

# Arcana Magi Pure Vol.3 - c.1

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The Clans had gathered at the theater for their meeting. All the elders prepared for a vote, with members of the Society watching over them. Mrs. Saito stood with arms crossed, staring down at the Moderators on stage, with fiery eyes. The cats, from behind the podium, took a deep breath watching every member raise a ghostly hand. They saw the elders of the Kitsune, Inu and Higurashi Clans stared back at them with condemnation. The cats shook their head in rejection, and slammed the gavel. They began to conclude their meeting as Ren landed on the ground.

“Like, we bit the bullet this time lady.” Ren said approaching Mrs. Saito getting her attention. She turned around.

“They won't say who brought the Purge of Emi to a vote. This is going to cause mistrust between the Clans and the Magi.”

“Everyone needs to mellow out and relax. Like, I got this Zen thing rolled up on top of my meditation mountain. We should go their and reach enlightenment.”

“This is not funny Ren!” Mrs. Saito leaned into his face. “A child almost got Purged.”

“No, we almost had a war.” Ren voice was deep and frightening. His tone made Mrs. Saito step back, but he smiled. “But hey, this is a time to celebrate a crisis averted. So, how about that offer?”

“No. We have to monitor the twins now and make sure no one attacks them. This whole thing is suspicious.”

“True, but with the Purge now voted out, the people who planned to go after Emi will back off, and Mayumi has nothing to worry about.”

“Why?”

“Because my little birdies told me the Priestess abandoned the shrine. The girls are at peace now and are happy.”

"Not good enough."

"Suit yourself." Ren hopped away from Mrs. Saito and her team. He could hear the frustration rumbling under her throat. The crow stopped and looked back. "You have more on your mind?"

"Why would the Clans agree to this? Why risk everything?"

"My other little birdies told me that the Mukado wanted to be a Clan. You know how the Clans get when change occurs."

"You sure get a lot of info." Mrs. Saito approached Ren and the crow looked up at the branches of the tree.

"Indeed. It's the only we can prevent horrific events. Change is a great fear because it takes us out of comfort. Fear of change is too inherit a nature for us all, and yet it is always the next generation that face changes with little fear... and eyes of wonder." Ren flew away leaving Mrs. Saito and her group with a little something to think over.



At school, a strange white rabbit with purple eyes and two tails hopped at the top of the hill. Its neck stretched looking around shivering. Its ears straightened. Its body coiled like a snake. A strange wind gathered around its body and with a leap, it avoid the snapping sound of the air. It scurried down the hill and Emi reached the top. As Mayumi climbed short of breath, Emi raised her hand up building the wind around the palm of her hand. She struggled to aim while forming the air into a ball.

"Focus Emi."

"I am." Her hand shivered as the rabbit hopped left and right. "Air Cannon."

The ball pushed off her hand like a gun knocking her into Mayumi's arms. The spell burst next to the rabbit knocking it aside, but it got up unfazed. With the sound of a growl, Emi gathered Mana; some of it was impure, forming a dark sphere.

"Gravity Bind." Emi threw the spell at the rabbit. The ball sucked the critter inside forcing it to the ground. Emi took deep breaths and Mayumi walked by shaking her head in disappointment. Emi watch her sister activate her magic circle underneath the

rabbit. Wind gathered around the sphere.

"Negate." Mayumi's spell cancelled out Emi's spell. "There we go. Levitate"

The wind lifted the rabbit gently into the air. She turned it around so she could look at its wiggling face.

"Yeeeeh." The rabbit made the sound with a sweetness that made Emi giggle. Unfortunately, black mist spilled out of its body and Mayumi focused her Mana.

"Purify." The magic circle slid over the rabbit's body. It separated the black mist from the rabbit, and the cloud turned white. Once the circle disappeared, Mayumi dropped to her knees taking a deep breath. Emi knelt next to Mayumi. "It worked."

"Yeeeeh."

Mayumi and Emi looked up at the rabbit and saw that it never turned back to normal. It approached them and nuzzled Emi. Mayumi lowered her head with her hand gripping her hair.

"The spell wasn't strong to return it to normal. I'm sorry Emi. I have a long way to go with master Purify."

"Koi."

"Eh?" Mayumi looked up at Emi and her sister gently rubbed the rabbit's fur.

"Her name is Koi, sis."

"Yeeeh."

Mayumi sat back on the sloped hill looking up at the sky, feeling the wind on her face.

"I never realized how amazing the wind is." Emi said lying on the grass, resting Koi on her chest. "It's great that we share this element together."

"Yeah. It's too bad our secondary spells are different."

"Gravity is not so bad."

"But it's part of the cause of your impure Mana."

"Hey, I'm not changing into my orichalcham outfit so back off." Emi looked at her sister with a smile. "Though, I do look awesome in it."

"You look ridiculous in it and you need to wear a skirt with that

outfit."

"At least my costume isn't green and yellow. It screams loud."

Mayumi and Emi looked at each and laughed. Emi sat up hugging Koi. Her moment of silence got her sister's attention.

"It's weird being a Priestess."

"You still haven't quit? It's been a week since the incident."

"I've been thinking about what I've done, sis. I exposed my followers to this, impure Mana, and you're the only one who can Purify them. I have to make up for this. I can't quit like that. The least I can do as the Priestess is just keep the Mukado away from the city, but the people, if I send them away, we'll never find them and Purify them."

"I see. You've been thinking a lot about this?"

"Yes. I want to bring light to the world through Hikari, but I don't want to hurt anybody." Emi felt Mayumi's hand on her shoulder, and she leaned on her sister.

"I believe you Emi. We'll get through this together."

Mayumi stood to her feet and Emi followed her back to the school building.

"I wonder how I'm going to sneak Koi into class."

"I'll get your bag to put her in."

"Thanks."

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At the Shrine of Four Mythic Beasts, Nina walked Goro to the entrance. Waiting there was Keiko, looking at the shrine itself. She thought of saying a prayer, but saw no point. After what happened last week, and have not heard from Mayumi, she came to accept that she might never see her again. Goro stood beside her and Nina sat down.

"Are you going to try to continue Mayumi's training Nina?" Keiko said.

"Only if she wants to."

"We can't force her into a life she does not want." Goro said.

"Yeah. I understand. I just..." Keiko looked away. "I just wanted her to be my friend."

"I'm sorry." Nina said. "She got what she wanted. She got her sister away from our world."

"But what about the people that became her followers? We can't leave them there."

"With the Priestess out of the way," Goro looked up to Keiko. "we can proceed in a rescue attempt."

Nina nodded. "This is a Clan issue now Keiko. We'll be fighting the Mukado. There's no need for the Magi or members of the Society to be involved. You don't have to worry about this fight. Thank you for your help. We really appreciated it. You're always welcomed here."

"Thank you." Keiko knelt down, picked up Nina, and hugged the fox. After planting her on the ground, Keiko bowed to the shrine. "Goodbye Nina."

"Let's go." Goro led Keiko down the stairs as Nina bowed to them.



"Yuri?" Rumiko said perched on the tree branch above the yard of Mayumi and Emi's home. "What exactly are we doing here?"

"We're just doing one last sweep before declaring this mission over." Yuri said resting on the tree trunk behind Rumiko, watching the window of Emi's room.

The sun was setting over the house, and Rumiko leaned on the trunk with her arms crossed. She felt Yuri landing on top of her head, hearing nothing around them. Rumiko tapped her finger on her forearm, waiting for the twins to return. She took out her kunai knife, slipping her finger through the ring of the hilt. The ninja spun it around to keep herself pre-occupied, drawing Yuri's attention away from the building.

"Stop it Rumi-chan." The cicada said. "It is not a toy."

"I'm bored. The Priestess hasn't returned to the shrine since last week. I think it's safe to say that she is no longer a threat. Besides, one of the spies from the Karasu Clan will show up. So there's no point being here."

"Don't forget your training."

"Yes. Yes. Always observe and never look past anything." A crow landed on the roof of the house, and Rumiko shrugged without care. "Right on schedule."

"Shh... They're probably home." Yuri saw the crow watching them from across the backyard. Everyone stayed still and kept quiet as Emi entered her bedroom.

Inside, Emi took one of her pillows and placed it on the floor. Koi jumped off her shoulder. She knelt down nudging her pet closer to the pillow, encouraging it to lay on it. Koi climbed on it and lied down. Emi pet the rabbit, sliding her hand to its two tails. She wished there was something she could do about it, but she had no solution. Purify did not restore the rabbit's body to normal, and looking at her hands, as the impure Mana gathered around her clean Mana, she wondered if she will change into a monster herself.

"Emi?" Mayumi said standing at the doorway. "Dinner is ready."

"Am I going to become a monster?"

Mayumi approached her sister. Koi lifted its head up at her and she understood what Emi meant.

"I don't know, but if you keep casting those spells with impure Mana, you'll get sick."

Emi stood up and turned to Mayumi. She did not know what else to say. There was a sense of helplessness. She felt the regret for her decisions last month. The stress made her thoughts feel caged. An overwhelmed sense where she knew she could explode from anger, but she could not release it. Emi cradled her belly, sitting down on the bed. She took a deep breath as Mayumi sat next to her. Without hesitation, Emi hugged her sister. No tears, or a whimper.

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Night fell and Rumiko saw the time on her watch read nine. Yuri walked ahead to the edge of the tree branch observing Emi doing her homework. Rumiko shook her head realizing nothing is going to happen.

"It looks like she's really moving on Yuri."

"So strange."

"What is?"

"That this is the life you Magi go through. What's it like holding an object with hands? Wearing clothes?"

"You know what else is strange? Knowing that animals can talk. You try spending most of your time in school told that animals only roar or buzz and then we meet you. Talking animals is stuff we see on television, yet here you are. Shining Star told me that the Priestess was frightened when her Mana formed, then thrown into this world of magic and talking creatures. You have no idea how much I understand her. Not understanding what we go through is probably why our relationship with the Clans are so--"

"Fragile?"

Rumiko and Yuri looked at each other, silent for a moment.

"Yes." Rumiko turned away from Yuri looking at her watch again. "I have to go home. I have a test tomorrow and I must study."

"Okay. I'll stay here and keep watch."

"Be careful." Rumiko leapt out of the tree without the crow seeing her. With the ninja no longer in her sights, Yuri stood at the edge of the branch lying on her stomach.

Two hours have passed, and the house lights went out except for one, Emi's room. Yuri saw Mayumi inside nodding to her sister. Once she left, Emi turned off her lights and opened her window. She jumped scaring Yuri, but a gust of wind slowed the Priestess' fall. Emi landed on the ground but stumbled and fell. She got up brushing the dirt off her clothes and looked up.

"How does Mayumi do it?" Yuri overheard. The cicada flew down and latched onto Emi's jacket. She held on tight as the Priestess ran climbed the wall and out onto the street. Yuri looked around her surroundings keeping track of where they were. The homes around them soon turned to shops. The streetlights passed over them as though someone was flipping the light switch over and over. Soon Emi slowed down and started sneaking around. The Priestess was searching around. Yuri did not want to take a chance and flew into the air. She followed Emi down an alley. They emerged into an open area where a fountain and benches were set up.

Keeping her distance, Yuri watched Emi sit on the bench and a

centipede as big as a housecat arrived. There was a ghostly hand above its head carrying a scroll. It handed the paper to Emi and she opened. Yuri flew around landing on to a nearby drinking fountain behind Emi to see what was written. Yuri realized the Priestess was looking at the centipede but no words came out.

“Telepathy?” Yuri whispered. When Emi moved the paper exposing the writing, Yuri leaned closer to see what was written, but was instead swept up into the air. She looked up and found herself in the claws of the crow that was spying at the house. Yuri struggled to break free, but when she looked down there was black mist reaching out to them. It was like a hand wanting to grab them. She tried to see where Emi was, but they were too high for even the mist to reach. Yuri shivered and gripped the claw out of frustration. She took a deep breath, relaxed, and looked up at the crow. “Thank you.”

“I’ll take you back to your Clan. Hang on.”

To Be Continued...

