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## **The Magnus Protocol**

### **Episode 43 "Sink or Swim"**

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**Edited with additional materials by Alexander J Newall &  
Jonathan Sims**

**7/14/25**

**[Intro Theme]**

**ANNOUNCER**

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus  
Protocol.  
Episode Forty-Three – Sink or Swim**

**[Music]**

**1. ALTER WOLF TÄTOWIERUNG (ALICE'S PHONE), EXT.,  
DAY, RAINING**

**ALICE** stares into the window of the shop and sighs. Behind her,  
**HEINRICH UNHEIMLICH** shifts uncomfortably.

**ALICE**

**(mispronouncing)**

**Alter Wolf Tartoweeurung...**

**HEINRICH**

**It means "Old Wolf".**

**ALICE**

**Wanna get a tattoo?**

**HEINRICH**

**This skin was hard to craft. I do not  
wish to tarnish it.**

**ALICE**

**Hang on, are you telling me-  
Actually, nope, forget I asked. Okay,  
so, why do we think the address you  
found connected to the Friedrich  
programmer is a tattoo parlor?**

**Beat.**

**ALICE CONT.**

**Heinrich?**

**HEINRICH**  
(irritated)  
**Was?**

**ALICE**  
(nervous)  
**What's wrong?**

**HEINRICH**  
(sighing, reluctant)  
**You are not Colin.**

**ALICE**  
**Uh yeah. So...?**

**HEINRICH**  
(frustrated)  
**This was where I...**

**Beat.**

**ALICE**  
(suspicious)  
**Where you what?**

**HEINRICH**  
**I was... Offended, when your Colin called me safe. After I found this location I intended to lead him down that alley and...**

**ALICE**  
**Kill him?**

**HEINRICH**  
**Nein. but I would make him regret the word 'safe'.**

**ALICE**  
(scared)  
**And now?**

**HEINRICH**

Now he is dead. He is dead and you are here and you do not call me safe so... I just wish he was not dead.

**ALICE**

Me too.

**HEINRICH**

So ist es halt.

Beat. Eventually.

**ALICE**

So now what?

**HEINRICH**

Now we ignore the scary alley and instead chase your programmer. So, was there much in the window to intrigue?

**ALICE**

Maybe?

She looks again.

**ALICE**

(cont.)

There's some old flashes out front and-

**HEINRICH**

I do not understand how you use this word: "flashes"

**ALICE**

Hmmm? Oh you see the pictures pinned out front, like samples? Those are flashes.

**HEINRICH**

I understand.

**ALICE**

**And a lot of them include alchemical symbols. Mercury... Sulphur, copper...**

**HEINRICH**

**You appreciate their meaning?**

**ALICE**

**Not as much as Celia or Sa- I'm not an expert. But they were all over Colin's journals. How long has this place been here?**

**HEINRICH**

**At least since the Wall came down but there are few records.**

**ALICE**

**So it's possible he came here?**

**HEINRICH**

**Yes, if your 'KS' programmer was interested in both tattoos and alchemy.**

**ALICE**

**Okay. Then I guess we go inside and talk to the owners.**

**HEINRICH**

**I am assuming you mean that I will speak to the owners since you cannot actually speak German.**

**ALICE**

**I'm getting better-**

**HEINRICH**

**No, you are not.**

## **2. ALTER WOLF TÄTOWIERUNG, INT. (ALICE'S PHONE), DAY, RAINING**

**HEINRICH** is finishing a conversation with an elderly **TATTOO ARTIST** whilst he finishes a tattoo.

**TATTOO ARTIST**  
Danach... weiß ich nicht.

**HEINRICH**  
Bist du sicher?

**TATTOO ARTIST**  
(irritated)  
Ja, ja, ja. Das ist alles?

**HEINRICH**  
Ja danke.

**TATTOO ARTIST**  
Bitte.

**HEINRICH** returns to **ALICE**.

**HEINRICH**  
Your programmer's name is Klaus  
Schweitzer.

**ALICE**  
Is he sure?

**HEINRICH**  
Yes. He has owned this place for  
forty years, very proud of his  
memory.

**ALICE**  
So what happened?

**HEINRICH**  
Schweitzer was a regular in the 80s.  
He collected photographs of rare  
tattoos, especially those of a man

named Oscar Jarrett. These inspired the tattoos you see in the window. Schweitzer even rented a room upstairs for a few months and filled it with computer equipment.

**ALICE**

Jackpot! Is any of it still there?

**HEINRICH**

No it was taken along with him.

**ALICE**

What do you mean?

**HEINRICH**

I mean that Klaus Schweitzer and all his computer equipment were taken from here by the Stasi.

### **3. OIAR OFFICE (COMPUTER), INT., NIGHT, CLEAR**

**CELIA** is on the phone to Alice.

**CELIA**

(on phone)

Who the heck is Oscar Jarret?

She listens.

**CELIA**

(cont. on phone)

Okay, well its better than nothing.

She listens.

**CELIA CONT.**

(cont. slowly, on phone)

I said it's better than nothing!

**She listens.**

**CELIA**  
(cont. on phone)  
**What?**

**She listens.**

**CELIA**  
(cont. on phone)  
**Of course, I'm going to let her know.**

**She listens.**

**CELIA**  
(cont. on phone)  
**Because she's worried about you.**

**She listens.**

**CELIA**  
(cont. on phone)  
**Ok, well, I'm not going to say that.**

**She listens.**

**CELIA**  
(cont. on phone)  
**Sorry, what? I can't hear you the  
signals- Alice? Alice?**

**The call drops. CELIA breathes a big sigh.**

**Eventually she returns to her work triggering:**

#### **4. CYBERSPACE**

**NORRIS**  
**27-02-2010**

**Collection: Service de l'Informatique**



**et des Traces Technologiques (SITT)**

**Article:**

**Transcription PDF de l'entretien avec  
un étudiant britannique**

**Cas: 2731/13**

**Numéro de série: 63159932**

**Collectionneur: David Collins  
(SOCO-98549)**

**Acheminement vers: England, North-  
West Long-Term Evidence Storage**

**Contenu du dossier:**

**R:**

**-just, uh, getting my notes together.  
OK, we are set!**

**This is Prim Rosewell. It is 21st  
February, 2010, interview with  
Monique Bakayoko, in her Paris  
apartment.**

**Um, thank you so much for having  
me, Ms. Bakayoko.**

**B:**

**That's fine.**

**R:**

**So, let's get to it, from a childhood in  
Abidjan to sold-out performances in  
La Scala, Sydney and Vienna, Ms  
Bakayoko could, um... ...should  
surely be ranked as one of the most**

**extraordinary contemporary  
sopranos and opera stars, often  
compared to the great Maria Callas-**

**B:**

**I wonder.**

**(Scornfully)**

**Can you... can you even begin to  
comprehend, Ms Rosewell, how  
endlessly and persistently tiresome  
it is to sit and listen to every  
journalist begin by listing out your  
life's work, and then end with, "*oh,  
and on her best day, she might even  
have been as good as Maria Callas?*"**

**R:**

**Oh, no I didn't mean-**

**B:**

**I used to speak to real journalists,  
real opera historians. Now I talk to  
children who don't do their research  
and who want nothing more than a  
quick soundbite.**

**A long silence.**

**R:**

**All right. Well, for contemporary  
comparisons I'd say the only  
sufficient ones are... Netrebko,  
obviously, Bonney, Warsame, and  
maybe Carrington, on a good day.**

**B:**

**How old are you?**

**R:**  
**25.**

**B:**  
**And you really do love opera? It's an uncommon thing, for someone your age.**

**R:**  
**When I was nine, my dad took me to see Medea at the ENO. Your Medea.**

**B:**  
**Ah, I remember that one.**

**R:**  
**My mother thought I'd be bored senseless. But... I'll never forget it. The temple going up in flames, Medea with her knife, covered in her sons' blood.**

**B:**  
**(reminiscing)**  
**We had far too little time between exits and entrances, so they had a bucket of corn starch and red dye to toss over me before I stumbled back onstage. Sopranos are supposed to be the worst divas, but you don't see what we have to endure.**

**R:**  
**(Impassioned)**  
**It was astonishing. The madness, the fury, I could hear the truth in your voice, I believed every word.**

**Beat**

**B:**  
(Teasing)  
Ah but was I as good as Callas?

**Beat.**

**B:**  
(cont.)  
Prim, wasn't it? What do you want to ask me, Prim?

**R:**  
Why did you stop?

**B:**  
Ah. And now we're back to the same old dirge. How many times do you think I have heard that question?

**R:**  
But you never answered it! July 1998. Your voice was the best it had ever been, you were at the height of your career-

**B:**  
The accident is a matter of public record. We were sailing down the Adriatic Coast. There was a storm and the yacht capsized halfway between Bari and Brindisi.

**R:**  
No.

**B:**  
No?

**R:**

Your injuries were minor, and you were in good spirits. Then you suddenly cancelled your autumn season at La Scala in the middle of August. They lost six figures in refunded tickets, and you never even explained yourself. You just left.

**B:**

And the years passed, and soon enough I was forgotten.

**R:**

Not by me.

**Silence.**

**B:**

I can tell you what happened, but I doubt you will appreciate hearing it.

**R:**

Tell me.

**B:**

People tell me it is frightening.

**R:**

Please.

**Pause.**

**B:**

Do you know the meaning behind the term 'diva'?

**R:**

'One who died and became divine.'

**B:**  
Exactly so. Could you call me 'diva',  
Prim?

**R:**  
Yes... diva.

**B:**  
Good.

It was the accident.

I didn't care for yachting, really, but  
when a man is set on comparing the  
sparkle of your eyes to the Adriatic  
what can one do but accept?

Pietro and I sailed down the Italian  
coast one fine summer weekend and  
he poured me glass after glass of  
champagne without ever even  
loosing a knot.

We got to Bari and heard there was a  
storm coming and he was  
unconcerned: "we'll sail through it"  
he said "we've got dinner booked in  
Gallipoli and you don't want to miss  
it."

I remember saying I trusted him.  
I also remember when the waves  
grew choppy and the sky grew dark  
and he stared up at the sail... and I  
knew I'd been misled.

I remember when we went over,  
Pietro screaming my name and  
then... nothing.

**When I came to I was bobbing in my life jacket in the upturned yacht's cabin. The water was stained with curls of blood, my blood, and the water filled the room up to my neck.**

**I was panicking of course, breathing hard. There was a pocket of air, perhaps enough for me across the length of the cabin, but who could really say?**

**I could hear the storm lashing against the hull and Pietro was gone and even if I removed my life jacket and swam down and out of the cabin, I had nowhere to go but the water.**

**And so, I screamed, and I screamed. I pleaded for someone to come and find me. Over and over, but of course there was nobody to hear me.**

**Or... so I thought.**

**It was some time after the first hour, perhaps after the second that the yacht seemed to suddenly lurch back and forth, as though something had taken hold of it. For a moment I even held the foolish hope of a rescue boat.**

**But then it went still and then there was a movement in the dark water all around me, a sudden current. Then something brushed against my leg.**

**It was cold and soft, and it trailed along my calf for perhaps a full second before passing me by.**

**Then it came from the opposite direction, and this time as it passed me there was the same clamminess and then a sudden sharpness, as though I had been bitten, or scratched.**

**Then an absurd, horrible and stupid thought came upon me:  
“It’s a hand. A cold, grey hand with very long fingers, reaching up to me from below.”**

**As soon as I had that thought, terror flared in me and I lashed out with my foot as hard as I could, and that was when the thing in the water snatched at my ankle and dragged me downwards into the dark.**

**It was only for a moment, but for that moment, there was no cabin at all. Only a dark and endless sea filled with fleshy white shapes, hundreds of horrid little things winnowing up towards me from the void...**

**And then I broke the surface once more screaming and flailing amidst the swirling white currents and I knew this was the place where I would die.**



**R:**  
(hushed)  
What did you do, diva?

**B:**  
I sang. I don't remember what. Not opera, maybe lullabies, children's songs? Something you would sing to gentle a wild animal.

I sang until I was hoarse, and whilst I did the currents kept swirling but nothing grabbed me. So I kept singing, hour after hour like Scheherezade, singing to be spared...

When I woke up I heard the muffled whirr of the helicopter blades high above me. I was relieved of course, but right before the coastguard descended onto the yacht, I thought I heard something else: A chorus of pounding wet flesh against the sunken hull, over and over and over, rising and rising and then just as suddenly... silent. Something like beating wings or a thousand hands, clapping all at once then stilled. Then a long silence.

**R:**  
And that's why you stopped singing. That experience?

**B:**  
No.  
I was living alone, back in Milan, waiting for the new season to start.

**I'd already written my experience off as a bad dream, hysteria.**

**The doctors had told me I needed to preserve my voice, so no singing, no speaking. I'd been living in silence for weeks. Meanwhile the team at La Scala, were growing nervous about their big investment for the season lest she had lost her mind or worse, her voice.**

**So they summoned me there before two senior producers, sat stiffly with their arms crossed in the stalls and a kindly old pianist, and they asked me to sing.**

**The house lights went down. And suddenly I was swimming in that darkness again, alone in the open sea and I knew what I needed to sing for them.**

**But this time it was with strength, with passion and playfulness, and I knew that though my power had changed, it had not left me. I was filled with such joy... until I realized that the piano was not playing.**

**There was a high-pitched whine of building pressure, and the producers were writhing in their seats, helplessly choking and gurgling as frothy black water trailed out of their mouths and nostrils.**

**Then all at once, they were bursting open, their skin tearing along its**

**seems, their open eyes pressed from their sockets by sluicing water.**

**The pianist was the same, his throat bulging as a fresh torrent of sea-water spilled forth and then long grey fingers questing from inside the water forcing the jaw wider and wider from the inside before halting and then... beginning to applaud...**

**The bodies were whole again once the ambulances arrived. I was told they all had strokes though no-one had any explanation for how they happened simultaneously, nor for the brine which now stained the stalls and piano...**

**It was La Scala that decided to cancel the season and with it I faded into retirement.**

**The funny thing was though – I didn't mind.**

**Once you've found an audience that will tear itself through water and flesh just to applaud you, anything else seems so muted and small by comparison. No, no not small: Repulsive, an audience of dull, vapid faces hiding in the dark, patting their gout-ridden palms against each other in a mockery of appreciation. How could I ever perform for them again?**

**Silence.**

**B:**  
But we've got away from your question, Prim. "Why did you stop singing?" That was it, wasn't it?

**R:**  
(Hoarsely)  
Yes, diva.

**B:**  
I didn't. I just play to a different audience. One who gives their reviews only to me. And the mortician of course, when they are found.

**Beat.**

**B:**  
I wonder, would you be found, Prim?

**R:**  
I think I should go now, diva.

**Interviewer stands.**

**B:**  
Are you sure, Prim? You could stay... You could stay and listen to the truth in my voice once more, hear me sing it one last time...

**R:**  
(terrified, enraptured)  
Diva... Please....

**Data Corrupted.**

**Transcription Ends.**

**5. OIAR OFFICE (COMPUTER), INT., NIGHT, CLEAR**  
**CELIA** exhales.

**CELIA**  
Christ, I hate the wet ones.

The office door opens and Gwen hurries out.

**CELIA**  
(cont.)  
Oh, Gwen, I-

**GWEN**  
Sorry, Celia, I'm in a bit of a rush.

**CELIA**  
I got a call from Alice.

Gwen stops in spite of herself.

**GWEN**  
(cooly)  
And?

**CELIA**  
Sounds like she's making some progress nothing that can't wait till tomorrow night though.

**GWEN**  
I'm not in tomorrow. I have a meeting. Just email me a report and I'll read it en route.

**CELIA**  
A report?

**GWEN**

Yes, thank you. One page will be fine. You'll be ok on your own tomorrow, I trust?

**CELIA**

Well, I-

**GWEN**

Great, see you in couple of days.

She exits in a hurry.

Beat.

The office is very empty.

CELIA takes a deep breath then gets to work.

[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 Jon Ware and edited with additional materials by Jonathan Sims and 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, Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn

**Bouchard, Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley, with additional voices from Alexander J Newall. 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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Thanks for listening.**

## **The Magnus Protocol 43 – Sink or Swim**

**CAT1RB4153-27022010-11062024**

**idolatry (music) -/- compulsion (drowning)**

**Incident Elements:**

- **drowning**
- **mind control**

Transcripts available at <https://rustyquill.com/transcripts/the-magnus-protocol/>

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Executive Producers April Sumner, [Alexander J Newall](#),  
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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)

**Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer**

**Robert Vernon as Heinrich Unheimlich**

**Nils Schiffmann as Tattoo Artist**

**Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley**

**Alexander J Newall as Norris**

**Anusia Battersby as Gwen Bouchard**

**Dialogue Editor – Nico Vettese**

**Sound Designer – Meg McKellar**

**Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella**



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

**SFX from Soundly and Freesound: Anthousai, EpicWizard, kyles, blaukreuz as well as previously credited artists.**

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