

The Magnus Protocol

**Episode 6
"Introductions"**

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Edited by Alexander J Newell**

Show-Notes are available at the end of the Transcript.

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Draft 2**

ANNOUNCER

This episode is dedicated from Eric Crabtree to LaWanda Anderson - You will always be my chipmunk and I love you always. You taught me that it's ok to seek help and know my value as a person. I spent so much time Hunting for reasons to exist and with help I learned that the reason lives inside me all along. This world shines brighter because you exist in it. I love you always.

[Intro Theme]

ANNOUNCER

**Rusty Quill Presents: The Magnus Protocol.
Episode Six – Introductions**

[Music]

1. INT. OIAR OFFICE – NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

SAM is typing away on his computer, though the rhythm of it is unsteady. He is exhausted and keeps almost drifting off to sleep before jolting himself back awake.

From her desk, ALICE starts to whistle a lullaby at him.

SAM

Not helping, Alice.

ALICE

I'm sorry, I'm meant to be helping now?

SAM

I'm going to get another coffee.

ALICE

Have you considered simply bypassing your mouth altogether and injecting the beans directly into your bloodstream?

SAM

Great idea. Why didn't I think of that?

ALICE

Not enough coffee beans in your blood.

SAM

Of course.

Beat.

ALICE

Real talk, though, if the first three coffees haven't helped, I wouldn't get another. More caffeine isn't going to make you more awake, it's just going to make you shake and puke.

SAM

(Yawning)

I'll have to risk it. I'm really struggling here.

ALICE

Oh sure. Ignore the woman who's worked nights for almost a decade. What would she know?

SAM

So what would you suggest?

ALICE

Going back in time and buying those black-out curtains like I told you to.

SAM

I know, I know, I just- we barely see the sun as it is, it feels wrong to actively shut it out entirely.

ALICE

Oh Sam. The sun is the enemy. It rules the world of light but we who dwell in darkness feel only its wrath. Get the curtains.

SAM

Yeah, maybe.

ALICE

Or get fired for falling asleep at your desk. Your call. Incidentally, did you know you make this adorable little “mlem” noise when you drop off?

SAM

(affectionately)

You really punish people for daring to be your friend, you know that, right?

ALICE

My justice is harsh but fair. Anyway, you'd best get your nap out of the way. We need you bright-eyed and bushy tailed when you meet the new guy.

SAM

Aren't I the new guy?

ALICE

Pffft. You wish. You're old news, Sam, basically a dinosaur. There's a new new hire coming in. It's all in Lena's email, which you would probably have read if you were conscious.

SAM

Is someone else leaving?

ALICE

Hope not, but this job has kind of a high turnover rate, so Lena likes to hire a couple of replacements when an old-timer leaves.

SAM

What, and just assumes one of them won't stick it out?

ALICE

She's usually right. And at this exact moment, my snoozy darling, the smart money's not on you.

SAM

What happens if both of us thrive here?

ALICE

Then we draw lots and one of you gets eaten at the Christmas party.

SAM

Well, let's hope the new guy isn't too stringy.

ALICE

Ooh, fighting words!

GWEN enters from the break room.

SAM

Hey, Gwen, you hear we've got a new hire coming in?

GWEN

Whoopdedoo.

SAM

Not you too?

GWEN

Training someone up takes a lot of time and we're massively behind as it is.

SAM

True but once they're trained up it's another pair of hands to help.

ALICE

If they stick around.

GWEN

Which they won't. Now, like I said, massively behind.

SAM

Sure, sorry.

They resume typing in silence, until the computer starts to play a casefile.

2. CYBER – N/A, N/A (999 CALL)

There is a ringing as a call comes through.

OPERATOR 1

Emergency, which service?

NEEDLES

What a fantastically good question.

Beat.

OPERATOR 1

Police, ambulance or fire?

NEEDLES

Well no-one's on fire, so probably not that one. Although they also do rescue, don't they, and this poor fellow really would benefit from a bit of rescuing right now.

OPERATOR 1

Sir, describe the situation and I can transfer you as appropriate.

NEEDLES

Hang on, I'll ask him.

The phone is moved around and held close to a man whose breathing is ragged and pained.

NEEDLES

(slightly distant)

What do we think? Police or ambulance?

VICTIM

(pained and mumbling)

...help...

OPERATOR 1

Sir? Sir are you in danger?

The phone is brought away from the victim and back up to Needles.

NEEDLES

You'll have to forgive him, he's full of needles at the moment.

Beat.

OPERATOR 1

Uh... Sir, can I please have your location?

NEEDLES

Oh, I thought you got it automatically?

OPERATOR 1

Not on a mobile so-

NEEDLES

Wonderful! I have longer than I thought. In that case, we'll have a little natter at our end and call you back once we come to a decision about which service.

OPERATOR 1

Sir, don't hang-

A scream of agony from the victim, then the line goes dead.

There computer locates the next call for the case.

Another ringing as a second call goes through to 999.

OPERATOR 2

Emergency, which service?

NEEDLES

We've been discussing it, and we're going to go with police. Final answer.

OPERATOR 2

Transferring you now.

The call is put through.

POLICE OPERATOR

Police, what's your emergency?

NEEDLES

Yes, hello Police. I've got a man here and, well, let's just say he's been quite stabbed.

POLICE OPERATOR

Are you in any danger?

NEEDLES

(Amused)

Me? Gosh no! No. I suspect he thought I was at first though. The way he postured and pulled out his little knife.

POLICE OPERATOR

Is the attacker still in the area?

NEEDLES

Oh yes, very much so. Although I really wouldn't go so far as to call him an attacker. In fact, in many ways it was an act of affection by the end. An embrace. A cuddle, even! Ha! Yes, let's call it a cuddle.

He starts laughing to himself.

POLICE OPERATOR

Are you sure you're ok? Panic is normal in these situations. Have you been hurt?

NEEDLES

Of course it hurts, how couldn't it? But I've come to rather enjoy the pain by now. All those teeny tiny holes bright and sharp...

POLICE OPERATOR

I'm going to need you to stay with me. The man, the one you said was stabbed, is he still there?

NEEDLES

I doubt he's going anywhere ever again.

POLICE OPERATOR

Is he breathing? Does he need an ambulance?

NEEDLES

Absolutely, but that isn't the real question, is it?

POLICE OPERATOR

I can dispatch an ambulance, but I need your location. Do you know your address? Do you know where you are?

NEEDLES

I know exactly where I am. I grew up here, you know. It was a decent place back then. Nice people lived here, you understand? Not like now. Now it's a dreadful place. Not safe to walk at night. I take some pride in that, actually.

POLICE OPERATOR

Sir, I need an address or a landmark. Tell me where you are.

NEEDLES

Oh the land is definitely marked now, same as me, and it feels good. It satisfies in a way I never really thought anything would. It fills that hollow, lonely hole inside quite

nicely. It's not sadism, or masochism, I tried both of those already. I think it's the fear, the look in their eyes once they realize their mistake, it just makes me want to hold them close, so I do.

POLICE OPERATOR

The injured man... Did you stab him?

NEEDLES

Ah well that's a tricky one. Sort of? In many ways he stabbed himself on me. By the time he saw the needles we were already very close. Close enough to smell his sweat and cheap aftershave. In fact, he barely had time to be afraid before we embraced. He's terrified now of course...

POLICE OPERATOR

I need to put you through to my supervisor.

NEEDLES

(suddenly sharp)

If you leave this call I shall embrace him again and I sincerely doubt he would survive.

(returning to jocular)

You know what? I'd like to change my answer. I did stab him, yes. I certainly repositioned myself to make sure he got some in his face. In his eyes. Does that count? He keeps touching them like he's going to be able to pull all the metal out but I told him it will only drive them deeper. It won't last too long, thankfully, he'll finish bleeding out any minute now,

but in the meantime that fear wafting off him as he lies there, half afraid of death and half afraid of living with what has happened to him. It's quite delightful. And it drowns out the aftershave nicely.

POLICE OPERATOR

(disturbed but keeping it together)

Give me your address and remain where you are.

NEEDLES

Do I frighten you? Mr. Operator.

POLICE OPERATOR

Is that why you called? To try and scare whoever picked up?

NEEDLES

Call it desert. But you're not afraid are you? Unsettled, off-balance but nothing more. Why is that?

POLICE OPERATOR

I guess I'm just not scared of needles.

NEEDLES

(irritated)

Not sca- This isn't some poxy blood test, some little pinprick, this is hundreds, thousands of razor sharp points pushing into your flesh. We're talking about the embrace of an iron maiden, an excruciating agony formed from a thousand tiny hurts.

POLICE OPERATOR

Sir, you're clearly not... well. And I believe you've hurt someone who

may have tried to mug you so if you give me your location I can send someone over to help.

NEEDLES

Oh, I see. You don't believe me. Yes, I suppose that makes sense. It is somewhat outlandish and that's only exacerbated by the distancing effect of the phone. Yes, the more I think on it the more obvious it is that this call was never going to give me what I was after. I wonder, though, which of the police contact centres you're hiding in Hendon? Lambeth?

POLICE OPERATOR

Excuse me?

NEEDLES

Lambeth, then and I am sure I could recognize your voice now.

Beat.

NEEDLES CONT'D

Ah, there it is. There's the fear. Not much, just a little prick but we found it in the end, didn't we?

Beat.

POLICE OPERATOR

I'm transferring you to my supervisor now.

NEEDLES

Then I'll be going. I've no interest in speaking to them, and besides, we agreed that if you left the call my friend here would have a last little cuddle before I go. I do hope speak

**again soon Mr. operator, see if we
can't find some other frightful little
pinpricks we can explore together...**

The call ends with a click.

3.INT. OIAR OFFICE – NIGHT, CLEAR (COMPUTER)

**SAM, GWEN and ALICE are all sat at their desks. Sam let's out a
noise of bemusement at the case. The others clearly weren't
listening.**

SAM

Is that it?

GWEN

Is what it?

SAM

The case. It just kind of ends.

ALICE

What sort was it?

SAM

Didn't you hear it?

ALICE

**I barely hear my own. You tune them
out after a while.**

SAM

**It was a pair of emergency services
calls.**

ALICE

**Oh, yeah, you're not getting any
closure from those. You might be
assigned the follow-up coroner's
report if something weird happens to
the body but that's pretty rare. Why,
were you enjoying it?**

SAM

I wouldn't exactly go that far.

ALICE

Well who knows, maybe you'll get lucky and they'll kill again. What was it?

SAM

Like... A guy made of needles I think.

ALICE

Needles? Is that scary? I've been working here so long I can't tell anymore.

GWEN

Maybe if you're scared of needles?

SAM

To be fair, he did sound kind of... sensitive about that.

ALICE

Huh.

LENA enters.

LENA

Good evening everyone.

ALICE

Lena! Little bird told me the new hire was coming in today.

LENA

Please refrain from referring to me as a "little bird" Alice.

ALICE

Big bird, then. So where's the fresh meat?

LENA

She is getting a cup of coffee from the break room. Her name is Celia, and I trust you will all make her feel welcome.

GWEN

We'll certainly try.

CELIA enters with a cup of coffee and a little donut.

CELIA

Lena, these little donuts are amazing! Where do you get them?

LENA

Celia, these are you co-workers.

CELIA

Oh, god, of course, I'm sorry! Hello everyone!

SAM

That's alright, we're a bit of a letdown after mini-donuts.

ALICE

Lena likes to put them out when someone new joins our little family.

LENA

Just ensure you eat them on site. Now I'll leave you all to get acquainted, I have some intake paperwork to finish. Alice, I'll have a word with you about training later tonight. Celia, come by my office once you're done here, we have some last papers to sign.

CELIA

Will do!

LENA leaves.

CELIA CONT.

So yeah! Never worked somewhere with minidonuts before!

ALICE

I wouldn't get too excited. They're probably still left over from when Sam joined us.

SAM

Well I liked them just fine.

CELIA

You're Sam, then?

SAM

Yup. Only just joined myself.

CELIA

Awesome! Actually, can I ask you a question? Your interview...

SAM

Oh my god, yeah, suuuper weird, right?

CELIA

Thank you! I was sat there like "whaaaaaat?"

ALICE

You should both be proud. Lena only tries to talk you out of it if she thinks you're worth talking to in the first place.

CELIA

Yeah. It's been a while since I had an interview but that was...

ALICE

Yeah she used to have a real problem with turnover, people would take the job and bail after a couple of weeks, so she changed up her interview style to make sure she only got people who were-

SAM

Suitable.

ALICE

Desperate.

CELIA

And I'm both, the system works! Also, I don't know if I caught your name.

ALICE

Alice. I'm the longest inmate down here, so let me know if you have any questions: where are the toilets? Do they have any sharper knives? How do I make the nightmares stop? Anything at all. And that chatterbox over in the corner is Gwen.

GWEN

Sorry, Celia, was it? It's lovely to meet you, I hope you have a good time here now if you'll excuse me I have a lot of work to do.

She returns to her typing.

CELIA

Sure, no worries. I'll be honest, I thought there'd be more people working here given the size of the building?

SAM

Yeah, no we're, uh...

ALICE

Streamlined?

SAM

Streamlined. Sure. There is an IT guy as well, though you might want to steer clear of him until you've got your bearings a bit.

Alice chuckles slightly to herself at the memory of pranking Sam.

SAM CONT'D

But mostly it's just us.

CELIA

Four weirdos in a basement reading scary stories. Dream job.

ALICE

If you say so.

SAM

Fair warning some of these cases are... They're not fun to read.

CELIA

I appreciate the concern but I'm sure I'll be alright. I don't scare so easy these days.

ALICE

Yeah, you got that hardened killer look in your eyes.

CELIA

Damn, and here I thought I'd hidden it behind a sweet and bubbly demeanor. Anyway, I'd better go

check in with Lena. Lovely to meet you all!

SAM
Lovely to meet you too!

Celia leaves.

SAM CONT'D
She seems nice.

ALICE
(thinking)
Yeah...

GWEN
Don't get attached.

ALICE
Wouldn't dream of it.

4. OIAR BREAKROOM – NIGHT, CLEAR (CCTV)

Sam is making himself another cup of coffee. He sighs to himself waits for the coffee machine to finish dispensing.

Alice enters with Celia as he picks up the mug.

ALICE
And here we reach the highlight of our tour. The breakroom!

CELIA
It's quite a sight.

ALICE
While I understand you're awed by its magnificence, I must warn you that flash photography can spook the local wildlife.

SAM

The “local wildlife” is just getting another coffee if you want in?

ALICE

Against my warnings.

SAM

It’s fine. I’m fine. I’m still adjusting to the nights, that’s all.

CELIA

I can’t say I’m looking forward to that aspect of the job either.

SAM

Has Alice tried to sell you her second hand curtains yet?

ALICE

Alice had not yet gotten to the advice section of the tour, but it was next on the agenda.

SAM

You sure I can’t get you anything, Celia? Tea maybe? I think there’s some ancient hot chocolate hidden behind Alice’s “secret” biscuit stash.

ALICE

I knew it was you, you little thief!

CELIA

Thanks but I’m alright for now Sam, honestly. I might take you up on it later.

SAM

Sure thing.

CELIA

Am I good to head back, Alice? Colin said he'd have my workstation set up by now.

ALICE

Go for it. I'll be over in a bit to take you through your first cases.

CELIA

Perfect. See ya, Sam!

Celia leaves.

Beat.

ALICE

Wow.

SAM

What?

ALICE

Wow.

SAM

What are you going on about now?

ALICE

You have got it bad, son!

SAM

Oh for god's sake Alice.

ALICE

"I think there's some old hot chocolate"? Why don't you just get her name tattooed on your arse while you're at it?

SAM

You're being ridiculous-

ALICE

“Would you like tea Celia? Coffee perchance? My heart carved from my chest and arranged on a little doily? Please, Celia, cut out my tongue so I can always be there to lick your stamps for you!”

SAM

Okay firstly, this place is making you really morbid. Secondly, if you knew anything about stamps you’d know that modern prints are self-adhesive so actually -

ALICE

Also, how do you know where I hide my biscuits.

SAM

It’s literally the same place you did when we were students – back of the top shelf in the upper leftmost cabinet. Where you think people won’t be able tall enough to see them.

ALICE

Touché. But you should be very careful about sharing such knowledge. Choco Liebnitz are simply too powerful for the common palette.

SAM

If you say so. Anyway, I need to get back to-

ALICE

Staring into the eyes of your dearest beloved?

Beat.

SAM

I'd have an incredibly witty retort for that if I wasn't so completely shattered.

ALICE

Awww! I know sweetums, I know.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

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

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Thanks for listening.**

The Magnus Protocol 6 – Introductions
CAT1RB4824-09022024-12022024
Injury (needles) -/- intimidation [999 call]

Incident Elements:

- **Needles**
- **Sadism**
- **Stalking**
- **Mentions of – mugging, implied murder**
- **SFX – pained screams**

Transcripts: <https://shorturl.at/gzF15>

This Episode is dedicated from Eric Crabtree to LaWanda Anderson, thank you for your generous support! You can a complete list of our Kickstarter backers

<https://rustyquill.com/the-magnus-protocol-supporter-wall/>

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Directed by Alexander J Newall

Written by Jonathan Sims

Script Editing with Additional Materials by Alexander J Newall

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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

Billie Hindle as Alice Dyer

Anusia Battersby as Gwendolyn Bouchard

Hattie Quinlan as Operator 1

Harry Roebuck as Needles

Tom Park as Operator 2

Joe Bence as Police Operator

Sarah Lambie as Lena Kelley

Lowri Ann Davies as Celia Ripley

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Mastering Editor - Catherine Rinella**

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Art by April Sumner**

**SFX from previously credited artists.
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