go?
I trust you were successful?

GWEN

What was that?

LENA

Excuse me?

GWEN

What. The hell. Was. That.

LENA

Ah. Presumably you are referring to Mr. Bonzo.

GWEN

No. No, no. I watched Nigel's SOS every week as a kid. I *know* Mr. Bonzo. That thing was not Mr. Bonzo.

LENA

I assure you that it was. He is one of our Externals.

GWEN

Mr. Bonzo is a man in a big fat funny suit who pours green custard on celebrities. That... abomination wasn't a costume. That was skin. It was sagging, it was sweaty!

LENA

I'll grant you that Mr. Bonzo is one of our more... obviously grotesque Externals but I assure he is a valued asset.

GWEN

I thought he was going to kill me!

LENA

But he didn't, which means you've passed the first part of your probation. Congratulations. Did you scream?

GWEN

What? No!

LENA

You should. It really helps one cope with the more affronting aspects of the job. And they usually like it.

Beat.

GWEN

What was in that envelope I gave him?

LENA

A name and an address.

GWEN

But for who?

LENA

I'm sure you've already worked that out. But just in case you haven't, keep an eye on the case loads over the next few days. It should become abundantly clear.

GWEN

I don't understand.

LENA

Yes, you do.

Beat.

GWEN

But... why?

LENA

"Why" comes later. For now, it's best you try to process the "what". I'll let you know when I have another liaison assignment for you.

GWEN
(defeated)
I... Ok.

Gwen opens the door.

LENA
Oh, and Gwen?

GWEN
Yes?

LENA
Get some sleep. You look dreadful.

Gwen closes the door.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER
The Magnus Protocol is a podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-alike 4.0 International License. The series is created by Jonathan Sims and Alexander J Newall, and directed by Alexander J Newall. This episode was written by Jonathan Sims and edited with additional materials by Alexander J Newall, with vocal edits by Nico Vettese, soundscaping by Meg McKellar, and mastering by Catherine Rinella with music by Sam Jones. It featured Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer, Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid, Anusia Battersby as Gwen Bouchard, Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley, Sarah Lambie as Lena Kelley, with additional voices from Jonathan

Sims.

The Magnus Protocol is produced by April Sumner, with executive producers Alexander J Newall, Dani McDonough, Linn Ci, and Samantha F.G. Hamilton, and Associate Producers Jordan L. Hawk, Taylor Michaels, Nicole Perlman, Cetius d'Raven, and Megan Nice.

**To subscribe, view associated materials, or join our Patreon, visit rustyquill.com. Rate and review us online, tweet us [@therustyquill](https://twitter.com/therustyquill), visit us on facebook or email us at mail@rustyquill.com
Thanks for listening.**

The Magnus Protocol 11 – Marked

CAT23RC5246-06012020-11032024

Tattoo (corpse) -/- compulsion [email exchange]

Incident Elements:

- Thalassophobia
- Obsession
- Mentions of: corpses, exhumation

Transcripts: <https://shorturl.at/gzF15>

This episode is dedicated to Stuart Pollock, thank you for your generous support! You can a complete list of our Kickstarter backers <https://rustyquill.com/the-magnus-protocol-supporter-wall/>

Created by Jonathan Sims and Alexander J Newall

Directed by Alexander J Newall

Written by Jonathan Sims

Script Edited with additional material by Alexander J Newall

Executive Producers April Sumner, Alexander J Newall, Jonathan Sims, Dani McDonough, Linn Ci, and Samantha F.G. Hamilton

Associate Producers Jordan L. Hawk, Taylor Michaels, Nicole Perlman, Cetius d’Raven, and Megan Nice

Produced by April Sumner

Featuring (in order of appearance)

Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn Bouchard

Sarah Lambie as Lena Kelley

Jonathan Sims as Chester

Dialogue Editor – Nico Vettese

Sound Designer – Meg McKellar

Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella

©Rusty Quill 2023

**Music by Sam Jones (orchestral mix by Jake Jackson)
Art by April Sumner**

SFX from Soundly and previously credited artists

Support us on Patreon at <https://patreon.com/rustyquill>

**Check out our merchandise available at
<https://www.redbubble.com/people/RustyQuill/shop> and
<https://www.teepublic.com/stores/rusty-quill>**

Join our community:

WEBSITE: rustyquill.com

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/therustyquill

TWITTER: [@therustyquill](https://twitter.com/therustyquill)

REDDIT: reddit.com/r/RustyQuill

EMAIL: mail@rustyquill.com

The Magnus Protocol is a derivative product of the Magnus Archives, created by Rusty Quill Ltd. and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share alike 4.0 International Licence.

©Rusty Quill 2023