

The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 42
"Hostile Workplace"**

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

7/8/2025

**TRANSCRIBER NOTE: PL = PRIMELINE
(THIS IS ONLY USED AT ESTABLISHMENT OF SCENE)**

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER
Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus
Protocol.
Episode Forty-Two – Hostile
Workplace

[Music]

1. INT. PL ALICE'S HOUSE – AFTERNOON, CLEAR (TAPE
RECORDER)

Click.

SAM is crouched over PL ALICE, who is unconscious.

SAM
Alice! Alice are you alright?

She does not respond.

SAM CONT'D
No no no! Alice, wake up. Come on,
stop messing around.

PL GEORGIE enters breathless.

PL GEORGIE
Lost it. Damn that thing moves
quick! How is she?

SAM
I-I don't know. She won't wake up.

GEORGIE
Shit. How long's she been out for?

SAM
I, uh... Twenty seconds, maybe?
Thirty?

PL ALICE
(weakly)
Wake me in an hour...

Sam exhales in relief.

SAM
Christ, Alice, don't do that to me.

ALICE
(weakly)
No promises.

GEORGIE
I'll radio Melanie. She should be able
to call-in a medical team to- eurgh!

SAM
(Alarmed)
What?

GEORGIE
Your arm.

SAM
My ar-Jesus!

Sam looks at his arm. His arm looks back at him.

SAM
Uh-

GEORGIE
(Calm)
When did it happen?

SAM
It must have been when it grabbed
me...

ALICE
What's going on?

SAM

Nothing. Nothing, I'm fine. I just need to- I'll be back in a second.

GEORGIE and SAM step aside.

GEORGIE

Can you... See out of them?

SAM

(Hushed, urgent)

What? No! Oh god will I start to?

GEORGIE

I don't know. I've seen a lot but this is... new.

SAM

What do we do!?

GEORGIE

We can't just leave them in case it gets worse.

SAM

Worse? How can it get worse!?

GEORGIE

Let's just say we need to get rid of them.

SAM

But how do you get rid of extra eyeballs!?

GEORGIE

I mean... I assume the normal way?

SAM

The normal way?

(realizing)

Oh Christ...

ALICE

(off)

Everything okay out there.

GEORGIE

(calling, faux fine)

All good! Alice, do you have a sewing kit?

ALICE

In the dresser. Top drawer.

GEORGIE

(calling, faux fine)

Thanks!

SAM

No.

GEORGIE

It's just like lancing a boil.

SAM

You don't know that!

GEORGIE

You'd rather they stuck around?

Beat.

GEORGIE

(cont.)

Well then. Give me a couple of minutes. Just- Keep an eye on Alice.

SAM

Oh ha ha.

GEORGIE exits. Sam returns to Alice.

SAM

How we doing?

ALICE

Feels like I was drinking tequila all night but yeah, I'm ok, I think.

SAM

I thought I'd lost you.

ALICE

One all, I guess.

SAM

I don't follow?

ALICE

I already lost you remember? It was your turn.

SAM

Oh right, yeah...

ALICE

It's alright. I know you're not my Sam but you're damn close. And now you're leaving too.

SAM

Yeah. Sorry.

ALICE

It's ok.

Beat.

ALICE

Are you sure you can't work things out with your Alice?

SAM

I dunno... Last time we talked...

ALICE

You should try doing an apocalypse together. Did wonders for us.

SAM

Heh. I'll give it some thought.

ALICE

Just... make sure you survive this time yeah?

SAM

Alice...

GEORGIE returns with a sewing needle.

GEORGIE

Okay. Good news is I found a nice big needle. Great news is Melanie's managed to call in a med-team and they're on their way. Bad news is they said we need to sort your arm ASAP.

ALICE

What's wrong with Sam?

GEORGIE

Nothing serious, just some minor first aid, right Sam?

Beat.

SAM

(restrained)

Er... yeah. Yeah it's nothing.

GEORGIE

So, I heated it over the stove and I even found some old rubbing alcohol kicking around with some clean rags so we should be good to go.

SAM

Is it going to hurt?

GEORGIE

Probably. Is that going to be a problem?

SAM

(yes)

No...

GEORGIE

Good. Bite down and close your eyes...

SAM

(muttering)

Easy for you to say...

He bites down on a belt.

ALICE

It's alright, Sam. I've got you.

SAM braces then GEORGIE unceremoniously lances the six eyeballs on his arm.

GEORGIE

(matter of fact)

Hold him.

ALICE

I'm... trying...

SAM screams in indignant rage throughout. Finally, GEORGIE finishes and steps back.

GEORGIE

Right. That should do it.

SAM's screaming begins to subside.

GEORGIE

(cont., to Alice)

You can let him go now.

Sam recoils and checks his arm.

GEORGIE

See? That wasn't so bad, was it?

Sam whimpers manfully then spits out the belt.

GEORGIE

(cont.)

The medics can take a proper look at the station, but with any luck we've stopped them spreading at least.

SAM

(weakly)

Oh good.

GEORGIE

How're you doing? If you're going to puke, try to keep your arm out the way.

SAM

(weakly)

No, no I'm fine. I just... just need to...

He feints in Alice's arms.

ALICE

Sam?

GEORGIE

He's out. He'll be fine. He's had a big day.

Click.

2. INT. MEDICAL WARD – AFTERNOON, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

Click.

SAM is lying in bed, again. PL MELANIE enters.

PL MELANIE

Scratching at the bandages won't help. Trust me.

SAM

You have no idea how-

Beat.

MELANIE

You maybe want to try that again?

SAM

Sorry, it just- it just itches like crazy. Oh god, what if they're growing back?

MELANIE

Then I'll take a pair. Look, I wouldn't worry, the doctor isn't. This is nowhere near the weirdest thing we've seen from the zone. We had a rookie a couple of years back who got stuck in there for too long. You wouldn't believe where he started growing a new face.

SAM laughs nervously.

SAM

How's Alice?

MELANIE

Sleeping but they say she'll recover quick if she doesn't do anything stupid.

SAM

That's good. Where's Georgie? I thought she'd want to be here?

MELANIE

Well, given what we're dealing with she thought it best to go and get- Ah, speak of the devil.

The door opens and GEORGIE enters with PL BASIRA.

GEORGIE

(to Basira)

This is the one I was telling you about.

SAM

Miss Hussain?

PL BASIRA

(taken aback)

Have we met?

SAM

Oh, uh- I suppose not. Sorry. I'm Sam.

BASIRA

Georgie got me up to speed. So... you've met my double?

SAM

Yeah. You were a deputy head.

BASIRA

At a school?

SAM

Uh, yeah.

BASIRA

Huh.

Beat.

BASIRA

Was it a good school?

SAM

I mean it was pretty fancy-

GEORGIE

Sam, I brought Basira in to help because she, myself and Melanie are, as far as we know, the last people alive who dealt with our Archivist back in the day.

BASIRA

So it is John then? Or his double at least?

GEORGIE

We don't know.

BASIRA

But you did see it?

GEORGIE

What I saw... It was so transformed, so inhuman... If was is him, he's completely gone now.

SAM

Ok, sorry, hold up. Can I get, like, an explanation of who this John guy is or something? As far as I know this is a monster that came over with me from my world and now you're all acting like he's an old friend.

MELANIE

Georgie, you care to do the honors?

GEORGIE

You tell it better.

MELANIE

Alright, so... A few years ago, before everything went to hell, we had a... colleague?

BASIRA

A friend.

MELANIE

Meh. A guy called Jonathan Sims. He was the archivist for the Magnus Institute, and we all ended up working there at one point or another.

GEORGIE

Ahem.

MELANIE

Except Georgie.

MELANIE

So anyway, he got wrapped up in bad supernatural stuff the same as we did, but he got it the worst. It turned him into a kind of uh...

SAM

External?

MELANIE

What? No, shut up. He turned into... something that sent the whole world to hell. Eventually, he managed to undo it, but it killed him and... someone else we cared about.

BASIRA

Well, they disappeared.

GEORGIE

At the exact same time that the building they were in completely exploded. Dead doesn't feel like much of a stretch.

BASIRA

I mean you say that but-

GEORGIE

Let's not do this again.

Beat.

SAM

So you think this archivist might be the same as your archivist?

GEORGIE

Maybe. The eye stuff... The monologues... It's definitely similar.

BASIRA

Where did your archivist come from?

SAM

I mean, we don't know exactly-

BASIRA

Best guess.

SAM

We have- Had a Magnus Institute in my world but it burned down about twenty-five years ago.

BASIRA

Lucky.

SAM

I guess. But me and Alice, my Alice, went poking around in the ruins and we think we might have accidentally disturbed it.

MELANIE

Do you know how long it had been down there?

SAM

No, but it must have been trapped a long time. Since the place was destroyed at least. Maybe longer.

BASIRA

Hm. the timelines don't work.

MELANIE

Assuming time is the same everywhere, which we already know isn't the case.

BASIRA

True.

GEORGIE

The Institute, the one in your world, did it still serve The Eye?

SAM

I don't know what that means.

MELANIE

Did it do a lot of collecting stories, taking statements?

SAM

...No. No, I don't think so. It was more into Alchemy.

GEORGIE

Alchemy? What, like lead-into-gold?

SAM

More like lead+fear into gold but yeah, sure.

BASIRA

Interesting.

SAM

So then, what's this eye you said your institute was working on?

BASIRA

Oof, lots to unpack there...

MELANIE

Not it.

BASIRA

Fine. So, uh, in our world fear was a like a supernatural force okay and it was chopped up into fourteen entities.

MELANIE

Fourteen and a half really...

BASIRA

Whatever. The point is, each one was tied to a specific kind of fear, like... the Corruption was all disease and filth and bugs, or the Spiral was kind of like madness and not trusting yourself. Or the Hunt which-

She stops.

BASIRA

(more reserved)

You get the idea.

SAM

And your Eye was one of these entities?

GEORGIE

The Eye was a power yes. One obsessed with being watched.

MELANIE

But that's not how it works where you come from is it?

SAM

I don't think so. My job is- was, categorizing these things for the government and we had a whole index of way more specific listings.

BASIRA

Can you give me an example?

SAM

Uh, sure. So like, when I was a kid I applied for the Magnus Institute's gifted kids outreach program and... well long story short I saw a man's skeleton, claw its way free of his body.

MELANIE

Sounds like Flesh to me.

BASIRA

Maybe buried?

GEORGIE

So, what did your... index say about it?

SAM

Oh uh, I think it was something like:
Alchemy cross referenced with
human bones or something-

MELANIE

Okay...

SAM

-but that's not the one I was thinking
about. That was just the set-up.

GEORGIE

Go on.

**3. INT. MEDICAL WARD – AFTERNOON, CLEAR (TAPE
RECORDER)**

SAM

So, going through that, left me with a
real phobia. Of skeletons. Not
surprising, really. I get why it was
kind of funny. At least, why everyone
always laughed when I told them, so
after a while I just stopped telling
them.

It makes sense. I mean, we see
skeletons as kind of goofy, right?
Dancing cartoon bones and cheesy
Halloween decorations. If people
have seen a real one, it was probably
cleaned, polished and hung up in a
museum somewhere. Not many
people have seen them fresh and
bloody, with fat and muscle still
clinging to them.

As a kid, the phobia was really intense. I don't know how many Halloween meltdowns my parents had to deal with over the years but I never told them what happened at the Magnus Institute. I didn't think they would believe me and now I'm certain they wouldn't.

Even now, I can see you smirking, and I do get it. But handing the other kids a cheat code for bullying you is a bad idea so by the time I was in my mid-teens I'd learned to hide it, just calling myself a 'bit of a scaredy-cat'. I still had to steal myself when October rolled around, but it generally didn't affect my life as much as it had when I was younger.

Then I started training to be a lawyer. I went corporate, nothing sexy like a barrister. I'd never had a calling so I thought I might as well make good money while doing something that I at least found mildly interesting. Anyway, it takes years to qualify, even after finishing your degree and taking all the courses, so I took a job as a paralegal at Akman Blane. It wasn't what I expected.

There were three others on my team. Natasha Merrell, Anastasia Russing and Anthony... Something, I forget his last name. As soon as I met them, I knew we weren't going to get on. My parents were pretty well-off, all told, but these three were something else. Every one of them

was there because of some family connection and none of them had any doubt about where their career was going.

Natasha was occasionally kind to me, in a 'charity case' kind of way, but as far as the other two were concerned, I might as well have been something they scraped off their shoe and on top of all the rest of the pressure that comes with working as a paralegal, it didn't take long for it to start getting to me.

Six months in and I was already getting hit with holy trinity of insomnia, depression and burnout. Then Halloween came around. One of them, I think it must have been Anthony, went around taping little cartoon skeletons to all the monitors. It wasn't aimed at me, I hadn't been stupid enough to tell any of them but I, uh, reacted badly.

I don't remember what happened, exactly, but I knew it ended with me crying at my desk. Natasha asked me what was wrong and... I don't know, maybe it was because she was occasionally nice to me, but I ended up telling her. She nodded, very sympathetic, and said she'd get Anthony to take the skeletons down. He did, and that was the last I heard of it.

Until about a month later, when Anastasia asked me to help her get a ream of paper down from the top shelf of the stationary cupboard. It wasn't a suspicious thing to do. She couldn't have been more than five foot two, and it wasn't the first time she'd asked me to fetch something. So, it came as a complete surprise when the door slammed shut behind me.

The cupboard was shallow enough that it didn't have a light and as I was plunged into pitch darkness I could hear three distinct voices giggling to themselves. It was only as I turned to open it that I saw what was waiting for me.

Pinned to the inside of the door was a glow-in-the-dark paper skeleton, you know the ones with those pale green bones that stand out in the gloom? I froze, terrified. I wanted to scream, but I choked it down. I knew the reaction they wanted, and however close I might have been to a breakdown at that point I was damned if I was going to give them the satisfaction.

Then something changed. I don't know how to describe it exactly. It was like the fear inside me, mixed with something, became something entirely new, not just inside me anymore.

I screamed when the skeleton began to peel itself off the door. Its two-dimensional grin opened wide as its legs flailed, stretched and spasmed, dancing like in those old cartoons. And it reached out its arms towards me.

It couldn't have been more than ten seconds between my scream and when our boss, Jean Pearce, pulled the door open, but apparently my face was already covered in papercuts.

4. INT. MEDICAL WARD – AFTERNOON, CLEAR (TAPE RECORDER)

SAM

So yeah, I don't know how that fits into whatever system you use for these things...

MELANIE

It doesn't.

BASIRA

Anyone else clock when it turned into a statement?

SAM

What?

MELANIE

You think it's nearby?

GEORGIE

I don't think so. The squad has definitely been more... eloquent

since it arrived but it seems to be just a general effect near the zone.

BASIRA

So far.

GEORGIE

Hmmmm.

MELANIE

I'm guessing you didn't stay in that job much longer?

SAM

I tried, but my nerves were shot. A week later David pulled me into his office for the 'not everyone can handle the pressure' talk and I was "encouraged to move on" right out the door.

Beat.

GEORGIE

Anyway, the point is that regardless of whether this Archivist is John or not, it's not working the same as it did before.

SAM

I don't even know if it's quite the same as it was in my universe either.

BASIRA

What do you mean?

SAM

Well, the eyeballs are new for one. I'm wondering if this "Eye" thing you have has changed it...

BASIRA

Had. It's gone now.

GEORGIE

Unless having another Archivist changes that.

Beat.

BASIRA

Well shit.

GEORGIE

Yeah. So given all that, if anyone wants out now is the time because either way, this is going to get messy.

Beat.

BASIRA

I'm still in.

SAM

And it's not like I've got anywhere else to be.

Beat.

MELANIE

You know I can hear when you're all staring at me right? Obviously, I'm in. I'll just leave the shooting to you guys.

Beat.

GEORGIE

Well okay then.

Beat.

SAM

So does that mean I'll be getting a gun because I haven't actually-

EVERYBODY

(except Sam)

No.

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 and edited with additional materials by Alexander J Newall, with vocal edits by Lowri Ann Davies, soundscaping by Tessa Vroom, and mastering by Catherine Rinella with music by Sam Jones. It featured Shahan Hamza as Samama Khalid, Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer, Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker. 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.

**To subscribe, view associated materials, or join our Patreon, visit rustyquill.com. Rate and review us online, tweet us [@therustyquill](https://twitter.com/therustyquill), visit us on facebook or email us at mail@rustyquill.com
Thanks for listening.**

The Magnus Protocol 42 – Hostile Workplace

**CATXXX-XXXXXXXX-XXXXXXXX
ERROR (Unknown Source)**

Incident Elements:

- scopophobia
- body horror (eyes)
- graphic violence
- SFX: Screaming, squishing

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

You can find a complete list of our Kickstarter backers
<https://rustyquill.com/the-magnus-protocol-supporter-wall/>

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](#),
Jonathan Sims, Dani McDonough, Linn Ci, and Samantha F.G.
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

Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Lydia Nicholas as Melanie King

Frank Voss as Basira Hussain

Dialogue Editor – Lowri Ann Davies

Sound Designer – Tessa Vroom

Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella

Music by Sam Jones (orchestral mix by Jake Jackson)

Art by April Sumner

SFX from Soundly and Freesound: JuanD20, felixblume, toefur, kooust, chris_dagorne, 1skyland, Yuval, Harrisando, sillygrizzlies, gbnelso, sturmankin, gadiraz, jameswrowles, Cornersting, CJspellfish, pfranzen, ScottStanderfer1, fordps3, iggy1345, bouncyballblue, dalexgray, wibwob, shutuplaika, ondrosik, CJspellfish, Mediasaur, richwise, misimmonsvoice as well as previously credited artists.

Check out our merchandise available at <https://www.redbubble.com/people/RustyQuill/shop> and <https://www.teepublic.com/stores/rusty-quill>

Support Rusty Quill by purchasing from our Affiliates; DriveThruRPG – DriveThruRPG.com

Join our community:

WEBSITE: rustyquill.com

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/therustyquill

X: [@therustyquill](https://twitter.com/therustyquill)

EMAIL: mail@rustyquill.com

The Magnus Protocol is a derivative product of the Magnus Archives, created by Rusty Quill Ltd. and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share alike 4.0 International Licence.