Arcana Magi - c.21: The World Stage

by H-M Brown

< body="">“Vyndor,' A female voice said behind the door marked conference room. Karyn heard it as she waited for Oryn to open it. ‘everything is arranged and in place. Good luck.”

Oryn opened the door to the conference room for Karyn. Inside, there was a video conference with the Board of Directors. Strangely enough, the orb sat on a pillow on the table. Everyone in the monitor became silent as they looked in awe of Karyn's presence. The old mage stared at them with cold eyes as she and Oryn approached the orb.

“We…' The female elf said from the monitor. ‘We are honored to meet you Madam Karyn.”

The old mage said nothing. She did not even return the complement. All she had was disgust in her eyes as she looked at the grown men and women. To her they had no hearts. Knowing that they had committed such evil acts, not just only to Alysia and Reya, but to their employees as well. Nobody said a word to each other. No one had time for formalities. The monitor turned off and Oryn pulled a seat back to offer Karyn, but the woman just stood there. Everything was silent. Karyn stared at the orb, despite no sense of emotion or action made. Eerie as it was, the atmosphere felt hostile.

“Leave.” Karyn said.

“What?' Oryn said. ‘Vyndor will be here soon and…”

Karyn turned her head to Oryn. The old mage was in disbelief at what she heard. Her eyes had no feelings and made Oryn step back, even though the shackles suppressed Karyn's ability to channel mana. The old mage's emotionless face redirected at Vyndor, it reminded Oryn of Alysia. Karyn never looked back or paid attention to Oryn as the executive walked away without saying a word, without looking back at them.

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When the door closed, Karyn approached Vyndor at the end of the conference table. The orb sat there, as always, never made a move. No sense of emotion. Just an object resting on a pillow. Karyn walked past it and stood before the window staring out at the dark cloudy sky. Looking out at the city, her eyes shifted to the side.

“I know who you are.' Karyn stared at the orb's reflection on the window made by the room's lights. ‘You may have fooled Oryn, but you're dealing with me.”

“I have to admit,' The orb glowed with each word spoken. ‘she is quite a fool.”

“True.” Oryn turned around and stood before the orb.

“Tell me. Do you believe in Oryn's theory?”

“No.”

“It is quite a laugh. Did she tell you her story?”

“As farfetched as it is, a dimensional vortex is not impossible. Though, it does take a lot of mana to cast. It has been documented that other worlds have connected with ours before.”

“So you are giving her the benefit of the doubt.”

“The dimensional travel yes. Her theory, no.”

“And what if she proves her theory is a fact?”

“The magi will destroy her and all documents related to her knowledge. They won't let her live with that type of power. And after what you and her did to those girls, and everyone else you two got your hands on, there is no way Merydian Society will allow you to live on this earth.”

They went silent again. Only the sound of thunder outside spoke in this room.

“Hmph… Magi eh?' Vyndor said. ‘So that's what the Regs call us now.”

“It's what we Merydians call ourselves now.”

“I see. Well soon the world will all call themselves Merydians and we, Magi, shall return to our glorious days.”

Karyn stared at Vyndor. She did not understand what he was talking about. The old mage thought about the Sentinels and her eyes lit up.

“What have you done Vyndor?”

“Pick up the remote by the television. Tune to any cable news station.”

“Can't you do it yourself?”

“Indulge me.”

Karyn walked to the television and picked up the remote. She stepped back while turning on the monitor and she changed to a news channel. The screen read ‘Breaking News' and under it read terrorists found in Newark.

“We've just received an anonymous tip, that the four terrorists that attack Newark Airport a few days ago were sighted inside the city of Newark. We have reporters heading to a location called Mystic Intelligence. We will have live footage from our on field reporter soon.”

“It's not going to work Vyndor.' Karyn looked down at the orb. ‘The live feeds are going to get cut off by Mystic Intelligence Headquarters in Merydia.”

“Our hackers have that covered.”

“The blockades will stop them.”

“We gave them safe passage through all of the city borders.”

“The girls will not fight Mystic Intelligence.”

“Who said they have to fight Mystic Intelligence?' Vyndor said as Karyn looked up at the monitor. ‘The beauty of science is that sometimes, accidents can create something unexpected, and ideas turn into a dream come true. As far as I am concerned, Reya has earned her keep and shall remain free from our control.”

“Reya?' Karyn turned to the orb. ‘What does she have to do with this?”

“She was the first of many. Well you see Quillian had expressed great interest in our chimeras and unfortunately, their first attempt at kidnapping Reya proved fatal. But we were willing to make a deal so it could be water under the bridge, and a nice little profit.”

“Reya is a chimera?”

“Like I said, accidents do bring out the best in science.”

“You monster, she's just a child.”

“Yeah, well… it's business.”

Karyn picked up Vyndor and threw him to the floor. Nothing really happened and all she got in return is laughter.

“Lady you really believe I care if you kill me now.' Vyndor laughed some more as Karyn turned to the monitor. ‘In a few minutes, Quillian will unleash the chimera I sold them, at Mystic intelligence and the Sentinels will have to fight it, on television.”

“WHY?!' Karyn threw the remote at the orb. ‘You know what's going to happen?”

“The question you should be asking Madam Karyn is,' Vyndor said as it rolled closer to the old mage. ‘can the Regs handle the existence of magic in the world?”

Karyn ran to the phone on the other side of the table. A whip of light from Vyndor knocked the phone away and wrapped around the old mage. Without access to channel mana, a veil of light covered Karyn and paralyzed her body. Her body turned around and pulled towards the television. She floated in the air above the orb and she could not close her eyes.

“Why the hurry Madam Karyn? Don't you want to see you little girls take center stage and become the world's little media darlings?”

The power of the spell increased and inflicted more pain on Karyn. She lowered her head in exhaustion as Vyndor used his power to force her head up. The old mage watched the news coverage and hoped that someone would stop all of this from happening.

“The… girls?”

“Brainwashing them and attacking Mystic Intelligence in front a live television was indeed the real plan.”

“Why… them?”

“It's quite simple really. Show a monster attacking a city and people will say that's not possible, then Mystic Intelligence would cover it up saying it was hackers that made a fake video. Show four brainwashed girls attacking a city and blame it on the person who actually did it through press release, then people will cry outrage. I

would claim ignorance of Oryn's criminal act. Then I would present the innocent girls as victims of a rogue executive dishonoring my companies name and legacy. Then preach about the existence of magic to the world using Oryn's criminal act as an awareness that such things happen all over the world. Point out a few countries that have committed such atrocities toward Magi children and watch the Regs spiral down into a path of hate and anger that will let their guards down. Once mana, spells, and Magi are accepted, I will sell our latest… Magi Tech. I like the name. I will sell to to all the world's governments and thus start a new arms race. Perhaps even start a second Cold War. And, really, I told Oryn one Sentinel was more than enough."

"A…lysia…" Karyn shed a tear not from the pain of the spell, but from the fact that Alysia's suffering was all for greed and money.

"International Treaty 439 Madam,' Vyndor said as his shadow towered over Karyn's body. 'was a travesty that ended our rights as, Magi. From this moment on, it is repealed. You can't sell Magi Tech weapons if the world does not know magic exist."

The Sentinels and Kyo walked very low along the parked cars. They spread themselves apart as they got closer to the end of the lot. They leaned their backs on separate cars waiting for the signal to begin. With the exception of Danica, everyone had nervous looks in their eyes. They do not want to get into a fight with Mystic Intelligence, especially since they know Avalon Tech has a hold on them. Chisame and Danica poked their heads over the hood of the parked car. The ambulance was still there, and so where many agents looking confused.

"Something's wrong." Chisame said with a whisper to Danica. The leader looked over at the other car and saw Brie shrugged her shoulders.

"They're in disarray.' Danica said to Chisame as they both ducked back down. 'This is our chance to make our move."

Chisame closed her eyes and nodded. She looked over to Kyo behind another car all by himself. She gave him the signal to go first

and he stepped out into the open.

Kyo crossed the street and stood before an unmarked car. There were a couple of agents near the ambulance talking to each other. He waved at them to get their attention and they returned it. Kyo raised his gloved hands in front of his body. He channeled mana and they glowed bright. A magic circle grew out of thin air with the markings of the four phases of the moon with ancient runes on a circular band.

“A magic circle.” Brie said.

“I don't remember Kyo having that before?” Alysia said.

“Maybe he learned that after you…” Brie went silent but Alysia placed her hands on the hacker's back with a light smile to assure the youngster that she was not upset about it. They looked back Kyo as the agents stood ready to fight.

“KURAIKEN!” A sword ejected out of the magic circle. As the wind blew outward, he reached his hand through the full moon image, and grasped the hilt. The circle disappeared as he held his ancestral sword with two hand and the agents took out their wands.

“Put the sword down!” One of the agents said.

With a smile, Kyo swung the blade into trunk diagonally. It was so sharp that a chunk of the car fell to the ground. The tail light shattered like glass and a small hole to the trunk was visible. Kyo caught other agent's attention and he led a chase down the street so the agents would have their eyes away from the ambulance.

“Danica.” Chisame gave her signal.

“Finally.” The thief smiled as she crawled towards the ambulance.

“No killing.”

“Accidents do happen.”

Alysia and Brie rolled their eyes as Danica hurried to the ambulance.

The thief scurried right into driver's seat and reached under the dashboard. She pulled out the wires and started up the car. She honked the horn giving the signal to the Sentinels and she drove in front of the agents left behind. She gave the agents in the front

entrance the middle finger and screeched off.

Alysia, Brie, and Chisame watched four cars drive after Danica and saw only a few remaining agents by the corner watching both chases. The entrance was wide open now. The remaining Sentinels flipped the hoods of their ponchos over their heads, hiding their faces. They ran out into the open and up the stairs into Mystic Intelligence.

Inside, there was the front desk, but it was empty. Agents inside were all over the place. Phones ringing. Computers scrolling through commands. Television screens played reports of the news caravan approaching Mystic Intelligence on a news ticker at the bottom of the screen. The volume was set to mute. The Sentinels stared at the report as everyone ignored their presence. The girls walked along the wall as one agent wedged between them and another agent to get into an office. Another group gathered around a map as the head agent pinned thumbtacks on certain streets for them to blockade.

“I don't understand.' Brie said. ‘How did reporters know about Mystic Intelligence?”

“What do you mean?” Alysia said.

“Alysia,' Chisame turned to the winged girl. ‘no one outside Merydia is supposed to know magic exist in the world. You didn't know?”

“I don't remember,' Alysia held her head in pain. ‘if my parents told me that.”

“Worry about that later.' Brie said. ‘I need to get to a computer so I could find Reya, Suzie and the evidence room.”

“Pick one.” Chisame said looking at all the computers on the desks as the hacker saw an agent leave an office. Inside there was a computer and the blinders covered the windows so no one could see inside. Chisame led them into the room and they closed it slowly.

Brie activated the C prompt window and typed in commands overriding the security blocks and firewalls. She brought up a window, typed up profile information for Reya, and found her name in the victims list.

“They think Reya was kidnapped.' Brie read the screen. ‘It says she's in the infirmary in the second floor.”

“Alysia you go get her.” Chisame said.

“Right.”

“Suzie is in a cell below us.' Brie said as she typed on the computer getting passwords to enter the rooms. ‘I'll take care of that. The Evidence Room is on the third floor. The stairs is just past the desks.”

Brie wrote down the passwords and locations of Reya and the evidence on sticky pads and handed each one to Alysia and Chisame. And she wrote one for herself.

“We meet at the entrance, understand.' Chisame said. ‘No fighting. We want them to see we aren't what Avalon Tech made us out to be.”

The Sentinels made their way to the stairs across the main floor. As Brie ran down to the cellblock below, Alysia and Chisame ran upstairs. On the second floor, Alysia and Chisame peeked down the hallway. They saw the main doors leading to the infirmary. A nurse just entered past the security door and it closed. The security lock changed from green to red.

“Be careful Alysia.” Chisame left the winged girl and ran up to the third floor. There was no one around in the hallway. She walked quietly past secured doors, all marked as file rooms. The Sentinel walked past the men's restroom and heard voices in there. She hurried along looking back to make sure they would not spot her. Chisame arrived before a door marked evidence room. There was no security lock so she was able to enter inside. Once she went in, she saw a clerk's desk behind a chain link fence. No one was at their post. She stood before the door to the desk and saw the security lock. Chisame entered the password and received clearance.

Chisame walked along rows of shelves with evidence, following Brie's instructions and passed by a stepping ladder. Reading the tags, she saw all kinds of weapons in bags, files and paper, even bloodied clothes and items. It was very frightening to see. She found

the row their evidence was in. The Sentinel looked very carefully and saw the box sitting on the top shelf. She also saw their personal belongings and the Karl's duffle bag. Chisame went back and got the stepping ladder.

Once at the top, she grabbed the box and stared at the rest of their things. She wanted take them all, but there was too much to carry. Instead, she took Karl's duffle bag and opened it. She found Brie's laptop, the manaboards and few other tech. She slung the duffle bag over her shoulder and grabbed the box. Chisame heard a loud clang and hurried out. She could see the evidence clerk coming inside and waited patiently for him to leave the desk. The Sentinel peeked down the aisle, saw the clerk turn a corner with his back to her, and she ran out of the room.

Brie reached the bottom step. She leaned along the wall and saw the main entrance to the cellblock. The hacker stood before the security lock and entered the password. She went inside and found the place cold but not too cold. The corridor led Brie to an intersection marked, men, women, and juvenile in three directions. She walked down the women's cellblock and saw criminals behind bars. The women wandered back and forth restless. Some sat on iron seats, no doubt to Brie that the metal seats were cold. Some of the women huddled with each other to overcome the temperature. Brie kept her distance from the bars. She felt her mana suppressed from the detainment chambers.

“Brie?”

The hacker heard her name and she turned around pulling her hood back to show a her face. There was Suzie clasping the cold bars. Brie stood before her and saw the bandage on her head.

“You're head.”

“I'm alright Brie.' Suzie said as the hacker stood by the security lock. ‘what are you doing here?”

“Getting you, Reya and the evidence out of here.” Brie typed up the password.

“This is too dangerous. You shouldn't be doing this. At least go

get Reya and leave me behind.”

“I'm not leaving you behind. Besides, we got this under control.” Brie succeeded in releasing the lock and Suzie slid the gate to the side. Brie and Suzie hugged each other and Brie touched the bandage. She felt Suzie's hand pat her hair and saw a smile of assurance that she was okay.

The women in their cells started screaming and hollering. Brie and Suzie ran toward the entrance when they saw a couple of agents walking along the cells to quiet the prisoners. Brie and Suzie watched carefully as a guard heard one of the women claim there was an escape. When the guards turned a corner to see what they were talking about, Suzie pulled Brie and they ran out of the cellblock as more prisoners screamed for the guards.

Alysia already made her way inside. It was as if she was walking in a hospital. It was sterile and quiet. There were a few agents laying in hospital beds with their heartbeats monitored. They had injuries from either the incident at Newark Airport or Madam Karyn's attack. The winged girl walked along the wall and found herself at the nurses desk. There were monitors keeping track on the sick and injured. An agent stood by the desk with a doctor as one of the nurses presented a clipboard to him. Alysia ducked down and looked behind her to make sure no one was coming.

“Sorry you couldn't get your answers.' The doctor said. ‘But the child is completely feral.”

“The mind of a cat. The poor child.”

Alysia popped her head up from under the counter. She saw the agent sign on the clipboard and the doctor escorted him away.

“The child was malnourished,' The doctor said walking away. ‘and she did not hesitate to eat.”

Alysia read the note that Brie gave her and saw the sign on the wall leading her to Reya's room. Walking along the corridor, she looked into each room. Some empty, other had nurses tending the sick and injured, and others cleaning the room. She stood before a half opened door. The winged saw the room number on the wall, it

matched Brie's notes. Alysia opened it wide and walked inside lifeless. Her eyes frozen in time. There lying on the bed was Reya, looking right back at her.

“mew…” Reya's long grey hair and yellow eyes brought memories back to Alysia. Painful memories of the teen looking over her, wanting to protect her.

“Do you remember me?' Alysia said with a cold voice. She approached Reya as the catgirl tilted her head in curiosity. Alysa watched Reya stand on hands and feet and jumped down onto the floor. The winged girl knelt down before Reya and watched the catgirl nuzzle her chest. The purring brought tears to Alysia and the pain of the enchantment. Alysia placed her hands on Reya's cheeks and lifted her head up. With lips trembling, she tried to reach out for her friend. ‘Reya… do you remember me?”

“mew…' Reya's nose picked up a familiar scent. She stared deep into Alysia's eyes and she felt a pulse in her heart skip. A flash in her mind brought a picture of a shadow. A girl with wings standing before her, holding a long winged staff. Reya did not know what they were but the scent brought back that feeling. ‘A…”

“That's it Reya. It's me. Alysia.”

“A… A…”

“A…ly…si…a.” The winged girl laid her forehead on Reya's forehead and she cried. Her tears fell on Reya's hands.

Reya looked at the tears and saw her hands. Human nature kicked in and she felt tears falling down her face. Alysia's name stuck in her mind, repeated over and over again. A fragment of her memories appeared. Reya remembered lying in bed, hugging Alysia, crying because of the pain inflicted on them. She could not remember what was done to her and Alysia, but it was pain they shared. It brought out a protective instinct in Reya as she wrapped her arms around the Sentinel.

“Alysia.” Reya tightened her grip.

“Yes.' The winged girl held tight. ‘It's me.”

“Alysia.” Holding the Sentinel in her arms was emotional for both of them. All they could do was wail in tears like little children.

It took a moment for them to calm down. They leaned back so they could look at each other. Reya wiped Alysia's tears away.

“Re…ya…” Alysia placed her hand on the catigirl's chest as the doctor and nurse arrived.

“Reya.' The teen covered Alysia's hand and understood what that means. ‘Reya… Alysia.”

The catgirl placed her hand on Alysia's chest and they smiled together.

“It's a miracle.” The doctor said, accompanied by a nurse, as the girls looked up in his direction.

Alysia helped Reya to her feet and they held each other's hands tightly as the nurse ran down the hall.

“I'm taking my sister home.” Alysia said with a monotone voice. Her stern voice and cold eyes made the doctor step back; he never had a chance to explain his intention to help Reya. Leading Reya out of the room, Alysia kept her eyes on the doctor and together they ran. When they reached the nurses desk, two orderlies saw them and chased them to the main doors. Alysia and Reya got out of the infirmary and saw Brie, Chisame, and Suzie reaching out for them. Once Alysia and Reya grabbed their hands and they all ran down the stairs to sound of the alarms. The ladies ran fast past the agents as they all watched the group from their desks, run out of the door.

Danica screeched into a hard right turn onto another street. She saw Kyo in the parking lot running towards a chain-linked fence. The thief moved the car onto the sidewalk as Kyo jumped on top of the hood of a car. She slowed down as she watched the combat mage climb over the fence. Danica stopped the car right under him as he lost his sneaker and flipped over on top of the roof. She drove around another corner and felt one the cars bump the side of the van. The thief regains control as Kyo rolled to the side and grabbed the edge of the roof. Danica saw the Sentinels, Reya, and Suzie run out of the building, bringing along friends.

She picked up speed as Kyo screamed from the roof and he heard the sound of a pop. Danica and Kyo looked back and saw that

one of the drivers chasing them had cast a spell. They lost the left rear tire. Danica gave a second effort as she saw everyone heading towards her and she could not control the van anymore. She slowed the ambulance down to a complete stop and she jumped out of the van with Kyo climbing off. Everyone gathered and put their backs to each other. All of the cars chasing them formed a barrier. The running agents pulled out their guns and wands. The escapees placed their backs on the wall of the building and raised their hands up.

Before anybody knew, vans screeched to a halt not too far from the agents. All were news vans. Reporters, directors, and cameramen jumped out and set up camp. They started a live feed as a group of agents ran to them to stop the taping. Military vehicles arrived and the soldiers jumped out of the back gathering around with assault rifles.

There was a lot of confusion going on as reporters tried to fight for their right to air what was going on. They could see children held up by the agents and wanted to know why.

Soldiers did not care about the jurisdiction of agents anymore for their orders were to detain everyone. So many people arguing at once it sounded like a crowd in rush hour. Yet, it all came to deafening silence when a strange roar rattled the glass on all the buildings. It sounded like someone or something was in pain. It frightened Reya immensely as her ears twitched and she roared out of warning.

Everyone felt the rumbling of earthquake drawing closer and closer. A cameraman faced down the street, the building acted as a blind spot for most of the people there. Agents and soldiers standing in the intersection fired bullets and cast spells down the street. A green and yellow liquid gush out like a fire hose from the air and liquefied the agents and soldiers. The cameraman stepped back, zooming in on what happened, while the agents and soldiers screamed into a gurgled puddle. Trampling over the puddle and tossing aside the vehicles into an explosion, was the chimera.

It had a large elephant's head and horns of a bull along with its

tusks. Its sharp gator like claws stomped over the green liquid never feeling the burn. When it opened its wide mouth, its serrated teeth exposed dripping blood. A long sticky tongue snapped out and latched onto an agent. In a blink of an eye, the agent's body shattered like an explosion at snap of the teeth. He never had a chance to scream. When two soldiers fired their assault rifles at it, the creature's large nose sprayed it green and yellow acid at them. It let out another painful roar, a combination of an elephant, bull, and gator. The creature turned around and saw Alysia, its eyes glowed red. It charged right for her and everyone scattered. The creature rammed into the side of the building taking out almost the entire corner.

Alysia stepped back as the chimera pulled its head out of the building and looked back at the crowd of agents and soldiers. For a moment, Alysia and the chimera stared into each other's eyes. It was as though it recognized her and wanted to kill her. She froze in shock as a soldier picked her up and dragged her away before the hooves of the monster stomped on her. She found herself in the arms of Suzie as Kyo and the Sentinels gathered by the entrance of Mystic Intelligence.

The winged girl watched the agents and soldiers fight the monster in futile effort. The creature's skin was too tough for bullets pierce, or the fire and lightning spells to damage it. She saw the box of evidence by the ambulance. Alysia ran to the box and climbed inside the ambulance with it closing the doors. Inside she flipped the top open and grabbed her Mage Suit.

“What is Alysia doing?” Chisame said as the chimera pushed back all the agents and soldiers. She watched each one die at the hands of the creature.

Just as Brie and Chisame took off their ponchos and reached for the jewelry with Danica ready to call their weapons, Alysia jumped out of the ambulance dressed in her teal and pink Mage Suit with her favorite hairclips. She walked out into the middle of the street surrounded by death.

“Alysia?” Kyo said as he watched her raise her left arm into the

air.

“AWAKEN… SAGA!!” The bracelet burst into droplets of light, pushing the teal jewel into the air, and gathered around it. As her fist uncurled with a gentle reach, four triangles stretched out from the jewel and connected the tips with a circular band. The red staff stretched outward over her hand, and when Alysia's hand gently wrapped around it, a pair of white metallic wings stretched out from the neck base of Saga. She pulled Saga down across her body and spun it over her head like a baton until the headpiece pointed to the ground and the body of the staff rested on her back with her right fist leaning on her hip.

All the news vans watched what Alysia did and relayed it back at their network stations. Reporters gave play by play commentary as the Sentinels called their weapons.

“ADVANCE… FABLE!”

“ARISE…EPIC!”

“ASCEND… LEGACY!”

Their jewelry burst into droplets of light and transformed into their weapons right before the camera lens. The camera zoomed in on Alysia as she aimed Saga beside her body and channeled her mana.

“CANNONBALL!” The simple fireball fired out of the staff like a cannon and struck the side leg of the chimera. It roared in pain as the fire burned its skin. Alysia watched it turn around slowly with glowing red eyes that somehow targeted her. She prepared to channel mana as Brie cast her spell.

“RISING PILLAR!!” Brie slammed Legacy to the ground and a large pillar struck the chimera in the chin. But the pillar shattered, stalled the chimera, but did no damage. She ran to Alysia with Chisame and Danica, and together they rallied around the winged girl.

“Why the Mage Suit?' Chisame said. ‘You know its going to drain you mana fast.”

“I know but I can destroy it with double the spell strength. The creature is too tough for agents spells and soldiers bullets.”

“Our spells may not be effective either.' Brie said as she looked at the reporters in the distance. ‘I feel a little exposed.”

“How did the reporters know about this?” Danica said as she felt the earth shaking again.

“We'll worry about that later.' Chisame said as the creature barreled right at them. ‘Jump!”

The Sentinels scattered as the chimera ran past them. Danica rushed at the creature as it turned slowly around. She jumped up with Epic's blade pointed downward. She thrust the sword into the side of the creature and pierced its hide, but it did not go in deep. The creature never even roared in pain. She used her feet to pulled Epic out of the body and she used the wind to spin herself back to the group. As she landed in front of the Sentinels, a couple of missiles fired by soldier struck the creature. Chisame knelt down channeling her mana.

“IRON SHIELD!!” The flames bounced off the magical shield and kept the explosion from striking the Sentinels. She stood up as the agent and soldiers gathered around.

“You girls get out of here!” One of the agents said as the group cast more spells and bullets fired into the creature. They fired continued their assault as the chimera raised its long nose and the girls reached to stop them. But it was too late. They all screamed into a large puddle of liquid right in front of the Sentinels.

The girls retreated so they could have some distance. Alysia aimed Saga and her wings spread open. A blue and red fireball formed at the end of her staff. The intense heat liquefied the street into tar. The Sentinels backed as far away as possible as the chimera charged at Alysia again. Waves of heat stretched past her wings, it was the first time everyone outside of Brie, saw this spell in action. With the cameras focused entirely on Alysia, the fireball grew bigger and bigger.

“ASHES TO DUST!!” The fireball shot out at the chimera. It charred the skin turning it to ashes. Everyone cheered as they watched the spell engulfed the creature. But the rumbling continued as the monster emerged out of the fire, most of the skin turned to

dust but the body remained intact. A stampeding fireball, an unmovable object. Alysia felt a hug pushing her out of the way, the impact sent her further across the street, and rolling to the sidewalk. When she looked up, her eyes trembled. There was Kyo lying on top of her with his eyes closed. With most of her energy drained, she pushed Kyo up and rolled him over as Chisame channeled her mana.

“SPIRAL PRESSURE!” The twin snake water gusher struck the raw skin of the creature making it roar. She saw Brie and Danica stand beside her and they cast spells to provide Alysia cover. Whatever agents remained and more soldiers arriving with heavier weapons assisted the Sentinels. The monster was unstoppable.

Alysia lifted Kyo up and rested his head on her knees. She held his head as her tears fell on his face. She saw his eyes open and he smiled at her tears.

“My back.” He closed his eyes as the winged girl placed her hands on his chest and felt him breathing.

Alysia felt relieved and turned her attention to the chimera. She laid Kyo's head gently on the ground as Suzie and Reya arrived. Alysia looked up and saw the creature stomp between her friends, separating them. She saw Suzie and Reya watching over Kyo and her eyes turned cold.

Her heart let out a pulse. It caught the attention of everyone who could channel mana. It was a frightening feeling and it made the agents move the unwary soldiers back for protection. The chimera turned to Alysia again and stared her down. It bloody flesh exposed, dripping onto the street. Its red eyes focused on her as its target again, almost as if someone reminded it to kill her, and it charged forward.

Her wings spread open once more, and waves of heat stretched outward. She released Saga and it fell to the ground. It caught the Sentinels by surprise. Alysia channeled her mana from within. She felt it deep in her own heart. Warm, gentle, and destructive. It was a pain too deep for anyone to understand. Emotions boiled over from everything done to her. It was a spell her heart repeated over and

over again, throughout her ordeal, but would not unleash because of its gentleness. Now, it was time to release it. Alysia could no longer bear to hold it within herself.

Alysia stood on her toes and her body stretched. Her hands tightened into a fist, a wind current blew her upward, the pupils of teal colored eyes disappeared. All the mana she could channel gathered and flowed up with her arms as she raised them at shoulder height, her fingers dangled lifeless. She moved her right arm forward, the palm of her hand aimed at the monster. Alysia felt her heart beating inside, her fingers twitched with each pulse. As the monster towered over her, its feet close to trampling her over, she cast her spell.

“overkill”

Her right hand curled into a fist and the chimera's body burst into liquid. It splashed all around her like a wave crashing on the beach. The heat from her body evaporated most of the liquid leaving a circle of dry ground.

Everyone stood silent. No one dared to make a move as Alysia stood with cold eyes. Her face devoid of emotion. Her posture so ladylike. The Sentinels remembered seeing that look before. It was what Alysia looked like in the viral video after she used Ashes to Dust on the would be kidnapper. Only this time, she used a spell that did not come from Saga. It came from herself. A frightening spell that sent fear throughout the battle zone. A fear that made Reya cry and Suzie shiver. The cameramen held their ground as the reporters relayed their fears to the general public.

Alysia's pupils returned. The heat wave on her wings died down. Her right hand never lowered and shivered from shock. Her lips trembled, wanting to cry but could not. Her eyes rolled back and she dropped to her knees and collapsed on the ground beside Saga. With her hand over her staff, she looked up at the cloudy sky as rain picked up and fell on her face. The blood and acid washed away into the storm drains as Alysia felt herself lifted up by Brie and Chisame.

Her body lay on their knees. The winged girl could feel their hands comforting her as she took deep breaths. Alysia looked at Danica standing before her, with epic resting on her shoulder. They both smiled to each other as Alysia's eyes became a blur.

“You did great Shorty.”

The last words Alysia heard before she passed out.

To Be Continued...<>