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The Magnus Protocol

**S1 Bonus Episode:
"What If: Everybody Listened to Colin"**

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[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER
Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus Protocol.
What If Episode 1 – What If They Listened to Colin?

[Music]

1. O.I.A.R. MAIN OFFICE – AFTERNOON, CLEAR (ALICE'S PHONE)

ALICE is working on her computer. It's a top-of-the-line model: fast, sleek and slick. By contrast **ALICE** is plodding through her work.

ALICE sighs, moans and stretches luxuriously.

LENA almost immediately starts to tap on her glass.

ALICE
(muttering)
Yeah, yeah...

ALICE returns to work. It's agonizingly monotonous.

Eventually, **COLIN** enters.

COLIN
Hey Alice, sorry to interrupt-

ALICE
(manic)
Oh thank god- *Colin!* Colin my main man, The techlord himself, how are you? It's great to see you!

COLIN
(dubious)
Uhuh.

ALICE

(standing)

We should go catch up- grab a coffee in the breakroom, share a few laughs, catch each other up on-

LENA taps on her glass again.

ALICE takes a theatrically deep and steadying breath and sits again, her manic energy evaporating.

ALICE CONT'D

literally anything than sitting alone at my desk forever.

COLIN

(chuckling)

Problems?

ALICE

Everything is working just like you said it would.

COLIN

Told you. And all it took was ripping the entire system out and rebuilding it from the ground up. No more mad German algorithms, just nice straightforward webcrawlers.

ALICE

Uhuh. I want you to change it back.

COLIN

Alice-

ALICE

Just hear me out all right? It's not like you've got anything better to do.

COLIN

I mean...

ALICE

**-and that's exactly the problem.
When you said you could "fix
everything" I kinda thought you
meant you would make it better for
everyone.**

COLIN

(incredulous)

It is better-

ALICE

**Is it though? Or am I sitting here
alone bored out of my goddamned
skull.**

COLIN

**Alice, you were bored before,
besides which this place was a mad
house. Nothing worked, no one
could get anything done-**

ALICE

(Wistful)

It was wonderful...

COLIN

**It was my own personal hell is what
it was. And now look around.
Everything works, it takes you half
as long to get through your case
load-**

ALICE

-so Lena gives me twice as much-

COLIN

**And now we're working days. We get
weekends now, bank holidays, we
get to see the sun!**

ALICE

I hate the sun.

COLIN

No you don't.

ALICE

**And I miss Freddy and Chester and
Norris and-**

Colin sighs.

COLIN

You said you liked the new system.

ALICE

And I did. Until it got everyone fired.

Beat.

ALICE CONT.

**How exactly did you think they were
going to pay for the overhaul with all
those extra bells and whistles you
said they needed?**

COLIN

**I dunno, Lena said she'd take care of
it...**

ALICE

**Pro tip Colin mate, when someone
says they're going to "take care of it"
you might want to check if they
mean it in a pinstripe suit, concrete
galoshes kind of way before going
ahead with it.**

Beat.

COLIN

You literally cheered when Gwen left.

ALICE

That was different. That was funny.

She sighs deeply.

ALICE CONT.

But what the hell do I do now? I'm a cat without a mouse, no one to bullshit with, no one to talk to... I'm trapped down here alone, the last years of my youth leaking out through every tap of my desperately ergonomic keyboard.

She taps mournfully at the keys. The computer gives a beautiful soothing chirrup of approval in response.

ALICE CONT.

Disgusting...

COLIN

Not my fault you had the best KPIs. Anyway, I might have something here to cheer you up.

ALICE

Oh yeah?

COLIN

**(pulling out from his bag)
New Company phone. Lena said you've been having issues with your old one.**

ALICE

Yeah, it had this weird bug where it got thrown out of a window.

COLIN

Well she says she needs you "on call" so...

ALICE
Don't do this to me Colin.

He hands her the new phone.

COLIN
It's got a really janky AI assistant...
Maybe that'll fill the void?

Beat.

ALICE
Well it's a start I suppose...

ALICE turns her phone off.

2. The Pub Int.– Afternoon, clear (SAM's Phone)

The Pub is crowded and louder than is comfortable. SAM pushes his way through to get to Gwen.

SAM
Watch your backs!

He sits and hands Gwen her drink.

SAM CONT.
They're out of Sherry so I got you a
G and T.

GWEN
Thank you, I guess.

SAM
Next one's on you. It's funny, I used
to wonder how this place could
afford to stay open.

GWEN

It's almost like pubs make more money at six PM on a Tuesday than five AM on a Sunday.

SAM

Right? You know I never thought I'd say this but I think I miss working nights. I'd forgotten how the Tube is during rush hour.

GWEN

Traffic's the same.

SAM

Makes sense.

They both drink. It's clear they have absolutely nothing to talk about.

SAM

So... what have you been up to?

GWEN

Went home to visit family.

SAM

Sounds nice.

GWEN

It wasn't. How about you?

SAM

Er no, I am staying as far away from mum and dad as I can until I've got better news. I've been applying for jobs but for now it's beep beep.

GWEN

Beep beep?
(realizing)
Ah.

SAM

Sainsburys. And even that was a struggle.

GWEN

Sounds... interesting.

SAM

Does it?

GWEN

Not really no.

They both drink. It's amazing how silent they can be in such a noisy place.

GWEN

Are you still investigating that university?

SAM

Hm? Oh the Magnus Institute? Ha, fat chance, this is the first time off I've had off in two weeks. No, it turns out creepy mysteries are a bourgeois luxury.

GWEN

Careful, you're starting to sound like Alice.

They both hesitate.

SAM

Have you heard anything from-

GWEN

(icy)

No.

SAM

Gwen, it's not her fault...

Another pause.

SAM CONT.

So...

TEDDY noisily approaches them.

TEDDY

Coming through, coming through!

SAM

(aside)

Oh thank Christ...

TEDDY

Heeeey there you both are! And you got a table, nice!

GWEN

I got here early. I had time to kill.

TEDDY

(sitting)

I hear that! Well, let's see if we can do something about that.

SAM

Yeah, so don't get me wrong Teddy I appreciate the invite but like, what's this about?

GWEN

I'm somewhat curious myself.

TEDDY

Ah right, straight to it then. Ahem. I've got you both a job.

GWEN

Excuse me?

TEDDY

Well, almost. Provisionally at least. Basically, the people I'm working for heard that there are more ex-O.I.A.R. staff looking for a gig and they are just so happy with me they want to see if either of you are interested. Congrats, you've both been head-hunted.

SAM

Huh. Okay, so like- what do they-

GWEN

Why?

Beat.

TEDDY

Sorry?

GWEN

The O.I.A.R. was hardly a dynamic work environment and no offence Sam but the ink was still wet on your probation when they kicked you out.

SAM

Okay, some offence but whatever.

GWEN

My point is, why on earth would they want to headhunt both of us?

TEDDY

I mean there's a certain amount of overlap and you can say this for the O.I.A.R. for all its faults it was "specialist." I suppose you could call it resource allocation.

GWEN

Hm.

SAM

Not my first choice but I could definitely be convinced. So like, do they want to meet or-

TEDDY

Yep.

SAM

Okay cool, I should be able to get some time off booked next week if-

TEDDY

Now.

SAM

What?

TEDDY

I told you they were keen. That's why I asked you here in person. If you're interested, I can get you signed up right now.

SAM

Uh, Okay. I am available I guess...

ALICE enters unobserved in the background.

ALICE

(distant)

I'll try and grab us a table!

GWEN

(not noticing)

No.

SAM

No?

GWEN

(preparing to leave)

Oh I think you should definitely take this opportunity Sam but I think I'm going to have to be a bit more... discerning this time round. No offence.

SAM

Again, kind of offended but whatever.

TEDDY

If you're sure...

GWEN

I very much am. Working for the O.I.A.R. was a... phase.

(hint of sadness)

I've been talking with my father and- well- Anyway, if you'll both excuse me I have a car waiting-

ALICE

(to crowd)

Watch your backs, hot stuff coming through!

(noticing the gang).

Oh. Er... Hi.

GWEN

(icy)

Ms. Dyer. Surprised to see you here at this time.

ALICE

Oh yeah, we're on days now so y'know...

GWEN

Of course you are. If you'll excuse me.

SAM
See you Gwen.

TEDDY
Yeah, bye!

GWEN exits as aloof as she can manage in a dense London drinking crowd.

ALICE
Hey Sam, Teddy.

TEDDY
Hey Alice!

SAM
Hey.

Beat.

TEDDY
So yeah, tell you what then Sam, why don't I go call them and let them know you're coming and you can follow after you've had a chance to er... catch up?

SAM
Sure.

TEDDY
Catch you later Alice yeah?

ALICE
Sure, look after yourself.

TEDDY
Always do!

TEDDY exits through the dense crowd.

ALICE
So... you haven't drowned.

SAM

What?

ALICE

My new therapist tells me I need to think more positively. I notice you haven't been pulled flayed by an industrial shredder either.

SAM

(smiling)

Yeah no, I'm fine. You?

ALICE

Same old, enforcing the evil will of a self-interested government one taxpayer-funded paycheck at a time.

SAM

Cool.

Beat. Alice is clearly uncomfortable and works herself up to:

ALICE

Listen Sam-

SAM

You don't need to apologise.

ALICE

No really I-

SAM

It's fine, honestly. You couldn't have known.

ALICE

None of us did. I mean Lena was literally interviewing another newbie the day before!

SAM

I get it. It just... sucked y'know?

ALICE

I do.

Beat.

ALICE CONT.

**It was good to see you again.
Would've been nice if it had lasted.**

SAM

**Yeah well, unfortunately this is
clearly a pretty bleak timeline.**

He drinks.

ALICE

**You're forgetting about the one
where Colin went mental and built an
army of robots to torment us in his
cyberpunk sex dungeon.**

SAM

**Eh, at least it wasn't boring.
Speaking of...**

COLIN enters.

COLIN

**You got a table? Nice one! Oh hey,
uh...**

SAM

(coolly)

Sam.

COLIN

(guiltily)

Sam, right yeah. How you doing?

SAM

**I was actually just leaving. I've got an
interview.**

COLIN

Oh great!

SAM

Assuming it lasts longer than the last one...

COLIN

(guiltily)

Hah... yeah...

ALICE

(joking)

Let me know if they need anyone to turn up and make the corporate culture impossibly toxic. I'd be wanting six figures and use of the corporate jet of course.

SAM

(standing)

Of course. Have a good one guys. Say hi to Chester for me.

ALICE

Hah, will do.

SAM exits taking the phone with him as **COLIN** sits.

Growing distant:

COLIN

I doubt he could've hacked it anyway.

ALICE

I'll hack you in a minute...

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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Thanks for listening.**

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The Magnus Protocol - What If #1

We imagine a world in which everyone listened to Colin...

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Created by Jonathan Sims and [Alexander J Newall](#)

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Hamilton**

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Featuring (in order of appearance)

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Colin Becher

Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn Bouchard

Kazeem Tosin Amore as Teddy Vaughn

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