

Arcana Magi - c.12: Danica Leandros, Sentinel of Seiryuu

by H-M Brown

Danica Leandros was born in Greece on March 22, 2000, during the Vernal Equinox. She did not know her family's history, because her parents kept her birth a secret from her relatives. Daphne and Apollo Leandros were powerful warlocks. They terrorized, extorted, and stole from everyone around the world. They were so powerful that they were warlords in fourteen different countries. They were cruel enough to raise Danica as a criminal too. Mystic Intelligence had a hard time arresting them because of their connections with aristocrats, businessmen, and politicians. Pretending to be good philanthropists in the eyes of the wealthy and the elite made it difficult for any law enforcement agency to bring them to justice.

All this wealth had given Danica a sense of entitlement. Wonderful clothing, that made her look like a princess and complimented her beautiful blonde hair. Studying at the most high scale private girls school, with a scholarship to any one of the most prestigious universities of her choice. She had a love for dancing, taught by the most talented dance instructors. She had all the toys, dolls, and electronics a spoiled girl could ask for. She even received the most elegant and expensive jewelry, and the most elegant horse money could buy.

Of course, there was one love Danica had in her heart that stood above all those luxuries, magic. All that power in her hands and the ability to get people to do whatever she wanted. Butlers, maids, and nannies trembled in fear of her tirades and tantrums. One time, a maid actually complained to Danica's parents about their child's behavior and they sent her to another dimension. Some servants say that when the maid returned, she was never the same again.

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At the age of nine, Danica's parents took her to Brazil for her first test at stealing. It was a simple task. Just rob anyone that looked like an easy target. Danica saw a girl her age walking by herself, and saw the girl had a ring with a beautiful red gem embedded. Danica met the girl named Emilia Cruz. Pretending to be nice, they spent the day playing around, and by the afternoon, they visited a nearby beach. Sitting on the sand and watching the waves of the ocean, Danica listened to Emilia talk about her poor family. Emilia told her how useless her magical powers were to help them and how she wished she were rich. Danica paid no attention to Emilia's story as her eyes fixated on the ring. Her face reflecting off the jewel, the band was silver with a wiggling blue line around it. It looked like a creature trying to eat the red gem. The beauty of the ring was hypnotic.

Danica snapped out of her trance when she heard Emilia talk about a mysterious creature in her dream. It was a large snake like dragon named Seiryuu. It told her that she could be a Sentinel if she wanted to and all she had to do was give it a name. When Danica asked what she named it, Emilia said she had not named it yet. Instead, she wanted to sell it for money to help her family. With a smile, Danica asked to see the ring and Emilia handed it over. The little thief stood to her feet and slipped the ring over her finger. As Danica raised her hand up, Emilia tried to get the ring back, but Danica pushed her into the sand. Feeling the power within the ring, she called out its name.

Epic.

The ring burst into droplets of light and pushed the red gem out into the open. The lights gathered around the gem, four arrows emerged around it like a compass, and rested at the bottom of the hilt that stretched outward. The hilt itself was sky blue with the emblem of two pink petals, crossing each other like wings, embedded on both sides of a metal support band. When Danica curled her hand around the hilt, a blade of light grew. When the

light disappeared, the blade became a crystal, green like a leaf hanging on a tree and within the crystal, the veins of a leaf spread out. When Danica lowered the sword, it was light, but it was also tall. She had to lift her head just a little to look at the hilt and when she jabbed the blade into the sand, her arm stretched out with her elbow bent.

Danica looked down and saw Emilia crying, asking why her friend would do this. Danica kicked her back to the sand and planted her foot on Emilia's chest. She told Emilia they were never friends and she could do whatever she wanted. With a push, the blade slid into the chest of the girl, and her scream went unheard. Listening to Emilia's cries and saw she was unable defend herself, Danica found her weak. She leaned closer and asked Emilia if she feared her. The child nodded. Danica walked away and left Emilia nursing her injury and crying in the sand.

Danica presented the prize to her parents and they were proud of her success. She demonstrated the ring's power and summoned the sword. She told them that she was a Sentinel since she gave it a name. Impressed, her father tried to lift the sword up for a closer look, but it was heavy in his hands, and he struggled. Danica did not understand why as she took the sword back and held it with no problem. They understood that only she could use the ring. Danica demanded that her parents let her harness its magical powers. They agreed.

For the next two years, Danica trained hard in the art of sword fighting. She learned that its magical source came from the wind, so her parents taught her the best and most powerful wind spells. She mastered the art of thievery and even learned how to kill. It was a difficult experience, but her parents guided her carefully until she became accustomed to killing. The thing was, she watched her mother brutally kill one of their unarmed enemies who begged for mercy. Fearful of death itself, Danica saw him as coward unworthy of dying. She felt his fear of her parents was more satisfying than a quick painless death. She found her parents methods as sloppy.

Research on the Sentinels had been difficult. For one thing, Seiryuu had not appeared to Danica in her dreams. She did not know how to make contact or even why it had not made contact. It frustrated her on a Sunday morning when stood out on the hill. She screamed out its name to come before her, but nothing happened. All she felt was the wind blowing her blonde hair forward. She pulled it back and thought about how the wind felt. She raised her hand with the ring in the air. The wind blew through her fingers and felt the soft air moving around her hands in a circle. A pulse shot out of the ring and her heart reacted to it. The feeling startled her and she placed her hands over her chest trying to understand why that happened.

That evening, Danica went to bed thinking about that mysterious pulse in her heart. She lay on the bed with the ring held above her eyes, peering into the red gem. The full moon shined its light through the windows and made the room was visible to the naked eye. She rested the ring on her chest, her hands pressing on it gently. The ring and her heart pulsed together as she opened her eyes to a world of darkness.

There she was, looking at nothingness for as far as the eye can see. A growl sent a brush of wind past the child. She turned around in the direction of the wind. Before her, floating in the air was large snake like dragon. It had blue scaly skin with short wings. Two sets of claws near its tail and two sets of claws near its head with a pair of wiggling whiskers just under its snout. Its red eyes were cold and frightening, but Danica stood there with the same look. With a deep female voice, it introduced itself as Seiryuu. Danica told it that since she was a Sentinel, it bow before her. Seiryuu laughed.

She demanded to know why it never came to her for so long. Seiryuu told her that it was because her heart never understood the essence of the wind. Her heart was so cold and more intent on power itself, that she was ignorant of its very nature. She did not get it. Seiryuu asked what was it about the wind that she felt it flowing through her fingers. Danica never thought about that and proved his point. She raise her hands up remembered how the wind felt soft in

her fingers. Her answer was because she felt the wind in her heart. Then the ring pulsed. Her eyes opened wide and she looked up to the dragon. She had been casting spells with Epic but she never realized it could be even more powerful if used with the heart. Seiryuu said that was how Sentinel cast spells.

Her parents taught her that the heart was weak and to abandon it so her magic would become more powerful. Yet, she wondered just how powerful the sword can truly be if she used her heart. Then it occurred to her. She asked if she could only harness this power for good. Seiryuu told her that what she chose to do with her life could not be interfered. Her mana was her own mana and all it can do, was give her its blessing. The ring appeared before Danica, and she called for Epic. She raised the sword in the air. She asked one more time that all she had to do was use her heart to cast stronger spells. Seiryuu nodded and advised her that there was a difference between being a Sentinel from the heart and being a Sentinel with the heart. She ignored him.

Danica sat down and looked up at the dragon. She asked Seiryuu about itself. It told her it was one of the four Elements. The others were Suzaku, Byakko, and Genbu. It said that for generations they had blessed those who chose to be Sentinels. Many Sentinels have come from many walks of life throughout history. Some served in kingdoms as heroes, and others such as her, served for evil. She asked why they would allow a Sentinel to be evil. It repeated itself and said that it could not interfere with the decisions of a Sentinel. If one chose to kill, they could do nothing. If one chose to heal, it still could do nothing.

Danica then asked what they would do if someone forced her to do something with Epic that she did not want to do. It told her they would intervene to protect them. Danica's idea of tricking the Sentinels to get the other Elements went out the window. Looking up at the dragon, she knew they would be too powerful to fight against and she would not dare try. Knowing that she could do whatever she wanted and Seiryuu would not stop her was a fair trade off. Figuring that the other Sentinels may have weapons like

hers, she knew the only way to get them without the Elements interfering, was to kill them.

When she woke up Monday morning, she joined her parents for breakfast and told them everything Seiryuu said. They did not like the idea of her using her heart to cast those spells. They fear her heart would interfere with any tasks they assign to her, make her soft and weak. Danica assured them that she would have no mercy on her enemies. That was not good enough for them. Afterschool, Danica returned home and found her mother waiting at the door. Danica followed her mother down a set of stone stairs that led to a stonewalled chamber. It had bookshelves of scrolls and ancient text, shackles and chains dangling off the wall. Weapons of knives, swords and mace set on a rack.

She stood before a table where a teenage girl laid on. Her parents shackled the teenager and stripped her of clothing. Danica walked around the table as she saw her mother approached her father. They challenged Danica. They told her if she truly was they daughter and she truly loved them, then she should use her sword to take the girls life. She called Epic and lifted the sword up. She chopped the shackles and freed the girl. Instead of letting the teen leave, Danica grabbed her by the throat and threw her to the ground. Danica took a knife from the rack and handed it to the girl. Danica taunted the girl into fighting her. She challenged the teen's feelings to make her angry. The teen threw the knife down begging to go home and Danica kicked her to the ground.

Danica looked at her parents and questioned their strength. That they would kidnap a girl so that Danica would show them that she had the ability to kill heartlessly. She agreed. She had no problem with killing those who were strong, or those who would try to kill her. She watched her mother cast a spell on the teen. Lifting the girl in the air and turned her body into light. With a loud scream, her body shattered into droplets of light and rained down onto the ground vanishing without a trace. What good was killing that teen if they could not enjoy her cowardice and begging. She called her parents old and outdated. Their philosophy of having no heart to

rule had no merit. Danica felt she could do better than her parents, controlling people with her own heart.

Angry, her parents tried to kill her. Spell after spell, Danica fought them, Every time she got close to strike them, they would repel her. Outmatched and overpowered, she had no choice but to run. The escape was difficult as each attack from her parents caused explosions that sent shrapnel flying. It tore into Danica's clothes and flesh deep enough to leave scars along her back. The physical pain slowed her down. In one last act of desperation, Danica created a wind that sent the shrapnel back at her parents and they had to shield their bodies from the assault. Danica limped her way out of her home and toward the forest. Once inside, Epic turned back to a ring and she navigated through the trees and bushes, until she reached a raging river. Hearing the servants in the distance searching for her, she jumped into the water. She tried to swim across but her injuries made her tired halfway and the river swept her.

For the next two years, she lived her life in the streets. She traveled across Europe with the aide of a forged passport, and made her way to England. Now thirteen, she scavenged for food, stealing money, and practicing her spells. It was a hard life now, everything she ever wanted she no longer could have, but she did not care. Thanks to her parents, she was not safe wherever she went. She found herself fighting bounty hunters or a network of allies her parents made. She tried to start her own gang, but they were too weak and scared to side with her. Everyone in the underground knew her parents marked her.

It would not be until Monday morning in July, that she peered through a crowd and saw a man with a laptop playing the web video of Alysia casting spells with Saga. She asked where it was from and a female viewer said that it was in America. She recognized the name Suzaku on the video's title. When the video reached the end, Danica saw Alysia's eye within the fire. Danica saw strength in her eyes and liked the power of Saga that came with those eyes. She

wanted that staff. She wanted all of the Sentinel weapons, so she could defeat her parents and take over their criminal empire.

Danica stole the computer right in front of the crowd and used her wind spell to escape. Hiding away in an alley, she set up a screen name named Seiryuu in the message boards and announced that she was the Sentinel looking for Suzaku. The people visiting the boards did not believe her and demanded proof. She found a nearby young male tourist with a camera and seduced him into giving it to her. He agreed. She took it and the camera case, and left the tourist behind. She took a picture of the ring and posted it up on the website. When she received a message back, it was from Brie.

Sunday evening in New Jersey, Brie had an ongoing hacker battle with Anna as she tried to type messages to Danica. It was tough trying to protect both of their locations from two different computers, but Brie showed her determination. Using the strongest security program, she received a warning window telling her the firewall was in danger of failure.

“My firewall is too thin. I don't know how long I could hold on.”

“Can you send a message to Danica,” Alysia's cold voice said loudly from the bathroom. “and at least warn her about Avalon Tech?”

“I'll try.”

On the computer screen, Brie switched from the c prompt window to the message board window. She typed real fast telling Danica about Avalon Tech and their intentions, warning her to stay away from them. She clicked the send button and returned to the c prompt. She typed in a new line of code that contained a virus and struck the enter key. A window popped up with a meter that rose to one hundred percent fast and Anna's attack stopped for now.

“Okay. Let me reinforce the firewall.”

A message popped up from Danica asking who Avalon Tech was. Brie replied and kept the story short. Once she sent the message, Brie used the waiting time to reinforce the firewall. As Brie received a reply from Danica saying she will watch out for them. As Brie

prepared a line of code, Danica asked where they were. Brie wrote that they were in New Jersey.

"Brie,' Alysia said. 'Are you sure you don't need my help?"

"I'm okay Alysia. You just get your hair fixed.' Brie read Danica's reply and her head jerked back. 'Danica just asked where was New Jersey?"

"Well where is Danica?' Alysia said as Brie typed on the computer.

"She's in England, Alysia."

"Really?"

"Yeah.' Brie stared at the message window. She looked up over the monitor at Karl as the elf packed up the tools and mechanical parts in the duffle bag. They were getting ready to leave in the morning. "Karl, could you send us to England?"

"No.' The elf said as he zippered up the duffle bag. 'Tell her to stay in England and don't come here. It's safer."

Brie typed to Danica to stay there and not to come to New Jersey. Brie received a reply that said Danica was going to come. Brie did as best as she could to change the Sentinel's mind but Danica typed back saying she was already checking the maps in America and found the nearest airport in Newark.

"You idiot." Brie typed one more time telling Danica not to come but Danica replied she would see them tomorrow and logged off. With a sigh, shaking her head side to side, Brie hurried with the program she was designing as Anna sent a window counting down. Anna sent a tracer that would expose their location and was ready to execute in two seconds. Brie activated her new program that completely crashed the webpage. The program destroyed all the messages and the video itself. When Anna's program activated, Brie's program sent a virus back to Anna, disconnecting the internet connection and crippling the hacker's computer. Brie hoped Anna did get their location or learned of Danica's arrival.

"What happened?" Karl asked.

"Danica said she was coming. She'll be arriving tomorrow."

"Stubborn girl. Which airport did she say she was going?"

"Newark."

Karl looked back and rubbed his eyes in frustration.

"We're not going back there."

"We have to Karl. If they haven't figured it out already, they will know Danica will be here." Bried said to Karl as they sat in silence.

Suzie stepped out of the bathroom and waved Alysia over. When she stepped out, Brie and Karl stared with eyes wide open. Alysia's white and light blue hair was short. Her ends even, straight, with her flat teal and pink hairclips propping some of her hair up. She saw the smiles on Brie and Karl's face and it made her blush a little.

"I like it Alysia." Brie said as Karl nod.

"Not long like a girl and not short like a boy.' Alysia said while rubbing her hair. "Thank you Suzie."

"I'm glad you like it." Suzie smiled.

Alysia approached Brie and looked at the screen. She saw Brie shook her head side to side and shut down the computer.

"Danica is going to be in Newark tomorrow." Brie said.

"She is?" Alysia said.

"I tried to tell her to stay there where its safe, but she said was coming and cut off our communication."

"Who is she anyway Brie?" Suzie said.

"She says she's the Sentinel of Seiryuu."

"And you believe her? She could be one of the Avalon Tech employees under Oryn's control. Don't you know that you could have given away our location?"

"I blocked Anna out of the system so they couldn't find us."

"That's not the point Brie."

"Suzie?" Karl said.

"What?' Suzie looked back at the girls and them facing the floor. Suzie knelt down before them as they lifted their heads up to her. 'You have to understand, I don't want to risk you girls falling back in Oryn's hands. Alysia you're doing well Alysia recovering from Oryn's brainwashing, I don't want to see you like that again."

"We have to try Suzie." Alysia said.

"I know, but you both are rushing into this and I feel you should think this through. Brie, are you sure Oryn doesn't know our location?"

"I infected their system with a virus and erased the entire website. I'm not sure if they got anything. Everything was happening fast." Brie lowered the monitor, closing her laptop as Suzie sighed and took the computer.

"I'll think about it." Suzie said as Brie opened her mouth to say something. 'But, I'm not making any promises. If this person really is a Sentinel, Karl and I will go get her and you two stay behind to take care of Reya. Okay?"

Alysa and Brie looked over at Reya sleeping on her bed. They nodded in agreement.

"Good. You girls get some sleep while Karl and I finish packing. We'll talk about this in the morning before we leave."

"Okay." Brie turned to Alysa as Suzie went to Karl to help with the packing and placed her hands over the Sentinel's ear. 'We should leave before they wake up in the morning and go get Danica. We can't leave her behind like that."

"And then we come back with Danica and go start looking for the Sentinel of Genbu."

"Right."

As Suzie and Karl packed up the remaining parts and prepared to pack their clothes, Alysa and Brie secretly packed away a few of their items into their bookbags. They packed in their clothing, and toiletries. They set aside their roller blades and helmets. Without Brie looking, Alysa packed in her Mage Suit. She knew that if she was going to get into a fight she had to be prepared with the only outfit that could withstand fire.

To Be Continued...

