

MAG 200 — Last Words

Content Warnings

- Character death
- Fire & explosions (including SFX)
- Building collapse
- Physical violence (including SFX)
- Pleading
- Arguments
- Vocalised suffering (including crying)
- Explicit language
- Discussions of: death, mass death/suffering, existential dread
- Mentions of: war, suicide, blood, alternate realities, blades
- SFX: insects, lots of static and distorted voices, high-pitched noises

ALEXANDER J NEWALL

Hi everyone, Alex here with a couple of words ahead of this, the final episode of *The Magnus Archives*. Firstly, we wanted to take a moment to thank everyone who helped us get here; all the cast, crew, volunteers, fans, and friends we've had working with us over the years. Making something on this scale is only ever possible when a *huge* number of dedicated people work together, and we never could have made it all the way to episode 200 without everyone involved. So thank you. Secondly, we wanted to thank *you*, the listener. If you're hearing this then you have probably listened to a lot of *The Magnus Archives*. It has been an honour, coming on this journey with you and we hope you'll stick around and join us on other shows across the RQ network.

Thirdly, you may be wondering what happens with Magnus now. Well, no need to panic, we still have a whole roster of post-season content to come out via our normal release schedule, along with additional Patreon content and other things besides. Not only that, but from 5pm GMT, Thursday 25th of March, that's pretty much right now if you're listening to this at release, we are going to be streaming a little digital shindig as some cast and crew drop by to celebrate the end of the show. So be sure to check that out at twitch.tv/rusty_quill. That's all for now. Thank you so much from everyone at Rusty Quill and we hope you enjoy the final instalment of *The Magnus Archives*.

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro]

JONATHAN SIMS

Rusty Quill presents... *The Magnus Archives*. Episode two hundred: "Last Words."

[Theme finishes]

[Tape clicks on]

[The Panopticon's main chamber: In the background, swirling air can be heard; an unpleasant shifting tone; and a slow pulsing tone]

[The sound of Jonah's distorted voice fills the room; everything noise here reverberates similar to a vast domed church]

JONAH (BACKGROUND)

—and whispers deep within her mind those bitter thoughts that make her hate herself and those that reassure but cannot hide their secret loathing that will

leak and spread from tongues that mumble just outside the edge of hearing
things he knows will be his fate for all his efforts to protect himself and—

[Footsteps on marble]

ARCHIVIST

Jonah Magnus!

(Beat)

**[Hissing static rises; mixed with glitches and statics of the
'smite static']**

Ceaseless Watcher, you know why I am here.

Release him.

[The sound of a body landing hard on the floor]

**[Statics crescendos — without the smite glitch — and then
fade away]**

**[The shifting tones of the Panopticon fall away, while the pulse
become calmer]**

(Beat)

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

Jonah Magnus.

(Jonah speaks using Elias' normal voice, without any distortion)

JONAH

(Groggy) John? I-I-Is that you? Uh, I, I was having the most wonderful dream...

ARCHIVIST

(Icily) Get up.

JONAH

What's—? Wh-what's going on? Where—?

[Jonah slowly gets up as he talks]

[The Archivist draws a knife]

JONAH (CONT'D)

Oh. I-I see.

ARCHIVIST

It's over.

JONAH

Is it? **(sigh)**

Yes. Yes, I suppose it must be.

(Tired exhalation)

Where's Martin? I rather thought he'd be the one to do the deed.

[A clink from the knife]

JONAH (CONT'D)

Ah, I see. Going it alone are we? Heh. Probably for the best. Empathy only holds you back in the end.

ARCHIVIST

You've failed.

JONAH

Have I?

ARCHIVIST

Immortality. It's impossible. Even without me, nothing escapes entropy. Not forever. Not even fear.

JONAH

Yes...

Pity.

I suppose I always knew that, deep down. But it was *wonderful* while it lasted. I've seen more than I could have lived in a thousand lifetimes, and every moment was so—

ARCHIVIST

Shut up!

(Emotional) It ends now, all of it. I am going to take this world that you used me to create, and I am going to burn it out. It's the only way. I'm going to leave it a barren, lifeless void, cold and unafraid and then finally, when everyone's gone, and I am all that's left, I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I'll be leaving these *things* that you serve trapped and starving in their own private hell.

JONAH

...That we serve.

ARCHIVIST

Not for much longer. I wonder if they're even capable of fearing their own ends.

I look forward to finding out.

JONAH

Uh, L-Look, John, a-as fun as all this melodrama is, enough is enough. We both know you that don't have it in you—

[Footsteps as the Archivist moves in to deliver a solid punch]

ARCHIVIST

That was for Sasha.

JONAH

J-John, wait!

[Another blow]

(Jonah gasps)

ARCHIVIST

For Tim.

JONAH

(Afraid) P-Please John!

[Another solid blow]

ARCHIVIST

For Gertrude, and all the others.

(Jonah coughs, winded, his breathing laboured)

JONAH

(Pitiful) P-Please John... (coughs, wheezing breaths) I don't want to die.

ARCHIVIST

Neither did they.

JONAH

(Soft, terrified) No, no... N—

ARCHIVIST

But no-one escapes at the end.

[The Archivist stabs deeply]

(The Archivist makes a cry of effort, and grunts a few times as he pushes the blade further in)

(Jonah makes extended sounds of choking and gurgling pain)

[The Archivist removes the knife, and the body slumps heavily to the floor]

JONAH

(Wetly, indistinct) Good... luck.

(The archivist gasps)

[The knife rings out as it hits the marble floor]

[Statics of all kinds start to rise; glitching electric sounds from all sides; there is a high-pitched tone that keeps rising as the Archivist reacts]

(The archivist cries out, his voice now distorted)

ARCHIVIST

(Pained)—the flaying of skin... burning, retching on the smog of... hide, hide, hide... it is not real but still it comes to... falling through the pitch black daa-aaaaaargh!

(Pain noises intensify until the Archivist finds ...control)

[Crackling statics fade; in the background the Panopticon's pulse and shifting tones are more active]

(The Archivist takes some shaky breaths; from now, his voice always has some distortion)

[The doors slide open, followed by tentative footsteps]

ROSIE

Mr. Magnus, sir? Is everything alright? I, I thought I heard th—

ARCHIVIST

Rosie. You may go.

[Sliding doors close]

ROSIE

I, uh, I, I'm sorry Mr Sims but I was—

ARCHIVIST

(More distorted) You are dismissed.

ROSIE

Right. Y-Y-Yes. Of, of course. Sir.

[Footsteps, and the doors slide open]

ROSIE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

[Footsteps fade as the doors close]

[Hissing static starts]

(The Archivist gasps in pain as the power tries to reassert itself)

**[The Panopticon noises fade away — aside from the ever-present
slow pulse; the sounds of strange animals in a primordial forest
fade in]**

[Hissing static ends]

ARCHIVIST

Once upon a time there was fear. Old fear. Primal fear. A fear of blood and pounding feet, a fear of that sudden burst of pain and then nothing. And that fear was nothing. Went nowhere. Knew not what it was.

Then it became. Or perhaps it always was and simply entered. But fear was here and true and was itself, and it hungered. It wished to know more. It wished to feel more. It wished to **be** more. And to those things that hurried through the grass, that shivered through the night in their burrows and their

caves, because they knew the dark held flashing talons and shining eyes, they fed the fear. It was blunt and it was simple, but still it was solid enough to satisfy. And the thing that was fear was sated and content.

Then came minds that knew it differently. They grew slowly, over the millennia; inch by inch they found new things to dread. The fear of their own end, of the things that lived in the darkness, became a fear of the darkness itself. And as they grew to know what it is that they saw, to give it names, and struggle at learning, so too did they learn to fear that their eyes might deceive them, or show them too much.

[More familiar night insects start to fade in]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And as they learned to know their friends and kin, so too did they learn to fear the unknown figure, the coming of the stranger, and the silence when they were alone.

[The primordial animals fade out]

[A thunderclap; then the fizzing of igniting fire]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And when they found fire, that bright ignition of home and hope and progress, the thing that was fear gorged itself on a newfound terror once again.

[The fires gain size, while thunder echoes in the background]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And as these tiny, strange minds grew and learned, they did something new. They began to take their thoughts, their instincts and their horrors, and they

crystallised them. They gave them sound and form and shape to share them. And as they did the thing that was fear felt itself began to tear, to crack and fracture along a thousand unseen fault lines.

[Cracking and breaking; turning into writhing, squirming]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

It bled and warped and multiplied, and could no longer see itself as once it did. It could never be whole again.

But within these forms were freedoms, new and wonderful dreads to push and explore, new muscles to flex. The joy of oozing, crawling pestilence as minds distrusted their own corrupted bodies. The satisfaction of surrounding them, suffocating them, reaching down into them and drinking in their panic as breath failed them.

[Thunder and night insects fade away; squirming remains]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And as they grew to learn their place within the world, the pathetic meagreness of their own existence, they could not spin a story rich or grand enough to fully hide their own awful insignificance, lost and alone in the terrible greatness of the universe. And by the time these minds had reached a point of intricacy to lie and scheme and puppet one other, they had also learned to conceive of war.

[Drumbeats pound a sinister call]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And as the things that were fear hovered at the edge of the world, the flowing horror of these minds nourished them, swelling some and withering others, pushing and pulling the shattered, swirling mass of terror into ever newer and undiscovered forms.

[Soft whispers join the drums]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And something else began to happen. Some minds did not simply recoil from them and feed them. Some seemed almost to call them, to court them, to hunger for them in return. Minds that saw the faces of the things that were fear, and were compelled as much as they were repulsed. Whether or not they knew what it was they did, they called out. And they were answered.

[Drums fade leaving behind the whispering]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

Time is different for fear, and it cannot be said exactly who was the first to open themselves and be filled with the power of terror. A hermit, huddled in a pitch-black cave through winter, who emerged and brought the depth of night with him wherever he trod. A pestilent chieftain who found her breath sloughed from her body and rotted whatever it touched. A warrior driven from their village, who found their face as smooth and shifting as the sands of their home. Which came first does not matter, the unseen gap was bridged, and the thin veil between the world that was and the things that were fear had been torn, ever so slightly.

[Whispers are joined by ethereal singing; the same music that once
came from the Coffin artifact]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And with this tear, they grew stronger, bolder, pouring themselves into the world and creating monsters.

[Whispers start to fade away]

[Growls from different directions; a rattling and hissing cry; deep pulsing sounds; all sound... familiar]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

Long things that wore you like a suit, smiling things that stripped you from your bones, unseen things that watched and watched and watched and never left you. And with each new creation, each new servant, the Fears reached further and fed the things that made them.

And with this newfound power came greed. The hunger for more, the unformed, unfocused, but impossibly huge desire to exist. To join the minds that gave them shape and purpose, and finally drink their fill 'til they were one and the same. They had no concept of how, or when, or even why, but they needed it. They needed it.

[The ethereal singing comes to the fore]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And so the things that were fear began to sing, to draw ever more multitudes to them, to shape them and push them and beg them for freedom. For existence. But though they jostled and pushed and fought to emerge, they

could not. For they could not conceive of what or where they were beyond the words and images the minds below could give them.

[The creature sounds fade away; the singing continues]

[The clacking sounds of looms and gears fades in, as well as the dark electric sound of the void at Hill Top Road]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

But there was one, the part that some would call the Spider, that had been given a gift beyond all its brethren. The minds that feared grew suspicious of their own schemes, of connections and consequences, and over time these suspicions became threads, then webs, then nerves that granted the Spider, the Mother-of-Puppets, the Hidden Machination, a mind of its own; to plot and plan and draw its own connections, its own conclusions. Wheels, within wheels within wheels... It would not, could not tell its other parts, for were they even able to understand such things, which they could not, to trust, to *share* in such a way ran counter to its very essence.

[The singing fades away; the sound of the unpleasant shifting tone from the Panopticon fades in, growing clear]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

And so it drew its plan to escape not only this ephemeral cage of non-existence, but even the very reality into which they might break, and it chose its fool: The Great Eye, the most unwise of all the fragments, forever seeking and consuming knowledge that it could not comprehend.

It played and twisted and through The Eye brought about a new world, a wide and unending vista of terror and agony, and the place from which it might

spread, and spin another web far grander than anything conceived of in the minds that birthed it.

Finally, it would find its escape and with it... apotheosis.

[Hissing static starts]

[The mechanical clacking and void fades away; the Panopticon pulse becomes louder, while the shifting tone is a little quieter and lower]

[Hissing static ends]

(The Archivist exhales deeply)

ARCHIVIST

No. It won't. It has only found its end.

[The doors slide open]

MARTIN

John?

[Footsteps as Martin runs in]

John!

ARCHIVIST

Martin, what are you doing here?

MARTIN

Oh thank god. Just, just, just stop what you're about to do, okay? I know that you think that a—

(Beat)

[Doors close behind Martin]

What's that?

ARCHIVIST

Elias... Jonah Magnus.

MARTIN

(Shocked) He's— You didn't—?

ARCHIVIST

I'm sorry Martin.

MARTIN

(Horrified, scared) You didn't. N-No. No, no, no, no, no, no. No! This isn't—
You can't—

ARCHIVIST

(Calm) I did. I am.

MARTIN

Why?!

ARCHIVIST

You know why. I can't let them out.

(Martin sobs)

I can't! Not again.

MARTIN

Oh, what have you done, John!

ARCHIVIST

Go tell the others. It's over.

MARTIN

N-No... you don't understand!

ARCHIVIST

What?

MARTIN

I'm sorry, John. I'm, I'm so sorry... I, I saw you had gone and... and I knew that you-you couldn't help yourself. You never could! I knew you'd lied to me, that you were going in alone...

ARCHIVIST

Martin? What did you do?

MARTIN

(Shaking) I told them to go early. To do it straight away and... I'd keep you talking. Until they were done.

ARCHIVIST

(Calm) Oh Martin.

MARTIN

I didn't think you'd go through with it! Not without me! I can't believe you'd do this! That you'd leave me like this! You swore to me! You swore to me, you bastard!

ARCHIVIST

Martin! I'm still here.

MARTIN

Are you!? How much of you is even left now?

ARCHIVIST

It's still me, Martin. I'm still here.

MARTIN

How would you even know?

ARCHIVIST

...I'm sorry Martin, I am, but it's done. You can hate me, you can scream at me, but it won't change anything. I had to do this. And you promised.

MARTIN

(Angry trembling) Don't you dare say that. Don't you dare!

ARCHIVIST

(Calm) I'm sorry. We can still be together, here. Until it's over.

MARTIN

You're not listening! You never listen! They are down there fighting those things and lighting it right now!

ARCHIVIST

It's fine, Martin, I'll call off the servitors.

They can't light it if they don't have... they don't...

[Pats clothing]

[Hissing static start]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

W-wait a—

Oh... Oh no.

[Hissing static ends]

[A high-pitched wave of ringing then an enormous, distant explosion, and the creaking of distressed metal]

(The Archivist screams in distorted agony)

MARTIN

John!

ARCHIVIST

Martin, I— AH! AH!

MARTIN

John, we have to get out of here!

ARCHIVIST

(Gasping) I... I can't. Martin, I'm part of this place.

[Static distortions and crumbling building, creaking distressed metal]

(The Archivist winces in pain)

MARTIN

Goddamn it, John!

[Another wave of distant destruction]

ARCHIVIST

(Enduring) Aaaaaaargh!

I can... withstand it. I just need to hold... on...

[A closer, clear explosion resounds]

MARTIN

(Gritted teeth) Come on, John! Come on!

[Sound of tapes rewinding; building in distress; static screeching]

ARCHIVIST

(Struggling) No! I can feel the pull... The Web, the tapes, it wants—

No! I won't let it!

MARTIN

For god's sake, John, move!

ARCHIVIST

I can't!

Martin get out of here!

[A nearby collapse]

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)

What's going to be left of me after this, you can't see that.

[Distressed metal creaks]

(An inhale of pain from The Archivist)

MARTIN

No!

ARCHIVIST

I can't protect you from this. Go!

MARTIN

I'm not leaving you trapped here killing the world while I watch!

ARCHIVIST

If you stay, you'll die!

MARTIN

Then I'll die!

ARCHIVIST

No!

[A high-pitched tone; crumbling stone and building as another explosion rips through; fires in the background]

(Martin cries out, then starts sobbing)

[A glitching noise]

ARCHIVIST

Martin please! I can't lose you. Not like this...

(Martin sobs)

MARTIN

Tough! Okay? Where you go, I go!

ARCHIVIST

That's the deal...

[Panopticon continues to collapse and burn; a sharp static whine]

Okay.

MARTIN

What?

ARCHIVIST

Do it! The knife's just there. Let them go.

MARTIN

(Tearful) I'm not going to kill you!

ARCHIVIST

Cut the tether. Send them away.

Maybe we both die. Probably. But maybe not. (**Emotional**) Maybe, maybe everything works out, and we end up somewhere else.

MARTIN

Together?

ARCHIVIST

(**Emotional**) One way or another. Together.

(Martin takes sobbing breaths)

[A metallic clink as Martin picks up the knife]

MARTIN

I don't think I can...

ARCHIVIST

It has to be you. The Eye won't let me do it.

MARTIN

(Sobbing) Are you sure about this?

ARCHIVIST

(Humourless laugh)

No.

But I love you.

MARTIN

I love you too.

[Kiss]

[Martin stabs deeply]

(The Archivist gasps in pain)

(A tearful sob from Martin)

[The building still afire; statics start; and then the sound of many tapes rapidly unspooling and rewinding into a rising crescendo that culminates in an enormous white-noise glitch created by them]

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[Sound of shifting rubble and debris; birdsong can be heard faintly]

BASIRA

Huh.

[Rubble and mic noises as Basira reaches in and grabs the tape recorder]

[The birds get louder, while sounds of construction machinery are in background]

(Close) Still works.

GEORGIE

(Calling) You found something?

BASIRA

Just one of the old tape recorders.

[Footsteps as Georgie gets closer]

GEORGIE

God, tough little bastards, aren't they?

BASIRA

Yup.

[Footsteps on rubble as Basira and Georgie walk to Melanie]

MELANIE

(Calling) No luck?

GEORGIE

No, still no sign of them.

BASIRA

No bodies, though. That's a good sign, maybe?

[Basira and Georgie reach Melanie]

GEORGIE

Maybe.

MELANIE

Huh.

(Beat)

Maybe it's time to accept that they're gone.

BASIRA

Hm.

MELANIE

And, honestly, it's probably for the best.

I mean, I just don't think people would exactly be understanding. You remember what happened when they found Simon Fairchild?

GEORGIE

Yeah...

MELANIE

And he's not just some powerless left behind avatar, you know? We're talking about 'The Archivist'.

BASIRA

(Sharp) Yeah okay, you've made your point. **(sighing)** Would just be nice to know for sure.

GEORGIE

All we can do is hope.

BASIRA

I suppose.

(Beat)

(Georgie sighs)

GEORGIE

We should go. It'll be dark soon, and we still need batteries for the nightlights.

MELANIE

And I'm sure Rosie's keen for us to take the Admiral back off her hands.

GEORGIE

She's alright, he's calmed down a lot.

MELANIE

Thank god for tinned tuna.

(Beat)

Come on.

[Melanie extends her mobility cane]

BASIRA

What do you want me to do with this?

GEORGIE

Leave it. We're done with tapes.

MELANIE

Want me to smash it?

BASIRA

I think... we can probably just turn it off.

MELANIE

Okay.

[Footsteps and cane taps as Melanie and Georgie walk away]

(Beat)

BASIRA

If anyone's listening... Goodbye.

I'm sorry, and...

Good luck.

[Tape clicks off]

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Outro]

JONATHAN SIMS

The Magnus Archives is a podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial ShareAlike 4.0 International licence. Today's episode was written by Jonathan Sims, produced by Lowri Ann Davies, and directed by Alexander J Newall. It featured: Jonathan Sims as The Archivist, Ben Meredith as Jonah Magnus, Hannah Brankin as Rosie, Alexander J Newall as Martin Blackwood, Frank Voss as Basira Hussain, Lydia Nicholas as Melanie King and Sasha Sienna as Georgie Barker. To subscribe, buy merchandise, or join our Patreon, visit rustyquill.com. Rate and review us online, tweet us at TheRustyQuill, visit us on Facebook, or email us via mail@rustyquill.com. Join our community on the Discord via the website, or on Reddit, at [r/TheMagnusArchives](https://www.reddit.com/r/TheMagnusArchives). Thanks for listening.