

## MAG 158 — Panopticon

### Content Warnings

- Loud noises (including rock grinding) / static
- Violence (gun / monstrous)
- Extended gunfire
- Isolation
- Murder / Death / Loss

[The Magnus Archives Theme – Intro]

**JONATHAN SIMS**

Rusty Quill presents... *The Magnus Archives*. Episode one hundred and fifty-eight: "Panopticon."

[Theme finishes]

[Tape click on]

[Footsteps as Peter and Martin walk in an echoing tunnel]

[Faint sound of the Lonely (Peter's) static]

[They stop walking]

(Martin makes an agitated sound)

**PETER**

Is everything alright, Martin?

**MARTIN**

It's fine. Don't particularly like it down here.

**PETER**

Ah, yes, of course. Hard to trust the doors, I imagine.

**MARTIN**

**(Wry chuckle)** Yeah, well, everyone else seems to these days, so...

**PETER**

But she's still the same corridors, I suppose. I'm sure... what was his name...

Tim! Tim w—

**MARTIN**

**(Interrupting)** I would *really*. Rather not talk about it, Peter.

**PETER**

Very well. This way.

[They start walking again]

**(Beat)**

**MARTIN**

Look, are you *sure* about that map? I'm pretty certain the tunnels change.

**PETER**

Oh, don't worry about that. Ink's practically still wet. Not to mention, if they do change, well... I happen to have something that will change them back.

[Rustling]

**MARTIN**

That's a Leitner.

**PETER**

It is!

**MARTIN**

And the, um... the blood on it?

**PETER**

(Cheerfully) That's Leitner too!

**MARTIN**

(Apprehensively) ...Riiight.

**PETER**

Do you want to see how it works?

**MARTIN**

No, no, I'd really rather you didn't—

**PETER**

No, I insist! Watch.

[They stop walking]

(Long beat with no additional sounds)

**MARTIN**

(Wryly sarcastic) Very impressive.

**PETER**

I'm reading. Shush.

(Beat)

[Faint stone sliding and brick movement that gets louder]

**MARTIN**

P-Peter. Peter, there's a... Peter, I think there's something in there.

**PETER**

Mm-hmm. I'd stay quiet if I were you.

[The stone and bricks movement crescendos with rubble going  
everywhere as Not-Sasha is released]

(Not-Sasha enters with a distorted scream then some ragged gasps; its voice  
is distorted through the rest of the episode)

**NOT-SASHA**

So you finally decided to let me out, John? (Calling) Jooooohn?

(Beat)

Who's there?

(Martin's terrified breathing can be heard)

Who let me out?

Don't be shy... I just want to say thank you.

(Beat)

...alright, have it your way. Now if you'll excuse me... I have some unfinished business.

(Not-Sasha lets out a cackling laugh)

[Not-Sasha leaves with a scuttling sound]

(Beat)

(Martin lets out a shaky breath)

**MARTIN**

That — that — that — that was. Um—

**PETER**

Yes!

**MARTIN**

And it's, it's going to—

**PETER**

Make sure everyone is too busy to follow us. They'll be fine. Probably.

You could still go help them. If you insist.

(Beat)

(Martin lets out a resigned breath)

(Satisfied) Very good. Come on.

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[A quiet room]

**ARCHIVIST**

Gone *how*?

**DAISY**

Just walked out, as far as we can tell.

**BASIRA**

A couple of guards on duty vanished too.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Agitated) Vanished. *How?!*

**BASIRA**

Just left. Best we can tell, he had some dirt on them.

**DAISY**

Old friend at the prison let us know.

**ARCHIVIST**

What, and no one thought of that?

**BASIRA**

Asshole could have left at any time, but he just sat there laughing at us.

**ARCHIVIST**

No, no, this— this can't be a coincidence.

**BASIRA**

Coincidence with what?

**ARCHIVIST**

(Sputters) Martin, or someone, left me a tape. Him and Peter Lukas are looking for something d-down in the tunnels.

**BASIRA**

Do you know what?

**ARCHIVIST**

No, he called it a device.

**DAISY**

When?

**ARCHIVIST**

I-I mean, I don't— I mean... n-now? I guess? They could— it can't be a coincidence that this is when Elias chooses to make a break for it.

**BASIRA**

You think he's coming here?

**ARCHIVIST**

You don't?

**DAISY**

Let's go.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Sighs) I'll get the key.

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[Faint sound of the Lonely static]

[Martin and Peter's footsteps clang as they walk in a large  
echoing space]

**MARTIN**

What is this place?

**PETER**

The panopticon of Millbank prison. Not quite as Smirke originally conceived it, of course; Jonah Magnus made certain... adjustments.

**MARTIN**

And it's been down here the whole time?

**PETER**

Why'd you think this was chosen as the Institute's location when the prison closed? It's a significant site of power for the Beholding. From the tower in the centre of this room, you can see everything.

**MARTIN**

But there's nothing in the cells.

**PETER**

I don't mean the cells, Martin! I mean *everything*. Come on. Mind your step, this comes from an era before safety rails.

**MARTIN**

B... But I don't understand. Why are we here?

**PETER**

It's quite simple, really. I want to use the powers of this place to learn about the Extinction— what it's doing, where it's manifesting. Then we can stop it.

**MARTIN**

And you need *me* for this?

**PETER**

Correct! Without a connection to The Eye, any attempt to use it would likely end very messily indeed. But thankfully it just so happens that you hold such a connection.

**MARTIN**

So that's it. Both Lonely and Watching.

**PETER**

You must admit you're the perfect candidate.

**MARTIN**

I suppose I am.

**PETER**

There is, of course, just one other complication?

You'll have to dispose of the current occupant.

**MARTIN**

Current...

**[Martin sees; and they stop walking]**

**(Tense)** Who is that?

**PETER**

Jonah Magnus! His body at least. Sitting here, watching. Binding it all together, growing ever older. If you want to take his place, well...

**MARTIN**

I'll need to kill him.

**PETER**

Yes. Don't worry, though, I brought a knife.

**[The sound of a rolling, metal gate being opened and sliding back]**

**[Martin steps forward]**

**(Martin takes a trembling breath)**

**MARTIN**

Where are his eyes?

**[A footstep]**

**ELIAS**

Exactly where they've always been, Martin.

(Martin gasps)

Watching over *my* Institute.

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[A quiet room]

**BASIRA**

And you're sure?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yes, I'm sure it wasn't here before!

**BASIRA**

It's just that there's a lot of tapes around.

**ARCHIVIST**

And I don't keep any of them with the *key to the tunnels*. It's been left for me.

**DAISY**

And it says 'play me'. Kind of suspicious.

**BASIRA**

So Elias left it.

**ARCHIVIST**

Or Martin. Or Peter, or Annabelle!

**BASIRA**

Fine. Whatever. Could be a distraction.

**ARCHIVIST**

Only one way to find out.

**BASIRA**

We don't have time for this.

**DAISY**

We don't know that. We've no idea what sort of time frame we're on. I say play it.

**ARCHIVIST**

*Thank you.*

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[The sound of liquid being sloshed around; the Archivist's office door swings open]

**ELIAS**

(Further back) Gertrude.

**GERTRUDE**

**(Close) (Under her breath)** Damn.

**ELIAS**

**(Further back)** Did you really think I wouldn't notice?

**GERTRUDE**

I'd rather hoped you'd still be hampered with all the Dark's business.

**[A slosh as Gertrude puts a container down; Elias enters the room]**

**GERTRUDE (CONT'D)**

It's their 'Grand Eclipse' at the moment, isn't it?

**ELIAS**

**(Affected sigh)** But I think we've both come to the same conclusion about *that*.

That's why you're here.

**GERTRUDE**

Yes. Shame, really. I used to be able to torch a building in half the time. **(weary**

**breath)** Age catches us all. **(contemptuously)** Well, almost all of us, *Elias*.

**ELIAS**

You were the one so... *insistent* on staying human.

**GERTRUDE**

And no doubt that makes my death a lot less complicated.

**ELIAS**

What exactly were you hoping to achieve here? Why not come at me directly instead of burning everything first?

**GERTRUDE**

I was rather hoping the fire would occupy you while I did just that.

**ELIAS**

I see.

How long have you known?

**GERTRUDE**

About your body? Not long after you took your new host and we had that little... chat. Wasn't exactly a huge leap to the panopticon after that. The hard part was figuring out how to actually reach it. Took me the better part of a decade.

**ELIAS**

So you burn the place down, use it as cover to reach my body, and then we die together. How *poetic*. Doesn't seem like your style at all.

**GERTRUDE**

I wasn't actually planning on dying.

**ELIAS**

And how exactly were you planning on achieving that while you're still bound to the... ha. Oh, I see. Very clever. (**smirk**) I thought Eric was the only one to figure that little morsel out.

**GERTRUDE**

Knowledge has a way of surviving. *You* of all people should know that.

**ELIAS**

Quite. It was a good plan, actually. If you hadn't been so complacent about me keeping an eye out down here, probably would have worked. (**sarcastic**) Gertrude's grand retirement.

**GERTRUDE**

It still might.

Just needs a little spark, and—

[Metal clink of a lighter, meanwhile a gun cocks]

**GERTRUDE (CONT'D)**

I see. So you're finally getting your hands dirty? I must really have caught you off guard.

**ELIAS**

I suppose we both got a little complacent. Fifty years is a long time. End of an era.

**GERTRUDE**

**(Disparagingly)** I'm not really in the mood for nostalgia, Elias. You might have noticed I'm rather busy so either shoot me or—

[A gunshot rings out; Gertrude gasps and collapses]

**GERTRUDE**

Well... **(gasp)** there it is. **(gasp)** Thought it would hurt more.

**(Elias sighs)**

**ELIAS**

Pity.

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[A quiet room]

**BASIRA**

Right, so what does that tell us?

John? John?

**ARCHIVIST**

Y-yes, sorry, right. Just, uh... uh, the panopticon. It's the, um...

**BASIRA**

Design of Millbank prison, based on an all-seeing watchtower. I know. I *did* the reading.

**ARCHIVIST**

R-right.

**BASIRA**

You think that's the device?

**ARCHIVIST**

Ah yes. And I'd wager that Elias' body—

**BASIRA**

Gotta be Jonah Magnus, right?

**ARCHIVIST**

I'd say so.

**BASIRA**

(Sigh) And he's been body hopping like whatever was in Reynor.

**ARCHIVIST**

So is he going to help Peter or-or stop him?

**BASIRA**

Lukas is planning to take over the panopticon. Can't imagine he wants that to happen.

**ARCHIVIST**

But Elias put him in charge. That doesn't make any— what... Daisy are you—?

[Muffled sounds of violence]

**DAISY**

Shh!

**[Muffled gun shots ring out; distant female screams can be heard]**

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh, no.

**BASIRA**

Stay here, both of you. I'll check it out.

**[Tape clicks off]**

**[Tape clicks on]**

**[Faint sound of the Lonely static]**

**[A large echoing space; the panopticon]**

**PETER**

What are you doing here, Elias?

**ELIAS**

Oh, you needn't worry. Two against one? I couldn't stop you if I wanted to. I just wanted to be here at the end. Can a man not watch his own death?

**MARTIN**

What, wh-wh- *what*? What? How are you even *here*?

**ELIAS**

Well—

**PETER**

Don't let him distract you.

**ELIAS**

**(Faux-hurt)** Peter.

**PETER**

**(Cold)** Elias.

**MARTIN**

Both of you just, just shut up. Just give me a second to think.

**PETER**

Of course. You can take all the time in the world.

**ELIAS**

Come now, Martin. I would have thought you'd *jump* at the chance to kill me.

**MARTIN**

That's not... why wouldn't you help against the Extinction?

**ELIAS**

Because I'm a busy man. It has never been my top priority.

**MARTIN**

I don't believe you.

**ELIAS**

That really doesn't matter, I'm afraid. It's the only answer you're going to get.

**MARTIN**

If I...

If I do kill you, will the others survive?

**PETER**

(Warning) Elias...

**ELIAS**

Come now, Peter, it's a valid question. And *you* should have addressed it yourself, really.

The short answer, is *I don't know*, Martin. I guarantee it won't be pleasant for them, but I honestly don't know if their ties to the Institute are quite as strong as I may have implied. You, at least should be insulated from the fallout by your new allegiance. John... *might* be powerful enough to weather it. Melanie's well out of it, so that just leaves Basira and Daisy. And the rest of the Institute, of course, and you can't tell me you care about them.

**MARTIN**

(Indignant) Wh— of course I do!

**ELIAS**

*Do you though? Do you really care about any of them? Or is that worrying just simply an old reflex?*

(Beat)

Goodness. Peter has done his work well, hasn't he? Hm! No, the only choice I think that matters is whether *you* want to kill me or not.

**MARTIN**

I do. (**With humourless laugh**) I really, really do.

**PETER**

Then do it, Martin.

[Peter hands Martin the knife]

**PETER (CONT'D)**

We're the same, you and I. We don't need anyone else. Watching from a distance, that's always who you've been. Haven't you enjoyed it these last few months, drifting through the Archives unseen, unjudged? You'll like it in there. I promise.

**MARTIN**

Yeah.

Yeah, I think I would.

**PETER**

Then do it. Kill him and help me (**dramatically**) *save the world*.

(**Long beat**)

**MARTIN**

No.

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[The quiet room; with muffled violence in the background]

**DAISY**

(Sighing) Well?

**BASIRA**

Looks like two people. An old guy and—

**DAISY**

A woman with a scar.

**ARCHIVIST**

Oh, god, now? Why now?!

**BASIRA**

It's probably not a coincidence. From what I saw they've been toying with the rest of the Institute, but it won't be long until they're all dead or escaped.

**DAISY**

And then they're coming here.

**ARCHIVIST**

(Under his breath) Right. Okay.

**BASIRA**

Set up by the door. Try and take them when they break through.

**DAISY**

Right.

**[Movement as they take up positions]**

**ARCHIVIST**

Do ah... do I get a gun?

**BASIRA**

You ever fired one?

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Indignant)** You never *taught* me!

**BASIRA**

You never asked. Besides, we've got problems enough without—

**[A loud bang of wood as a trapdoor bursts open]**

**[Hissing static starts]**

**NOT-SASHA**

Hello, John.

**DAISY**

Oh, shit.

**ARCHIVIST**

You gotta be *fucking* kidding—

[Loud crash of a door being kicked open; Daisy and Basira fire off two shots]

BASIRA

Go!

[The team moves; not too far away is gunfire from Trevor and Julia; nearer is the clattering of Not-Sasha moving]

[Hissing static ends]

TREVOR

(Calling, distant) Jooooonny boy! (cackles)

JULIA

(Calling, distant) (Laughing) We want to make a statement!

NOT-SASHA

(Distant) Oh, hello! What's happening here? New friends?

TREVOR

(Distant) What the—

[Gunshots from Trevor and Julia]

(Not-Sasha laughs)

NOT-SASHA

(Distant) Not new friends? Even better.

**DAISY**

What the hell is that thing?

**JULIA**

**(Distant)** Ha! You see that, old man?

**TREVOR**

**(Distant)** Told ya. They're all monsters here.

**[Gunfire and muffled destruction continues]**

**ARCHIVIST**

You remember what happened to Sasha?

**BASIRA**

That's the thing that took her.

**ARCHIVIST**

It was trapped in the tunnels. It— Martin. Something's happening down there.

**BASIRA**

If he's down there with Peter, or Elias... dammit, we need to get down there.

**TREVOR**

**(Distant)** Come out, come out, wherever you are! **(sniffs)** You smell 'im?

**JULIA**

**(Distant)** Ugh. Hard to tell over the stink of *that* thing!

**[Gunfire and muffled destruction continues]**

**DAISY**

They'll follow us...

**BASIRA**

God dammit. John, go, we'll keep them busy.

**ARCHIVIST**

What? No! I—

**BASIRA**

Don't argue. Just go!

**NOT-SASHA**

(Distant) Joooohn?

**ARCHIVIST**

Fine. Just don't die.

**DAISY**

Go.

**[Sound of the Archivist running, fading out]**

**BASIRA**

This might be it.

**DAISY**

Basira...

**BASIRA**

Didn't think it would end like this.

**(Wry chuckling)** You know what, actually, I think I did.

**(Not-Sasha laughs maniacally in the background)**

**[Gunfire and muffled destruction continues]**

**DAISY**

Basira, promise me something.

**(Daisy begins to breath rapidly and aggressively)**

**BASIRA**

What? No — Daisy, no.

**DAISY**

Basira, when this is over, you need to find me. And kill me. Promise me.

**BASIRA**

No. No, Daisy, we'll figure something out.

**NOT-SASHA**

**(Closer)** You can't hide forever, John...

**DAISY**

These last months I... it was always borrowed time. Can't outrun it forever.

**BASIRA**

Daisy—

**DAISY**

Promise me!

**BASIRA**

I promise.

**DAISY**

Thanks. Now run.

**BASIRA**

Daisy—

**DAISY**

(Voice growling, distorted by the Hunt) *Run...*

[Quick footsteps as Basira leaves]

(Daisy snarls out each breath)

[Nearby, Julia cocks a gun]

**JULIA**

A-haha! There you are.

[Trevor cocks a gun]

**TREVOR**

All alone, little pup!

(Daisy's snarls grow into a full-throated, attacking grow-bark)

JULIA

Shit!

[A gunshot rings out]

[Tape clicks off]

[Tape clicks on]

[Faint sound of the Lonely static]

[A large echoing space; the panopticon]

PETER

Martin. What are you doing?

MARTIN

I'm... saying no. I refuse. Game over.

[The knife clatters to the ground]

PETER

Martin, this is not the time for petulance. There are bigger things at stake here.

MARTIN

(Laugh) You know, I think that was actually the problem. You made the stakes too high. All the little details that didn't add up... it made them *more* obvious. Exaggerated.

**PETER**

The Extinction *is* coming.

**MARTIN**

Oh, I'm sure it is! But that's not what this is about, is it? This isn't about saving the world, it's all just some power play against *him*. I might not know exactly what's going on, but I don't think I want any part of this. However much I want to kill him... I'm out.

**PETER**

But you said—

**MARTIN**

Honestly, I mostly just said what I *thought* you wanted to hear.

**PETER**

I see.

This is your doing, is it?

**ELIAS**

(Amused) Hardly.

**MARTIN**

It's not him! It's not anybody. It's just me. Always has been. I...

When I first came to you, I thought I had lost everything. John was dead, my mother was dead, the job I had put everything into had trapped me into spreading evil and I... I really didn't care what happened to me. I told myself I

was trying to protect the others, but honestly we didn't even *like* each other. Maybe I just thought joining up with you would be a good way to get killed. And then... John came back, and... and suddenly I had a reason. I had to keep your attention on me. Make you feel in control so you didn't take it out on him. And if that meant drifting further away, so what? I'd already grieved for him and if it meant now saving him, it was worth it.

When you started talking about the Extinction, though... you had me actually, for a while. But then, (**laughs sardonically**) then you tried to make me the hero. Tried to sell me on the idea that I was the only one who could stop it. And that... that never sat right with me. I mean, I mean, look-look at me, I'm not exactly a, a-a chosen one. But, by then I was in too deep. So I played along. Waited to see what your end game was, and here we are.

Funny. Looks like I was right the first time. It's probably still a good way to get killed.

**ELIAS**

(**Smugly**) I warned you, Peter.

**PETER**

But you do serve the Lonely.

**MARTIN**

Oh, I'm getting there, but, if this is the final test or something? Then bad luck. The answer's still no.

**PETER**

(**Petulantly**) No. No! This isn't fair— do you have any idea what you've done?  
You knew, he must realize—

**MARTIN**

Elias— *Jonah* had nothing to do with it.

**PETER**

No, that's not— you can't—

**ELIAS**

(**Extremely pleased**) You've lost, Peter, admit it. (**small chuckle**) He played you like a... like a... (**pleased**) cheap whistle.

**PETER**

No! Shut up.

**ELIAS**

Peter. It's time.

**PETER**

Fine!

[The Lonely static suddenly crescendos as Martin speaks; when it  
fades back to a faint level Martin is gone]

**MARTIN**

(**Fading out**) Great. Now perhaps one of you, then, can tell me what's...

**ELIAS**

It won't be that bad, Peter. (**small chuckle**) You'll see. Now, he'll be here soon, so you can leave or—

**PETER**

Oh, no. No. I'm not gonna make it easy on him. You haven't won yet.

**ELIAS**

Your choice. Just make sure to leave the door open.

**[The Lonely static rises again, before becoming faint]**

**(Elias lets out a long, triumphant laugh, then sighs, contented)**

**[Tape clicks off]**

**[Tape clicks on]**

**[Faint sound of the Lonely static]**

**[A large echoing space; the panopticon; footsteps]**

**(A few seconds of John's laboured breathing)**

**ELIAS**

Ah, John. I was almost worried. You found your way all right?

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Out of breath)** Yes. Y-yes, I did.

...How?

**ELIAS**

Suffice it to say I called you.

**ARCHIVIST**

What is this place?

**ELIAS**

Hmm. A complicated question. And time is—

[Hissing static starts]

**ARCHIVIST**

It's the panopticon.

[Hissing static ends]

**ELIAS**

(Pleased) ...My you *have* grown. Yes. A masterpiece, isn't it?

**ARCHIVIST**

Yeah. It is. And that's you then? Your... body?

**ELIAS**

Not anymore — n-not really, although if you harmed it, it wouldn't go well for me. Or any of your friends, for that matter.

**ARCHIVIST**

Maybe it's worth it.

**ELIAS**

Maybe. And I'm sure in another circumstance, you would be more than happy to take your chances for a shot at revenge.

**ARCHIVIST**

But...

**ELIAS**

But, for Martin, time is very much of the essence.

**ARCHIVIST**

Where is he?

**ELIAS**

Peter Lukas has him. Cast him into the Lonely, and with every passing moment he gets further away from you.

**ARCHIVIST**

How do I bring him back?

**ELIAS**

From out here? Impossible.

**ARCHIVIST**

You want me to follow him?

**ELIAS**

No, John. *You* want you to follow him. *I* simply want you to know that if you do so, you are almost certainly not coming back. To go into the Lonely willingly is as good as death.

**ARCHIVIST**

How do I do it?

**ELIAS**

Wasn't too long ago. And I'm sure traces of their passage still remain. Just open your mind. Drink it *all* in. *Know* their route, and simply... follow it.

**[The Lonely static starts rising in volume]**

**ELIAS (CONT'D)**

Very good.

Are you scared, John?

**ARCHIVIST**

**(Quietly) Yes.**

**[The Lonely static crescendos]**

**ELIAS**

Perfect.

**[Tape clicks off]**

**[The Magnus Archives Theme — Outro]**

**JONATHAN SIMS**

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