

Arcana Magi - c.28: Our Hearts as One

by H-M Brown

Alysia aimed Saga at Oryn. Her wings stretched out. She knew she had to be careful, since she wore a Mage Suit and hair clips. Her spells had to be right or she would lose her mana and strength. She stepped along the side as Reya stayed behind her. The winged Sentinel and the executive watched their movements. They did not know who was going to make the first move. This situation felt familiar. Alysia remembered it all too well, weeks ago when they stood up to Oryn in her office. This time it was different. Her mind free, she could fight Oryn with no problem. But she felt escape was more important as she looked at the door. Sealed off by a barrier spell, the only way they could get out was beating Oryn. Yet, the executive was too powerful. She could feel it.

"Reya, I'll keep Oryn busy. Go to the door and see if you can break the spell."

"But I don't know how. I have very little mana."

"That's right." Oryn said. "So you may as well give up and go into the Therapy Room now."

"Shut up!" Alysia said. "Reya, it doesn't matter how you break the seal. Just do it. I know you can."

Reya saw Alysia's face. Focused on Oryn, ready to battle. The catgirl understood her role and knew that if she can break the seal, they can escape together. She curled her hands and nodded.

"Be careful Lys." Reya ran to the door as Alysia walked around Oryn to act as a shield to protect Reya.

As Oryn channeled her mana, Alysia ran up to the executive and swung the bladed wings of Saga at her. The executive stepped aside as the staff brushed by her and ripped her suit jacket. Oryn hopped back as the blunt end of Saga jabbed her in the stomach. The woman lost her concentration and failed to channel her mana. She

nursed the wound as Alysia swung Saga downward. Oryn stepped aside dodging the attack. She planted her hand onto the Sentinel's stomach gathering mana.

"PULSE!"

Alysia flew back and bounced over the table, knocking a monitor to the ground. She landed on her stomach and cringed from the pain on her back. She lifted herself to her knees and picked up Saga. The Sentinel saw a purple line sliding on the floor toward her. Alysia jumped to avoid it but the line followed her in the air and struck her back. Her body turned purple and became an x-ray exposing green-colored bones. She fell to the ground and rolled to her stomach before Oryn's feet. She resisted the pain and focused her mind so she would not trigger the enchantment. When Oryn kicked Alysia to turn her over, the winged Sentinel threw her hand up with channeled mana.

"CANNONBALL!" A fireball burst into Oryn's chest and sent the executive stumbling back. She patted on the small flames to put them out. Oryn sighed in relief as Alysia stood to her feet, taking short breaths. The executive was not happy that her clothes charred from the attack. She took out her notepad from her pocket before another spell destroyed it. But she failed to watch the Sentinel as Saga struck her hand. Her pages of spells flew over a table and she felt the blade of the wings tear into her pants, but no blood came out. Oryn jumped back into a defensive posture and noticed Alysia standing there fixed on her stomach.

"You're wearing a Mage Suit."

"Yes, Suzaku." Oryn said taking out a pair of red gloves and red flat hairclips from her pockets. "I came prepared."

Alysia watched Oryn slip on her gloves and hairclips, then tore apart her clothes. She stood before the Sentinel in a red and black Mage Suit. The executive stared at her ruined clothes and sighed.

"And these cost me five hundred dollars."

"So sad." Alysia channeled her mana.

"Well at least I won't burn to a crisp."

Alysia lifted Saga over her head and channeled mana. She felt herself using a lot of mana, but it was a risk she had to take.

"RING OF FIRE!" She jammed the staff on the floor and the river of fire slid along the ground like a snake. It followed Oryn as the executive jumped to the side. Alysia moved her hand to the right and made the flames turn around. She saw the executive stand right before her and jumped into the air. As the Sentinel looked up, her spell struck her body. The force of the impact swept her off her feet; even the flames had no effect on her. Alysia felt her wings spread open and her body became lightweight. She was able to move her body in the air and flipped back onto her feet. The Sentinel found herself crouched on the floor and her eyes grew wide. 'I can move like this?"

Alysia stood up and looked at the back at her mist wings. She could feel them now as oppose to when she first sprout them the day after her accident. They were a part of her body now. Unfortunately, she did not have time to reflect on it as she felt Oryn's fist in her stomach. Alysia's slid back a little and with her hand curled, she returned the punch. Right into Oryn's chest.

"So strong." Oryn said as she covered her chest. The executive underestimated Alysia's physical strength. Small as the Sentinel was, she could not resist rubbing the pain. The executive understood she needed to avoid that and focused on casting spells. After all, she sensed Alysia was struggling to channel mana in her Mage Suit. Despite Marcel's interference, at least her equation spell was not wasted and got Alysia into that outfit.

"Let us go Oryn." Alysia said as she watched Reya bash the door with a chair. 'You can't fight me and my spells are doubled in power in this suit."

"Are you sure about that?" Oryn smiled.

"What?"

"That's not the same Mage Suit you and Byakko wore before you escaped here."

"You mean..." Alysia looked at her hands and felt her mana weakened. Her eyes lit up. Her Cannonball spell never doubled in

power. That was why Oryn was still standing. If she unleashed her stronger spells, like Ashes to Dust, she may not defeat Oryn. She had no choice but to attack her physically until she can get an opening. Then again, Oryn's Mage Suit may have doubled the power of her spells. Alysia could put herself in danger if she tried to fight hand to hand. "This is bad."

Perhaps not. Alysia looked at the wall and thought of an idea. She stretched her wings and ran toward it as Oryn watched channeling mana. The Sentinel jumped on the chair as footstool and jumped up at the wall. Her feet and hand planted on the wall and pushed off it. The momentum increased her speed as she dove straight for the executive. She could feel the wings guide her. The air blowing through her feathers was a sensation that felt so wonderful. Her hand curled into a fist as Oryn readied to block it. Instead, Alysia pulled her body back and swung her right leg at the executive. Her foot struck Oryn's face and sent her rolling along the ground past her notepad.

"I did it." Alysia took short breathes as she tried to control her emotions.

"WOW!" Reya said as Alysia ran over to her.

"Did you find a way to break through?"

"No. It's so powerful." Reya's ears twitched and she leaned closer to the wall. "I hear something."

"What is it?"

"I don't know. It sounds so faint. The barrier may be blocking the sound."

"It could be the girls. We have to get this spell down."

"Try if you can." Oryn waved her hands at them. "BIND!"

A blast of purple light flew so fast, Alysia and Reya never had a chance to avoid it. It slammed their bodies onto the wall and held them up. It crushed their bodies and they screamed, for Alysia it was more painful. They struggled to break free as Oryn looked under the tables. Alysia stretched her body out as the enchantment triggered.

"Alysia... are you... okay?"

"It... hurts... so much.' Alysia closed her eyes and focused her mind. She planted her hand on the wall. She ignored the pain as best she could and felt a lot of mana drain with this spell. 'EXPLODER!"

The wall exploded behind them and made the girls fall to the floor. It startled Oryn and weakened her focused on the Bind Spell. This gave Alysia a chance to spin Saga over her head and engulf it with flames. She pulled back the staff and activated her spell.

"RAZOR FLAME!" She flung Saga at Oryn, the executive had no time to dodge it. Oryn raised her hands up, but she knew she had to release them if she did not want to get hit.

"DEFLECTOR!' Oryn's Bind spell turned off and Saga bounced off a shield of light. The staff bounced over a table and landed on the floor. The executive saw Alysia collapsed to her knees. 'Good."

Reya crawled to Alysia as the Sentinel realized she lost Saga. The catgirl help her to her feet and they saw Oryn holding the staff with both hands. Reya stepped aside as Alysia approached Oryn and left the catgirl by the door. They were not sure what the woman was going to do.

"You think I'm going to use the staff.' Oryn said flexing her fingers. 'Experience five months ago taught me otherwise."

Alysia raised her hand up to draw Saga back to her, but Oryn tightened her grip and pulled the staff back. It was a tug of war between the two as physical strength fought mental strength. But Alysia was losing. She pushed her mind hard to free the staff and the stress triggered the enchantment. The Sentinel gave up and clenched her head. She focused her mind and cleared her thoughts.

"Oh, I see the enchantment has not been de-spelled.' Oryn said as she approached Alysia. 'I have your staff. You and Reya have no way out. Submit yourself to me."

"No." Alysia said as she stepped back and shut off her emotions. Her eyes turned cold. She tried her best not to feel anything so she would not trigger the spell. But the injury and stress was too much. She saw Reya by the door; her cat ears leaned on the door again and her ears twitched. The Sentinel saw her friend bang on the door

trying to make as much noise to the people on the other side. Unfortunately, she kept her eyes off Oryn and felt Saga in her pushed into her stomach. Alysia stumbled back and took more strikes from Oryn using Saga. She resisted the pain and ignored it all together. She wanted to scream. The Sentinel dropped to the ground and took short breaths.

Oryn knelt down beside Alysia and grabbed her white and light blue hair. She pulled it back, and tried to get an emotional response. Their eyes locked in place. Sparks of anger clashing between their faces. They could feel each other's hatred. Oryn pushed Alysia's head into the ground. It made her scream.

Alysia's eyes blurred. Her hands shivered. She could barely hear anything. It was similar to what happened the day of her hockey game. This time her body went into a seizure and jumped all over the floor. The enchantment added to the trauma as her body stretched upward. She rolled over and curled into a ball. Her thoughts ran rampant. Like a flashflood, she heard everyone's voices at once. It pained her heart.

"What have you done to her? Wow what a pretty bracelet? You're right Suzie, she has wings. I got another A in my math test mom. They are not your parents. I like to read a lot of books. I'll make you smile again. Your life was a lie. You are not Alysia. You did great Shorty. Daddy I want to see that movie. My name is Alysia. I'll never tell you to get over it. You'll have to live in Merydia from now on. I wanted to be with you so much. We're your parents and we'll always love you Alysia. I love you Suzaku."

As Alysia cried out loud and Reya hurried to her, Oryn found her notepad under the table and flipped through the pages. The executive placed her hand on the page and the equations glowed. She channeled her mana as Reya rushed her. Oryn slapped the catgirl, knocking her aside. The executive aimed her hand at Alysia as Reya saw the manaboard on the floor and behind the table.

"FATE TO DESTINATION!!" A wave slid over Alysia's body. It affected her mind but it did nothing. The pain from her concussion was too much and the spell could not compel her.

Oryn stepped back as she felt the spell shut down. She heard footsteps behind her. The shock of the failed spell made her lose sight of Reya as she saw the manaboard swung right into her face. Oryn fell down; her notepad flew over Alysia. She pulled the catgirl down while she fell. She shoved the board aside, and when her eyes looked up, there was a fist coming right at her.

One after another, Reya punched Oryn in the face. Tears falling, Reya refused to stop as Oryn struggled to deflect each attack. Her nails slid down Oryn's face and left scratch marks. Everything done to her mother, Alysia, and herself. It was a flood of anger that she felt in her heart. That pain felt no satisfaction as her arms tired out and she rolled off Oryn's body. She crawled over to Alysia and pulled the Sentinel to her. She took her eyes off Oryn as the executive looked at the ceiling. The catgirl tried to get Alysia to look at her, but it was as though the Sentinel's mind was lost.

"Alysia." Suzaku said.

The Sentinel could hear her voice, whispering into her ears. It was as though the red bird was right before, even though Alysia was aware that she was not asleep.

"Suzaku." She said with a weak voice.

"Don't give up."

"My head hurts and I can't channel mana." Alysia's blurred vision saw a person dragging another person. She could not tell which one was Reya or Oryn.

"Focus on our heart and our minds will overcome."

"Our... heart." Alysia felt her heart pulse. The beating made her tears spill. She focused on her heart and cleared her mind. She felt the mana flowing within. Her sight cleared and saw Oryn stomp on Reya's back. This was the same move Oryn used on Sydney before. Alysia failed to stop Oryn then and save Sydney. Her heart pulsed again. This feeling inside, she had done this before, but never gave it a thought. She channeled mana from her heart, but never had control. She was not sure if the Mage Suit would affect her heart if she cast a spell. But Alysia had no time to second guess with Reya's

life in danger, she felt the need to protect her. She was not going to let what happen to Sydney repeat itself. 'GET OFF MY SISTER!'

A burst of hot air pushed Oryn back. The executive and Reya saw Alysia stand up, her mist wings reformed on her back. A wave heat acted as an extension of her wings. The power was difficult to control, the Mage Suit was not making it any easier on her heart, but she endured. When she took a step, the wings of heat followed her and flapped with the mist wings.

"So beautiful." Reya closed her eyes and passed from her injuries.

Oryn felt excited. More than ever. When she first saw those extended wings, she was afraid. Not so much the power but what Alysia was thinking. The unpredictable situation of a brainwashed child struggling to not kill another human being, harnessing such a power. Now, she was facing a freed child, who knew what she was doing. She knew Alysia wanted to leave and was willing to go to this level to escape. The executive also knew that she was still just a child lacking experience in both using mana and acting on it. Oryn saw a piece of glass from a nearby broken monitor. She pretended to be on one knee, with her hand over the shard. When Alysia stood before her, Oryn rammed the glass into the Sentinel's thigh. She punched the teen in the face before she had chance to scream. Oryn threw two more punches but Alysia never fell to the ground.

"Why won't you go down?!" Oryn threw another punched but Alysia caught it. The executive tried to pull her hand back, but instead her body leaned forward by Alysia's strength and felt a punch to her face. Oryn stumbled back. Blood trickled out of her mouth.

Alysia removed the shard of glass, raised her hand, and Saga returned. The Sentinel walked sideways keeping her eyes on Oryn. She knelt beside Reya and shook her shoulder. There was no response and but she felt her pulse.

"I'll get us out of here Reya. Just hang on."

"I always get what I want Suzaku!" Oryn raised her hand up and gathered mist around her hand. "That includes you!"

Oryn charged at Alysia as the Sentinel pulled her staff back. The executive spread her fingers apart as a green ball formed at her palm.

“RADION BLAST!” The ball flew toward as Alysia spun Saga in front of her. Flames lit up and a shield of heat became visible.

“PYRO SHIELDER!” Oryn's spell bounced up to the ceiling and exploded. Fragments rained down and Alysia covered Reya to protect her. A large piece struck her back. She jerked her head up screaming. Alysia endured. She shook her head and pushed Reya under the table. The Sentinel slid under pushed the table over to its side to act as a cover. She looked at the trail of blood her thigh left behind and lit a flame on the palm of her hand. Alysia slapped the flame on the wound and sealed it closed. It was temporary as she saw a little cracking from the scab but it bought her some time.

“Hiding behind the table? You know I could just blow you both away.”

Alysia took short breaths. Trying to conserve her energy. Channeling the mana from her heart. Her eyes blurred a little and refocused. With Reya around. Oryn could use her as a target. She needed to keep Oryn's attention on her. She saw her manaboar not far away. When Oryn looked over the turned table, Alysia jabbed the blunted end of Saga into the executive's chin. The Sentinel rolled over to her manaboar and planted her feet on it.

Her mist wings stretched out and the heat wave glowed teal. She launched herself in the air and floated around in a circle. The Sentinel aimed Saga as Oryn aimed her hand.

“ENERGY BARRAGE!”

“FIRE BLASTER!”

Both attacks fired like machine guns. Each shot of the spell clashed with each other. They created a trail of explosions following Alysia along the wall. When the spells finished, Alysia dove down to the floor, and crouched.

Alysia pulled her wings down, keeping the heat wave low and out of Oryn's sight. She floated along slowly, watching the executive's

movements carefully. The Sentinel noticed Reya was safe, for now. She had to act fast before Oryn decided to turn on her friend.

"Oryn." Alysia said. "You can't beat me."

Alysia saw the executive turned around. She had the advantage as Oryn walked toward the wall. The Sentinel flew right at the woman. She held Saga sideways across her chest. Alysia picked up speed. The Sentinel imagined herself on the ice and Oryn in a hockey uniform skating along the glass board of the rink. Just as Oryn turned her head around, Alysia shifted her manaboard into a skid, and pushed her staff into the executive's back. The impact rammed Oryn face first into the wall. It brought back memories as a Hockey Hooligan; the executive's body slid down to the ground. Alysia floated backwards, watching Oryn on her knees with eyes closed. She held Saga in a defensive position and saw Oryn's lips move with her fingers on the floor.

"Darkness Projector."

Alysia saw the same purple line from before coming at her. She flew up and saw the line follow her. The Sentinel flew along the wall and turned around, but the spell kept up with her. She spun her body around and cast a spell to stop it.

"PYRO SHIELDER!" As she spun Saga, the line broke into five and bent around the spell. The lines gathered between her and shield to become one line. It struck her belly and her purple body stretched outward. The manaboard fell down to the floor and she dropped right into a table. The impact aggravated her injured back and a spec of blood ejected out of her mouth as she screamed. She placed her hand on her back her eyes blurred a little. The pain started to catch up to her. That meant the enchantment was going to trigger if she does not put Oryn away.

The truth was that she would have to kill Oryn to accomplish this. This was not what she wanted to do. Regardless of how evil Oryn was to her, Reya and everyone else, she vowed never to take a human life. It was such a gross feeling to have. It felt like her soul was stripped away doing that. If she could take Oryn down without ending her life, she would. But it seemed she did not have any

option, until, her hand touched a notepad instead of Saga. She noticed Oryn stopped approaching her. Alysia found that interesting.

"What is so special about this pad?" She flipped through the pad and saw nothing but equations. There were names and notes in each page. They seemed weird at first but, as she read them, it did not make sense. "Some of these calculations are wrong."

Alysia heard Oryn laughed. She saw the executive approach her with her hands to her hips.

"Of course you don't know Suzaku. You're only thirteen. This level of math is beyond your comprehension."

"Really?" Alysia looked at the page called Reversal. "Because this equation should have an x instead of a y."

Alysia held up the page and Oryn analyzed it.

"This can't be!" Oryn stepped back. "You're right. But how did you know?!"

"You should know." Alysia looked up with cold angry eyes. "You've read my mind in the Therapy Room."

Oryn stood there. Her heart pounded. In a moment of arrogance and obsession over Alysia, she foolishly forgot about one piece of Alysia's past. So worked up over having the power of Suzaku and the child by her side, she never considered the possibility of what would happen if Alysia learned about the equations.

"How strange?" Alysia said "These equations are reacting to my mana. Like spells. Oh."

Alysia remembered the day she and Brie escaped. When they went to get their jewelry in Oryn's office, she saw Oryn's book called 'The Theory of Fate and Destiny'. She never had a chance to read the book, but she did get a glimpse of the equations. Alysia turned to the page called Fate to Destination on the notepad. She saw her own name written under it equaling x and Therapy Room equaling y. It made sense now. These equations were spells. Powerful ones at that. Given that her name and the Therapy Room were in the same equation, she understood how she got here against her will.

"I won't let you use it!" Oryn flung a green sphere from her hand. "RADION BLAST!"

Alysia leapt up in the air. She flipped over the ball as it exploded on impact. The Sentinel landed on her feet and felt the pain of her cut. She saw the wound reopen and blood spilled out. She did not have time to reseal it as Oryn threw another Radion Blast spell. Alysia rolled to the side and kept dodging each attack until her back bumped into a table. She looked at the corner of eye and saw pencil on the table. Alysia turned around and snatched it as another Radion Blast struck her. She opened her eyes as they blurred and found the pencil and notepad on her belly.

While still on the floor, she flipped through the pages as her sight restored. She found the page for Fate to Destination again and made a quick adjustment to the calculations. When she finished, another Radion Blast blew across the floor. Aysia lied on her stomach. She felt the pencil under her chest. The notepad rested across from her at arms length. She planted her hand on the page but Oryn's foot stepped on it. The Sentinel released the pad and the executive picked it up.

"Nice try." Oryn placed her hand over the page without reading it. "But you were foolish in trying to preserve the notepad when you should have destroyed it."

"No."

"Yes." Oryn said as the equations glowed. "Fate to Destination."

Oryn stood still. A wave slid over her body as Alysia stood to her feet and limped over. She saw the Sentinel take the notepad from her hand. The page and pencil held to the executive's face.

"It can't be." Oryn walked toward the Therapy Room as Alysia ran past her. She watched the Sentinel open the door for her; she felt coldness of the Sentinel's eyes. There she stood in the middle of the room, as the door closed. Oryn struggled to move but her own spell prevented her from escaping. Her heart pounded at first but then she felt relaxed. She knew Alysia would not be able to work the control room by herself, unless. "The preset controls."

Alysia climbed up the stairs. She stepped into the control room and saw Oryn below. From this view, she thought about what it must have felt like for Oryn to look down her. The joy they had torturing

her mind and body for their heartless greed and obsessions. She stood before the computer monitor and saw the program asking to restart Therapy. Alysia reached with her right hand. She paused for a moment looking at her gloved hand. It shook. Not because of whether what she was about to do was right or wrong, but because of the pain. The scars from punching the glass, the after effect from using her own personal spell Overkill, she was not sure if her hand would ever stop shaking again. With her hand curled, she pounded on the monitor to activate it.

The sound of the hum unnerved Alysia's mind. She covered her ears as she watched Oryn look up at the ceiling. A spotlight shined down on her. The Sentinel took a gulp of air in her throat as she watched the executive float up. Alysia heard her moan. She heard her whimper.

“please... stop...”

Alysia tightened her teeth together hearing her beg so suddenly. Oryn acted so tough, so powerful that to hear her cry now, felt insulting. Alysia fought hard in that machine as she saw the executive squirm in the air, struggling to cover her ears. At this Stage of Therapy, Alysia felt it was a walk in a park. The Sentinel felt her heart turn cold. She went to each control panel, pressing every button and turning every dial pushing the machine to its maximum limit. Alysia forced the machine to catch up to the higher settings. The Sentinel saw the ceiling open up and her eyes froze. She saw Sydney inside the glass dome hanging off the wires. Alysia covered her mouth as tears build up and Oryn's body turned to light.

Before she could react, Alysia felt a light glare off her face. She looked to the side and saw the mirror acting like a television. She stood before it and saw Oryn's life. From childhood to adulthood. Every little bit, from publicly known to private and embarrassing moments. Alysia knew all too well, what that was like. She learned about Oryn's trip through a strange vortex. Alysia saw a shadow of a young man connecting a chain to Oryn's teenage body. As time progressed, she saw the obsession the executive had in mastering

the use of equations as spells. The cold, calculated maneuvering the executive used on people to get what she wanted.

When Alysia saw herself in Oryn's memories, she felt disgusted at what Oryn learned about her. Her private moments in the most private places, like in her bedroom and bathroom. Her likes and dislikes. Her friends. Her family. Oryn knew everything.

"What have you done to our daughter?" The voice sounded familiar. Alysia looked up and saw Oryn walking up to her. The Sentinel saw her parents in Mage Suits holding each other's arms. She had Saga aimed at them, casting a spell to attack them.

"What are you doing Vyndor?" Oryn said in the mirror.

Alysia's lips trembled as she felt the fear that racked her heart. Oryn looked down at the orb as it answered her question.

"Oryn. I am helping ease her pain by killing the people who stole her life."

Alysia's memories opened up. The memories of this moment, suppressed by her will. She saw herself standing there before her parents. She believed they were strangers who stole her life. The Sentinel felt hate in her heart for them, but she could not understand why she would not kill them. She felt the tears fall down her face as her mother reached out to her.

"I know you can hear me baby. It's me... you're mother. I know you don't want to kill us. Whatever they said to you was a lie."

Alysia refused to believe them. She refused to listen. She refused to kill them. It was too much for her mind to handle as she formed a blue ball at the end of Saga. It grew as her parents hugged each other and channeled mana.

"Alysia." Her father said. "It's not your fault. We love you."

"We're your parents and we always love you." Alysia's mother said.

With tears dripping of her chin, Alysia cast her spell.

"ashes to dust."

"TIME DISPLACEMENT!"

Alysia's eyes blinked as she saw in the mirror how her parents disappeared, just like Marcel. Oryn had her hand on her notepad as

the Ashes to Dust spell burst off the wall. She actually believed she murdered her parents, but that never happened. She heard herself screaming out loud. It was so horrifying, it was incomparable to the cries she made that rainy day in Kyo's arms. On that day, she blanked that memory out of her own mind and stood there and empty shell. It was what Vyndor felt Oryn needed to get Alysia under control. To stop fighting Therapy. From that point that Oryn was able to take advantage of Alysia and increased the pain and torture.

Alysia dragged her feet along the ground and leaned her back to the wall. She slid to the floor and pulled her knees up to her chest. She wrapped her arms around her legs and tucked her head between her knees. Tears fell down her cheeks and blood trickled from her thighs. Her body calm and the heat wave left her wings. The pain throughout her body caught up to her. Her wings laid flat hugging her back. The enchantment triggered.

Her cries drowned out Oryn's screams.

To Be Continued...

