

Arcana Magi - c.1: Oryn Zentharis, Seeker of the Truth

by H-M Brown

Oryn Zentharis accomplished many things in her life. She completed her greatest desires with a driving force and believed anything was possible. Oryn spent her entire childhood training in the art of magic. She graduated a professor of Philosophy and Mathematics from Harvard and earned a doctorate in Runeology and Linguistics from the University of Avalon in the mystical country of Merydia. She was a beautiful woman, whose long flowing black hair and gentle blue eyes made men want her attention. Now that she became CEO of Avalon Tech Enterprises in Newark, New Jersey, men were attracted to her power as well.

Oryn's latest research brought her closer to a knowledge that will place her in company of great thinkers, like Sir Isaac Newton and Mage Karyn Mayweather. She had only one obstacle, but it increased to four. This situation took her research in another direction. She convinced her four colleagues with rewards of funding their own personal research by joining her latest experiment.

Oryn stood in a control room before a large spherical chamber. Computer Programmer Anna Ling and Neurologist Doctor Marcel Jones sat in the front stations before the large glass. Mageologist Professor Jonas Bronsky and Sorceress Lyn Smith stood behind Oryn next to magical orb and mirror. She held her meeting with them, regarding their plan of action for their research.

"How is my little goddess?" Oryn said.

"Alysia is well and rested," Marcel said. "but..."

"But what?"

"We won't be able to use the Erase Spell on her emotions."

"Explain?"

"The concussion she suffered during a hockey game she played in three weeks ago has rendered her sensitive to flashes of light. She suffers from post concussion trauma as a result."

Oryn's lowered her eyebrows in frustration. She grew impatient from this delay.

"In other words once we turn on the machine, the lights will trigger pain and her emotions from it will prevent us from using the Erase Spell. She could put up a resistance to fight the pain overall. We can't keep her brain activity and mana channeling in synch."

Oryn crossed her arms and walked up to control panel Marcel sat at. The monitor showed abnormal brain activity. The line jumped up and down at the height of the experiment. It also showed another line with mana activity in a soft wave. The unsynchronized lines made Oryn unhappy with this situation. She turned her attention to Lyn.

"Is there another way to erase her emotions?"

"No.' Lyn said looking into the mirror. 'I suggested to Marcel that instead of erasing her emotions, we use it as an obedient inducer."

"Sounds risky." Oryn said.

"Not really. I can cast an enchantment within her subconscious that will react to strobe light effects if she attempts to access her emotions. We can order portable strobe lights at a store to use on her if she tries to defy us or free her mind."

"That would mean keeping her around us at all times." Oryn said.

"Unless we erase her memories clean and raise her from scratch." Lyn said.

"She...' Jonas said, cutting into the conversation. '...already made contact with Suzaku and chosen to be the Sentinel of its staff. We may sever their connection if we wipe her mind and we don't know how long it will take the bird to find and choose a new Sentinel. It may wise up and never choose a new Sentinel at all."

Oryn walked past Jonas and stood beside Anna.

"The staff she called Saga, is it still in synch with her?"

"Yes Oryn," Anna said. She showed Oryn the monitor of Saga's energy reading next to Alysia's heart rate. Both lines moved at the same time. 'As you can see, the synchronization has held up to level two. They have been resisting together against all of our attempts to control them. This recent development with her concussion has really forced us to delay going into level three. It will take us at least twenty-four hours to re-adjust the settings and enchantments to get to level five."

"Oryn," Marcel said. 'you have to understand, this child just recently gained the ability to channel mana. Clinically speaking, her inability to use mana was to be a generational skip in her family. This concussion is why she can access mana now and since concussions are unpredictable, we found ourselves in a trial and error basis. We may end up destroying her mind."

"And?" Oryn turned to Marcel. Her cold eyes quieted the neurologist. She faced everyone, challenging any hypocrisy they may have. Without a word, everyone turned to Marcel and he nodded in agreement.

"I'll keep monitoring her brain activity."

"Good. We'll continue this tomorrow." Oryn left the chamber as her colleagues made the adjustments in their stations. When she opened the door, she looked back at the window and nodded.

Outside the chamber, a cat eared girl approached Oryn with a touch screen organizer in hand. A young teenager dressed in business attire. She stroked her grey hair back so it would not cover her yellow eyes. She lifted her head up to look at her boss and her face looked withdrawn. Her tail raised itself up from fear of Oryn but relaxed as she listened.

"What is next on the agenda, Reya?" Oryn watched the teen slid her fingers on the surface of her pocket computer. The woman listened to the teen as her low soft voice spoke.

"You have a teleconference with the Board of Directors in Merydia."

"Good."

"Reya's tail swayed side to side as she followed her boss toward the elevator. She stroked her grey hair out of reflex and out of habit. Reya knew she had never done this before, but now she cannot help herself. The elevator arrived and the doors opened for them. Together they stepped inside and rode it to the top floor.

"How is the stock market in Merydia, Reya?"

"The stocks are falling and word is spreading that Jagr Pharmaceuticals may release the cure for leukemia after the death of the owner's daughter."

"Now we can't have that."

"Madam Oryn? Would that not be a good thing for the world?"

"True, but then we would have learned nothing when the doctors and economists killed Polio. We need to accomplish two things in the business world. One, we make a profit by spoon-feeding the product to the public. Two, we eliminate our enemies around the world, especially those non-magical Regs."

Reya jerked her head to Oryn. Her eyes widened and she wanted to slap Oryn for her comments, but she felt the restriction in her mind. Memories of the loss of her little brother to cancer burned deep in her heart. When Oryn looked down at Reya, the cat girl shook her head and snapped her out of the emotion. She smiled.

"I understand Madam Oryn." Her voice became cheerful despite the tear streaking down her face.

"Good." The elevator doors opened. Oryn stepped outside and stopped keeping Reya inside.

"Madam Oryn?"

"Reya, I want you to go for your weekly therapy right now."

"Yes Madam Oryn." Reya's hands shivered as her smile faded. She wanted to say no but she obeyed and tears covered her face. Reya stared at the corner of Oryn's cold eyes as the door closed.

Oryn walked from the elevator toward her office. She looked down at Reya's desk by the front door. The phone never rang and it suited her just fine. She opened two large wooden doors and walked on the red carpet towards her desk. The sunlight consumed her office. It shined on her large desk and reflected off a large flat panel

screen hanging on the wall to the left. She stood before the monitor and looked at her watch. She had one minute to go. Across the room from the screen was a bookshelf that stretched from the floor to the ceiling, and a sliding ladder attached to it. She approached it reaching for a hard covered book called 'The Theory of Fate and Destiny' she published. She opened the pages as the large monitor automatically turned on.

Oryn turned around with her book in hand. She saw the Board of Directors sitting in a semi-circle around the conference table. She closed the book and held it close to her chest. The woman approached the monitor and looked up at the directors. From left to right, a female fairy sat on a little chair on top of a table waiting to begin. Beside her sat a male dwarf, with a long well groomed beard looking at a mirror. At the end sat a tall troll with grey skin and wild hair, licking his yellow teeth. Across from them, a female elf with fair skin, silky eyes, and pointed ears read the latest report. The male human beside her took a page of her report to read it. The human picked up a feather and tossed it aside. It came from a winged male humanoid with long black hair. He retracted his feathers and fixed his tie. At the head of the table, opposite the television screen they had was an orb on a pillow. It just sat there, as if staring at Oryn even though no one could tell without a face or movement.

"Good morning ladies and gentlemen." Oryn said as the meeting opened with the female elf's first question.

"What is the status of your latest project?"

"We have a minor setback. We are expecting a twenty-four hour delay."

The board members groaned from this setback and there frustration showed. The human leaned over the table while folding his hands to talk to Oryn.

"You realized that the stock market dropped for a fifth day in a row."

"Yes I am." Oryn said.

"Our metal works division..." the dwarf said. "...are threatening to form a union if they do not get proper benefits. Why should the funds divert to you Oryn?"

The troll leaned forward on the table.

"What about my division? The drivers have found alternative roads to avoid the toll bridges, despite our efforts to control the transportation industry."

The fairy crossed her arms.

"The medicinal plant production is weakening. Spring is around the corner and we're going to lose the crops. This project of yours Oryn, had better not fail."

The winged man slammed the table with his fist. The vibration knocked the fairy out of her seat as he pointed his finger at her.

"Well maybe if your doctors release some of the cures to the world, we can make some profit and not have to struggle with the market."

The fairy stood to her feet and brushed her pantsuit and blouse.

"Maybe if you hadn't outsourced the jobs to give yourself a fat bonus, we wouldn't be struggling with the economy."

The directors argued with each other about their mistakes. Oryn stood unimpressed with the Board Members. Her attention turned to the orb and waited for something to happen. The female elf saw Oryn silent and raised her hand to quiet everyone. They all turned to the orb and waited. Nobody knew what to expect.

"Oryn." A light pulsed from the orb with a soft deep male voice. "Do you have Suzaku?"

"Yes Vyndor, but her medical condition is causing the delay."

"And you have a solution to correct this problem?"

"Yes."

"Ladies and gentlemen, we will weather this storm. Our focus shall be to support Oryn and her project. There are three more Sentinels of the Four Elements out there. We shall direct all our resources to acquire them and condition them. With their power, we should have no problems convincing our corporate rivals to merge with our company. Then we shall be the only company in Merydia

that will make exclusive deals with other companies around the world. In addition, we won't risk violating International Treaty 439 with our presence in the world."

The Board Members felt skeptical. They knew the stakes were too high. That one of the Sentinels so far caused delays in this project, created doubts in the success of this investment. The female elf made a proposal.

"We should vote to cut the funding of this project, right now."

"I agree." The troll tapped his fingers on the table. "The last thing we need is Mystic Intelligence investigating us." The troll looked across the table to the human. They both turned to Oryn.

"Oryn." The human said. "You made sure that Suzaku is not on the missing children's list."

"We faked her death. Her family buried her dummy body one week after we made the switch. We can do whatever we want with Suzaku. So I do not see the need to vote now that we have gotten this far."

The directors breathed a sigh of relief in the room. No one continued the conversation about the vote and dropped the subject. Everyone turned their attention to Vyndor. Oryn walked away from the monitor and stood before her bookshelf.

"Then it is settled." Vyndor said. "I will deal with Mystic Intelligence personally. Everyone be ready to take losses during the fiscal year. Oryn will continue with the project as planned. Oryn?"

She turned around after placing her book back on the shelf. She turned to Vyndor and gave her undivided attention.

"This project had better work. I will not tolerate..." Vyndor stopped talking as Oryn smiled and chuckled. Everyone felt undermined by her sudden posturing.

"Ladies and gentlemen, when this project is over, we will control fate and destiny itself. Both will be in the palm of our hands. My theory will become the absolute truth, the absolute way of the world. After all..." Oryn approached the large windows behind her desk. "...the Sentinels are fated to serve our destiny."

Oryn looked out at the large city before her. She watched the cars and trucks drive by on highways and bridges. The smokestacks of factories covered sky with black clouds. The New York City skyline in the horizon was a marvel to behold from the east as the sun rose high. A faint reflection of her face appeared on the window, her eyes fixated on it...

...and she smiled.

To Be Continued...

