

MAG – 132 - Entombed

Content Warnings:

- Claustrophobia
- Emotional trauma
- Suffocation
- Crushing
- Dissociation

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro]

JONATHAN SIMS

Rusty Quill presents: The Magnus Archives. Episode one hundred and thirty-two. Entombed.

[The tape clicks on. A second tape clicks on.]

DAISY (TAPE)

It was a coffin. An old, wooden coffin. Rough, unvarnished. I could see splinters where the nails had been hammered in badly. Wrapped all around it was a thick metal chain, ending in a heavy padlock. That weird moaning was coming from inside it. It was the only sound that cut through pounding rain.

[The tape clicks off. The tape is replaced. The new tape clicks on.]

ARCHIVIST

(Sighs) Hello, Melanie. I know I said we'd wait until Basira was back, but I don't... I'm sorry. I know she won't... She'd want to do it a different way. But I

know what I'm doing. This time I do. I hope. I have her voice. I think that should be enough to find her, and I'm leaving my... I'll leave it with the tape. I should be able to find my way back to it. I think. Wish me luck. Although, I suppose if you're hearing this, then I didn't have any. I don't know. I'm... I'm scared. When does the fear go away? Anyway, I'm sorry. You too, Basira, if you're hearing this. I know you'd stop me. You'd be right to, but ... But if this goes wrong, all you lose is ... I'm not risking anyone else. And I know... I think I can get her out.

[The Archivist turns the tape off.]

ARCHIVIST

Right, you're coming with me. Let's do this one properly.

[Static rises]

No need for that. I'm willing.

[Static fades]

Right.

[Sound of archivist opening the casket and chains rattling]

ARCHIVIST (Cont.)

Stone steps. Roughly hewn. They... They keep going. (**Sighs**) Well, no point waiting.

[The Archivist descends the steps, a door shuts, then the archivist continues downwards. The tape clicks off. The tape clicks on.]

ARCHIVIST

I'm not sure how long it's been. The steps ended, eventually. There're passages, but it's very ... It's close. I'm having some trouble, but I'm going the right way. I know it. I just ... I just need to keep moving. When I stop, it starts to press on me. Just keep going.

[Tape clicks off. Tape clicks on. There are sounds of scraping against stone and earth as he moves.]

ARCHIVIST

I-I can't stand, anymore. It's not a passage, not anymore. It's a tunnel, barely that. But I'm ... I'm definitely getting closer. If I can just ...

[The Archivist struggles forward]

ARCHIVIST

My torch is broken. I didn't even drop it. It got caught against the wall. Crushed. God. I don't even know how long I've been here.

[The tape clicks off. The tape clicks on. The Archivist is still moving. It sounds slow and difficult.]

ARCHIVIST

I heard someone. He was begging for me to save him. He said he couldn't breathe. I can barely breathe. I couldn't find him, but I am not here for him. I don't even know him. I can't ... I can't see anything here. For all this place closes around me, I feel adrift, like nothing can get through the dirt and the muck and ... I still have Daisy's tape, and I still think I'm going the right way,

when I move at all. It feels like every inch costs me another scrape or bruise. I'd hoped I was beyond that, but apparently not.

(Struggling to breath) The air is heavy – soil and dust. I am very thirsty, but I know I won't die of it. I won't die of anything down here. Not ever. Not if I can't find my way out. When I first came down, I could feel it, the part of myself I left outside, but ... But it's been getting fainter, and now ... I'll try not to think about it. I don't ... don't want to stretch my mind to try and see it, in case it's not there at all. I can't afford to think about it. Not now.

[The tape clicks off. The tape clicks on.]

ARCHIVIST

(Strained) I think ... Oh God ... I think I'm ... I'm stuck.

[The tape clicks off. The tape clicks on. The Archivist struggles to free himself.

In the distance there's a thunderclap.]

ARCHIVIST

Wh-what?

[Heavy rain sounds in the distance, and singing starts to pass through the earth]

ARCHIVIST

Oh no. No ...

[He struggles to breath as the Buried squeezes him. The Buried relaxes.]

(The Archivist takes a breath.)

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ARCHIVIST

Daisy.

[The Archivist tries to move]

ARCHIVIST

Daisy!

[Pause]

DAISY

(Muffled, distant) John!

[The tape clicks off. The tape clicks on. The Archivist is still moving slowly forward.]

ARCHIVIST

Daisy, can you reach me?

DAISY

I can't ... can't see you.

ARCHIVIST

Follow my voice.

DAISY

Is that— I, I can't—

[Daisy grabs the Archivist's arm]

DAISY

Y-you're real. You're real.

ARCHIVIST

Yes. I'm here, Daisy.

DAISY

Daisy. Yeah. Daisy, that's me.

ARCHIVIST

Are you alright?

DAISY

I, I can't move. I, I can't ... and I can't ... breathe. And—

ARCHIVIST

Oh God.

DAISY

—just alone. I think, I think ... I hear this, sometimes, singing, when it's wet. Or, or scratching, trying to get out. But I don't ... I don't think there's anyone there. It's just been me, until now.

ARCHIVIST

Are you ... are you okay?

DAISY

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No.

ARCHIVIST

Sorry, obviously. Nah, I just meant ... You sound okay.

DAISY

Do I?

ARCHIVIST

I thought you might have been, uh, taken over. By the Hunt.

DAISY

What?

ARCHIVIST

The Hunt. You're a hunter.

DAISY

Yeah. Guess I was, but not here.

ARCHIVIST

No?

DAISY

No. I can't feel my blood. I could always feel it, but it can't reach me here.

Where are we?

ARCHIVIST

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The coffin. We're in the coffin. It leads to, uh ... It's got a lot of names. Choke.

The Buried. Too-Close-I-Cannot-Breathe.

DAISY

Yeah. That sounds right.

ARCHIVIST

Come on, let's get you out of here.

DAISY

C-can't move. Even if I could, there's no way out.

ARCHIVIST

It's okay, I've, uh ... I've got a plan.

DAISY

This like all your other plans?

ARCHIVIST

It's fine, I just ... I just need to find it.

DAISY

What?

ARCHIVST

(Muttering to himself) Come on, come on, where are you?

DAISY

John?

ARCHIVIST

(Still muttering to himself) Come on.

(The Archivist sharply intakes breath.)

DAISY

John?

ARCHIVIST

I know.

DAISY

The way out?

ARCHIVIST

No. I know where we are. There is no out. Not here. This is ... This is forever deep below creation, where the weight of existence bears down. This is the Buried, and we are alive. There isn't even an up. What have I done? What have I done?

DAISY

Not alone, though?

ARCHIVIST

No. No, not alone.

[Music begins to play softly, then fades out]

DAISY

John?

ARCHIVIST

Still here.

DAISY

Good, I ... Good. I want to talk.

ARCHIVIST

Okay. Um, and what do you want to talk about?

DAISY

Don't ... I don't care. I, I, I just want someone to hear me.

ARCHIVIST

Well, I'm not going anywhere.

(Daisy laughs shakily.)

ARCHIVIST

Daisy?

DAISY

Oh. I want to, but it's difficult.

ARCHIVIST

Would it help if I ... ask?

DAISY

Y-yes, alright. Do your thing.

ARCHIVIST

Um, er, how are you feeling?

DAISY

Scared. I'm scared. I've been scared the whole time here, not just when it's crushing, when it fills your mouth with dirt. It knows when to stop, or when to ease back so you don't lose it or grow numb. Leaves you terrified for when it starts again, and when it does, you're scared it'll never stop. I thought I'd never see the sky again, n-never see Basira, b-but now ... You've got out of other stuff like this. Maybe you'll get out of this and t-take me with you. But I don't know what I'll be o-outside. Th-the Hunt can't reach me here. I'm s-scared that ... that I feel more me than I have for years. Maybe all my life. The hunt was me, but I don't think I liked it. I think it just made me need it. I hurt a lot of people, and some who I shouldn't have.

Did you ever hear the story Elias told me? About what I did, how I am. He didn't get a detail wrong. The hunt, the hunger, was in me all my life, telling me who to chase and how to hurt them. I never needed to think who I was outside of that. But down here, where I can't hear the blood anymore, I don't ... I don't know who I am without the chase. I just know that I don't like who I was back outside. I don't want to be her again. I want to be better.

You know what I thought when I woke up here? I thought this was Hell. I was dead and was in Hell. And I knew I deserved it. I don't want to be a sadistic predator again, but I don't want to hobble around like some pathetic, wounded prey here. I don't know which would be worse. And I'm scared now that I won't ever get the choice.

ARCHIVIST

One thing I've learned, Daisy, is that we all get a choice. Even if it doesn't feel like one.

DAISY

I was going to kill you. You know that, right?

ARCHIVIST

I definitely got that impression, when you dragged me into the woods for an execution.

DAISY

N-no, no, no, after the mission. I was planning to kill you.

ARCHIVIST

I ... I did not know that.

DAISY

I realised you were in my dreams. R-reliving the ... this. The coffin. You were there.

ARCHIVIST

Yes.

DAISY

Didn't think it was real, not really, just my mind putting you there because I hated you, but no. One night, you turn up in a new shirt. Didn't fit you. Not your style. I didn't think much of it – just a dream. Then you come back from the States, and guess what you're wearing.

ARCHIVIST

Oh.

DAISY

Realised what was happening then. Realised you weren't human. Needed to die as soon as it was safe, never mind Elias and his insurance.

ARCHIVIST

And now?

DAISY

Don't know. I miss dreaming. You don't sleep down here.

ARCHIVIST

Daisy, you should know I'm ... If I wasn't human before, I'm even less human now.

DAISY

Yeah, well. At the moment, I don't care.

ARCHIVIST

And if we get out?

DAISY

But we can't get out.

[The Earth shifts.]

(The Archivist grunts in pain.)

DAISY

(Pained) I'm sorry. I'm sorry, John. I'm sorry.

[Tape clicks off. Tape clicks on. The sounds of shifting earth and pained breathing.]

ARCHIVIST

Daisy.

DAISY

I'm here.

ARCHIVIST

I can ... It's closer.

DAISY

What is?

ARCHIVIST

My anchor, my, uh ... a rib. I can feel—I know the way!

[They start to move.]

DAISY

What? How?

ARCHIVIST

I don't— It's like, my link is ... stronger.

[They move more quickly]

DAISY

Slow down, I-I can't—

ARCHIVIST

Don't let go. Come on, we're close. This way.

[The sound of wood.]

ARCHIVIST

Here! Here, come on, push!

DAISY

I, I am!

[The coffin door creaks open and, groaning with effort, the archivist and daisy crawl out into the office. There are many tape recorders playing in the background.]

DAISY

We're out. We're really out. I can't believe—

ARCHIVIST

Um.

DAISY

What? What is it?

ARCHIVIST

Tape recorders. M-must be dozens of them.

[The door opens and Basira storms in]

BASIRA

John, you stupid idiot! What did you think—

DAISY

Hi.

BASIRA

Oh my God.

[Tape clicks off.]

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Outro]

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Today's episode was written by Jonathan Sims and directed by Alexander J Newall.

It featured: Jonathan Sims as the Archivist, Fay Roberts as Daisy and Frank Voss as Basira.