

**The Listening Club TTRPG
Episode 3**

JONATHAN SIMS:

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining us for this third episode of the Magnus Archives tabletop Role playing game, the Listening Club. I am Jonathan Sims, he/him your most humble GM. And with me I have Anusia.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Hello. I'm Anusia pronouns she/her and I am playing Margot.

JONATHAN SIMS:

And I have Ian.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Hello. It's Ian. Ian Hayles. He/him. I'm playing Alphonse Platt.

JONATHAN SIMS:

I have Lowri.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Hello, it's Lowri. She/her. I'm playing Elodie Jones.

JONATHAN SIMS:

And I have Pip.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Hello. I am Pip he/him. And I'll be playing Barry Knapp. Just good to say <laugh>.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

It is

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Wonderful.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Does anyone want to give us a quick rundown of where we are in the old story?

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

The listening club gathered together to listen to the 100th episode of the Armitage Library. It's very exciting. We all sat in the cafe, had a listen. Was it Mr. Clot? Was his name the The giant? Yeah, the giant hairy-
<laugh>

JONATHAN SIMS:

That's the was important. Yeah. <laugh>.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

-bloody drains Monster was finally defeated seemingly in this episode and we were comparing notes and chatting about it and seeing whether we thought he's really the big bad, et cetera. But one of our members, June, who actually brought us all together and is a great enthusiast, didn't show up and there was no notice whatsoever. It's very, very unusual. And then we got an email through from June saying that we should come immediately because urgent things were happening. We got to June's place, it was on the second floor, but we tried to buzz and there was no answer. So we buzzed a very rude neighbor who did let us in when we said we had a package. We got up to June's door. Margot tried to lockpick a door that was already open because no one thought to test whether the door was already open. But either way we got into June's flat. It seemed really deserted, really quiet. There were several rooms for us to explore.

JONATHAN SIMS:

This maybe more of an in depth retrospective, but look, let keep going.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

I can stop! I can stop-

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Made a cup of tea.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

This is why I picked the yapping based archetype.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Let's cut and go back. So you'd all explored a lot of rooms and you'd found some interesting stuff indicating that, I don't know, maybe something weird was going on with moldy pencil, the production company behind the Armitage Library. Ian, what's Alphonse doing? Remind me?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

He's just put the headphones on. There's some talking. It's definitely not something weird and uh, occult happening down the end of those headphones. Sure, everything's going to be

JONATHAN SIMS:

Fine. So there were some sinister mini discs and they have successfully unscrambled one and Alphonse is having a listen. It is a small raspy voice speaking very low.

My name is <unintelligable>, this is how I died. The voice starts to tell a story and at first it's a pretty gruesome story about getting some sort of fungus that infected and eventually consumed them. Pretty ghoulish. Pretty horrible. And one that you actually recognize from episode 51 of the Armitage Library. But it wasn't told like this. The wording is ever so slightly different. And it wasn't told as a first person narrative, it was redone as a police report in the podcast. But the voice is, it doesn't sound entirely natural. It's caught with a sort of horrible clarity that only a mini disc can really capture <laugh>. So I'm gonna give you three points of stress, Ian.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Mm.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Because it's pretty horrible to listen to. If you take four points of stress, you start to go down in damage, you start, you are currently hail

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

And hearty.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yeah. You become impaired and then incapacitated and then di. So right now you're still hail but you're quite stressed 'cause that is weird to listen to. Also, I just wanna take a brief moment, just a brief aside to roast Ian. 'cause in the break between these episodes he went away and he has brought his own collection of mini discs.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Yeah, there's A little pod. A little older for them all. <laugh>.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

That's beautiful.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Younger listeners might not understand how absurd this is, but those of us who lived through the early two thousands, it's very fun.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

They are a very good storage device. I've got albums on there that I haven't got anywhere else. Thank you very much <laugh>. Some of my first audio editing was on these things. I have the Wiggins Pier Described Experience, that's that one there. That is it. There is the described audio tour

JONATHAN SIMS:

I know, I believe you.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Thank you. Unedited <laugh>. Boom. How dare you.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Wow. I'm sorry. I think we just became a real life listening club And we must now listen to Ian's mini disc collection.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Role Playing the game canceled. We are now going through Ian's mini discs.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yeah, <laugh>. This is what Elodie is saying as Alphonse is listening - You know MiniDisc, they're actually very underrated. Like that's one of the things that drew me to the podcast. Like it's quite realistic that you would want to store things on them. Very underrated storage system.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Margot's just looking at her when she's saying this

JONATHAN SIMS:

Alphonse is eyes staring blankly into space sort of Thousand yards stare

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Alfonse. Are you okay?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

So he snatches the headphones off his head and he's like, this is weird. 'cause that's not, it's the right story. It's the wrong way.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Are is ears bleeding?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

No.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Cool.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Elodie's gonna pull the headphone jack out of the whatever it's playing from so that it plays out loud that we can all hear it.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Okay. Everyone except Alphons take two Stress.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Oh sorry <laugh>.

JONATHAN SIMS:

It's not quite as intimate, you know as with the headphones,

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

You really want to be listening to it on headphones, you know you really need that directional audio kind of situation. Yeah, yeah, Yeah.

JONATHAN SIMS:

But it's still pretty weird and spooky

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Do these two count as the first three points of stress that I ignore completely?

JONATHAN SIMS:

They do indeed.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

This is uh, which episode number?

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yeah, episode 51.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Yeah with the fungus thing.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

But that was a police report. Wait, so is this like bonus content? Oh my god. Has she been finding like bonus content behind the scenes stuff?

Are the mini discs labeled?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Oh, what a good question. Yes. This one just has 5-1 on them. You will notice the 51 is not written in June's handwriting.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Where does she get them from?

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Alphonse. You said that she got a letter right?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Yeah. Yeah there's envelope here. Does it have like indentations that if it had like a mini disk in it?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yeah, the size of the envelope. You reckon you could fit somewhere between one and three mini disks in there? 'cause they're very compact.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

So this envelope's got AGN, the initials on the envelope?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Arthur G Neville.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Yeah, it's Arthur.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Yeah but He's not like a real guy though, is he?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Well he is but he isn't isn't he...

JONATHAN SIMS:

Online, It is claimed at least that Arthur G Neville is also the real name of the guy behind the podcast. He's got like a little bio on the website

but reading it, it could just as easily be a bio of the fictional character. So

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):
Little Lemony Snicket kind of vibe.

JONATHAN SIMS:
Yeah, yeah. Kind of lemony snicket-esque. You do not recognize the voice on this mini disc.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):
Has he been like stealing people's stories?
I'd like to listen to another mini disc, see what's on there. If it's also another episode.

JONATHAN SIMS:
Okay, I will say it is. Yes. This one is episode 12 in which a guy is slowly fed into a spectral threshing machine. Oh again, first person perspective from the guy being threshed.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):
Oh god, that's disgusting.

JONATHAN SIMS:
It's pretty graphic to be honest. Like at various points you feel like you can almost hear the gears grinding in the background. You take another point of stress and I'm gonna say you're gonna take one stress point for each of the mini discs you listen to. The voice is different though. It is a different voice to the one you heard before.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):
Can we stop doing this please? Thank you. Oh I feel quite sick to be honest with you.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):
Yeah. Okay. Sorry, I just wanted to check. You know you've gotta be thorough 'cause otherwise how will you know?

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Is There any way of telling? Which was the last one that she listened to?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Oh, probably 51. Because that was the one that was in the device that had the USB attachment. Elodie, You had to sort of take that one outta slot, another one into that particular player.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Are there any clues to be gleaned from which episodes these are?

JONATHAN SIMS:

The Armitage library is notorious for being a bit hit and miss.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Mm.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Some of the episodes are like really horrible and visceral. Good horror. Mm. And some of them almost feel a bit like they just don't quite have that bite to them. And certainly the ones on these mini discs, they're the ones you remember being like bit upsetting, a bit real at times.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yeah. Above the table I am asking is there a clue that I can have? Can I roll for something because I've got spreadsheets about these loads of cross-referencing.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Mm-hmm <affirmative> I'll give you an intellect role. Do you have a skill that would lower it?

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

I mean I've got an edge one in intellect. I've got decipher as my special ability skill, forensics, researching.

JONATHAN SIMS:

I'll give you decipher. It costs one of your intellect points to use decipher. But uh, I'll let you use it.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Oh great. I see. And what was the number?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Just need a six

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

13 anyway.

JONATHAN SIMS:

13. Okay. The ways you keep track on it, you have a little color code of like green which is like pretty chill. Nothing really there.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yeah.

JONATHAN SIMS:

And red is a properly grim sort of episode. The 15 mini discs here represent maybe a third to a quarter of the red ones.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Mm.

JONATHAN SIMS:

The red ones are also notable that a lot of them seem slightly less connected to the overarching metaplot. They seem separate somehow going through a laptop. Now that you are familiar with the extraction process, you can sort of trace to where it's not quite a hidden folder but it's deep in the sub folders of her audio editing software. There is a folder which has what looks like the 15 audio files from these mini discs and a small text document. It is labeled MPP.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Who is looking through the laptop?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Margot's been looking through the laptop so far. Anyone else can like, you know, she's very small. You can just push her away.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

<laugh>, how dare you. I'd like to click on the text document if no one's got any objections.

JONATHAN SIMS:

It's just a little note. Moldy pencil productions and an address that is not the address that is listed officially.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Aha.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Leaning over on with um, Elodie and like all of Elodie's research with the binders and the, and the episodes and everything that we've sort of found.

So do you think, is it that the good episodes are real? Like we all listen to the show and it's Yeah, it's pretty grim but like what we just listened to felt...Real

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Proper grim.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Is it that the good ones are these stories on the, on the discs.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Sorry Barry can you call them the red ones? Not the good ones. 'cause I really don't feel comfortable ranking them like that.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

No, no you're right. You're Elodie, I'm sorry.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

But you're right they are. They're the red ones, right? They're the red episodes.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

When you say real do you mean like it's happened?

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

I dunno. We'll find out? 'cause if that's their address ...

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Hundred percent let's go. I've just looked up the train times and if we leave now we can get a train Liverpool in 20 minutes.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Just before we go though, have we seen her keys?

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yes. They're in a bowl next to the door

JONATHAN SIMS:

Smash. Cut to the off peak train to Liverpool.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

I use my Rail Card.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

I have brought train wine.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Lovely, smash cut again to outside. It is actually the building that is on the publicity photos for Moldy Pencil. It's just not at the address that is given. It's down at Backstreet in Toxteth in it was once a warehouse but it's now been converted into multi-level office space. It looks significantly grimer than it does in all the publicity photos and those. It's always sort of sunlit and you know, whimsical and cool and creative. This just looks kind of run down and a bit grimy.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

There's a reason the rent would be cheap here, maybe

JONATHAN SIMS:

<laugh>. Mm-hmm <affirmative> And it is coming on towards evening. So the sun is starting to get lower in the sky.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Cut back to us, the intrepid heroes that that we are.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Well the intrepid people

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

<laugh>, you come in on Elodie finishing a phone call, which is her just leaving a voice note for her sister being like, Hey Faye. Um, yeah. Going to this weird looking place, you know, you know the podcast. I love that. I always tell you about that you never listened to me about, but anyway you really should listen 'cause it's very, very good. But anyway, I'll show you the spreadsheets again. Uh, when I see you next week. <laugh>. Um, yeah, I just wanted to let you know if that's where we are. This is the address. Bye. I love you <laugh>. So that she has left some record of someone where they're going

JONATHAN SIMS:

<laugh>. Yep, yep, yep, yep.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

And has also tried to call June several times and I assume she hasn't answered

JONATHAN SIMS:

Just no answer. Yeah.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Yeah.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

What's the kind of building in terms of security?

JONATHAN SIMS:

The ground floor has a glass front entrance you can't easily see inside. It's a little bit mildewy, one of those rolling garage doors next to it. And then there are two levels above that you can't easily see into from the ground.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Are there any buzzers or anything like that on the,

JONATHAN SIMS:

There's a buzzer. It's got the little sort of moldy pencil logo. Just above it though. It looks quite old. It looks quite sun faded.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

It doesn't look like there are any other doors. Fire exits. Any other kind of entry or exit from the building?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Not on this side of the street. You could try and circle around, see if there's anything at the back.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

I think I'd have a quick circuit of the building as much as I can.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Doing a quick circuit. It looks like there is a back alley but it is for the use of the various businesses around here. So it does have a gate which you would need to circumvent somehow to get into the back alley.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Does it look like there's anyone there?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Not obviously, no.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Should we just press the button?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Do you try the door before or after you press the button?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Almost at the same time.

<laugh>.

JONATHAN SIMS:

The buzzer goes, there is no answer but the door is unlocked.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Oh Great.

JONATHAN SIMS:

There is a little front desk but there's no one sitting behind it. It looks a little bit dusty. Not like no one's been here for years, but like it's not being cleaned recently. And there is a, a staircase leading upwards.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Is there on the desk, any kind of pad or something where people sign in and outta the building.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Ooh, good call.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yes, there's one of those sort of paper sign in books.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Gonna have a look at that.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yes, there are about 12 names that all seem to have signed in and out several times over the last few days though. Looking at it again, you do notice that they are all in the same handwriting.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

I would've grabbed some of the mini discs. Is it the same handwriting as the handwriting on the mini desks?

JONATHAN SIMS:

It is.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Oh, big brain <laugh>.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Is there anything odd about these names? Do we recognize them? Are they characters or are they

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Are They're like names of the editors?

JONATHAN SIMS:

If you compare them to the sort of the list of staff on the MPP websites.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Mm-hmm <affirmative>.

JONATHAN SIMS:

They are all staff members of Moldy pencil.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Hmm. Can I use my tracking skill to try and work out if June is here? <laugh>? I don't know how

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

If it's dusty in here, are we seeing, is there evidence in said dust?

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Yeah. Footprints.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Do you know what? Yeah, I have a role. Roll your tracking. I'd say you need a 12.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

That's one of my skills. And I have an edge in intellect.

JONATHAN SIMS:

It would be 15. It's 12. With your tracking, do you wanna spend two points to lower it? to a 9?

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Absolutely. A hundred percent.

Really didn't need to do that. That's a 19 <laugh>.

JONATHAN SIMS:

A 19. Okay. You do notice that there was a slight scuffing on the carpet inside the door as though something heavy was being dragged.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

No.

JONATHAN SIMS:

And just one or two very small. You wouldn't have noticed unless you were actually looking spots of blood that dripped.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

I will quietly draw everyone's attention to that.

Should we call the police <laugh>?

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Where's it heading? Towards the stairs or the lift or

JONATHAN SIMS:

Up the stairs. Looking at it. You are not sure the lift is working.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Margot will probably head for the stairs.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Okay.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Yeah, I'll go after it. Like subtly slash un subtly. Try and get in front of you.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

I'm a three at a time stare type person. Those elegant limbs.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Oh yes.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Oh no, I'm, I'm too slow.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

<laugh> Elodie's at the back. Trying to call the police.

JONATHAN SIMS:

You don't seem to have any signal in here.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Shit.

JONATHAN SIMS:

At the upper level there is a glass door that leads into what looks like an office space. It actually looks like the office space. You recognize from the various publicity pictures, there are figures sat at the various desks but through the door you can't make out any details.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Are they moving or are they still,

JONATHAN SIMS:

It's hard to say. They seem to be sat at desks whether they're completely still or just sat at a desk. You're not sure

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Right. Well look, June's obviously her or in tr-, I dunno what the fuck's going on here. I'm gonna push the door open and start being like, excuse me.

JONATHAN SIMS:

You go up to the nearest person behind the desk.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

I'm very much going for the practiced the hand of like, excuse me mate, I Think you're gonna have to leave

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

<laugh>.

JONATHAN SIMS:

You place your hand firmly on the shoulder and the plastic head of a mannequin falls off the shoulders.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Ah.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

What?

JONATHAN SIMS:

They all seem to be just mannequins sat at desks.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Ah, right. They're not people. Are they blank faced?

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yeah. No. No faces. No faces. Wigs but no faces.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Oh No.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

You said before that you didn't see much movement, which, which implies some. Is there any movement from these mannequins?

JONATHAN SIMS:

No. No. I was, I was just hedging.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Oh good.

JONATHAN SIMS:

I was just hedging.

There is quite a pungent smell though.

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Oh geez.

JONATHAN SIMS:

A nasty, earthy, decaying smell. And you notice that on some of the tables appear to be heads like mostly skeletal, like old at first you think they're props, but the smell is pretty potent.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Oh.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Each of which seems to have one side of its head around the air. Caved in.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

Right. Let's go, let's go, let's go. Now we're calling police. We should not have come here.

Elodie's. Absolutely. Rounding everyone up to try and get them to go.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Unfortunately, I'm afraid there is a <buzz> as the door behind you remotely locks. And I'm probably going to uh, call this episode there.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

No let us out. Dammit. Why didn't you take lockpicking <laugh>

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

so many doors!

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

We haven't met a single person. God damnit.

IAN HAYLES (ALPHONSE):

Oh dear.

JONATHAN SIMS:

There's the barista, who's manager , ike has a thing for Barry...

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

I thought we'd be in social situations.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

Should have taken your opportunity to pickpocket Those baristas.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Yea, Really should have

ANUSIA BATTERSBY (MARGOT):

Pickpocket the mannequins. See if they've got anything on them.

JONATHAN SIMS:

I mean, who knows. Who knows? Alright, thank you very much for joining us for this penultimate episode of The Listening Club. Join us next week to find out exactly how horribly they're all going to die.

PIP GLADWIN (BARRY):

What? I think we're gonna be fine.

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

I've got a sister. She knows where we are.

JONATHAN SIMS:

**Yeah, no, no. Obviously, obviously not necessarily. Not necessarily
<laugh>. Yes, necessarily.**

LOWRI ANN DAVIES (ELODIE):

No.

JONATHAN SIMS:

Bye.

ANNOUNCER:

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