

MAG – 082 – The Eyewitnesses

Content warnings:

- Interrogations
- Abuse of power
- Police brutality
- Blackmail
- Graphic injury
- Blood & gore
- Murder

Discussions of: gaslighting, threats of violence, corpses

Mentions of: gunshots

SFX: low drone

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro]

JONATHAN SIMS

Rusty Quill presents: The Magnus Archives. Episode eighty-two. The Eyewitnesses.

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro – Continued]

[Tape clicks on.]

DAISY

Fine.

MARTIN

Sorry. I just... I feel more comfortable with it on.

DAISY

I said it was fine.

MARTIN

Yeah, right, so, um... Statement of Martin Blackwood, interviewed by Detective D– Tonner. February 18th, two thousand and –

DAISY

What are you doing?

MARTIN

I... I'm making a statement. Isn't that what you want? My statement?

DAISY

No. I just need you to answer the question.

MARTIN

Oh. Okay. I mean, y-you wanted a statement last time. About...it was... when I found Gertrude. Or at least your partner did.

DAISY

Didn't know who the killer was last time. This time it's simpler. And... And Basira's not a police officer anymore.

MARTIN

Oh. Look, y-you're sure it was him? I mean, I know, I know... but I can't... He wouldn't! **(Pause)**

I... I don't think it was him.

DAISY

You think we should be looking for other suspects?

MARTIN

Wh– N-No! No, I mean, not – Look, that tape that we gave you...

DAISY

Has a lot of distortion, some screaming and a recording of you seeing the body, you claim for the first time. Always suspicious when two suspects are each other's only alibi.

MARTIN

I told you that there was someone else there. It may...

DAISY

Which one should we be asking, by the way? The man with the knife hands or the woman trapped in your 'magic corridors'?

MARTIN

It. Happened.

DAISY

Well, if your witnesses appear back in this universe, maybe the situation will change. Otherwise, it's an easy choice: answer my question or I pin it on you.

MARTIN

Y-You can't! Th-That's not how this works. **(Pause)** Is it?

DAISY

Let me tell you how this works, Mr. Blackwood. I've got a hell of a workload, no partner, and full operational discretion to make this whole situation go away. That means you help me, or I make things very unpleasant for you.

MARTIN

But you're the police!

DAISY

So, help me stop a killer. Where is Jonathan Sims?

MARTIN

(Pause) I don't know.

DAISY

Don't lie to me.

MARTIN

I don't!

DAISY

Everyone I've talked to says you and him were close.

MARTIN

What? Did they? I mean... I mean, who said that? I, I, I guess, I mean, more than the rest, yeah okay, but –

DAISY

Did he have any other friends? Anyone outside the Institute he might have talked to?

MARTIN

I... No, I don't really... think so. I don't, don't think he had much of a life outside of this place.

DAISY

There's nowhere? No-one he might turn to?

MARTIN

He never talked about his friends, worked all hours... No. I'm sorry.

DAISY

(Sighs) Right. Get lost. Send Stoker in.

MARTIN

That's it?

DAISY

Unless you know something else.

MARTIN

What about Sasha?

DAISY

(Sighs) No sign of her body here or in the tunnels. No evidence she was the victim of violence. Maybe she saw the murder, or caught Sims smashing up the storage room, and took off. Maybe she's with him. Or he killed her, too. Either way, quicker I find him, the better for her, so if there is anything you're not telling me...

MARTIN

No. I just... Bring her back safe, okay? **(Pause)** I'll send Tim in.

[Martin leaves, the door opening and closing.]

DAISY

Tim Stoker. **(Pause)** That your name?

TIM

Yeah.

DAISY

You want me to leave this running?

TIM

No. You can turn it off.

[Tape clicks off. Tape clicks on.]

DAISY

Hm.

TIM

Huh. Seems about right. Look, just... just leave it on, or do you want to do this somewhere else?

DAISY

It's fine.

TIM

Suppose you want my statement?

DAISY

I just need anything you know on the possible whereabouts of Jonathan Sims. Anywhere he feels safe, any friends or associates he might turn to?

TIM

No.

DAISY

You're sure? Nothing that might help me find him? If you're hiding something out of some sort of loyalty...

TIM

(Laughs) Look, if I knew, I'd tell you. We haven't talked too much lately.

DAISY

And you haven't seen Sasha James either?

TIM

No. You think she's dead?

DAISY

Can't say yet. But looking at it, yeah, I think Sims killed her, too.

TIM

Sounds right. More bodies for the archive.

DAISY

You've got quite a turnover. Anything you want to tell me about it?

TIM

Yeah, don't take a job here.

DAISY

Oh... You're done, Mr. Stoker. Send in Bouchard.

[Tim leaves, the door opening and closing.]

DAISY

Elias Bouchard?

ELIAS

Correct.

DAISY

Sit.

[The chair moves as Elias sits.]

ELIAS

So, what can I do to help? You want my account? My sworn testimony? My statement?

DAISY

What is...? No. Just a couple of questions.

ELIAS

Of course.

DAISY

I don't suppose you know how to turn this off?

ELIAS

Oh, leave it running. I'm sure John will want to review the tapes when he gets back.

DAISY

So you don't think he did it?

ELIAS

Killed a man in cold blood? Certainly not. He doesn't have the stomach for it.

DAISY

People can surprise you.

ELIAS

In John's case, I rather hope so.

DAISY

You want him to be a murderer?

ELIAS

Have you had any luck identifying the body yet? **(Pause)** Well?

DAISY

I'm the one asking the questions.

ELIAS

Very well, then I suppose this interview is over. Unless you care to arrest me?

DAISY

(Pause) The victim isn't someone we have on file. Doesn't match any missing persons. Still a John Doe.

(Elias laughs)

I say something funny?

ELIAS

Nothing. Just remembering an old joke.

DAISY

Right. So. Do you know anything about the current whereabouts of Jonathan Sims? Anywhere he might be staying? Any friends he might have contacted?

ELIAS

I do.

DAISY

(Pause) Well?

ELIAS

I was wondering. Is it worth it? Operating the way that you do?

DAISY

Just answer the question.

ELIAS

Does the lack of oversight make up for the lack of support?

DAISY

What do you know about the current whereabouts of Jonathan Sims?

ELIAS

Everything. I know exactly where he is and who is with him. But I don't think I'm going to tell you.

DAISY

I can drag this down to the station if you want, you weird little freak. Maybe Sims didn't do this alone.

ELIAS

Please, Detective Tonner. You don't want this to happen in the police station any more than I do. Your superiors, exactly how aware are they of what you're doing right now?

DAISY

They know enough. They got a call and sent me down here. That's how it works.

ELIAS

And then they don't ask any questions, as long as you keep it far away from official police channels.

Except your partner leaving has made you sloppy. No notes, no proper interrogations, no back-up of any sort. You've barely collected a scrap of evidence from the scene, and made no official record of the dozens of

interviews you've done with the Institute staff. You haven't even followed up on any of the other potential suspects or leads, and shown no interest at all in the fate of Sasha James.

All you care about is where John is, because you've decided on a course of action, and you're going to follow it through.

DAISY

(Pause) If you're right, what's to stop me kicking your teeth in? No cameras down here, remember. I can always just turn off that little recorder of yours. Smash it up.

ELIAS

Very true. However, you aren't going to do that, Detective. Because of Calvin Benchley.

DAISY

What?

ELIAS

Calvin Benchley. You recognise the name, don't you Alice? You see, I know what you did.

DAISY

I... don't know what you're talking about.

ELIAS

No? The scar may have faded, but you haven't forgotten. Did it itch, just a little, when you were burying him?

DAISY

You shut the hell up, or I swear I'll kill you.

ELIAS

A genuine threat, I'm sure, but right now what you're really trying to figure out is, if I have any evidence that could make it back to your people. It seems impossible, of course – how could I? But you just don't know. So many impossible things happen in here, in this strange, musty place.

DAISY

Shut up!

ELIAS

Here's what's going to happen. I'm going to make a statement. Your statement. To prove to you what I know, and because I want John to hear it someday. And when it's over, you are going to leave. Because if you don't, I'll make sure your superiors know all about every nasty little thing you've done in the name of peace and order, and I'll make sure they are subject to the scrutiny they so desperately want to avoid. More importantly, I'll make sure they know it has all been exposed because of you. Is that clear?

(Pause) I will take that as a yes.

If you're smart, you'll go back to the police station and put forward some half-baked cover-up for what happened to your mystery corpse and leave it at that. But I don't think you are smart, so in many ways I'm excited to find out what you do next.

(Pause) Statement of Alice Tonner, regarding the crimes and death of Calvin Benchley. Statement never given.

DAISY

Don't.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

Everyone calls me Daisy. I like that because it sounds so gentle, and I'm the only one left who knows about the scar on my back. It doesn't really look like a daisy, more like a starburst, but it's what the doctor said when I got it, so that's how I've always seen it. It makes me feel strong, to know that the soft nickname everyone calls me comes from a bloody wound. And I like to feel strong. To be in control.

DAISY

I'm going to kill you, someday.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

When I was eleven, I had a best friend, and his name was Calvin Benchley. We didn't hang out at school much because his friends said I couldn't play with them because I was a girl. But every day after getting home we'd go to the nearby park and play. It was small, just a scrap of grass and dirt, but if you hopped the fence to the south you could get into the cemetery, and if you went the other way you got into an old building site. The fence on that side was broken and jagged, but it collapsed enough that it was easy to climb over it, into the half-built structure.

Our parents had forbidden us from playing there. It was collapsing, as well as being a known hang-out for vagrants and druggies. We would take turns daring each other to go in there. That day, I dared him. That's why it was my fault.

DAISY

Shut up. It wasn't my fault.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

We had been in the park, when there had been shouting from the building site. Crashes. Violence. Then a long silence.

I dared him to take a look, and when he didn't want to, I started making fun of him. So in he went. When he didn't come back, I decided he was just trying to spook me. But after fifteen minutes I decided he wasn't. I wanted to run away and get my mum, but I was frightened of getting in trouble, so instead I followed Calvin over the fence.

Inside were the first two dead bodies I had ever seen. They looked like they had attacked each other with broken glass. One lay impaled on a broken bottle, still holding the long shard of glass that jutted out of the other's throat. There was blood everywhere. I felt a rush of fear, and a strange sort of excitement.

DAISY

You can't know that.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

On a broken staircase above them, stood Calvin staring at me with vacant eyes. Standing behind him I saw something. A hunched figure. I think it was naked. I

couldn't see anything except pale flesh and the vivid red of cuts and injuries. Every inch of its body appeared to be covered in open wounds, but no blood seemed to flow from them.

The thing was utterly still, save for a lipless, scabby mouth, which moved so fast it was almost a blur, silently mouthing words that only Calvin could hear. I know they were for him, because with each movement of its jaw, the thing's long, pointed black tongue would shoot out and flick itself into his ear. He was completely expressionless as that crooked, cut-up figure whispered to him and flicked at his ear with a barbed tongue.

DAISY

No.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

Then Calvin's eyes turned to me. Without hesitation or expression he began running, sprinting right at me. I tried to get away, but he was faster, and slammed into me, pushing off my feet and into the rusted fence behind me. There was an explosion of pain in my back, as jagged metal embedded itself in my shoulder, and then it went dark. The last thing I remember before the hospital was the fierce pride on Calvin's face as he stood there.

No-one believed me about what happened. Calvin said that I had tripped and fallen, and that was the story everyone accepted, but after that he was different. Moody. He started getting into fights. Everyone just assumed he was turning into a teenager, but six children at my school were seriously injured or killed by the time he left for university.

All accidents, of course, nothing that would have pointed to him. But I was always careful around him, the daisy-scar on my back a constant reminder that we were not friends, that he was no longer to be trusted. I told people, but he seemed to feed on the uneasy glances of his classmates, and took great pleasure in scaring them further.

Even after school, I kept an eye on him but I couldn't believe he had never been arrested. I later got a look at his file and found out that he had been, but they'd never been able to make anything stick. He was smart and careful. We once almost nailed him for aggravated assault, but the victims changed their story and said they were the ones who attacked him.

DAISY

You've made your point.

ELIAS (STATEMENT)

Six years ago, Calvin Benchley became the first human being I murdered. I beat him round the head as he was coming out of a bar, drove him to my usual spot and shot him five times in the chest with a handgun taken from the evidence lock-up. He didn't beg for his life. He didn't say a word. I don't think he even recognised me. He was harder to get rid of than the vampires, but I managed it.

And nobody asked any questions at all. He was a scumbag, and nobody wants to risk getting a Section 31. He was the first human I dealt with like that, but he certainly wasn't the last.

ELIAS

Do I need to go on, Detective Tonner?

(Pause) Good. Feel free to see yourself out. If you take any action against myself or this Institute, I will ensure the police become aware of your crimes in a way that cannot be ignored or covered up.

I leave the matter of Jonathan Sims up to you, though I will not tell you where he is. I suggest you close the case and move on, but if you find yourself unable to do so, my advice is to kill him quickly. There's no telling what he might be capable of.

[A chair is moved and the door opens.]

DAISY

One day, someone is going to kill you. I really hope it's me.

[The door is slammed behind Daisy as she leaves.]

ELIAS

Good day, Detective.

[Tape clicks off. Tape clicks on.]

MARTIN

– but she looked like she'd seen a, well, you know...

TIM

So?

MARTIN

So, I'm just saying, she spends all that time in there with Elias, and then leaves like that? Maybe he told her something.

TIM

Or maybe she just hates it here. Like a normal person.

MARTIN

Maybe they said something about Sasha, y'know?

TIM

She's dead, Martin. Come on! Even *you're* not that blind. He got her, too.

MARTIN

Don't you say that. Don't you *dare* say that!

TIM

I didn't. It was that detective. Y-You try talking to her about it?

MARTIN

She didn't care. Just wanted to know where he was.

TIM

Makes sense.

MARTIN

No. No it doesn't! Nothing about this makes sense!

I don't know who that old man was, but John would *never* hurt Sasha.

TIM

Fine. If it wasn't him, it must have been that thing we saw.

MARTIN

It was only for a second. And what with that weird finger guy, and the door... I mean, it d-didn't look like her.

TIM

It did. You know it did. Maybe it ate her. Maybe it was her. Maybe she was always some messed up mutant and we just never noticed. Could have been 'Michael'. I mean, it basically told us it was working with John. When you disappear and there are more than three different ways you might be dea—

Look, I'm sorry. It's just this place. **(Sigh)** Bad things happen and eventually you don't come back.

MARTIN

T-Tim...

TIM

I'm going to go lie down.

MARTIN

Tim, we've got to talk about this!

[The door opens as Tim leaves.]

MARTIN

(Sighs) Huh.

(Calling after) Tim? Tim, did you turn the reco—

[Tape clicks off.]

[The Magnus Archives Theme - Outro]

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