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The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 15
"Good Show"**

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

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Draft 3**

ANNOUNCER

**This episode is dedicated to Liesl Frank -
Thank you Alex and Jonny and everyone at
Rusty Quill for giving us Magnus Archives
and Magnus Protocol. And thank you to
Daniris Rodriguez for showing me the
Magnus Archives. I love you and I'm so
happy I have you in my life.**

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus
Protocol.
Episode Fifteen – Well Run**

[Music]

1. INT. O.I.A.R. BREAKROOM – NIGHT, CLEAR (CCTV)

CELIA is sat reading.

SAM enters, walks over, then plops into the seat opposite.

Beat.

SAM

Ahem.

CELIA turns a page.

SAM CONT.

Uh- Ahem?

CELIA

One sec.

She notes something down.

SAM

Ahem, please?

CELIA chuckles and puts her paperwork away.

CELIA

Sorry, go ahead.

Beat.

SAM

Ahem-

CELIA

Oh my, Sam! I didn't see you there! What can I do for you?

SAM

I'm so glad you asked Celia! I was wondering if you had perhaps dropped something...

CELIA

(amused but confused)

Don't think so.

SAM

You're sure? Nothing small and ticket shaped like perhaps-

(flourishing)

These incredibly exclusive, hardly-discounted, barely obstructed theatre tickets?

CELIA

No.

Beat.

SAM

You're sure? Because they look like they'd be perfect for someone to use maybe for a second date...

CELIA

Yea. Nothing to do with me.

Beat.

SAM

(earnest)

So... is that a no to-

CELIA

(smiling)

I'm just playing... What's the show?

SAM
(checking ticket)
Oh, er... "The Pillowman"?

CELIA starts laughing.

SAM
What?

CELIA
(laughing)
Oh nothing, *very* romantic choice.

SAM
Is it? I don't really know much about it, I just thought...

CELIA
Well count me in. If only to see your face.

SAM
Cool. Sorted, then.

ALICE enters loudly and rushes over.

ALICE
Not so fast now!

SAM sighs quietly.

ALICE
I mean sure you could both go canoodle in some stuffy old theatre-

SAM
It's a good place to canoodle.

ALICE
-or you could hear one of the great up-and-coming music sensations that is currently taking the London scene by storm!

SAM
Let me guess, Dredgerman?

ALICE

Don't be daft, they're taking a break before their tour! No, it's "Penny for the Well" actually.

SAM

But it is still Luke on Bass right? How many bands is that boy in?

ALICE

Let's just say that this revolutionary indie ensemble, which may or may not also include my incredibly talented younger brother, is playing The Gladstone Arms at ten thirty tomorrow evening and you are both on the guest list. You're welcome.

Beat.

CELIA

I'm sure Luke is great Alice-

ALICE

Oh he is-

CELIA

-but I don't think I can make it.

SAM

Anyway, we're going to the theatre.

ALICE

Aha! But that's the best bit, they're the last ones on so you can do your boring play and then just swing by afterwards!

SAM

Alice-

ALICE

Oh come on, it's the weekend. Live a little!

CELIA

I'm sorry, but I don't think my sitter can stay late.

Beat.

ALICE
Your... sitter?

CELIA
Yeah. There's no one else to step in so...
it's a thanks but no thanks from me.

Beat.

ALICE
No, yeah, no, of course. So... Like, a dog
sitter, or...?

CELIA
A baby. Human.

ALICE
(kind of thrown)
Right. Sorry. Yeah, that's cool. Babies are
cool.

CELIA stands and picks up her paperwork.

CELIA
I'll tell you what though, give me a bit more
notice next time and I'll see if I can't sort
something. I'd love to see your brother
play.

ALICE
Uh yeah, sure.

CELIA
Anyhoo don't mind me, I'm a bit behind
tonight.
(to Sam)
Just ping me the details for the theatre
later yeah?

SAM
'course.

Celia exits.

Beat.

ALICE

So...

SAM

(standing)

And you say I'm clueless.

ALICE

What?

Sam exits.

ALICE CONT.

(calling)

What? I said babies were cool!

2. CYBERSPACE- N/A, N/A (COMPUTER)

A phone recording begins.

Beep.

VOICEMAIL

Hi, you've reached The Sentinel tip-off hotline.

If you are calling with information that you believe merits investigation for the public interest, please leave a message with as much detail as possible along with your name and number.

If you wish to remain anonymous, please instead leave a three word code at the start of your message that we can use to identify future calls or correspondence from you.

This voicemail is monitored by dedicated staff that are obliged to report serious crimes to local law enforcement if there is risk of imminent harm to anyone.

Please speak after the tone. To end the recording, simply hang up.

Beep

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT, HEAVY RAIN (PHONE)

CATERER

(catching their breath)

I need to report... something. I can't go to the police, I- You're supposed to be independent and well, I've got to risk it. People need to know. They need to know what's happening, what they're doing, and I don't know how much time I've got left.

I work as a caterer. High-end private functions, silver service, that kind of thing. It's my own company and I've managed to build up a decent reputation in the right circles.

We get called in for the really high-end stuff. The kind of event where the guest list is so rich that you've never even heard of them. There's a big difference between "extravagance" and "elegance." We sell the latter.

We're not a big operation though, there were only six permanent staff including myself. We do hire in fixed-term waiting staff and other contractors but even so... I knew these people. I worked with them for years and they didn't deserve what happened to them...

We got the call a couple of months ago for a fairly small event at Wychwood Hall in the Cotswold's. Apparently, they had a family shoot and wanted us to prepare the game. Normally that would be pheasant or partridge and we'd just swap it for stuff we prepared off-site since no one could ever tell the difference, but they were really explicit about it being larger game and wanting to know who's kill they were eating.

That meant a lot more prep time and equipment but they insisted and at this level you don't get to tell the client no, just how much extra it will cost.

We set up the cooking gazebo during the early afternoon in the rear gardens on the butler's instruction. The house itself was a massive sprawling Elizabethan thing with pristine flowerbeds and prim lawns that ran right up to the surrounding woodland. It wasn't usual to be given center stage like that but I figured the client fancied themselves a foodie and wanted to see the prep. Thankfully we brought the flashy gear, just in case.

Normally you'd expect the shoot to have already been well underway by the time we arrived but people were only just arriving in their tinted Range Rovers and Rolls.

I didn't say anything but I made damn sure everyone got a head start on the veg and sauces because as this rate it would be a miracle if they'd be eating before nine.

Another hour passed with a couple more cars trickling in, but still no one had set out. Instead, I could see them through the leaded windows, just watching us work.

Finally, after another half hour I had the house staff fetch the butler. He eventually came out, dour as before, and I told him that unless he knew something I didn't there was going to be a distinct lack of venison for tonight's venison medallions.

He just gave me this look, told me to "prepare" and then headed back inside.

Obviously that pissed me right off but what can you do? They'd paid for the day so we just hunkered down and looked busy.

Finally, as the sun was starting to set a bloody red behind the woodland, the guns came out with their entourage, all tweed, Winchesters and dogs and in front of them marched this... matriarch.

I don't know how else to describe her. This big, imposing, like some Roman statue brought to life and given a gun. I kept thinking of my army days cooking for the top brass. She had the same eyes, like they didn't see people any more just "assets" and "resistance." And if that wasn't enough, she had this huge custom rifle over her shoulder, like an antique elephant gun or something. There was no way it was UK legal, the thing looked like it could take out a jeep, never mind a stag! And it wasn't gilded or anything, it was dull and plain looking despite its massive size and you just knew that this was a gun for killing with, not showing off.

It was her domain and she reeked of power and authority in every sense of the word and when she spoke they all listened.

She had the guns all line up facing us with their dogs at heel and then they all just stood there watching the sun set as their staff and security all headed back into the house leaving us alone with them. That was when I knew something was really wrong.

The woman stepped forward with her dogs by her side and faced me with this bright and wide smile splitting her face under her electric blue eyes and gunmetal-grey hair. Then she just locked eyes with me and began to carefully load the rifle without looking, punctuating each word with another cartridge.

"Are you prepared?" she asked quietly.

“As we can be” I replied. “but-“

Then she raised her hand to silence me and it was as though she had slapped a gag in my mouth. I couldn't even think of disobeying her, the words just died in my throat.

She returned to the group her dogs flanking her the whole way and her silhouette outlined in the blood-red dusk light. I couldn't make out any of the other's faces, dazzled as I was by the light.

Then she stood tall and proud and said with just the tiniest hint of anticipation: “Let's begin then shall we?” As one, the hunters raised their rifles as one and levelled them at us as we stood transfixed under our gazebo.

There's a very specific feeling you get when you're staring down a barrel at close range. First the world gets very sharp and bright, then the horizon sort of shrinks around you till it's no wider than the dark hole aiming straight at you. It had been a long time since I'd felt like that, but it was still so familiar. Too familiar.

The woman hadn't raised her own weapon, instead she called as though directing a firing squad: “Hunt.”

None of us replied. None of us even breathed. We stood completely still and silent, the only noise the gentle evening breeze through the trees and the slight hiss of the red wine reduction boiling over beside me. There wasn't even any birdsong. Then I realized, she wasn't talking to the other guns, she was talking to us.

After seconds that felt like hours the woman seemed to grow impatient. Finally, she sighed and repeated: “Hunt” before shouldering her rifle, sighting and then pulling the trigger without hesitation.

There was a deafening gunshot that stabbed at my eardrums, leaving them ringing and then a sudden clatter of someone falling to the ground behind me dragging utensils down with them. I couldn’t turn to see who was hit, but I think it was Steven. He was only twenty-three. I know it was a headshot though, you don’t forget that sound.

Without lowering the rifle, she chambered another round and re-sighted, this time at me. She smiled greedily then pumped her eyebrows just once, playfully.

“Hunt!”

And this time, I understood. Without taking my eyes from her I reached out and gently closed my hand around the handle of the cleaver in front of me. It shone, pristine and unblemished, ready for its bloody work. Then slowly, so slowly, I raised it overhead, bracing myself for what followed.

The woman grinned widely, her finger caressing the trigger, then I brought my hand down sharply, smashing the cleaver into the face of Marcus, our Saucier. He couldn’t even cry out as it cleft deep into the base of his neck, his arterial blood gushing out and down into the overly-hot pot, releasing a plume of acrid iron-smelling steam.

I looked down at his carcass then wiped the blood from my brow and yanked the

blade free with a crunch before turning to the rest of my staff. They ran.

The party ate well that night. All told, it didn't take long, maybe a half hour at most? None of them got far. I caught Debra as she tried to hide up in a tree. Fair play to her, almost made it up there despite being in her fifties. Mira tripped over a rabbit hole in the darkness, I think she tried to beg, but I couldn't make out the words.

The only one who gave me any real trouble was Boris. He was a big guy, nearly six five, and that's a hell of a size difference, even with my training. But it wasn't enough. I had killed before, and he hadn't. He hesitated, and that was that.

As I was packing up, the woman shook my hand and complimented me. Then the butler handed me a thick brown envelope. It was full of cash and a note written in elegant cursive with just one word:

“Run”.

And I did. Can't stay anywhere too long, can't stop moving. I keep hearing dogs barking and I don't know if it's just some pet or...

I thought about handing myself in to the police, but that just feels like trapping myself in a dead end.

So I'm getting out of the country. First the channel tunnel and then keep going until I've gone far enough that she can't-
Wait...

Beat

CATERER CONT.

(hushed)

Oh no...

The car window shatters inwards from a sudden loud gunshot. The CATERER is wetly silenced.

Someone approaches, reloading an enormous rifle with growling dogs in tow.

They stop then yank open the care door.

LADY MOWBRAY
Well run dearie. Well run...

The line goes dead.

3. INT. O.I.A.R. OFFICE – NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

CELIA takes a steady breath.

CELIA
(disturbed)
Well, that was...

LADY MOWBRAY
(too close)
Fascinating.

CELIA jumps up with a cry and turns to find Lady Mowbray and her dogs standing right behind her. The dogs growl threateningly.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.
Sit.

CELIA
Excuse me?

LADY MOWBRAY
I was talking to the boys.

The dogs sit. They are not fur babies, they are what turns up when someone says “release the hounds”.

CELIA
Can I uh- can I help you?

LADY MOWBRAY
I rather think you might...

MOWBRAY sniffs her as though she were a particularly odd vintage.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.

(stalking)

What did you say your name was dear?

CELIA

I didn't.

LADY Mowbray chuckles slightly as her dogs begin to growl.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.

My, we are an odd one, aren't we?

She sniffs again.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.

And braver than we look.

CELIA

You're not allowed to be in here.

LADY MOWBRAY

I was invited.

The dogs growling intensifies.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.

**A fine specimen... strong and... different...
What is that...?**

She sniffs yet again. GWEN enters.

GWEN

(cautiously)

Lady Mowbray?

Beat. The tension holds for a moment then breaks; the dogs suddenly sound smaller, more docile.

LADY MOWBRAY

**That's me yes. I presume you're
Gwendolyn Bouchard?**

GWEN

**Er yes. Thank you for coming in. If you'd
like to follow me?**

LADY MOWBRAY hesitates just for a moment.

GWEN CONT.

Lady Mowbray?

LADY MOWBRAY

Of course.

(To Celia)

Catch you next time, dearie.

CELIA

No, you won't.

LADY MOWBRAY chuckles then falls in behind Gwen with her dogs.

GWEN

(departing)

Can I get you any refreshments Lady Mowbray?

LADY MOWBRAY

(departing)

No thank you dear. I recently ate.

GWEN

(suspecting)

Ah, um. Of course.

CELIA watches them depart.

LADY MOWBRAY CONT.

(distant)

Bouchard... You wouldn't be of the Cheshire Bouchard's would you?

GWEN

(distant)

Oh, uh well actually-

A door closes cutting off their conversation.

Beat.

CELIA exhales shakily before turning back to the computer.

4. INT. CLUB - EVENING, CLEAR (ALICE'S PHONE).

The club is busy but not packed. A final guitar chord rings out as the applause ends. After a few moment of, canned dance music comes in over the speakers as people filter away from the stage.

Alice finishes off her drink as Luke approaches.

LUKE

There she is!

ALICE

(sardonic)

Oh my god it's the guy from the band,
gosh, I'm giddy.

LUKE

Not surprised, the way you were flailing
about.

ALICE

How dare you. I am pushing the
boundaries of what it means to dance!

LUKE

I won't argue with that.

(to barman)

Pint of water please mate. With ice.

(To Alice)

Thanks for coming Alice, you didn't have
to-

ALICE

(gesturing)

Clearly! I thought this was meant to be a
little chill side gig thing?

LUKE

So did !! Turns out though that things are
really picking up.

ALICE

(sardonic)

Hello? Yes? Is that Glastonbury? Why yes,
we DO have a minute...

LUKE

You joke but the managers already added seven more cities to the Dredgerman tour.

ALICE

Oh wow, fair play!

The barman hands Luke his drink.

LUKE

Cheers mate!

LUKE almost downs the lot.

LUKE CONT.

How's Sam by the way? It's been years since I saw the weedy git.

ALICE

Same as ever.

LUKE

Shame he couldn't make it tonight.

ALICE

Yeah. Still, sometimes it's nice hang out and have a drink, just to two of us.

LUKE

I'm flattered.

ALICE

You should be. And since the show's over...

LUKE

(to the barman)

Two pints of Doombar, cheers.

ALICE

(smiling and genuinely happy)

There we go.

5. EXT. CLUB ALLEY - EVENING, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER).

A tape recorder **CLICKS**, distantly a body shuffles in an alley off the main road.

VICTIM

- the second time is up I try to grasp the air
and fill my lungs that burn and rattle full.

I can't, there's so much air but none inside
as I go down again the cold surrounds and
drags me down, the blue the black the
weight of all the sodden fates awaiting me
below the line of sea and sky.

The **VICTIM** gasps for air.

I kick, I lunge I flail towards the brightened
blue and break above the third and final
time.

ALICE turns into the alleyway, heading home and still buzzing from the show. She removes her headphones as she sees a figure muttering.

VICTIM CONT.

I know I'm spent there is no
more within me save the salt-
spun death that reaches down
my throat

ALICE CONT.

Hello?

The **VICTIM** shuffles towards Alice, stumbling, seemingly oblivious to her but nonetheless still threatening.

VICTIM CONT.

and spasms in my chest that
cannot breathe inside me

ALICE
(cautious)

Uh Hi? Hello?

The **VICTIM** shuffles towards Alice, stumbling, seemingly oblivious to her but nonetheless still threatening.

VICTIM CONT.

coughs and sputters and tries to push it out but more comes in

ALICE CONT.

Listen I er- I don't have any spare...

The VICTIM stumbles then falls to the ground, hard. They begin to writhe, clutching at their throat.

VICTIM CONT.

and down I go the third and final time I know it's done

ALICE CONT.

Jesus! Are uh... are you alright?

ALICE cautiously approaches, suddenly THE VICTIM grabs her in panic.

VICTIM CONT.

**i'm done
the water is...
is... dark**

ALICE CONT.

Oh shit! Get off! Get off me! Let go!

ALICE manages to throw the Victim off then stands back watching them writhe.

ALICE CONT.

Oh shit, oh shit, oh shit, shit, shit!

The VICTIM begins to choke. ALICE approaches again cautiously

ALICE CONT.

**Can you hear me? I'm- I'm
calling for help okay just- just
hold on yeah?**

ALICE dials 999 whilst the victim continues to choke and gasp for air.

ALICE CONT.

(on Phone)

Ambulance.

**Just round the back of the
Gladstone Arms near uh... Lant
Street.**

**Yeah there's someone I don't know
if they've OD'd but they're going
into a fit or something.**

**Uh Alice, yeah and wait... hang
on... oh shit, shit she's stopped
breathing, yeah, yeah just hurry!**

**The VICTIM dies, impossible amounts of water chocking up out of her
lungs.**

ALICE CONT.

Oh shit... oh shit...

Alice hesitantly begins chest compressions, singing to keep time

ALICE CONT.

(Rhythmic, under breath)

**Nellie the elephant packed her trunk,
and said goodbye to the cir-cus,
Off she went with a trumpety trump,
Trump trump trump.**

**Nellie the elephant packed her trunk,
and said goodbye to the-**

Shit, shit, shit, shit!

**She is panicking. She sees the tape recorder next to the body and picks it
up.**

ALICE CONT.

What is-?

The victim starts to speak again, quietly, bubbling up through the water and out of dead lips.

VICTIM CONT.
(whispered)

Deeper...
Deeper...
Down among the dead and
swollen flesh so pale within this
lightless place where eyes are
open cloudy white and all the
water pushes down upon a
lifeless form that sinks and
sinks down to the bottom that is
not there no sandy grave below
the swell no rest among the
coral and the depths I feared so
much but reached up and over
land to claim me still

ALICE CONT.

Oh shit... You... But...

I-I'm sorry. I can't- I...

ALICE drops the tape recorder and flees. The dead woman's voice trails off.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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The series is created by Jonathan Sims
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Alexander J Newall.

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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

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**Davies as Celia Ripley.
The Magnus Protocol is produced by April
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Thanks for listening.**

The Magnus Protocol 15 – Well Run

CAT1RB-6451-22062023-22032024

Hunt (aristocratic) -/- compulsion

Incident Elements:

- **Graphic Violence/Murder**
- **Futility**
- **Being Hunted**
- **Classism**
- **Dehumanisation**
- **Hostile work environment**
- **drowning**
- **Mentions of: blades, guns, military service**
- **SFX: Gunfire, loud music, suffocation**

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

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<https://rustyquill.com/the-magnus-protocol-supporter-wall/>

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Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Jesse Hawke as Voicemail

Danny Scarre as Caterer

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