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The Magnus Protocol

Episode 48 "Temporary Positions"

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[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus
Protocol.
Episode Forty-Eight – Temporary
Positions**

[Music]

**1. EXT. THE SQUARE MILE, NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE
RECORDER)**

Click.

**The square mile is near, full of things that should not be. SAM is
lying in the mud, asleep near a military-grade electric fence.**

**He shivers, then after a particularly loud creature cries, he
wakes with a gasp.**

SAM

(groggy)

What? Ah It's cold! I- Where...

**He looks around a realizes where he is. There is the distant
rumble of an approaching engine.**

SAM

(cont.)

**Oh. Oh no, How the hell did I get
back here?**

He gets unsteadily to his feet.

SAM

(cont.)

Okay calm down, calm down.

An overambitious creepy tries to approach and... ZAP!

SAM

Argh! Oh okay, I'm guessing that's
the perimeter fence then so...

The rumble grows nearer.

SAM

(cont.)

Oh thank christ.

(calling)

Hey! Hey over here! I need help!

The engine bears down on Sam as the zone recoils slightly.

SAM

(cont. calling)

Oh wow am I glad to see you!

WARDEN OLIVIA

(tense)

Back up! Stand in the headlights,
show me your hands!

Beat.

WARDEN OLIVIA

Hang on, you're The Captain's pet
right? Sam... something?

SAM

Uh yeah that's me. I guess.

WARDEN OLIVIA

(climbing down)

She's got half the wardens out
looking for you. What the hell are
you doing here in your PJs?

SAM

I have absolutely no idea.

WARDEN OLIVIA

(dubious)

Sure. Well, get in, I'll take you back to base.

SAM

(Hurrying over)

Thank you!

WARDEN OLIVIA

But you're the one who explains this to the captain.

Click.

2. INT., GEORGIE'S OFFICE, NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

Click.

SAM is sat sipping from a hot cup while **GEORGIE** paces.

GEORGIE

(brusque)

Seriously? No idea?

SAM

I told you, I went to bed normally, fell asleep and then when I woke up-

GEORGIE

Yeah, fine.

Beat.

SAM

Maybe I was sleepwalking?

GEORGIE

Through two locked doors and a monitored patrol circuit? With

nobody seeing you? No. I don't think you walked anywhere.

SAM

So you think I just, what, magically teleported there?

GEORGIE

We don't say "magic" on base. It softens it, makes people complacent

SAM

Okay so you think I just... appeared there. Why?

GEORGIE

(sharp)

Why would you suddenly be teleported back to the hole in the world you crawled out of? Gee, I wonder...

SAM

(not escalating)

So you think it's trying to pull me back?

GEORGIE

Makes sense.

SAM

I guess. So what? Now I could just ping into the middle of the zone at any time...

GEORGIE

I mean, better you going in than other stuff coming out.

SAM

Thanks.

GEORGIE

Just being honest.

SAM

Well fine then. If my world wants me back so much and I'm such a burden why don't I just go? The doctor said I'm basically recovered.

GEORGIE

Oh I'll be more than happy to send you on your merry way... As soon as we've dealt with the potentially world-ending monster you brought here with you.

Beat.

SAM

Fair. So do we think the Archivist is getting pulled back as well?

GEORGIE

Maybe. If it does get pulled back through, fantastic. We'll pack you up and send you on your way. I'll even give you a lift.

SAM

How generous.

GEORGIE

But I'm not counting on it. My luck isn't that good. For now, the best we can do is call up some reserves and add more patrols, just in case it turns up as suddenly as you did.

SAM

Good idea.

GEORGIE

Honestly though, I'd feel better
dealing with it here on our terms.
I'd rather have a corpse I can burn
than just making it your problem and
hoping it all works out.

SAM

(diplomatic)

I understand.

GEORGIE

Although, that does remind me...

GEORGIE picks up a phone handset and presses a few buttons.

GEORGIE

Hello? Yeah. Is Anya here yet?

She listens to the handset.

GEORGIE CONT.

Good. Could you send her up?
Thanks.

She replaces the handset.

SAM

What's going on?

GEORGIE

I was going to tell you before you
pulled your little disappearing act,
but no time like the present, I guess.

SAM

(uncertain)

Uh Ok...

GEORGIE

I've got some friends over at the
Oxford Exclusion Zone, and I had a
hunch, so I asked them if they'd ever

heard of anyone turning up from another world like you.

SAM

And they had?

GEORGIE

More than once. Turns out it's... well, not a regular thing, but it's happened a few times over the years. People turn up in the zone, starved almost to death, and they generally help them recover and send them back.

SAM

And no one thought to mention this to me?

GEORGIE

I mean, they told me when I asked. Remember, Wardens are community-formed, not centralized, and comms are still patchy. Also most people just want to move on and forget about the zones entirely so there's a serious shortage of researchers.

SAM

So why did I end up here and not in Oxford?

GEORGIE

That is a fantastic question that I am not qualified to answer.

SAM

Right. But it was almost certainly because of The Archivist right?

GEORGIE

Oh yeah. Anyway, it's happened enough times up there that the

wardens have been looking into it a bit deeper. Turns out they managed to find someone who made the crossing pre-Incursion.

SAM

Oh, cool.

GEORGIE

Her name's Anya Villette, and I thought the two of you might have a few things to discuss. Maybe try and work out-

There's a polite knock at the door of the room. GEORGIE opens it and ANYA steps inside.

GEORGIE

(cont)

Ms. Villette, thanks for coming.

ANYA

(to Georgie)

Glad to help.

(to Sam)

Are you other traveller?

SAM

Yeah, Sam. Hey.

Anya?

ANYA

Good to meet you.

SAM

You too.

Beat.

GEORGIE

Well, I've got to write up this whole... situation, so I'll leave you to talk. Let me know if you have any reality-shattering insights.

SAM

Will do.

Georgie exits.

Beat.

SAM

So, Anya... What's your story?

ANYA

Short version or the long version?

SAM

It's not like I've got anywhere I need to be.

3. INT., WARDEN OFFICE, NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

ANYA

I was... nobody. Still am, really. Used to work as a cleaner, now I help with construction. Never cleaned anything special or built anything important and I'm happy with that. I've met important people and I've seen their work and let me tell you, being nobody is better.

The only thing that makes me different is that I'm not from here but it's just a different type of immigration really.

I still don't know why it happened to me. I was just cleaning a house. It was big, and a bit creepy but people had lived there for decades probably. I don't know, maybe it had a reputation or something, but I never looked it up because, hey, it was just a cleaning job. But I went down into a basement that wasn't supposed to be there, things went weird and when I woke up. I'd lost time, I'd lost weight, and I'd lost home.

I went back to that house a bunch of times over the years, trying to see if I could go back but it never worked. So eventually, I settled down and made do. My parents never met in this world so no need to worry about doubling up. It wasn't easy, I didn't exist on any government database, and I was constantly worried about being deported somewhere but it never came to that.

Gradually, I worked my way onto some official systems. Email address then a bank account, then a stable address... Any real investigation and it would have all fallen apart but I stayed out of trouble, avoided stuff like credit checks and it seemed fine. I got myself a job in a little café, managed to get a small friend group together, I even started dating. I had quite a nice little life built up by the time the world ended.

Looks like you've been here awhile

so I assume I don't need to explain the incursion? Great. They've explained how it worked? Everyone trapped in their own custom fear pocket? Well, I didn't have a domain of my own. I guess it's because of what happened to me, but who knows? The point is, stuff worked differently for me.

I started trapped in a muddy ditch with maybe two others and if you tried to escape you couldn't help but slide back down and there were long shards of broken glass hidden in the mud at the bottom so that they cut into you when you weren't trying to get out.

I remember, when I first arrived, I was mostly just confused. Not just because the world had suddenly changed but more because everybody else seemed to know exactly what they were meant to do. They all immediately turned on one another with horrible violence or terrified flight but even now I still have no idea what they were thinking.

It still hurt, though. When the glass cut my legs or when someone tried to smother me in the muck, it all felt exactly as awful as you would think although... I never screamed as loudly as the others, my wounds were never so serious and I always climbed the highest. I guess it was just a bit easier for me?

I actually started to feel guilty, like an imposter. Soon the others noticed I was different, they stopped attacking me and then they ignored me altogether and I was just standing in the dirt watching them, alone in the crowd.

Then it all changed. Suddenly I wasn't in the pit I was looking out the window of an old, badly furnished apartment as fire swept up the crooked tenement.

Now I know you aren't meant to compare domains, they were specific, everyone felt as bad as they could, that was the point. But... feeling the fire burn through your flesh, that definitely hurts the most, no question. There are no words to describe it and even if there were I wouldn't.

And yet, I handled it the best. I was the only one who seemed able to leave my own apartment, I was able to push through and keep moving, and I would fight my way inside other people's apartments to help them.

Maybe that was my mistake? They would welcome my help at first but soon they became suspicious, then outright hostile. It wasn't long before they were deliberately locking their doors and I was shut out. Then it all changed again.

I lost count of how many times I moved. Drowning in an endless ocean, pulled apart by a butcher's machine, trapped as a lab rat incubating diseases... Every time suffering, but every time as an extra, as a tourist.

When the Incursion finally ended, at first I just assumed I'd been shifted into another domain, albeit one much more boring than the others. It was only once I found other people that I started to realise it was over.

Since then I've joined a commune out near Abingdon. It's much easier for me now since basically no one has any official records and even if they did no one would care, everyone is just glad of the help. We're doing alright, crops are doing well. I didn't hear any of the rumours about the Oxford zone at first. We were all too busy but eventually I learned there was some hole in the world near Cowley Road.

It wasn't far, so I went to have a look, got chatting to one of the wardens and well... here we are.

4. INT., WARDEN OFFICE, NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

Anya leans back.

SAM

How many times have you told that story?

ANYA

I've lost count. Does it sound anything like what happened to you?

SAM

I mean, I haven't lived through the sort of hells you have, but in terms of changing dimensions... maybe a bit? So how many other, uh, "travellers" have you talked to?

ANYA

Four, including you.

SAM

Did they all come from my world?

ANYA

I'm pretty sure they didn't all come from the same place. What's something special about your world?

SAM

Uh... You ever heard of the Magnus Institute?

ANYA

Everyone here knows the Institute since Towerfall.

SAM

Right, of course. Well, in my world it burned down in 1999.

ANYA

Right. Well, I never heard of it back in my mine. Of the others I met, two of them came from somewhere where it was still active, although they didn't know much about it, and the third said it was based in Edinburgh.

SAM

But they all came through the same portal in Oxford?

ANYA

In the exclusion zone, yes. But I suspect thinking of it as a 'portal' is what's confusing you.

SAM

...because a portal's like a door and only has two sides?

ANYA

Yeah these are more like holes leading to the space between places.

SAM

... meaning you go in one and come out another randomly?

ANYA

Yes.

Beat.

SAM

No. That doesn't work. When I came through, I wasn't alone. We both left together and arrived at similar places at similar times. And I've got a friend back home, I think she's from here. Do you think I just got lucky with the swap, or...?

Beat.

ANYA

I don't know. Maybe every time someone crosses it makes it easier for people to follow? Or maybe knowing her before hand was

enough of a link to this world that it
pulled you along?

SAM
(unconvinced)
Maybe.

ANYA
I'm not an expert, Sam.

SAM
You're the closest we've got.

ANYA
Then I doubt we'll ever really know
how any of this works.

SAM
(dissatisfied)
I'm hearing that a lot recently.

ANYA
Sorry.

SAM
Not your fault.

Beat.

SAM
(cont.)
Listen, Anya... Do you ever find
yourself getting pulled back towards
the porta- the holes?

ANYA
The others asked me the same thing
they all disappeared eventually so
I'm guessing that's where they went.

SAM
But you...?

ANYA

No, it's never happened to me.

SAM

Any idea why?

ANYA

My best guess? Bad timing. I might have been the first person ever to fall through, that means I slipped through a tiny crack in the universe before the Incursion had even started but now? That hole and a bunch of others are blown wide open.

SAM

But you're still here.

ANYA

For now. Maybe the effect wears off and they were too weak when I first came here? Maybe the Incursion changed me, maybe my world's gone and there's nothing left to pull me back? I have no idea, and honestly, I don't think there is even a way to find out.

SAM

I get it. Thanks Anya.

ANYA

Sorry I couldn't be more help.

SAM

No, you were and I really appreciate it. Does Georgie know all this?

ANYA

I talked her through most of it on a call yesterday, but she's asked I report to her before I head home.

SAM

Right.

Beat.

ANYA

Good luck Sam. I hope we get a chance to talk again before... before you go.

SAM

Yeah, me too.

ANYA

Goodbye Sam.

SAM

Bye.

ANYA exits.

Pause. SAM gives a big dissatisfied sigh.

Click.

5. INT., MEDICAL UNIT, NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

Click.

ALICE [PL] sleeps quietly surrounded by various medical equipment. SAM enters and checks her chart.

ALICE

(weakly)

Have they found the cure yet?

SAM

The... cure?

ALICE

Yeah, for being this goddam
gorgeous.

She coughs weakly. Sam smiles.

SAM

Sorry, didn't mean to wake you.

ALICE

It's fine. My Sam had elephant feet
too. You should've heard him trying
to sneak into bed if he stayed up
late.

Beat.

ALICE

(cont.)

So, am I gonna make it, doc?

SAM

I honestly don't know what I
expected. It's not like I can read
read these charts.

ALICE

Two days to live. Got it.

SAM

Well you definitely sound better.

ALICE

That's why I'm in the hospital, babe.
My jokes are sick.

SAM

Alice...

ALICE

Yeah, yeah, I know. I've not forgotten
who you are.

SAM

No it's not that. I... I think I'm probably going home soon.

ALICE

Home. You mean back to your world, your own Alice?

SAM

I mean, assuming she hasn't trashed the place while I was away.

ALICE

Heh. Classic Alice.

Beat.

ALICE CONT.

Is it safe? Going back, I mean.

SAM

(lying)

Oh Yeah. It'll be fine.

ALICE

You've always been a shit liar Sam.

GEORGIE abruptly.

GEORGIE

Sam, there you are.

SAM

Hold on, Georgie I'm just-

GEORGIE

No time. We've had a confirmed sighting of the Archivist. Just crossed the edge of the zone, heading inwards. We're pursuing.

SAM
(changing gear)
Oh Ok, yeah let's go.

They move to leave

ALICE
Sam, wait!

SAM
Alice-

ALICE
Don't! Don't chase it. Leave it to the
wardens, it's their job.

GEORGIE
We're leaving. Now, Sam.

GEORGIE exits.

ALICE
You have to leave me, ok, I get it so
go home Sam, go home and don't
get yourself killed chasing this thing.

SAM
I can't just-

ALICE
You can! I won't let you die again. I
won't!

She tries to grab Sam, but he pulls back as the medical
instruments complain.

SAM
I'm sorry.

ALICE
Don't!

SAM
Goodbye Alice.

SAM exits.

Click.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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Thanks for listening.**

CATXXXX-XXXXXXXX-XXXXXXXX

ERROR (Unknown Source)

Incident Elements:

- **Loss of control**
- **Temporal distortian**
- **Mentions of: Graphic violence, immolation, drowning, illness**
- **SFX: Buzzing Bee**

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Written by Jonathan Sims

Script Edited with additional material by [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)

Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Marta de Silva as Warden Olivia

Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker

Vicki Glover as Anya Villette

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

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Sound Designer – Tessa Vroom

Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella

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Art by April Sumner

SFX by Soundly and Freesound: dangerbabe, dansotak,
vladnegrila, Hupguy, Feibel1, brandondelehoy, gadiraz,
maru02144, bbrocer, DarkProductions_2016, TRP, MWsfx,
DrFahrts, nintendoto, tothrec2, Kinoton, bdunis4 as well as
previously credited artists

Very Important Bee Soloist: Cecilia

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