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The Magnus Protocol

Episode 46 "Slipping"

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

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER
Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus
Protocol.
Episode Forty-Six – Slipping

[Music]

1. A BERLIN STREET (ALICE'S PHONE), EXT., DAY, RAINING
ALICE and HEINRICH stand staring at an empty lot. Traffic flows
nearby.

ALICE
Well. Shit.

HEINRICH
Klara did say there was nothing here.

ALICE
Yeah.

Beat.

HEINRICH
In a lot of the ways, you are already
lucky that so much of your
programmer's trail still existed.

ALICE
Yeah.

Beat.

HEINRICH
It has been almost forty years,
Liebchen¹.

¹ Sweetheart/Darling/Dear

ALICE

(snapping)

Can you not 'liebchen' me right now, Heinrich? I know this was overdue. I know that by rights the whole Berlin trip should have been a bust but that doesn't make me it any easier seeing my final lead turn out to be an empty patch of demolished scrubland.

pause.

ALICE CONT.

I'm sorry, Heinrich, I shouldn't take it out on you. You've been nothing but helpful.

HEINRICH

...Nothing?

ALICE

When you haven't been scaring me shitless.

HEINRICH

(mollified)

Danke².

Beat.

ALICE

It just... It feels like such an anti-climax, you know?

HEINRICH

In my long experience few things end in a glorious shower of blood and screams. Most things simply... fade away.

² Thank you

ALICE

Hmmm.

Pause.

HEINRICH

So what is next for Alice Dyer of the
O.I.A.R.

ALICE

Pffft. I guess I just go home and lie to
Gwen about my expenses. Unless
you're still thinking about killing me?

Beat.

ALICE

(cont.)

(suddenly nervous)

You're... not still thinking about
killing me, are you?

Pause.

HEINRICH savours the moment.

ALICE

Heinrich?

HEINRICH

No. But I thank you for that little
taste of fear.

ALICE

Asshole.

HEINRICH

Na klar.³

ALICE

I suppose I'd better call Celia, then.

³ Sure/fair/of course

HEINRICH

Yes, you should probably tell your superior about that man I killed, also.

ALICE

Oh god! I'd forgotten about Dane. Do you have any idea how much trouble I'm going to be in for that?

HEINRICH

Ich verstehe nur Bahnhof⁴.

ALICE

I'll take that as a no.

HEINRICH

Do not despair, Alice. I have been considering, and the trail of this man is perhaps not as ended as you believe.

ALICE

How do you figure that one?

HEINRICH

We have concluded that Klaus Schweitzer is no longer in Berlin.

ALICE

Right.

HEINRICH

And almost certainly has not been so for over thirty years.

ALICE

Are you going somewhere with this or just rubbing it in?

⁴ An idiom meaning 'I don't understand anything'/'I know nothing'

HEINRICH

Your organisation, it has a copy of his program, yes?

ALICE

Apparently. Or a version of it, at least, but-

HEINRICH

So his program came to you. Is it not very possible that perhaps he did as well?

ALICE

I mean... okay yeah sure but-

HEINRICH

Then perhaps your next investigations are to be closer to the home.

2. INT. OIAR OFFICE, NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

CELIA sits at her desk, working slowly and starting to nod off.

GWEN knocks on the window.

CELIA does not respond.

Beat.

GWEN enters from the Manager's office.

GWEN

(calling over)

Celia.

Celia is completely gone. **Gwen** strides over.

GWEN

(cont.)

Celia!

Celia jolts awake.

CELIA

Yes! Sorry, I'm- Hi, Gwen. How can I help?

GWEN

Remaining conscious would be a start.

CELIA

I know, I know, I just- I haven't been able to catch much sleep recently.

GWEN

We all have trouble sleeping, Celia but you don't let it interfere with the work.

CELIA

(growing irritated)

Did you need something?

GWEN

Did Alice say what day she would be back?

CELIA

No. Just that she was done there. She sounded pretty down about it. I'm guessing she didn't get many answers.

GWEN

She'll get over it. Answers don't always help, sometimes they just make things harder.

CELIA

Hm. Something on your mind?

Beat.

GWEN

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you got exactly what you wanted and somehow it just made everything worse?

CELIA

Yeah. Yeah I have.

Beat.

GWEN

It's awful, isn't it?

CELIA

(sad)

Yeah.

Pause.

GWEN

Anyway, I should let you get back to it. If you can stay awake.

CELIA

I'll manage.

GWEN

How about I manage and you sort the caseload?

CELIA

(unimpressed)

Sure.

GWEN

(exiting)

Let me know if Alice calls again.

Gwen leaves.

CELIA
(flat)
Will do.

Celia resentfully resumes her work. Eventually she triggers a case.

3. CYBERSPACE

CHESTER
Elric Capital, Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes

Saturday 13th January 2024

1. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 10:03AM by CEO

2. Certification of quorum.

Members present:
REDACTED, CEO;

REDACTED, CFO;

Geoffrey Malachi, Senior Vice President, Consulting;

Zach Francis Allan, Senior Vice President, Human and Labour Resources;

Aina Lake, International Consulting Representative.

Members attending remotely:

**Iris Lee, Senior Vice President,
recruiting;**

**Mark Mitchell, Communication
Specialist.**

Members absent: None.

3. Approval of Minutes

Zach Francis Allan motioned that the minutes of the 17th November 2023 meeting be accepted as amended. Iris Lee seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Project updates.

Aina Lake provided update on Zorrotrade winddown and liability. All participants in closed beta expected to be removed from balance sheet by Q2. Mr Malachi requested status of programmer who initially conceived and oversaw the app's expansion. Ms Lake confirmed all Zorrotrade operations had been successfully ceased and Elric liability reduced to zero. The programmer who had originally approached Elric for investment had succumbed to an early test run Q3 2023. REDACTED asked what, if any, assets had been recovered from Zorrotrade or whether it was a complete loss. Ms Lake answered that all non-hostile company assets and liabilities had been seized and/or

sold with a total return of 43 million USD. REDACTED commented that the sum was insignificant.

Iris Lee provided update on Booth development. Minimal changes in situation since previous board meeting. Mr Mitchell commented that it had been nearly two years from initial investment. REDACTED commented on the size of the funding amount and the lack of return. Ms Lee responded with criticism for the work ethic of engineers and began to read a list of “concerns and delays” from project leads Bailey and Chavez, but was unanimously refused the floor after initial two points.

Zach Frances Allan provided update on specialist investments, of which seven are active at the time of these minutes, down from nine at the end of Q3 2023. REDACTED requested reason for drop in number. Mr Allen explained that W Liebowitz, a.k.a. “Teeth” had been killed in an altercation in Glasgow shortly before Christmas. The investment management team had successfully limited Elric’s liability.

REDACTED asked what second loss was. Mr Allan reported that G Meers, a.k.a. “Inside Out”, had renounced further Elric Capital investment and sent a video message to Mr Allan asserting such. REDACTED demanded to view the message,

overruling Mr Allan's objections, and the video was shown.

Following a brief recess to allow members to clean up, the board meeting was moved to Room C, as janitorial staff were adamant it would take multiple hours to fully remove the smell.

Mark Mitchell motioned to pursue retaliatory action against G Meers. Aina Lake seconded. Motion defeated four votes to three.

5. Other Business

REDACTED reminded the meeting that Dr Augustine had requested to give an in-person presentation to the board and was waiting to provide it.

Mr Malachi requested reminder of Dr Augustine's position. Ms Lake provided overview of Dr Augustine's extractive grief service, for which an initial round of seed funding was provided in 2020, to limited success, and which ceased operation in Q2 2023.

Mr Malachi expressed surprise that the presentation had been agreed to, and was informed by REDACTED that the motion as to whether to allow it had been deferred to this meeting.

REDACTED motioned to allow Dr Augustine's presentation to

**commence. Aina Lake seconded.
Motion carried five votes to two.**

Following a brief recess to allow Dr Augustine to be informed that his presentation was to be permitted, the members moved to meeting room F, which was preset with appropriate A/V equipment.

Mark Mitchell objected upon Dr Augustine's arrival, observing that the specialist in question was not Dr Augustine at all. Ms Lake commented the specialist appeared to match Dr Augustine's description. Mr Mitchell highlighted digital artifice on his video call that make it clear Dr Augustine was not a mundane specialist, an observation agreed with by Ms. Lee, while REDACTED noted that Dr Augustine's skin did not appear to sit right upon the frame of the specialist in question.

The specialist claiming to be Dr Augustine attempted to calm the members, admitting to having only taken those parts of Dr Augustine necessary to gain admittance. Mr Malachi asked if Dr Augustine was still alive. The specialist replied he was not, but observed that this was a moot point as Dr Augustine had no extant formal relationship with Elric Capital at this time. REDACTED agreed and urged the other board members to give their time and attention to the specialist.

The specialist wearing parts of Dr Augustine introduced themselves, providing the name of Adam, though noted that over the past few years they had taken many names, including Robert Blanc, Michael Egan, Arthur Winstead, Alistair Brown and others. They claimed to be a creation of Dr Augustine as part of his experiments into grief redirection strategies.

Ms Lee professed ignorance as to the details of this investment. REDACTED informed her it was overseen by Richard Kent, who was forced to resign from the board in Q3 2022, following his death.

Mr Adam agreed to suspend the presentation while the minutes from previous meetings regarding investment in Dr Augustine's activities were located and read.

Once the minutes had been read, Ms Lee and Mr Malachi both expressed additional confidence in their knowledge of the situation.

Following this, the being calling himself Adam began to detail the process of his creation as he understood it. He professed to have little understanding of the processes, instead operating on an instinctive level to convert himself into a facsimile of the dead using available cadaverous elements.

REDACTED queried whether this was the reason Mr Adam killed Dr Augustine. Mr Adam explained the doctor was a first attempt to extract the necessary components while alive, but this process had proven sufficiently traumatic that killing Dr Augustine had been the only sensible course of action.

REDACTED agreed that this was understandable and noted for Mr Allan to investigate the specifics of Dr. Augustine's estate and follow up with any appropriate condolences for surviving family.

Ms. Lake queried Mr Adam's motivation in requesting a meeting with the board. Mr Adam answered that since they had been created with funding from Elric Capital, it logically followed that the board would have a purpose in mind, now that Dr Augustine was dead.

REDACTED asked what Dr Augustine had provided Mr Adam in terms of a purpose. Mr Adam related the briefing he received upon his initial creation: he was a proof-of-concept for new grief support pathways whose function was to replace the deceased for however long the surviving client wished and was able to pay for such a service, using parts of the deceased to match them as close as possible in both physicality and manner.

REDACTED pointed out that the withdrawal of funding was specifically due to the failure of this proof-of-concept, that Mr Adam (referred to in Dr Augustine's funding applications as simply "the creature") had offered no comfort to their clients, but rather invoked an reliably intense terror.

Mr Adam became agitated and began talking extensively and animatedly about love claiming to have been created to love and to comfort and that every cadaver he had used had imbued in him a deep love for the client that had hired him. He stated that he was a being of deep, warm feeling despite inspiring only revulsion and fear to date.

Mr Malachi pointed out perhaps this was understandable in light of this emotion being acquired through the mechanism of eating the cadaver of a client's loved one. An outburst from Mr Adam followed, leading REDACTED to threaten an early close to the meeting, and reiterate that he was still unclear as to Mr Adam's exact motivation for attending

Mr Adam claimed to have spent most of the last year restrained in Dr Augustine's basement, since his creator had fallen into a deep depression following the withdrawal of Elric Capital funding. He further claimed Dr. Augustine had been

endeavouring without success to find a way to destroy what he called “his greatest mistake”. Dr Augustine had, however, taken to drinking heavily and did not maintain Mr Adam’s restraints properly, allowing a successful escape attempt, followed by the murder and harvesting of the Doctor.

Mr Adam stated that Dr Augustine had talked extensively about Elric Capital and had often blamed them for his creation. This led Mr Adam to assume that the board might still hold an ongoing intention for him.

REDACTED briefly summarised the basics of venture capital and private equity investment, emphasizing the indirect nature of such business. This led Mr Adam to become agitated once again and he made several threatening statements, demanding to know why he was made only to suffer.

REDACTED suggested Mr Adam could make an investment proposal of his own.

After a brief recess, Mr Adam made a presentation suggesting his own continuation of Mr Augustine’s work, finding the bereaved and taking the form of their deceased loved ones in order to determine if there was still an optimal combination of factors (age, closeness, recency of loss, cultural background, etc.) that might

allow Mr Adam to effectively inhabit the position and affections of the deceased individual.

Mr Malachi asked what sort of returns might be expected since Mr Adam was not suggesting a coherent payment model for this service. After some hesitation Mr Adam proposed he may be able to get access the monetary estates of the deceased, although Ms. Lake raised legal concerns that would need to be assuaged.

Ms. Lee asked what the prospects for growth would be, to which Mr Adam did not appear to have a clear answer.

REDACTED motioned to fund Mr Adam continuing Dr Augustine's research project for a further 18 months. Zach Francis Allan seconded. Motion defeated five votes to two.

Mr Adam expressed extreme displeasure with the decision and became violent, leading to the summoning of security staff to eject him.

Mr Malachi declared dead from blood loss and stomach trauma 11:23AM. Two security staff declared dead from broken neck and internal hemorrhaging 11:31 and 11:33AM respectively. Mr Adam declared dead from assorted injuries at 11:26AM,

**11:34AM and 11:40AM (see
Coroner's note).**

**Members moved to meeting room D
to allow for medical and clean-up
personnel.**

**Iris Lee motioned to defer appointing
a replacement for Geoffrey Malachi
as Senior Vice President, Consulting,
until the next board meeting.
REDACTED seconded. Motion
carried unanimously (1 in-absetia).**

6. Adjournment

**Meeting adjourned 11:46AM by CEO,
REDACTED**

4. INT. OIAR OFFICES, NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

The case ends. CELIA considers.

CELIA

Hm.

**She pulls out the enormous categorisation and leafs through it
frustrated.**

CELIA

No... No... No... So where...?

**Celia flicks through a few more pages before finally giving
surrendering, leaning back and rubbing her eyes.**

CELIA

Whatever.

She sighs, then her breathing slows and she falls back asleep.

5. EXT. MOTORWAY, NIGHT, CLEAR (CELIA'S PHONE)

A lorry blares its horn as it screams towards her.

CELIA cries out and rolls to the side as the lorry passes.

CELIA

Argh!

She tumbles to a stop at the hard shoulder.

CELIA

(despairing)

Oh God No... No!

CELIA continues to despair as the lorry pulls over, turns on its hazard lights and the driver steps out and rushes over.

CELIA

(cont.)

Nonononononono! Not again... I can't... I can't!

DRIVER

Hey are you all right? You're lucky I didn't hit you! What are you doing all the way out here in the dark? Do you need me to call someone? I should call someone, right...?

CELIA

No, no I'll be fine, I have a phone, I'm just...

CELIA sighs a deep, despairing sigh.

CELIA

(cont.)

How far is it to London?

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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Thanks for listening.

The Magnus Protocol 46 – Slipping

CAT1RBC5257-13012024-13062024
reanimation (variable) -/- purpose

Incident Elements:

- **existential crisis**
- **graphic violence**
- **grief**
- **necrocannibalism**
- **time/memory loss**
- **SFX: asmr raindrops, sudden loud noises**

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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

Anusia Battersby as Gwen Bouchard

Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley

Pip Gladwin as Driver

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Art by April Sumner**

**SFX from Catherine Rinella, Soundly and Freesound:
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