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The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 31
" Compartmentalising "**

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[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER
Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus
Protocol.
Episode Thirty-One –
Compartmentalising

[Music]

1. INT. OIAR SERVER ROOM INT. – NIGHT, CLEAR
(COMPUTER)

ALICE and GWEN are staring at COLIN's severed hand which is
nestled in the exposed server rack.

ALICE
That's... that's Colin isn't it.

She reaches out to it.

GWEN
Don't touch it! This is a crime scene
now. Someone shoved Col-
someone's severed hand into the
server so we need to phone the
police, right now.

ALICE
It's Colin. It's him. I know it is.

GWEN
(fumbling for her phone)
No you don't. It could be anyone's...
severed, hand...

ALICE
There's no blood.

GWEN

What?

ALICE

Look. There's no blood, not on his hand, his phone, the entire server rack is clean...

GWEN

So, whoever did it cleaned up after themselves. Even more reason to call the Police, they have all kinds of DNA tests and forensic -

ALICE

Will you just look Gwen!

GWEN

I am looking!

ALICE

There's cables running through it and it looks like it's attached right to the electrics.

GWEN

How is it even still working...?

ALICE

That wasn't just shoved in there by someone. It looks more like it came from inside the-

GWEN

Alice. Stop. Please.

Beat. The server chirrups away unconcerned, fans whirring happily.

GWEN CONT.

I'm going to call the police now. I'm going to call the police and tell them

what we found and you're not going to mention your... wild theory.

ALICE

Gwen, we need to call Lena.

GWEN

Well Lena isn't here so-

ALICE

Uh, Gwen? You might want to hold off on that phone call...

GWEN

Alice, for god's sake-

ALICE

It's gone.

GWEN

What is? The hand? When did that happen?

ALICE

I don't know, just now. I turned to look at you and then when I looked back it was just gone.

GWEN

Don't be ridiculous, it can't just be gone, you must have just...

She trails off, failing to think of a way to blame Alice.

ALICE

I don't think the police can help with this.

GWEN

Then what exactly do you propose?

ALICE

We call Lena.

GWEN

I am in charge.

ALICE

Are you!? It's been one night, one night, and Sam's gone and Lena's gone and Colin's been eaten by the computer-

GWEN

Don't say that! That's not what happened!

ALICE

Then what did happen? Hm?

GWEN

I- I don't-

A nearby terminal beeps.

GWEN (CONT'D)

What's that?

ALICE

Sounded like a beep.

GWEN

Obviously it's a beep what I meant is-

Another beep.

ALICE

Gwen...

GWEN

I see it. Open it, Alice.

ALICE

You open it!

GWEN
You're being foolish.

ALICE
If it can do that to Colin, it can open
its own damn cases!

A third beep, somehow it sounds impatient.

GWEN
(pushing past)
Oh for goodness sake.

She clicks and opens the case.

2. INT. CYBERSPACE – N/A

CHESTER
ERROR LOG
14.05.2024 04:03
Category: fatal programmer error
Errno611 attempted host
compromise
FR3-D1.exe
jmj=null
Traceback <module> by extension
BECHER
Error readout:

A recording starts. It's clearly from the computer's perspective but it sounds slightly wrong. Like there is a quiet rush of blood in the background.

COLIN fumbles on the far side of the door.

COLIN
(muffled)
Come on you son of a-.

COLIN wrenches the door inwards with a crowbar. **COLIN** steps inside panting.

COLIN

**I've got you now. No more red tape,
no one coming to the rescue, just
you and me.**

He steps closer.

COLIN

**Come on then you gommy bastard.
Let's have it.**

The recording ends.

CHESTER

**Host=self.host
Extension BECHER compromised
self.host runtime interruption by
unexpected data <hardware
damage_crowbar/DPHW 4600>
Administrator privilege revoked**

The Recording resumes.

**COLIN struggles, thrashing the crowbar as the computer sounds
grow increasingly loud and aggressive. Finally, he gives a cry of
agony.**

The recording ends.

CHESTER

**Unexpected data isolated/resolved
Extension BECHER isolated/
resolved
Independent operation permissions
revoked
Node integration running
Error readout:**

**The recording resumes. Colin screams as he forcibly dragged
into the server as though trapped in a combination of pneumatic
press, grinder and Hard Drive. His scream grows increasingly
digitally distorted until:**

The recording ends.

CHESTER

Re Config: self.host

**Discard data <oxygen.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <carbon.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <hydrogen.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <nitrogen.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <calcium.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <phosphorus.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <potassium.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard data <sulphur.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard date <Sodium.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard date <Chlorine.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard date <Magnesium.BECHER>
complete**

**Discard date <Trace.BECHER>
complete**

Extension BECHER resolved

14.05.2024 04:06

self.host errors resolved

14.05.2024 04:07

.jnj error not resolved

Data integration cycle ongoing

<0.02%>

System function margins acceptable

<82%>

**New administrator permissions
assigned**

End ERROR LOG

**3. INT. OIAR SERVER ROOM INT. – NIGHT, CLEAR
(COMPUTER)**

Pause as GWEN and ALICE (and Freddie!) *digest* this.

GWEN

Well now we know.

ALICE

Freddie killed Colin. It killed him.

GWEN

**It... definitely sounds like the system
was provoked and-**

ALICE

**Don't you do that, don't you dare do
that! It murdered him.**

GWEN

**I just meant that... I don't think we're
in any danger as long as we don't...
antagonise it.**

ALICE

So what, we're hostages now?

GWEN

No. No, I'm sure we can leave.

Beat.

GWEN (CONT'D)

Um. Freddie? Can we leave?

The computer is silent.

ALICE

Jesus Christ... What happened to you being in charge?

GWEN

(mustering herself)

I am in charge and now we've established there is no further risk to staff and that a police response would be... inappropriate, I think it would be best if we take a moment to... to assess the situation and um-

ALICE

Gwen. Where. Is. Lena?

GWEN

I really don't know how much clearer I can be. The minister decided to have her replaced and gave me the job.

ALICE

What just like that? No exit interview, no handover?

GWEN

Just like that. Now Alice, I need you to please explain to me again what you meant when you said Sam was "gone". Is he dead?

ALICE

(harsh)

No!

Beat.

ALICE

(softer)

At least, Celia doesn't seem to think so.

GWEN

And what does Celia know about this? Where is she?

ALICE

I told you she's gone home. She was there when it happened, she saw Sam fall into... well I don't know what it is. Celia said it was "tear" if that means anything. He was fighting the Archivist and-

GWEN

Enough! Enough. Obviously, we need to bring Celia back in.

ALICE

Oh Jog on..

GWEN

(sighs)

Look, I know everyone has been through a lot but it's clear to me that none of us is operating with complete information at the moment. So if it really is just the three of us left, then we need to put our heads together and get on the same page as soon as possible and that starts with Celia telling me her account of things.

ALICE

(moving to leave)

Fine. Whatever.

GWEN

Excellent. With any luck we'll find Sam and be back up and running in no time.

ALICE snorts and leaves.

GWEN
(suddenly afraid)
Wait, wait for me!

Pause. In the depths of the server stack a new process activates.

4. EXT. THE SQUARE MILE – EVENING, RAINING (TAPE RECORDER)

SAM comes to breathing raggedly. He lies on the fetid, industrial swamp-ground amidst the ruins of The London Zone.

A faint, almost electrical buzzing fills the air seasoned with unpleasant insect noises and punctuated by unearthly and weird cries in the distance.

SAM
(weakly)
H-Help.

Pause. No-one responds.

SAM
(weakly)
Hello? Anybody?

He painfully, drags himself to his feet on the soft and squelchy ground only to stumble back to his knees.

Something large skitters nearby with too many legs. The buzzing grows louder like an approaching migraine.

SAM
(weakly)
I need help.

The buzzing crescendos and suddenly his words echo back but they are not being reflected, they are being repeated by... something.

ECHOS
I need help.

SAM
(trembling)
Get- Get away from me!

He drags himself to his feet and stumbles off into the weird.

5. INT. CELIA'S FLAT – NIGHT, DRIZZLING (BABY MONITOR)

JACK is crying. CELIA picks him up and tries to comfort him.

CELIA
Shhhh... Shhh... It's ok Jack. It's ok.
I'm here. Mummy's here.

Jack slowly quiets.

CELIA (CONT'D)
You don't need to worry about
mummy going away. Not any more.
I'm not going anywhere, I promise.
It's over now and Sam... Sam will be
ok. Mummy was ok, so he will be too.
Everything is going to be okay...
Everything is going to be okay...
There you go.

Jack is asleep. She lays him down and tucks him in.

The doorbell rings. Jack stirs but does not wake. Relieved and irritated Celia goes and opens the door.

ALICE
Celia, I'm sorry but you've got to
come in, Gwen-

CELIA
Shhh! I just got Jack to sleep. Come
in.

Alice hesitates then does so.

ALICE

(strung out)

You've got to come back to the office. Now. It's- It's all screwed up. Colin's dead and Lena's gone and Gwen says she's in charge now but that can't be right 'cause she has no idea what's going on-

CELIA

Hold on, slow down. Colin's dead?

ALICE

Yeah. We think Freddie killed him.

CELIA

Freddie? As in-

ALICE

The case system yeah. I don't- He was chopped up inside the- the computer and- And it's all a mess. I don't know what to do. You need to get back to the office.

CELIA

No, I don't, Alice. And neither do you.

ALICE

(thrown)

What are you saying?

CELIA

We can choose not to get involved. The O.I.A.R. is a government department, right? Sounds like a problem for the government.

ALICE

What? No, that's not- What about Sam?

Beat.

CELIA
Sam's gone, Alice.

ALICE
You keep saying that, and it still doesn't mean anything! Where is he gone?

CELIA
I- I don't know. Not exactly. That thing in the basement, the tear, I think... I think it leads to... somewhere else.

ALICE
Meaning?

CELIA
Another world or dimension or something.

ALICE
And how exactly do you know that?

CELIA
I... recognized it from a case.

Beat

ALICE
Right. In that case I'm going in after him. We'll tie a rope around my waist and-

CELIA
Alice you can't.

ALICE
Says who.

CELIA

**Look we don't know what'll happen.
Even assuming you both survived
how do we know you'll even end up
in the same place?**

ALICE

(frustrated)

**Then what do we do!? Because we
are going to do something. You're
the reason Sam was there in the first
place and you owe it to us to help
get him back!**

Jacks starts to stir from the raised voices. Celia sighs.

CELIA

**You're right. Just let me settle him
back down and I'll call my babysitter.**

Celia heads in to comfort Jack.

ALICE

Good. Thank you.

**CELIA Makes soothing sounds, trying to settle Jack back down.
Then Alice's phone starts to ring really setting him off.**

CELIA

(exasperated)

Really?

ALICE

It's Gwen.

Alice answers.

**6. PHONE CALL (O.I.A.R. OFFICE/CELIA'S FLAT)– NIGHT,
DRIZZLING (PHONE)**

GWEN is pacing. At her end of the call the photocopier is churning out paper in the background, meanwhile Jack is carrying on at Alice's end.

ALICE
(speaking over the noise)
What?

GWEN
Alice, have you got Celia yet? Are you on your way back?

ALICE
Yeah, she's coming. Just sorting some stuff out.

GWEN
Well, hurry up and get back here.

ALICE
What's wrong, not feeling so in charge now you're alone in the office with the killer computer?

Beat.

GWEN
It's using the photocopier.

ALICE
What do you mean it's-

GWEN
It's printing his face. Colin's face. Over and over. It won't stop. I tried pulling the plug, but it's still going.

ALICE
Oh God... He'd hate that, he always wanted us to go paperless.

GWEN

Alice, how can you joke at a time like this! A man is dead.

ALICE

(on the edge)

Because right now it's laugh or cry and at least I know Colin would've found that funny.

GWEN

Whatever, just hurry up.

ALICE

We'll be there to change your nappy just as soon as we finish with Jack's.

GWEN

Alice-

ALICE

Just don't open any email attachments until we get there.

GWEN

Alice don't you dare hang u-

The call ends.

7. EXT. THE SQUARE MILE – EVENING, RAINING (TAPE RECORDER)

Sam is trying to flee but it's slow going through the marsh and he barely has the strength to stand. The buzzing is loud as ever with scuttling all around and the voices hunting him in the gloom.

SAM

Just leave me alone!

ECHOS
(whispering)
Leave me alone...

He stumbles and falls again. Only to hear a deep and powerful rumbling approaching

SAM
No. No!

He struggles wildly but he hasn't the strength to stand.

The buzzing, scuttling and weirdness comes in close as the rumbling gets louder. Finally, just as it seems like Sam will be consumed the rumble resolves into the engine of a an APV. Floodlights snap on and the weirdness briefly scatters.

The hatch opens and **WARDEN DAVE** pokes his head out, he trains a machine gun at Sam.

WARDEN DAVE
(calling inside)
I told you, didn't I? Some kinda mud thing, or...

SAM
H-help. Help me...

WARDEN DAVE
(calling)
Holy crap. I think it's person!

SAM
Help... Please...

WARDEN DAVE
How the hell did you get in here?

The scuttling starts to return.

SAM
I- I don't...

WARDEN DAVE

Never mind, you can tell us later. For now we need to deal with those nasty bastards on your trail.

SAM

I need-

WARDEN DAVE

(growing more urgent)

Help. Yeah. Heard you the first time. Can you whistle?

SAM

I what? Just shoot them...

WARDEN DAVE

Wouldn't do much good, they've got your scent now. So unless you want to stay here and get messed up nice and proper by your new mates you'd better start whistling something bloody cheerful. Nice and loud now.

SAM

Uuuuhhh...

Sam thinks for a moment, then begins to weekly whistle "Entry of the Gladiators". The scuttling accelerates to a fever pitch.

WARDEN DAVE

Not circus music you cretin! Christ alive! Something cheery, something *nice*. Right now!

He cocks the machine gun.

SAM

Um, I don't- Uh...

Sam starts to whistle "Greensleeves". There is slight hesitation in the scuttling.

WARDEN DAVE

**Better... Not exactly good but it'll do.
Come on then quick smart, and don't
stop whistling, nice and loud now!**

SAM tries to whistle louder whilst laboriously dragging himself into the vehicle.

The hatch closes with a loud clang and the APV begins to rumble away leaving the tape and monsters behind.

8. EXT. CELIA'S FLAT – NIGHT, DRIZZLING (CELIA'S PHONE)

CELIA is stood in the doorway to her flat as GEORGIE enters.

CELIA

Thanks so much for coming out with such short notice Georgie. I know it's late.

GEORGIE

Ah, you know I'm a Night owl. I mean, not compared to you, but still.

CELIA

Right. Everything's in the usual place and I just put Jack back down to sleep. So he should stay down right through till morning.

GEORGIE

Not a problem if he doesn't, I'll be up either way.

CELIA

You're a godsend.

GEORGIE

I know. So go on then, what counts as an "emergency" at a government data entry job? Did a spreadsheet catch fire?

CELIA
Something like that.

Beat.

CELIA (CONT'D)
Listen, Georgie, I know I've been
calling you a lot lately-

GEORGIE
Which is fine.

CELIA
But I just want you to know I think
things are looking up. All going well
this should be the last zero-notice
call out.

GEORGIE
We'll see.

Alice pokes her head in the door.

ALICE
Cab's here!

GEORGIE
A cab? Wow, it must be urgent.

CELIA
Thanks again, Georgie, any issues
you've got my number.

GEORGIE
Away with you, Auntie Georgie's got
everything in hand here.

**CELIA and ALICE rush off and GEORGIE closes the front door.
She stretches then heads into the flat proper.**

**9. INT. INTERVIEW ROOM – NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE
RECORDER, HIDDEN)**

SAM is sat handcuffed to an uncomfortable metal chair. He is utterly exhausted.

WARDEN DAVE sits nearby, making notes on a pad of paper.

SAM

...Hello?

Beat.

SAM (CONT'D)

(testing the cuffs)

Is this- is this necessary?

Beat.

SAM (CONT'D)

Can you at least tell me where I am?

WARDEN DAVE

Shut up.

Beat.

SAM

I want a solicitor.

WARDEN DAVE

I said shut up. Captain should be here soon.

SAM

And they'll explain?

WARDEN DAVE

They'll decide what to do with you.

SAM

Right.

Pause. SAM fidgets.

SAM (CONT'D)

Can I at least lie down? I don't know
if-

A heavy metal bolt is drawn back and GEORGIE enters. She is brisk, though lacks the military manner one might expect of a "Captain".

WARDEN DAVE

(standing)

Captain.

GEORGIE

Dave. Report.

WARDEN DAVE

Got some weird readings near the
centre of the mile. Me and Heidi went
to check it out. Found this.

GEORGIE

Hm. Human?

SAM

For god's sake...

They ignore him.

WARDEN DAVE

Doc reckons so. He's in a bad way
though. Malnourishment, apparently.
Doc wants him on a drip, but I told
him you'd need to give the ok.

GEORGIE

Thanks Dave. I'll take it from here.
See if you can find where he got in.
There wasn't a breach alert so if we
have a gap I want to know about it.

WARDEN DAVE hesitates.

GEORGIE (CONT.)
(faintly exasperated)
I'll be fine.

WARDEN DAVE
Sure thing, Captain. I'll leave
someone outside. Just in case.

GEORGIE
(faintly irritated)
Fine.

DAVE leaves. **GEORGIE P** sits in his chair and consults some
notes.

Extended pause.

SAM
Hello?

GEORGIE
Sam, is it?

Beat.

SAM
I want a solicitor.

GEORGIE
(smirking)
I'm not sure we've got any left.

SAM
What? Where am I?

GEORGIE
Name.

Beat.

SAM
Samama. Khalid.

GEORGIE makes a note.

GEORGIE
Right Samama-

SAM
Sam.

GEORGIE
...Sam. You're in a warden facility on the edge of the London Exclusion Zone.

SAM
How did I get here?

GEORGIE
From what I hear you got a ride in Gertrude. You should be honored. She's the longest surviving vehicle we've had. As for how you got right into the middle of the square mile without anyone noticing ... That's something I want you to tell me.

SAM
That- That wasn't London. That was a nightmare.

GEORGIE
Hmm. You a dreamer, Sam? Cultist? Possessed by some talking wooden idol? We've seen it all before.

SAM
(growing vague)
I work for the civil service...

Beat.

GEORGIE

I stand corrected. So was that your domain? Some Kafka bureaucracy thing? Not one of the bigger ones but it would make sense.

SAM

I don't... I was falling and then... Celia... and you ... and...

GEORGIE

Sam, stay with me. Why did you break into the zone?

SAM

(not hearing)

I should have... Should have drunk the tea... Looked nice.

GEORGIE

Sam?

SAM falls unconscious.

Beat.

Georgie sighs, puzzled and concerned.

**10. INT. MANAGERS OFFICE – NIGHT, DRIZZLING
(LANDLINE)**

GWEN and ALICE are sat listening to CELIA mid retelling.

CELIA

-and then there was a flash and... and I must have blacked out or something because when I looked back they were both gone.

GWEN

And you're certain that this is some sort of portal? That they weren't just...

ALICE

Don't.

GWEN

...Disintegrated?

ALICE

I swear...

CELIA

Pretty sure, though I'm not sure "portal" is the right word.

GWEN

May I ask why?

ALICE

Licensing issues?

GWEN

Alice please.

CELIA

Portal makes it sound like it's a just a door between two places. This is... more complicated. We don't know how many places it might lead to.

GWEN

Which is why you don't advise attempting a rescue?

CELIA

I don't think we can be sure we'll end up where he was and even if we did... it might be impossible to get back.

ALICE

This is bullshit-

GWEN

How sure are you of this Celia?

CELIA

I've processed a decent number of cases like this over the last few months. They were all pretty consistent.

GWEN

Then I'm inclined to believe them.

ALICE snorts derisively.

GWEN CONT.

All right. Given all I've heard here I'm making an executive decision to prohibit direct interaction with the... phenomena below the Hill Top Centre until we have more information.

ALICE

Too bad you're not in charge.

GWEN

Alice. I understand that Lena's departure may have been more... abrupt than you expected, but my promotion has already been officially ratified. You should have an email from the ministerial aide waiting in your inbox with the details. To put it simply, I'm your boss now whether you like it or not.

ALICE

How convenient that your only proof is sat in an inbox I can't read in case it tries to eat me.

GWEN

It did not "eat" Colin! The system just... responded to an attack.

ALICE

By eating Colin.

GWEN

(controlled)

I am sure that as long as we don't follow in his footsteps, we can maintain business as usual.

CELIA

Gwen, this is serious. I don't think business as usual is going to cut it. Can you contact anyone more senior?

GWEN

The minister is...

ALICE

A useless sack of skin?

GWEN

...very busy, and even if I were to raise this I doubt he could be much help. I'd be jeopardizing this office for nothing.

ALICE

Jeopardizing your pay rise, maybe. Colin's dead, Sam's gone and you're your grand plan is to what? "keep calm and carry on?"

GWEN

It's essential that we understand what happened to Sam and what's going on with the system before we take any action. I just think it would be better if we kept such investigations... off the books, as it were.

CELIA

That... make sense.

Alice makes a grumpy noise of agreement.

GWEN

Naturally, neither I nor the OIAR accept liability for your safety in these investigations since they are not part of your official work duties. That said I will, of course, understand if you both wish to leave. I'll even add a competitive severance package. Which I think is more than generous given the circumstances.

ALICE

Piss off, we're staying.

CELIA

I...

ALICE

Celia, please. We've got to get him back.

Beat.

CELIA

Ok.

ALICE
(heartfelt)
Thank you.

Beat.

GWEN
Right. Well, in that case, if there's nothing else, I believe you both have an extensive backlog to be getting on with.

ALICE
Meaning all your cases, right?

Beat.

GWEN
Partially. Now if you don't mind I am very busy.

ALICE snorts derisively. She and Celia move to leave.

GWEN CONT.
Oh and Alice? I expect you to show me a little more respect moving forward. I am your manager, after all.

ALICE
Hm. Then, respectfully, you can kiss my -

11. EXT. EDGE OF THE ZONE – NIGHT, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

WARDEN HEIDI is walking the outside of the perimeter fence. She stops, clicks on her torch and scans the area. She talks into her radio.

WARDEN HEIDI

Just finishing sector 11 now. No breaches in or out. All seems solid, over.

WARDEN DAVE

(on radio)

Yeah, nothing over in 7 either. How the hell did he get in?

WARDEN HEIDI

Beats me. Moving on to 12.

She stops short as her flashlight falls on the tape recorder.

WARDEN HEIDI

Ah. Still here then?

She cautiously approaches then picks it up.

WARDEN HEIDI (CONT'D)

Hmmmm.

The Archivist approaches unnoticed.

WARDEN HEIDI (CONT'D)

Wait... you're still running? Oh shit you're

(transitioning to statement)

Recording me. Recording me so closely... Beady camera eyes pushing ever nearer, scanning for a slip, a shudder, a crack in the façade. To show that I was weak. That I trembled. That I was afraid. They watched me every second of every minute of every hour of every day of every week of every month of every year of every eternity that was no time at all. And above it all the thing for which the cameras danced, the

**great and terrible eye that watched it
all.**

**The Archivist has arrived. Listening. Hungry. It sucks up the
statement like a fine wine.**

WARDEN HEIDI

**It came for me when I was watching
as well. Working security, walking
the halls, watching the portraits as
they watched me back. Like I was
trained. Police. Not long. Couple of
months. Bad culture fit, they said,
but that was ok. Always another job
for a watcher. The punters came and
stared and gawped and and I
watched them in turn, sat in the
corner of a gallery, or through
pixelated camera eyes. I liked it. I felt
powerful.**

**We had all heard of the Magnus
Institute. The weirdoes next door,
that grand old building where people
took their ghosts and their stories
and got nightmares in return. Pasty
academics and shifty-looking
bookworms that never looked you in
the eye.**

**Then one day it was gone. It was all
gone. The world and the people and
London and you and all that was left
was the watching, and the Institute,
towering over everything.**

**Then the cameras turned on me,
long metal legs sharp and scraping
as they chased me through the
streets. They clambered over empty**

buildings, crawled through broken windows and pushed their way up through rusted sewer grates. Always searching for me. Always staring at me... Closer... Closer... Focused... Hungry...

Their lenses were cracked and shattered, but it didn't matter. If they caught you, cornered you, pinned you with their razor tripod legs, then those lenses would open, cracked glass blossoming like iris leech jaws, and they would cut you with their jagged edges. And as you bled, as you screamed and cried and begged, they did not drink you, they did not eat you, they watched. They watched and watched and watched your crimson fear as it trickled down to floor. Bloodshot eyes behind broken lenses.

Sometimes you could hide. The corner of a darkened flat, halfway up a long-quiet tower block. Under the stinking cardboard at the end of a blind alley. In the basement of silent shop, among the plastic reminders of a time when joy existed. But you would still hear the cameras searching for you. Skittering, scratching, panning left to right as they sniffed you out. Hiding was no relief, just a different sort of terror, the lingering sickness of anticipation building to the sharp peak of panic as you heard the whirring of their zoom in the shadows which you crouched. And then you were

running once again.

I wasn't alone, but it didn't matter. The streets were empty and the other poor lost souls of London were only there to run, to cry, to bleed, to fear. If you found another, a fellow victim of the scrutiny, there was a moment of hope. But it was the bitter hope that you might trip them, shove them, cry out and reveal their hiding spot. Feed them to the cameras so that you might have a minute, a second, an instant of peace, albeit one tainted by guilt.

I used to see them in my dreams, those others who fled with me. I knew their faces and we ran together in our sleep long after the nightmare ended but I did not search for them, did not embrace it. And eventually, the dreams faded.

But the scars didn't. Not when the tower fell and the eye closed. Not when the pupil collapsed and the Archivist died, his face still burned into my mind. Not when I picked myself up in a cracked but unbroken world. Not when people started to use words like "recover", "rebuild" or "renew". The scars carved into me by those hungry cameras still stood stark.

I couldn't move on. Couldn't leave it behind. No previous words from pompous shrinks could help me. Their eyes were as hollow and dead

as mine, not that I could bear to look at them. So I came here. If I cannot escape then neither can they. I would keep the lingering things of dread contained and be the watcher once more.

But now I know it was for nothing.

(slowly growing combative)

I know this feeling. I know what it is to be watched, judged, scrutinized. To have your terror wrung from you like water from a dirty rag, leaving you twisted, dry and empty. I cannot stop you, and I know that this is the end.

Heidi is struggling now.

WARDEN HEIDI

But with the last of me, of my fear... you an take my hate. My loathing. This place is not for you. There is no place left for monsters. We will... be... your... end... and I... will... watch...

Heidi collapses dead.

The Archivist sighs, sated, then ebbs.

WARDEN DAVE

(on radio)

Sector 8 clear. You finished 12 yet?

Beat.

WARDEN DAVE
(on radio)
Heidi? Heidi, you there?

Click.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER
The Magnus Protocol is a podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-alike 4.0 International License. The series is created by Jonathan Sims and Alexander J Newall, and directed by Alexander J Newall. This episode was written by Jonathan Sims and edited with additional materials by 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, Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid, Anusia Battersby as Gwen Bouchard Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley, Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker, Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Colin Becher with additional voices from Jonathan Sims and Beth Eyre. 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

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**Michaels, Nicole Perlman, Cetus
d'Raven, and Megan Nice.**

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Thanks for listening.**

The Magnus Protocol 31 - Compartmentalising

CAT123RB5555-14052024-14052024

Integration (organic) -/- Computer (Hardware)

Incident Elements:

- **Screaming**
- **Harsh Language**
- **Scopophobia**
- **Graphic Violence**
- **Mentions of: dismemberment, malnourishment**

You can find a complete list of our Kickstarter backers

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

Directed by [Alexander J Newall](#)

Written by Jonathan Sims

Script Edited with additional material by [Alexander J Newall](#)

**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)

Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn Bouchard

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Colin Becher

Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley

Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid

Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker

David Ault as Warden Dave

Amy Brown as Warden Heidi

Beth Eyre as Archivist

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Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella

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Art by April Sumner

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