

EPISODE 8: ETHER? I HARDLY KNEW HER!

INT. OPENING.

NARRATOR

Within the multiverse sits a fantastic, magical realm: a place we call Hearth. This is the world of Magus Elgar. Seeking to prevent disaster, he and his colleagues hunt for Stamps, scientific tools augmented with magical power. Their tale continues here: Episode Eight: Ether? I Hardly Knew Her.

INT. VITROLO, COLOSSEUM ANTECHAMBER - DAY

NARRATOR

The capital, Vitrolo, holds the two great authorities of Hearth: the Ministry of Magi, and the Council of Nine. As a tentative alliance between magic and bureaucracy, the ministry and council hold the annual Sazastrum Tournament. Here, Magi from all over Hearth are judged through duels, showcasing their prowess and expertise, all for entertainment. Sadly, when it comes to contests of will and spirit...

SFX: As the narrator speaks, A mechanical whirr, a pained dying scream. Victus chuckles quietly echo down the antechamber.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Not everyone plays fair.

RADIO

The duel of his fate shall drain the nine! Drain the nine! Abominations!

HORATIO

The signal's getting stronger down over here! I'm barely tuned to a 100 foot radius! The Stamp must be close!

UDO

Are you sure? The radio thing still gives me a headache!

KAYLEE

(panting between words)

At least it's not a 'claw your eyes out' headache anymore!

MAGUS ELGAR

Quickly, it sounded like it came from this corrido-ohhhh...

Music sting!

HORATIO

Good lord!
(lamenting)
We're too late.

KAYLEE

Cardio.... Always with the stupid cardio... Let me catch my breath. Oh god, what **happened** to him?

UDO

Elements, I think I'm going to be sick.

Kakkay whines.

UDO (CONT'D)

You better have said that out of disgust.

MAGUS ELGAR

Elements, this is the fourth duelist he's attacked! The ministry is not going to be pleased with this.

HORATIO

I think we might need to consider making this warning public.

MAGUS ELGAR

The last thing we need is to give the Council of Nine a reason to pass magical restrictions.

UDO

The ministry and council are already strained.

(MORE)

UDO (CONT'D)

If this gets out, it'll be the
'Abracadaver' trials all over
again.

MAGUS ELGAR

Yet, the ra-dio led us right here.
Udo, Kaylee? Investigate the area,
see if there's any signs of him.
I'll take a look over the magus
with the doctor.

UDO

Right.

KAYLEE

Right.

Udo and Kaylee rummage through garbage.

MAGUS ELGAR

Poor man. After the duel, He was
too tired to put up a proper
defense.

HORATIO

Wasn't he the rock throwing magus?
I was watching the duel earlier,
quite the powerhouse, hard to
believe he was overwhelmed so
easily.

MAGUS ELGAR

Yes, Magus Aynard, a practitioner
of geomancy. He once created an
entire island to garner tourism for
his home town. Pity it took him a
few ruptured volcanos to get it
down pat. Now he lays here withered
like a piece of jerky. An utter
tragedy.

HORATIO

He looks emaciated. What horrible
magic caused this?

MAGUS ELGAR

I'm afraid it's far worse than
being bludgeoned by maces, doctor.
This man has had the **ether** sucked
right out of him!

Dramatic sting!

HORATIO

I thought you said that ether's all
around us, like... radiation.

UDO

Ether is sort of like... magical **energy**, everyone and every**thing** is a vessel for it in some way. The ether in the air is loose and direction-less. But **this?** This is basically concentrated life force. If his ether's been sucked dry, then he won't be able to do much. Magic, walking... even breathing.

KAYLEE

No sign of the Stamp. Doctor, anything on the radio?

UDO

(pleading)

Please don't check the radio.

The radio is switched on. Only static plays.

HORATIO

Nothing. It's inactive again, the signal's too faint to track.

Click. The radio is switched off.

HORATIO (CONT'D)

That proves it. Whoever is draining ether from magi is using the Stamp to assist somehow.

KAYLEE

Couldn't the Stamp be alive like the goo or the ferrofluid?

UDO

The ministry has an actual suspect this time around. We're looking for a guy in a mouth-less mask.

KAYLEE

(sarcastic)

Oh. That narrows it down.

UDO

Yeah, shame masks are in this year.

SFX: Chime in the distance. An announcer speaks indistinctly.

MAGUS ELGAR

Ah that reminds me! Udo, I've been concocting a plan that I wish to hatch, and **you** are my boiled egg!

UDO

Don't you peel those?

MAGUS ELGAR

When we arrived, the ray-dio mentioned the "dueling of fates", obviously a reference to the tournament. We needed some way to investigate if one of the duelists might be responsible. So I took the liberty of entering you ahead of time. I'd question Magus Aynard but considering he's... indisposed.

KAYLEE

Dead.

MAGUS ELGAR

Dead-ish. **You** will draw the culprit into a trap, with your very own Sazastrum duel!

UDO

My **what?!**

MAGUS ELGAR

The arrangements have already been made! This is a **perfect** opportunity to show what you've learned! Oooh I can't wait to see what you can do!

UDO

Magus, please!

MAGUS ELGAR

Why do you think we came here in the first place?!

UDO

Entertainment?! Stamps?!

HORATIO

Absorbing Hearth culture?

KAYLEE

Waiting for the tower repairs to finish again?

MAGUS ELGAR

Also those, yes. But also to prove to the ministry you're ready for a proper title, Udo! Like, **Magus** Udo! Or Junior Magus Udo! Rolls off the tongue!

UDO

I-I'm not cut out for dueling,
magus.

HORATIO

He's got a point. Look at his arms,
they're like wet noodles.

UDO

Right! Noodles can't duel, magus!

MAGUS ELGAR

Preposterous, you said you couldn't
handle a **dragon** either, and look
how that turned out.

UDO

I nearly died!

MAGUS ELGAR

This is **non-lethal** practice in the
magical arts. The arena's defensive
wards prevent deadly blows! It
won't kill you, just hurt... a lot.
If you do well enough, you might
even earn yourself a ministry rank
and a nice sack of gold! We could
always do with a fancy tower
renovation!

KAYLEE

You really could.

UDO

Why not have Kaylee sign up? She's
been getting better with her
practice.

KAYLEE

It's true! Check this out, I just
learned how to conjure up a
swirling ball of lava! **Conflatilem
Petram!**

SFX: lava spews out of Kaylee's hands.

UDO

Lava, Cool, See magus? She's got
this!

KAYLEE

Hahaha!

The spell suddenly fizzles out as another totem turns to dust.

KAYLEE (CONT'D)

Ugghh, another one?! Good thing I packed **fifty!**

Kaylee rummages through her bag.

MAGUS ELGAR

And **that** is why I didn't enter Kaylee. They only let you carry one totem into Sazastrum duels. We're not having another Tortimer the Totemer, because that was **totally cheating!**

HORATIO

Also Kaylee's not exactly the mistress of restraint.

UDO

But **you** could-

MAGUS ELGAR

Me? Udo, would you rather pursue our culprit while protecting me in a weakened state, or to have our culprit pursue **you** while protected by your fully-charged mentor?

UDO

...I'm thinking.

MAGUS ELGAR

You'll be fine, Udo! All you have to do is rough up a fellow Magus, and **we'll** ambush the hunter! You have the easy job!

UDO

...I'm the bait.

MAGUS ELGAR

The bait and a battler. A baitler!

UDO

(sigh)
I'm already regretting this.

ANNOUNCER

Would the next contestants please report to the dueling arena?

MAGUS ELGAR

Oh, that's you Udo! Quickly now, no time to waste! Onwards and outwards into the field of combat!

UDO

Wait, M-Magus!

Elgar and Udo head away.

HORATIO

And they left the body. How charming.

KAYLEE

Let's take him to the ministry security post. I'm on first name basis with the guard there.

HORATIO

Really?

KAYLEE

Oh yeah. Once I mentioned the investigation, he was totally on board.

HORATIO

I thought we were keeping it quiet.

KAYLEE

We are. He's kept it tight lipped, except for him humming his own mystery theme. Come on. The ministry should know if they can perform an... ether... **transfusion?** Is ether a liquid? Some tangible thing? I never bothered to ask.

HORATIO

It's probably one of those nebulous concepts. Do you think he'll be all right? I hate to think of how much harm our tools have caused.

KAYLEE

I've always felt like science is a very **neutral** thing: it depends on who wields it. In your case, you use science to discover the secrets of the universe. In my case, I plead the fifth.

EXT. SAZASTRUM COLOSSEUM ARENA - DAY

Crowd cheering in the background.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen! The Council of Nine and the Ministry of Magi proudly presents the Sazastrum Duels! I am your announcer today, Henry Harpsichord and I am accompanied here by a... I'm sorry I never got your name.

NARRATOR

That's fine. I get that a lot.

ANNOUNCER

Sorry, Bubba.

NARRATOR

That's not my name.

ANNOUNCER

And what a beautiful day for dueling it is, Craig!

NARRATOR

You're doing this on purpose.

(to the crowd)

Behold! The Sazastrum Duels are an ancient rite of passage that divide the warriors from the cowards. A testament to the alliance between the Ministry of Magi and the Council of Nine.

ANNOUNCER

Couldn't have said it better myself, Jim. The rules are simple, folks. Both magi cast offensive magic, in the hopes of knocking the opponent clear off their feet. Three solid hits and you are ouuuuuttta theeeeerrre.

NARRATOR

Why are you drawing that word out? ah- Let's have a look at the upcoming duelists.

UDO

People. So many people screaming at me.

MAGUS ELGAR

They're not screaming at you. Your opponent's a real go-getter!

UDO

Somehow that's worse. I-I don't think I'm ready for something like this!

MAGUS ELGAR

Relax. Just remember the *basics*, and you'll be fine.

UDO

It's not too late to call it off. Maybe next year when I'm-

MAGUS ELGAR

Udo, you've been my student for the last five years. You and I have shared the most incredible of experiences: things magi have never been able to do before! Why, in just the last few weeks, you've learned more about magic than some would in a lifetime.

UDO

Which I barely *use* because either you or Kaylee take care of things.

MAGUS ELGAR

It's time to graduate to fighting your own dragons, Udo. I can't be around to boil you out of every pot.

UDO

I'll, uh... take the compliment? Are you sure about this?

MAGUS ELGAR

You'll do fine. And just remember, there's no pressure... If you win, all part of the plan to prove yourself! If you lose, you'll be painfully incapacitated, which is also part of the other plan! Either way, it's foolproof.

UDO

No pressure.

Kakkay squawks.

ANNOUNCER

And now for all you dueling
enthusiasts... It's tiiime tooooo
(flatly)
perform some magic.

MAGUS ELGAR

Udo, It's time.

UDO

Can it **not** be?

NARRATOR

He's a newcomer to the Sazastrum
grounds, but he represents the
greatest of the fabled and feared
Malaaki bloodline. The Ministry
submits Acolyte Udo Malaaki!

A few modest cheers and applause.

ANNOUNCER

Just look at that unwavering
confidence. He's just **trembling**
with anticipation!

UDO

I wanna go home!

NARRATOR

And his opponent, the Cruncher of
Numbers, the Mistress of
Multiplication, the Divisive
Destructor, she'll add to her
record by subtracti- Who wrote
this?!

ANNOUNCER

That's my job, Bob!

NARRATOR

Of course. The Council submits, the
Mathemagician, Acolyte Pythagatha!

ANNOUNCER

Acolyte Pythagatha's got some curve
on her angles if you know what I
mean. And there's her famed death
glare pointed right at me, I'm **not**
walking away from that one.

PYTHAGATHA

So, **this** is the infamous Udo Malaaki Masquerading as a magus instead of the sorcerer you were meant to be? This will be easy. It's hard to consider **you** as a real magus.

UDO

(nervously)

Hey come on Pythagatha, why not talk it out instead? At least I'm rational?

The crowd oohs in excitement.

ANNOUNCER

And a scathing quip from the newcomer using her own field of study!

NARRATOR

By the look on Udo's face, it was entirely impromptu.

UDO

Wait, what? What did I say?

PYTHAGATHA

Petulance! I'll enjoy making you suffer!

UDO

(to himself)

And I regret everything about this already.

(aloud)

Help!

MAGUS ELGAR

You can do it Udo! Remember, Mathemancy is the most grounded of the magus schools. Pythagatha is **all** number theory. Just remember the counters for diophantine approximation and you'll be peaches and gravy!

UDO

Yup. As doomed as peaches and gravy.

PYTHAGATHA

(opening up a scroll)

Reimann Zeta!

NARRATOR

Pythagatha opens up with her offensive spell!

Spell get thrown-

UDO

Uh. Analytic numbers! C-counter... what would counter-Ooh it looks like rainbows! **Gah!**

Spell hits Udo, the crowd goes wild.

ANNOUNCER

And with a triple backflip, Udo is slammed into one of the boundary pillars! Point to pythagatha, Udo is really gonna feel that in the morning isn't he, John?

NARRATOR

Udo's conjuring mathematical glyphs. It appears he's going to fight fire with fire.

UDO

All right, let's see how you like some of uh... this! **Dirichlet!**

NARRATOR

Acolyte Udo fires off a vector!

PYTHAGATHA

A generalization? How obtuse. **Sigma Bernoulli.**

Spell fizzles out.

UDO

She countered me?!

ANNOUNCER

And the vector is distributed harmlessly by Pythagatha! Somebody wasn't ready for the pop quiz!

NARRATOR

Don't count him out just yet, Henry. Udo is methodical, he's appraising her capabilities.

ANNOUNCER

It's not gonna be enough to bring his A game, because **this** is a numbers game!

PYTHAGATHA

Let's try something a little simpler. **Cosignus Adjatenuse!**

ANNOUNCER

Trigonometric projectiles! Check that vintage, it's a good year!

UDO

Oh I know this one. I know this one... uh... **Sine Oppotenuse!**

The spell is cancelled.

NARRATOR

A quick and masterful cancellation!

PYTHAGATHA

Well done. But didn't you forget something?

A secondary spell rapidly approaches from Udo's blind spot.

UDO

Forget som- Oh crumps the tangent-

The spell hits and udo goes flying. The crowd goes wild.

ANNOUNCER

There's the tangent! And what a tangent folks! By the Elements, Pythagatha's got Udo's blind side marked!

NARRATOR

More like triangulated!

ANNOUNCER

That's the spirit, Andy! Point to Pythagatha! Looks like that knocked the wind out of Udo. Get up Udo! She's bearing down on you!

NARRATOR

One more hit and he's finished!

Pythagatha cackles.

PYTHAGATHA

Time to resolve this elementary equation...

UDO

Summa Pondus!

Pythagatha gets slammed into the ground by Udo's spell.

NARRATOR

And in a stunning gambit, Udo doubles Pythagatha's gravity inches from his face! A point to Udo!

ANNOUNCER

She's feeling the weight of her decision for a point blank taunt! Can Udo make a comeback here, Jack?

UDO

All right, I'm up! What's wrong, Pythagatha? Did I come at you at the wrong angle? **Leno manum!**

A loud slap echoes through the colosseum.

PYTHAGATHA

Urf!

ANNOUNCER

There's the mage back hand! Thank you magus, may I have another?!

NARRATOR

Point for Udo! That's two for all! One more hit and it is finished!

MAGUS ELGAR

That's it Udo! Keep that mage hand strong!

PYTHAGATHA

Gale dramatis!

NARRATOR

She's winding up for a dramatic spell! That's sure to impress the crowd!

ANNOUNCER

That robe is billowing, portrait worthy right there! What's she gonna cast?! **What's** she gonna cast?!

NARRATOR

Be sure to find out... right now!

The crowd cheers.

UDO

(panicked)

Uhhh, uhhh, uhhh-!

PYTHAGATHA

Nulla Divident!

UDO

Gale dramatis?!

A tremendous fireball gets deflected by a surge of intense wind, blowing back Udo.

NARRATOR

And in a moment of panic, Udo deflects the fire with dramatic wind, only to be devastated by the blastback.

ANNOUNCER

Let go of his throat, Pythagatha, your opponent's choked! Udo is down! Acolyte Pythagatha is the winner!

UDO

(strained)

Yup... Everything hurts... math headache. Worst kind of headache.

PYTHAGATHA

So this is what's left of the dreaded Malaaki bloodline? Well you know what they say: tragedy plus time equals comedy. So I guess it was inevitable that you'd become a laughingstock.

UDO

(strained)

I don't hear any laughing. Only deafening ringing.

MAGUS ELGAR

Udo! Are you okay?!

UDO

(strained)

Peaches and gravy...

MAGUS ELGAR

Those two don't go well together,
you must be in horrible shape!

(quietly)

You did Excellent Udo. That was
quite the beating, our culprit will
be sure to target you now!

UDO

(strained)

Hate you. Hate your face.

MAGUS ELGAR

Poor child's delirious. Come on,
you're getting rest! Let's get you
to the infirmary.

TRANSITION TO:

INT. SAZASTRUM COLOSSEUM INFIRMARY, DAY.

MAGIC NURSE

Well I've done all I can, a few
bruised ribs and a sprained ankle.
It's a good thing those non-lethal
wards are as good as they are.
Aside from the algebraic imprints
on your behind, you should be in
good condition in no time.

UDO

Thank you doctor. At least
nothing's broken.

MAGUS ELGAR

(overdramatic)

Ohh my goodness Udo! I'm afraid
you're helpless here until your
condition improves!

(whispering)

Play along Udo.

UDO

(monotone)

Umm... ohhh, owww, the pain, it's
too great.

MAGUS ELGAR

(overdramatic)

Oh I know, Udo, but it's okay! The
magical burns will only last so
long! A good night's sleep

(screaming down the hall)

(MORE)

MAGUS ELGAR (CONT'D)

and you'll be healthy as hail! But until then, don't forget, you're totally helpless!

HORATIO

Is that really necessary?

KAYLEE

I'm having fun.

UDO

(loudly)

Oh, uh, **oww!** The pain! I'll never make it before I pass out from the sheer pain!

Kakkay throws in some wounded groans/howls.

MAGUS ELGAR

(overdramatic)

You'll be all right, Udo, just hang on! Don't go into the light! Their promises are lies! Lies I say!

UDO

(quietly)

You owe me for this.

MAGIC NURSE

Just sit tight, Mr. Malaaki. I'll go fetch the healing waters.

MAGUS ELGAR

(overdramatic)

There there Udo! I know what will cheer you up, some ice cream! I'll fetch some post haste! Come my friends! Let us **all** get him ice cream!

(to udo)

Kaylee and Horatio will be waiting nearby, ready to strike.

HORATIO

Just down the hall, watching for anyone to enter.

KAYLEE

Good luck, udo!

UDO

Where will you be?

MAGUS ELGAR

Checking up on Pythagatha. She's a target too. Though now that I mention it... to get ice cream! Got to keep up the appearance! Come Kakkay! To **ice cream!**

Rapidly retreating footsteps.

UDO

Magus wait! I...

(sighs)

Well, here I am. Stuck motionless in a stretcher, while Magus abandons me to the whims of a masked hunter. What a surprise.

VICTUS

Sickening, isn't it?

UDO

Whoa-what?! Oh, um, hey... How long were you hiding there?

VICTUS

Isn't it just like a magus to abandon you? Tell me, was it your idea to be the bait, or was it his?

UDO

Wha... Who are you?

VICTUS

A friend. One who deeply empathizes with your plight concerning Magus Elgar.

UDO

You don't even know who I am. Unless you were in the audience... or in one of the villages we've helped-

VICTUS

If you'd still call them villages after you left. Tell me, do you really plan on spending your days assisting a madman in tearing the world apart with his unadulterated curiosity?

UDO

What are you talking about...

VICTUS

He sent you out to fight unprepared, then he keeps you in here, helpless. Just to see what will happen.

UDO

It's... It's complicated.

VICTUS

Is it? I think I know why. Elgar is afraid of you, of where you come from... Afraid of your ancestry.

UDO

My ancestry has nothing to do with this!

VICTUS

Then why stress test you? Why push you to the absolute limit of your well being and sanity, if not to see you break?

SFX: humming whir.

VICTUS (CONT'D)

Well if the magus hasn't found your limit, perhaps we can, hm?

UDO

Wh-what is that?

VICTUS

This, Udo, is an artifact from another world, possessed of the magical power to drain the very ether coursing through your body. I won't drain all of it, just enough to get Elgar to come running.

UDO

The Stamp?! Then it's you! You're the one draining magi! W-wait! Don't you have to come up with a snappy line before you kill me? I-I could help?!

VICTUS

No. I don't do that sort of thing.

The STAMP powers up.

UDO
(terrified)
Oh hobblecotch.

The door is kicked open, Horatio runs at Victus.

HORATIO
The doctor will see you now!
Kaylee!

KAYLEE
Ranae Veru!

A frog ribbits and spits water at Victus, who is knocked back from Kaylee's brief shot of liquid.

UDO
(breathless)
Please don't fight above me!

KAYLEE
You don't get a say!

VICTUS
So. More assistants. Yet no Magus.
Still think he cares, Udo?

HORATIO
Don't worry, Udo, Kaylee's got
this! Right Kaylee?

KAYLEE
Y-yeah, I'll be fine, just go!

Horatio wheels Udo away.

UDO
Kaylee! No!

VICTUS
No matter, the magus wanted me so
I'll wait. You've quite the satchel
there. Kaylee, was it? Pity. You
happen to be in my way.

Kaylee gives an excited whine.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
What *is* that sound you're making?

KAYLEE
Nothing! Nothing!
(dramatically)
Who are you, you dastardly foe?!

VICTUS

You may call me **Victus**. Are you frightened?

KAYLEE

Eeee heehee. S-sorry, I know I'm supposed to be scared right now but, like, this is giving me the chills. Please, go all out! I absolutely love the mask.

VICTUS

Do you? Then you'll love this.
Ferrum Testa.

A metal shard flies past Kaylee.

KAYLEE

Man I've been waiting this entire trip to have one of these fights!
Conflatilem Petram!

A cascading rain of flaming pebbles comes down on Victus from the ceiling, Kaylee's totem cracks.

KAYLEE (CONT'D)

Ahh, again?!

VICTUS

It seems you-Ow-are also skilled, if not-Ow-more so-Ow-than Udo. Ow-Oh sod it! **Tempestatis!**

A downpour douses the rocks and drops them to the ground.

VICTUS (CONT'D)

Not bad. You have the raw power, but little control. Do you think the magus limits you with these totems?

KAYLEE

I'm not limited, I just need one that won't keep breaking on me!

VICTUS

And what happens if you never find one to match your talents? You'll burn out. Trapped like a wizard, overextending and breaking your totems like cheap trinkets. You'll always be limited by Elgar's method. Why not cut loose?

(MORE)

VICTUS (CONT'D)

Embrace what feels **right**, do the magic you've always dreamt of!

A pause.

KAYLEE

You know. You've just reminded me of another thing I've wanted to do since I got here.

VICTUS

Go on.

KAYLEE

Gale Dramatis!

A dramatic swelling of wind.

KAYLEE (CONT'D)

You'll do well to remember me as the one and only Dr. Kaylamity!
Fulgur-

CRACK!! The totem shatters. The spell rebounds as Kaylee is thrown back against the wall.

VICTUS

And there it is.

KAYLEE

(pained)
Knew I should've thought of a better name before now...

VICTUS

You won't need these baubles.
Incendifacio.

Kaylee's totem bag catches fire.

KAYLEE

My totems!

VICTUS

Now hold still. There will be some minor discomfort.

Kaylee is drained of her magic some. She groans in pain, Suddenly, Magus shows up.

MAGUS ELGAR

All right Udo, I've got a chocolate wandsicle for you and a strawberry one for me!

(MORE)

MAGUS ELGAR (CONT'D)

Or was it the other way around
and... I've walked into something,
haven't I?

VICTUS

Oh, Yes. **Ether drain!**

The Sound of the stamp fills the air, Magus recoils.

MAGUS ELGAR

(accusingly)

Owww!

(proud)

You think that's all you need to
stop someone like- oh there goes my
balance.

Thud.

VICTUS

And another magus falls right into
my lap.

MAGUS ELGAR

(straining)

And you, masked man, have fallen
right into **my** trap! Except I'm
supposed to be standing where you
are, but no matter! I've caught
you!

VICTUS

Hm. You have more ether than I
thought you would. Fair enough.

A humming whir fills the air.

KAYLEE

Magus, be careful! I'm pretty sure
that's the doctor's spectrometer!

MAGUS ELGAR

Shouldn't it be more silvery and
bowl-shaped?

KAYLEE

What? No, that's the focusing dish
for... Okay, same name, science can
be kind of redundant. The doctor
uses the portable one for reading
light coming off of stuff.

MAGUS ELGAR

Then why does it suck out ether
now?

VICTUS

Enough questions. I'll need all of
your ether Elgar. I'm sure you're
not using it properly anyway.

MAGUS ELGAR

Are you sure you can handle all of
this ether in me? I've got **oodles!**

VICTUS

(making adjustments to the
machine)

Oh, I know.

The machine intensifies.

MAGUS ELGAR

Gaahhh! This is much more painful
than I thought it would be!

KAYLEE

Magus!
(to victus)
Get off him!

Kaylee strains. she stands up and runs at victus.

VICTUS

Repente.

Kaylee is bounced off with a cry of pain.

Eventually the whirring slows down as Magus collapses to the
floor.

VICTUS (CONT'D)

Well now, looks like I've one less
magus to deal with. Just two more
to care for...

wet Kakkay footprints hit the floor. Kakkay meeps.

VICTUS (CONT'D)

Hm? Oh, you must be the vile
abomination that follows Udo
around.

Kakkay squeaks a question.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
You're very cute, in a monstrous
sort of way.

Kakkay meeps, strangely complimented.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
No matter. You're here now, I might
as well drain your ether and do the
world a favor. Don't worry about
your master, little one. He's next.

Kakkay growls.

Victus starts the machine up as Kakkay hocks a loogie.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
Ahh! You only hit my hand,
creature. I'll consider that your
last wor-

The machine starts to melt in his hand.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
No... No no no no aaah!

Victus throws his glove to the ground with the spectrometer.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
The spectrometer! The ether! You
little-

Kakkay leaps and scurries over Victus making little grunts
and growls.

VICTUS (CONT'D)
Ahhh! Get off of me! No, don't go
in there! Don't you touch me-Oh,
ah, no! You foul beast!

The spectrometer drops and clashes on the ground, breaking it
as the ether escapes, flowing back into elgar and kaylee.
They both inhale sharply.

MAGUS ELGAR
(hoarse)
Oof... Well... that wasn't fun.

KAYLEE
(hoarse)
My mouth tastes like trees. Why is
that?

VICTUS
I said... get off!

Victus tosses kakkay across the room.

MAGUS ELGAR
Kakkay!

VICTUS
Magus?! **How?!**

MAGUS ELGAR
Well then! Masked man! Now that I'm
back on my feet, relatively, let's
see how you handle dueling a real
magus! Prepare yourself for the
beating of a lifetime!

VICTUS
I know when I'm done, Elgar. This
was only phase one. I'll find other
ways to get my ether. We'll meet
again, I assure you. **Relicta
imminent!**

VOOP! Victus teleports away.

MAGUS ELGAR
(relieved)
Oh thank Elements, I can barely
stand without throwing up.

KAYLEE
Magus... are you all right?

MAGUS ELGAR
Never fear, I'm all right. How
about you, Kakkay?

Kakkay groans with discontent.

MAGUS ELGAR (CONT'D)
Good to hear you're chipper! Now if
you'll excuse me, I need a vacation
in dreamland. I'll be right back
kaylee.

Thud. Magus passes out.

INT. VITROLO VITRIOL INN.

HORATIO

Barkeep! Another round! The dear magi here just had the fight of their lives, and as a doctor I prescribe fluids! All the fluids!

MAGUS ELGAR

Ahhhh cider, this hits the spot! You sure I can't have some mead?

HORATIO

Have both. I may not know what ether is made of. But I know your body is in desperate need of blood sugar.

KAYLEE

So this Victus was the one draining ether... But why?

MAGUS ELGAR

Who knows? Maybe he was looking to become more powerful himself. We never found out if the device could transfer the ether or just removed it. But at least this part of his plan was unraveled. Udo? Udo are you alright?

UDO

...Victus gave me a lot to think about.

MAGUS ELGAR

Cheer up, Udo. Whatever it was, I'm sure you'll have the sense to take it with a salted grain.

UDO

I'm... *sigh* I'm just glad everyone has their ether back.

MAGUS ELGAR

Yes! All that goey plasmic life force is back to its rightful homes.

(to his stomach)

Aren't you? Aren't you my life blood, yes you are!

UDO

And he's talking to his stomach
like an infant.

KAYLEE

After what we went through? If he
wasn't doing it, I would be.

HORATIO

I'm just glad you're all right, I
must say I feel rather out of my
element.

UDO

In the Sazastrum duels or in the
bar?

HORATIO

Yes.

KAYLEE

I'm sorry we broke another one of
your tools, Doctor.

HORATIO

Well, you know what they say,
better broken than in the wrong
hands.

MAGUS ELGAR

Or wrong in broken hands! Can you
imagine what he's going through now
that Kakkay spit up on him?

Kakkay gives a gleeful chortle.

UDO

I wouldn't want to be him right now
that's for sure. Thanks Kakkay, you
really helped us out. Bacon for you
when we get home!

Kakkay meeps proudly.

UDO (CONT'D)

Though **your** plan almost got you
drained, magus. We might have never
gotten your ether back!

MAGUS ELGAR

Oh relax, Udo, everything worked
out for the best! Now tell me, do
you want the chocolate or the
strawberry wandsicle?

UDO
You can't just bribe me with
confectionery wandsicles and expect
me to-

The wandsicle is popped into his mouth.

MAGUS ELGAR
Strawberry it is! I prefer
chocolate anyway~

NARRATOR
And so ends another chapter in the
tale of Magus Elgar and the Mail
team. But who is this Victus? Why
does he detest magi? And will Mail
be able to stop him **and** the Stamps?

MAGUS ELGAR
Excuse me? What are you babbling
about?

NARRATOR
Be sure to return for the next tale
of the Magical Anomaly
Interdimensional Locators.

HORATIO
...who are you even talking to?

NARRATOR
Just let it pause and dramatically
fade.

A pause.

MAGUS ELGAR
(as it's fading)
Seems a bit strange to me, just
standing here...