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The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 18
"Solo Work"**

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Edited by Alexander J Newall**

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Draft 1.2**

ANNOUNCER

This episode is dedicated to John C. Worsley in honor of his daughter, Vivienne C. Worsley, she of the beloved carrot, the hungry sandwich, & the secret twelve.

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus Protocol.
Episode Eighteen – Solo Work**

[Music]

1. EXT. OUTSIDE THE OIAR - EVENING, CLEAR (ALICE'S PHONE)

Alice is walking outside along the road half-singing along with her headphones.

Looking up, she sees TEDDY leaving the courtyard.

ALICE

Teddy? Hey! Teddy!

Teddy looks over and sees her. He does his best to seem pleased to see her. ALICE comes over and takes her earphones out.

TEDDY

Hey Alice! Hi. I er, didn't recognize you.

ALICE

**(punching him in the arm)
Way to make a girl feel wanted!**

TEDDY

Ow! Sorry, not what I meant.

ALICE

It's fine. Kind of assumed you were coming to see me, though. Given you're lingering where I work. I'm flattered but-

TEDDY

Heh Yeah, well- uh-

ALICE

I mean I suppose it's possible you're not here to see me but if it was Gwen she would already have devoured you during mating, so-

TEDDY

You do know that-

ALICE

It's Sam, isn't it? You played it all cool during the leaving party but you're actually stalking him all hot and heavy with whips and chains and-

TEDDY

I'll just let you go ahead and finish, shall I?

ALICE

Best not, I might be a few minutes.

TEDDY

God, I'd forgotten what it's like being talked at by you.

ALICE

That's my brand, baby – irritating, yet faintly erotic. So anyway, why are you here?

Beat.

TEDDY

Oh, I can speak now?

ALICE

I'll allow it.

TEDDY

If you must know I had an interview.

ALICE

I knew you couldn't make it without my delicious charms.

TEDDY

You do realize there are other businesses in Royal Mint Court? It's not just the creepy basement nightmare factory.

ALICE

(genuinely surprised)

Huh. I never considered that.

TEDDY

Well, there you go.

ALICE

How are you doing?

TEDDY

I've been better. I have some savings, though – I'll get by.

ALICE

Be cool if you got this job, right? You working here by day, and me lurking in the night... Hey we could even go for drinks! A little snifter to start your day off right!

TEDDY

Sure, maybe. I'll have to keep you posted about the interview.

ALICE

You have to keep me posted about everything – I never see you anymore!

TEDDY

Yeah, sorry...

ALICE

We'll go out for drinks. You, me, Sam and Celia.

TEDDY

Celia?

ALICE

Oh, you'll love her mate. She's really weird, but like, in a hot way. She'll make you forget about all about your embarrassing obsession with Sam.

TEDDY

But how could I ever forget my one and only Alice-assigned true love?

ALICE

Because I'll order you to.

TEDDY

I have missed you.

ALICE

Then text me back, you loser.

TEDDY

I will.

ALICE

Liar.

That last line hits harder than intended, and the air suddenly goes out of the conversation.

TEDDY

Anyway, I should get going. Don't want to hold you up. Especially if Lena's in.

ALICE

Yeah. Some things never change.

Teddy starts to hurry off.

TEDDY

I'll see you around Alice.

ALICE

**Not if I stalk you first!
(quieter, to herself)
Look after yourself Teddy.**

2. INT. OIAR BREAKROOM – NIGHT, CLEAR (CCTV)

SAM is pouring himself a coffee. He takes a sip and winces. He needs the caffeine, but the taste is awful. LENA enters.

SAM

Hey Lena.

LENA

Hello.

She walks over to the kettle, fills it, then flicks it on. Sam sips his coffee again as she waits for it to start boiling. There is an awkward silence.

SAM

Don't see you in here often.

LENA

I forgot to fill my thermos this evening.

SAM

Right.

Beat.

LENA

You seem unsettled. Have you had a difficult case?

SAM

No. I mean, yeah, but no more than normal.

LENA

Yet you seem quite nervous.

SAM

Oh, well, I mean, if I'm being honest, you're my boss, but I've hardly ever actually spoken to you still.

LENA

Why would I need to talk to you? Your work is satisfactory. Unless you have a work-related issue I could assist you with?

SAM

Um no, nothing like that.

LENA

Then Consider my silence a compliment, if you like.

SAM

Right.

Extended pause. The kettle boils, and Lena pours out her tea.

SAM

Oh, I meant to ask – is Celia going to be in today?

LENA

No.

SAM

Oh.

Beat.

SAM

Can I ask why?

LENA

You may.

Beat.

SAM

Uh.

LENA

(taking slight pity)

She called in with a “childcare emergency”.

SAM

God, I hope Jack’s ok.

LENA

Who’s that?

SAM

Uh, Celia’s kid?

LENA

Oh, is that its name?

SAM

Uh Yeah.

LENA

Hm.

SAM

No kids of your own?

LENA

No.

SAM

No. That makes sense.

LENA finishes making her tea, dropping the teabag in the bin.

LENA

I hope you enjoyed our talk. Let me know if you have any problems.

She leaves. Sam blows air through his cheeks before taking a sip and heading into work.

3. CYBERSPACE – N/A, N/A

AUGUSTUS

Report of medical examiner's investigation for inquest into the death of Violet Parker.

Autopsy and examination performed by Dr. S. Rashid.

Decedent: Violet Abigail Parker

Sex: Female

Age: 41

Ethnicity: White British

Occupation: Teacher

Home Address: 74 Willowtree Close, Ickenham, Greater London

Type of death: Found at scene

Notification by: London Metropolitan Police

Investigating agency: As above

Situation of body: Clothed, in the middle of Milton Court Open Space

Estimated time of death: 0300

20.03.2024

Rigor: Yes

Eyes: Grey

Hair: Brown

Height: 172 centimetres

Weight: 31 kilograms

Marks and wounds: Extreme malnutrition. Tissue damage on both feet and stress fracture on left ankle.

Probable cause of death: Starvation, dehydration, exposure.

Manner of death: Unknown.

Examiner's comments: Hopefully no-one will ever read this. God, I hope she stays silent, and if she does then I will burn these notes so they can't be used as evidence to strip me of my position. But if she starts again and others can confirm it, then I think it is important to have kept these notes. Shortly before finishing my autopsy, the deceased, Violet Abigail Parker, began to talk. I can confirm absolutely that she was dead when this happened and I was at that moment examining her heart and lungs, and neither of them was active. How she could speak with an open thorax is beyond me.

She seemed to be reciting some sort of story, almost as an involuntary reflex. I believe it may have some

relevance to her death. I managed to transcribe some and have included it in my notes.

After a few minutes the cadaver ceased to speak, and has not resumed since. Unless the morgue technicians or funeral directors report something similar prior to cremation, I will probably keep this record private. I want to ask the next of kin about it but unfortunately no-one has come forward to claim the body. Besides, I doubt they would appreciate finding out she gave her last words after her death.

Transcript as follows:

AUGUSTUS (CONT.)

“-and of course mother always said not to. It was an old house, and an empty house, and mother said that that made it a dangerous house. There will be spiders, she said, rotten wood to fall through and oh so many rusty nails. And most importantly, too many rooms. So many turning passageways to confuse you, so many locked doors that even if you didn’t hurt yourself, you might never find your way out again. And then you’d walk till your feet broke and you starved to death. She wouldn’t come for us, if we went in there. She’d leave us to wander all alone. That’s what mother said. And we never did go in that house on Church Street.

But it's strange, even though we never went inside, I've been in the house on Church Street my entire life. I try to escape it. If my mother says she needs money, I give it. If Tom needs me to put together more lesson plans, I will. If Hannah needs her clothes washed I'll do it. Because if I don't, if I don't listen and I don't do what I'm told then they won't come for me. I'll be alone in the house. I'll be alone.

And it's always there, waiting for me. I've dreamt of it my whole life and I still am dreaming.

When I was fifteen, we were told that we had to study Wordsworth in school: "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud". Everyone laughed: sappy, stupid poetry. But in my imagination the clouds rolled silent and thick through the old house on Church Street, choking and hiding, so that even if anyone had thought to look they would never have seen me. The daffodils pushed and strained and tore through the old wood of the house, a rotted mass of yellow that would be my only company. From that day forward the empty grey of the house was laced with fog and moldering yellow.

The house itself is long gone, of course. They tore it down when I was ten. Reduced to splinters and stones. But it was already too late. With my mother's help I had built the

**house anew, not on Church Street,
but inside me. Where no-one would
find me or ever think to look.**

**And here I am. The corridors stretch
onwards with the doors all blank and
strange. Even the daffodils are here,
stinking of mildew. Someone has
brought me here but who? Some
figure reaching asking questions in
an alley? It does not matter. They are
not here now. No-one is here now,
and no-one ever will be.**

**Because I broke my promise. I went
in the house on Church Street and
I'm still here. Now all I can do is
walk. Walk and hope and ignore the
burning in my throat and the aching
in my belly. Keep screaming hoping
someone might hear me through all
that cloying fog.**

**But no-one is coming to help me. So
I must be careful on the stairs or
they will break and I will fall. I must
be careful on the floor or I will step
upon an upturned nail. I must be
careful with the doors or the handles
will give me splinters. And the fall
will break my legs. And the nails will
give me tetanus. And the splinters
will turn to gangrene. And all the
while the daffodils will watch and wilt
and laugh.**

**I wander lonely. I wander lonely. I will
die in this place. And no-one will
miss me.”**

4. OIAR OFFICE – NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

SAM finishes listening to the statement. He files it with a ping, then sits pensively, as though considering something.

SAM

Alice?

Alice looks up from her terminal taking her earphones out.

ALICE

Hm?

SAM

Were you listening to that one?

ALICE

Sorry, no. Was reading about some guy with an inverted face sitting on the ceiling and watching a guy while he sleeps. Pretty gnarly stuff. Why?

SAM

Well, it was... This dead woman was speaking to the medical examiner-

ALICE

G for Ghost comma recent. Easy.

SAM

No, it was the corpse itself that was speaking.

Alice is suddenly a little bit wary.

ALICE

Speaking as in...?

SAM

As in telling the story of its death. Sounds like she was trapped in her greatest fear which then actually killed her.

ALICE

Look I see where you're going with this. You think it's something to do with- With what I saw?

SAM

Yeah. I think maybe there's something out there that killed both of them.

ALICE

(growing sarcastic)

Hmmmm. I see. So you reckon I should have a look at this case? Maybe note down some connections? Pin it up on my corkboard, circle some key dates in bright red, connect them all with string and stare at them while moodily sipping bourbon?

SAM

I mean, maybe?

ALICE

That's dumb.

SAM

You can't just ignore this.

ALICE

Why not? Ok, let's assume you're right. These cases are connected and there's a weird murderer who can kill you with your deepest fear and then make your corpse narrate it. Let's take that insane premise as a truth.

SAM

Fine.

ALICE

Did your case give you any clue as to how to avoid this killer?

SAM

Uh... no, not really?

ALICE

Okay. Did it give any hint as to where they were going to be in the future so that I can avoid also being there?

SAM

Well no but-

ALICE

Did it, in fact, give any details as to how it works, what it looks like, what it wants, why it's here, anything like that?

SAM

No.

ALICE

Then with the greatest respect, your idea is bad and you should feel bad.

SAM

But now we know something's out there-

ALICE

And? If even one percent of these cases has even a grain of truth to them, then there are hundreds of somethings out there, thousands! This is just the latest flavour of awful.

SAM

But you might have actually met this one. In person

ALICE

And in case you didn't notice, it messed me up! So why the hell would I want to know more about it!?

SAM

I mean, it might help you come to terms with it, or...

ALICE

No, Sam. Absolute best case scenario it does nothing and just wastes my time. Most likely scenario it makes me too scared to walk down the street without freaking out. Worst case scenario it gets me curious. Because if there's one thing I've noticed with all these cases over the years it's that it's curiosity that actually gets you killed. So, thanks but no thanks.

Sam sighs.

SAM

Sorry I brought it up.

ALICE

It's ok. I know you're just trying to help but-

A door slams from the other end of the office.

ALICE

(cont'd)

Ooooooh, trouble in paradise.

SAM

Lena's on Gwen's case again?

ALICE

I dunno, she looks-

(TO GWEN)

Hey! Here comes trouble! As the barman said to the bull: "oh god, oh god no, please don't kill anyone, we don't have insurance!"

GWEN

Don't tempt me.

ALICE

Wouldn't dream of it. Sam on the other hand looks pretty iffy to me...

SAM

What's up?

GWEN

Nothing. It's fine.

ALICE

Oh good, glad that's sorted. Sam? Coffee?

Beat.

SAM

Uh...

ALICE

You know, since everything is fine.

Gwen sighs.

SAM

Gwen?

GWEN

It's just another Externals assignment from Lena.

SAM

And that's a problem because...

GWEN

Because... they're not... fun.

ALICE

Oh well no wonder you're throwing a massive strop. Lena can't possibly expect you to do work that isn't a complete hoot every second, that would be completely unreasonable!

SAM

Sorry did I miss the part where "Externals" is meant to mean anything?

ALICE

(explaining)

Grumpy contractors from outside the office getting government grants for doing f-all.

GWEN

No it's not... it's more complicated than that.

SAM

Complicated how?

GWEN

(hesitant)

They're not... I don't think they're people. Not all of them, anyway. Not fully.

ALICE

I mean are any of us lowly worms
“people” to you?

SAM

Not now Alice.

ALICE is affronted but shuts up.

SAM CONT.

What do you mean “not people”
Gwen?

GWEN

In the cases, you know how there are
often things or places or people or
whatever who... aren't right? Who
seem to be causing all the awful
things to happen.

SAM

Like... the monsters?

GWEN

I guess? Well, it seems some of
them... I have to meet some of them.
To uh... pass them work.

ALICE

(incredulous)

Riiiiiiiiight.

Beat.

SAM

(dubious but supportive)

Okay... So like can you give us an
example?

GWEN

I... Yeah, I guess.

Tense Beat.

GWEN
(cont'd, working up to it)
So... Do- Do you remember from
TV... Mr. Bonzo?

Pregnant pause.
Sam suddenly bursts out laughing.

SAM
You absolute asshole, Gwen! You
absolute- You totally had me going
there! I was- ha! Christ, could you
imagine though? You're turn up to
the tv studio all all like
(sinister voice)
"I have a job for you, Mr. Bonzo"
(normal voice)
And he's all like
(Bonzo voice)
"BONZO BONZO BONZ-"

GWEN
(absolutely losing it)
SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT THE
FUCK UP!

Stunned silence.

GWEN
(cont'd)
You don't-

She exits.

Beat.

SAM
So... that was weird.

ALICE
Told you. Curiosity will get you
killed. Best try and ignore it.

ALICE starts putting her earbuds in.

SAM

**Alice, she's really messed up, you
can't just keep ignoring-**

ALICE

(loudly)

Can't hear you! Headphones!

SAM

For god's sake...

5. CELIA'S FLAT – NIGHT, CLEAR (BABY MONITOR)

GEORGIE is playing with JACK in his crib.

GEORGIE

(covering her face)

Where's Georgie?

(revealing her face)

There she is!

JACK makes delighted baby noises.

GEORGIE

(covering her face)

Oh no! Where's Georgie gone!

(revealing her face)

There she is!

More cooing from Jack.

GEORGIE

(covering her face)

**Oh no! Who keeps taking Georgie's
face?**

**The door opens and CELIA comes in, holding a carrier bag of
baby food jars.**

CELIA

Having fun?

GEORGIE

(revealing her face)

Always. He's a great kid.

CELIA

He's a hungry gremlin. I've been all over town to find somewhere in stock. Thanks for stopping over to watch him.

GEORGIE

Of course. It's not like it's a big journey and I've always got editing work that I can do just as easily from here as at home.

CELIA

Well, I really appreciate it.

GEORGIE

You know you can call me beforehand. You don't need to wait until you've already gone to let me know.

CELIA

It's... not always that simple. I'd run out baby food and-

GEORGIE

Celia, I'm saying you don't need to lie to me.

CELIA

I'm not!

GEORGIE

He woke up hungry after I got here so I grabbed one of the many, many food jars you have in the cupboard.

CELIA

Ah.

GEORGIE

Celia, I like you. And I love little Jack. Yes I do! He's so cute! So I'm not going to ask about all these "emergencies" that you have to run off to, or your "civil service" job that happens to last all night. But if I'm going to be helping out I need you to be straight with me on something.

CELIA

(resigned)

Okay.

GEORGIE

Are you spying on me for the government?

Beat.

CELIA

I promise I am not spying on you for the government.

GEORGIE

Illuminati? Masons? Well, no, you wouldn't be spying for the masons but you know what I mean. I can't risk getting silenced.

CELIA

Wait, are you serious?

GEORGIE

Look I know it's daft but I need you to promise.

CELIA

Fine. I promise I'm not spying on you for any government, secret society, or other organization.

GEORGIE

Or aliens.

CELIA

Or aliens. Good enough?

GEORGIE

(relieved)

Yeah. Yeah, I believe you. Ok. Thanks. Right, then, I should get going – see if I can catch some sleep.

Beat.

GEORGIE

(cont'd)

Speaking of... have you been out all night in your Pajamas?

CELIA

Yes. Yes, I have.

Beat.

GEORGIE

Okay.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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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 Lowri Ann Davies, soundscaping by Tessa Vroom, 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, Kazeem Tosin Amore as Teddy Vaughn, Sarah Lambie as Lena Kelley, with additional voices from Tim Fearon.

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.

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mail@rustyquill.com

Thanks for listening.

The Magnus Protocol 18 – Solo Work

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Memory (derelict) -/- compulsion

Incident Elements:

- Isolation
- Strong Language
- Arguments
- Trauma Triggers
- Mentions of: corpses, autopsy, starvation

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

This episode is dedicated to John C. Worsley, 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](#)

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Featuring (in order of appearance)

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Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Sarah Lambie as Lena Kelley

Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn Bouchard

Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker

Tim Fearon as Augustus

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