

[Mage and Machine theme plays.]

Announcer: **Mage and Machine. Season Two, Episode Two: "Arrangements"**

[Inside the Hall of Magic. It's quiet, after hours. Kailira is slowly wandering the hallways.]

KAILIRA: (to herself, thinking -- this is not a spell, just talking to herself) *Gan ag wari ... tonnae cudanae ...*

[further down the hall, Plinio's crisp footsteps]

KAILIRA: (to herself) *Alberin* -- (notices Plinio and gasps) Mr. Plinio!

[Plin's footsteps stop.]

PLINIO: (small noise of annoyance)

[Kailira hurries up to him.]

KAILIRA: What are you doing here?

PLINIO: (bitter, and hinting with a hint-bat) Beg your pardon, *Apprentice Kailira*. I was just walking down this camera-filled hallway to reset a router.

KAILIRA: (hesitant) Is this ... router? ... someplace more private?

PLINIO: You could say that.

KAILIRA: Can we talk there?

PLINIO: (not thrilled about it) Like my day hasn't been difficult enough. Fine, come on.

[They walk together.]

KAILIRA: How did you get in here, anyway?

PLINIO: The Hall of Magic doesn't run on glitter and fairy wings, you know. Someone's got to keep your servers running.

KAILIRA: But you're --

PLINIO: (cutting her off) A licensed technician. I get work where I can.

KAILIRA: Oh.

[They reach the maintenance closet, Plinio pulls a badge from somewhere and swipes the door open. The inside of the closet hums with computers and ventilation as they enter.]

KAILIRA: (in wonder) So that's what's in here. I've never seen the door open before.

PLINIO: Most of your infrastructure gets serviced at night. Wouldn't want any fancy magical folks inconvenienced by mere machinery -- right, Apprentice?

KAILIRA: You don't have to call me that.

PLINIO: It *is* your title.

KAILIRA: I have a name.

PLINIO: Is there a reason you followed me in here? Because if there isn't, feel free to be somewhere else. Preferably somewhere involving a long walk off a short pier.

KAILIRA: How's Mack doing?

PLINIO: (coldly) Well, that's a hell of a thing to ask *me*.

KAILIRA: Please, I want to be sure he's all right.

PLINIO: (not sure whether to take her at face value) You ... you're honestly asking. You don't know?

KAILIRA: (growing alarm) Don't know what??

PLINIO: Well thanks to you and your dear friend Lady Chandley, Mack's rotting in a prison cell.

KAILIRA: (gasp) No!

PLINIO: Indefinite solitary confinement. Do you have any idea what that does to a person, Apprentice?

KAILIRA: (betrayed) But ... how could ... she *promised* me!

PLINIO: I told that idiot you were nothing but trouble. Now if you'll excuse me, I have a router to reset.

[Plinio starts working on a router under dialogue. He is definitely doing more than resetting it.]

KAILIRA: We have to do something!

PLINIO: Oh, we? There is no "we". *You've* done plenty. (beat) Hand me that.

[Kailira hands him a tool.]

KAILIRA: I only came back here because ... We were surrounded and I thought I could bargain for Mack's freedom.

PLINIO: (under his breath) Well, *there's* some irony.

KAILIRA: Lady Chandley said she'd let Mack go. She gave her word.

PLINIO: Give it a rest. You bet Mack's life on Chandley's word and now you're crying at me because it backfired.

KAILIRA: Please!

PLINIO: Please nothing. Goodbye, Apprentice.

[He turns to leave and she grabs him.]

KAILIRA: Stop calling me that -- (sudden surprise) Oh. Your arm.

PLINIO: (low warning) Unhand me.

KAILIRA: (distracted) It's magic. I never noticed.

[Plinio yanks his arm away from her.]

PLINIO: (gritted teeth) It's highly shielded at *great expense* so I don't have to

work on Mack one-handed. I'm still paying the damn thing off. Don't touch it again.

KAILIRA: I'm sorry ... I just ...

PLINIO: *Your* handiwork is the reason I lost a perfectly good cybernetic arm two years ago trying to save Mack's life.

KAILIRA: (urgently) Listen, I fixed that! The sigil's gone!

PLINIO: (suspicious) Come again?

KAILIRA: (realizing) That must be why Cassia broke her promise. She kept talking about how dangerous Mack would be without it and -- (beat) But he's really not. Right? I mean he wouldn't do ... those things she said ...

PLINIO: What did that vulture tell you?

KAILIRA: She said Mack's a criminal. That he killed people. Did he?

PLINIO: Look Apprentice, I'm not going to confirm or deny anything to someone in the employ of the Hall of Magic.

KAILIRA: (frustrated) I'm not being an apprentice right now! (sigh) It's just that Mack's the first person who was anything like a friend to me. In Hallamere, I mean. And now ... I know I screwed everything up when I thought I was setting him free.

[Beat.]

PLINIO: Okay. If you're serious about wanting to help, there's one thing you can do.

KAILIRA: Anything!

PLINIO: Her Ladyship's keeping a close eye on you, right? Forget that you even know my name. When she demands to know what you did with the tech you met in the hallway, just tell her you wanted to see what was in the maintenance closet.

KAILIRA: I'll do that. I promise.

PLINIO: (wheels are turning) You said you took that magical thing off him? The

one that disrupts tech?

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KAILIRA: It's completely gone.

PLINIO: So in theory he could get new cybernetics?

KAILIRA: (excited) Yes! (remembering) I mean, he could if he wasn't ... Sorry, Mr. Plinio.

PLINIO: Just Plinio. It's my first name, not my family name.

KAILIRA: Plinio. Right. Sorry, there's so many people here who go by their last names.

PLINIO: Of course. You academic types are above first names.

KAILIRA: Kai's my first name.

PLINIO: Okay, as far as I'm concerned, your first name is Apprentice. And as far as *you're* concerned, my name is a mystery. Because you don't know me, remember?

KAILIRA: Right. You're just somebody I begged to show me the ... routers.

PLINIO: All right. Now shoo before Her Ladyship decides to check up on you. The last thing I need is someone thinking we're being inappropriate in here.

[Natterjack's office. Natterjack has a nice office. It's not as plush as Chandley's and it's not meant to be intimidating. Natterjack is leaning against their desk idly sipping a drink.]

[There is a hesitant knock at the door.]

NATTERJACK: Come on in!

[Big double door opens and Plin walks in.]

NATTERJACK: (like greeting an old friend) My dear Mr. Orellano! It has been an age.

[Natterjack gives Plinio a warm handshake while clapping him on the shoulder with the other hand.]

PLINIO: (a bit nervous) Oh ... (nervous laugh) Hi. Natterjack. Thank you for seeing me on such short notice.

NATTERJACK: Not at all! Do you know, I was just thinking the other day how long it's been since I even heard your name. Seems like you've been making yourself scarce in -- shall we say -- certain circles?

PLINIO: (nervous laugh) It's been a complicated couple of years.

NATTERJACK: What brings you to my not-so-humble abode today? Nothing serious, I hope?

PLINIO: I wouldn't dream of asking for a meeting this suddenly if it weren't serious.

NATTERJACK: Oh dear. I *do* hope I can be of assistance. Please, have a seat. Drink?

PLINIO: Oh, no thank you. I've had so much coffee I could probably piss espresso.

[Natterjack pours themselves another drink. Plinio takes a seat. It's a comfy seat. Natterjack likes people to be comfy.]

NATTERJACK: Well, don't leave me in suspense. Tell me what you need.

PLINIO: I'm not here for myself, exactly. I need a favor on someone else's behalf.

NATTERJACK: Hm. Go on.

PLINIO: It's Mechanimo.

NATTERJACK: (knowingly -- they know Plin and Mack have a history) Ahhh, another name I haven't heard lately. Our cyborg friend certainly hasn't been himself. How's he getting along these days?

PLINIO: At this exact moment? Not well. He's in the Triple Towers.

NATTERJACK: Shame.

PLINIO: In solitary. Indefinitely, with no court date.

NATTERJACK: Mmm, sounds like someone's pulled some strings.

PLINIO: Yeah -- Lady Chandley.

NATTERJACK: (sigh) Let's be clearer, then. What are you asking?

PLINIO: I'm here to ask if you can get him out.

NATTERJACK: (deep thoughtful sigh) That's a mighty big favor, my dear.

PLINIO: I know. But if anyone in this city could do it ...

NATTERJACK: Your faith in me is flattering. (thoughtful) Hmm, the Triple. Who do I have there ... yes. Yes, I believe we're in the realm of possibility.

PLINIO: (sigh of relief)

NATTERJACK: Don't put up the Welcome Back banner quite yet. It's an *expensive* possibility. I use a connection on the inside and I can't use them again. (kindly) To be frank, that's a lot of capital for a cybernetics shop, even with a talent like yours. And Mechanimo's dance card has been empty since his fortunes fell.

PLINIO: (pulling out an ace) Don't write him off just yet. I happen to know from an excellent source that Chandley's work on him has been removed.

NATTERJACK: Ah! You mean --

PLINIO: I can put his old implants back in. He can be the powerhouse he was before.

NATTERJACK: (warming to the idea) That certainly changes the equation, yes.

PLINIO: That's why her Ladyship pulled those strings. She's afraid he'll put

himself back together.

NATTERJACK: That *is* Cassia for you. Anything out of her control gives her hives.

PLINIO: I understand we're talking a lot of debt here, asking you for this jailbreak. But once he's back on his feet, he'll be able to work it off for you.

NATTERJACK: My roster of contacts would definitely improve with the addition of someone with his, ah ... skill set. (beat) So. If I manufacture Mechanimo's escape, he'll be on the hook for some work for me, as and when it becomes available. I'd give you an exact amount, but we both know my business doesn't always come with numbers.

PLINIO: Of course.

NATTERJACK: It's a deal, then.

[Mack's prison cell in maximum security prison. It's not a nice place. Mack is pacing.]

MACK: (to himself) Keep it together. Keep it together. That agent chick was just messin' with you, right? They can't just ... they can't just leave you here ... (weary groan)

[Footsteps approach in the hallway.]

MACK: What? Who's that?

GUARD: (on other side of door) Ready when you are, Agent Vell.

[A little access window in the door slides open.]

MACK: (groans) Not you again.

AGENT VELL: Good afternoon, Mechanimo. I'm sure you've noticed the restraint cuffs on your wrists and ankles.

MACK: Uh, yeah. They're uncomfortable as hell.

AGENT VELL: They're about to get *more* uncomfortable.

MACK: Ugh, don't tell me --

AGENT VELL: I see you remember how they work from the last time you were here.

MACK: Yeah, yeah. Put 'em up against the back wall and they hold me there so some smug jackass like you can come in here without me rearrangin' your face.

AGENT VELL: Go ahead, then.

MACK: Uh ... or?

AGENT VELL: Don't play dumb, Mechanimo. This cell has your name on it for a reason. I can press a few buttons and make you comply.

MACK: All right, all right. You don't gotta make it weird.

[Mack goes to the back of his cell and puts his back to the wall. Agent Vell pushes a few buttons outside and some kind of electronic system engages, causing Mack's restraints to slam against the wall.]

MACK: (small grunt as the restraints hit the wall)

[The cell door opens. It's a very fancy high tech door. Agent Vell enters along with a couple of guards.]

MACK: Oh look, you brought friends. It's almost like a little party in here or somethin'. Am I the piñata?

AGENT VELL: Ugh, don't try to be funny. You might strain something.

MACK: Uh, hang on. Ain't you one of *Chandley's* little pals? How come you get to waltz in here? This is Hall of Justice territory.

AGENT VELL: As it happens, I'm here to do some scans for Her Ladyship.

[Vell pulls out some kind of complicated scanner. It's entirely electronic -- not magical.]

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AGENT VELL: Hold still.

[She starts scanning.]

MACK: The hell are you "scanning" for?

AGENT VELL: Any traces of the electronic disruption sigil. Just because Apprentice Kailira dispelled it doesn't mean you're done being a guinea pig.

MACK: I'm not a damn guinea pig!

AGENT VELL: Oh uh, to answer your previous question, the Hall of Justice is helping Lady Chandley with her research.

MACK: Well isn't that precious. You hear that, buddy? You're doin' the legwork for the Hall of Magic and they ain't even payin' you extra.

GUARD: (bored) Whatever.

[The fancy scanner beeps that it's done.]

AGENT VELL: Interesting.

MACK: (thoughtful) Oh. Nice little doodad you got there. Shiny buttons, really diggin' it. But you know, a teenaged girl could take one look at Chandley's handwriting on my pecs and see what was goin' on, but you? You gotta use an electronic scanner.

AGENT VELL: It's so predictable how prisoners in solitary talk the ears off of anyone who comes by.

MACK: (trying to get her goat) You didn't even bust out any magic when you arrested me. Can you even *use* magic?

AGENT VELL: (to Guard) Thanks for the assist. I've got what I need.

GUARD: Any time.

MACK: (talking louder as Vell walks away) Ooh, look who's ignoring me all of a sudden. (yelling) Big scary agent for the Hall of Magic can't even cast a spell,

huh?

[The door slams behind Vell and the guards. Vell starts walking off down the hallway.]

[Mack's restraints are released.]

MACK: (calling after Vell) Oh don't worry about it, I'm sure the boss lady hadn't even noticed!

[The little window slides open again.]

GUARD: Mechanimo.

MACK: What?

GUARD: Lights out in ten. Be ready.

[The window slides closed and the guard walks off down the hall.]

MACK: (to himself) Yeah, yeah. What's to be ready for anyway? (beat) (realization) Wait ... lights out in ten? It's barely past lunch!

[Mack goes to the door and bangs on it.]

MACK: (shouting) Hey! You! Is your watch on the fritz?! (beat) (quietly) Or maybe there is something to be ready for ...

[Mage and Machine theme plays.]

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Featuring the voice talents of:

Anjali Kunapaneni as Kailira

Garan Fitzgerald as Mack

Dan Foster as Plinio

Katy Milholland as Agent Vell

Briar Zachary as Natterjack

and Samantha Reed as Guard

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Directed by Samantha Reed

Produced by Pendant Productions

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