

# Arcana Magi Pure Vol.4 - c.3

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Through the city, the number of people searching for Emi increased. Men, women, and children looked everywhere. From alleys to cafés to schools, they were determined to find her. Those who were not looking for her, all they could do was watch either in curiosity or with disturbed expressions on their faces. It became so absurd that the media began reporting the hunt. Reporters from local newspapers gave questions to a family of four asking why this is happening.

"Priestess Emi is a wonderful girl." The mother said holding her toddler's hand. "I don't know what we would do without her blessings."

Another reporter with her camera crew reported on what looked like a protest parade, calling for Emi to return. The police arrived to try and disperse the crowd, but it soon became volatile. Bottles thrown, the crowd brushing against the officers; soon screams followed and tear gas burst into the air.

"Just what is going on here?" The reporter reacted and ran with her cameraman away from the violence. "Who is this Priestess Emi and does this have to do with the rumored parade from a few weeks back?"

On the television the reporter found herself chased by screams of 'Where's Emi?' and the feed is cut off. Mrs. Saito, with her arms crossed, turned to a team dressed like SWAT officers. There was silence in the air. So quiet in the room that only the sound of creaking was heard. Mrs. Saito's face was stone cold that the officers could not stop their hands from shaking.

"This is what we're up against. Followers under control of the kami Hikari. They are determined to find Emi by whatever means and we need to get this under control. If the general public find out

about the Magi, we won't be able to handle the outcry or panic."

"Ma'am?" One man raised his hand up getting her attention.  
"Why don't we destroy the shrine?"

"Not with the kami still inside. We don't know who Hikari is and if she happens to be part Amatarasu's group, it will be very difficult to justify the destruction without going to war with them. Right now we need to control the crowd, and extract Emi from the city."

A woman knocked on the door and entered inside. Mrs. Saito and the officers turned to her.

"Ma'am, Ren from the Karasu Clan is on the phone, line three."

Mrs. Saito picked up the phone and answered. After identifying herself to Ren she listened and her eyes grew wide.

"Emi and Mayumi were what?!"

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The twins followed Keiko and Rumiko down the street. The shrine was not too far as they ran past the people, who avoided the girls to keep from getting trampled over. They came to a stop when a group of boys saw Emi and pointed her out. Rumiko was ready to fight, but Keiko pulled her arm, leading her across the street. The girls turned a corner and with no one around, they all channeled their Mana and jumped high into the air. They all landed on the roof. Catching their breath, Rumiko pulled Keiko close to her face.

"Don't you ever stop me again."

"Do you want to be responsible for revealing us Magi to the people?"

"I think we're past that now. The Priestess' followers are getting violent and force is the only way to control them."

"That's not how I do things Rumiko."

"Too bad Keiko."

"Enough!" Emi said with hands on her hips. "Keiko is right, we don't attack them."

"Okay." Rumiko said approaching Emi. "They're your followers what do we do to clean up your mess?"

"I... I don't know." Emi lowered her hand thinking it over. "I could gather them and tell them to go home."

"Not a good idea." Keiko said. "Bringing together a large crowd could create bigger problems."

"Well running around the city to hide is not going to solve this problem either."

While the girls continued debating over how to resolve the issue, Mayumi became lightheaded. She watched them stretch and twist, then turn to stone. Soon everything around was white as stone. Objects, birds perched on the edge of the building, even the sky.

"Purify." The voice said in Mayumi's mind. It was like a headache. It repeated it again so clear; it was recognized as a woman's. So gentle and soft spoken. Inviting and warm. Yet frightening at the same time.

Mayumi's hands shook uncontrollably. Her heart pounding on her chest. Tears falling down her face. She struggled to speak, to yell back to stop, but the voice was just too kind to act that way. Then she heard her name. Only it was not the woman's voice but Emi's. She blinked once and there was her sister, with terror in her eyes. Mayumi felt Emi's hands on her shoulder, trembling to wake her.

"E...mi..." Mayumi shook her head. "She called out to me again."

"I'm so sorry." Emi immediately pulled Mayumi into her arms and held tight. Her eye opened, pushing away. "She?"

"Yes. I heard her more clearly now."

"What did she say?"

"Purify." Mayumi wiped her tears as Emi stepped back. "What?"

"That's not Hikari."

"Are you sure?"

"She never said that to me."

"Um, excuse me." Keiko said waving her hand. "What's going on?"

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The crowd grew large in the streets. People who were not followers stayed indoors, whether a shop or a house, watching the madness unfold. The Society had teams of their officers descend upon the crowds, carefully casting spells out of sight to push them back. From water cannons to tear gas, the slowly crowds started to

disperse. Helicopters in the air called for people to go home quietly, while a couple of men were held down by police and handcuffed. Everything was going well, until the followers started whispering to each other.

"The Priestess was spotted heading to another shrine." Was the message passing around.

Mrs. Saito overseeing from the helicopter noticed the crowd moving but not breaking apart. She grabbed the radio and contacted her teams below.

"Why is the crowd not breaking apart?"

"We don't know ma'am. They're whispering to each other before they move on."

"What are they saying?"

"It looks like they know where the Priestess is."

"Damn!" Mrs. Saito kicked the radio and leaned back on her seat. Her eyes shifted to the hill. Thinking about Mayumi, she had an idea of where Emi could be and got back on the radio. "All teams head for the Shrine of Four Mythic Beasts. Form barriers around the entrances and let the Kitsune know I'll be arriving soon."

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Jumping from roof to roof, Keiko and Rumiko remained quiet after hearing Mayumi's story. They saw the shrine ahead but they knew they were going to run out of buildings to stay above. Ready to drop down to the street below, they saw a crowd already building up in the vicinity. The girls stopped and laid low. Watching the people walking by in a parade. Mayumi held her head again, leaning on Emi's shoulder. Keiko crawled over and sat on her knees.

"Open your eyes."

Mayumi did and they were bloodshot. "My head hurts. I need an aspirin."

"I don't think that will help." Keiko saw Mayumi's hands shake violently and watched her close her eyes in pain. "Is she calling you out again?"

"Yes." Mayumi clenched her hands into a fist. "What do you want?"

"Is the woman saying something else?" Keiko leaned close to listen.

"No, she just keeps repeating the same thing." Mayumi placed her hands on her head, pulling her hair.

"We're almost there." Rumiko said looking down at the street. "But there is too many people in the way."

"What do we do?" Emi looked down as well. "Mayumi needs help."

Suddenly Mayumi pulled herself up, surprising everyone. She looked as though as nothing had happened. Mayumi lifted her hands up and felt no more pain. She was shocked by the sudden change and got to her feet.

"Easy Mayumi." Keiko tried to stop her from moving. "What just happened?"

"I don't know it all just stopped." Mayumi shook her head. "I just had an idea and all of the pain is gone."

"Just from an idea?" Rumiko said.

"Yes." Mayumi pulled her hair back into a tail. "Do you have scissors?"

The girls looked at Mayumi as she looked at Emi's hair, and suddenly they understood the plan.

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Mrs. Saito arrived by van with the teams mobilized in the front entrance. People were already approaching the shrine when the Society started building the blockade. The officers watched the people stop across the street and build up slowly into a mob. Mrs. Saito was frustrated by their determination to get Emi, but also by the fact they were innocent due to Hikari's influence. She wanted this end without any injuries or worse.

"Ma'am." A young man said approaching her. "The perimeter is set and the Kitsune are ready for the girl's arrival."

"Good." Mrs. Saito said. "Carry on."

Nina arrived on the scene and approached Mrs. Saito. Staying low behind the barrier, Nina sat down and spoke.

"Oompa sends his thanks for your assistance. I you need any

help just let me know.”

“Thank you, but it's we want to keep this between humans.”

“Any word yet on Mayumi and Emi?”

“No. All we know is that they do have help from Rumiko and Keiko. So they're safe for now. If the girls do come here, we'll get them inside. Hopefully, they went home instead.”

Nina peeked between the barriers and saw the crowd got big. Looking up there were two crows perched on the telephone pole. They were both facing away from the shrine when she noticed Rumiko peeking around the corner.

“Hey!” Nina heard Mayumi's voice and turned to her right with everyone in earshot. “I'm over here!”

“Look it's the Priestess.” The crowd screamed as though they saw a rock star and followed the girl around the corner where Rumiko was at.

“Emi?” Nina and Mrs. Saito said Keiko arrived.

“I can't believe it worked.”

Nina and Mrs. Saito turned around and saw Emi next to Keiko. At first they were stunned, but they relaxed realizing what just happened.

“Mayumi leading the crowd away?” Mrs. Saito said.

“Yes.” Emi said looking at the emptied street. “She cut her hair, so now they think she's me.”

“Clever.” Nina said leaping into Emi's arms.

“No it is not!” Mrs. Saito said bring the radio to her face. “All officers, retrieve Mayumi Akamatsu now. She cut her hair to look like the Priestess. NOW!”

She turned to Emi and yanked her arm, pushing toward the stairs at the entrance. “Get up there and don't peek outside! I can't believe you girls!”

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Mayumi ran as fast as she could, watching the crowd behind her reach out. She saw Rumiko on the roof top, preparing rope and the crows flying above. She was all too happy the plan worked and hoped that Emi made it inside. Mayumi turned left at the corner and

the rope flopped down. Knowing she did not have time to channel her Mana to cast a jump spell, Mayumi was going to have to rely on Rumiko's strength to get her up the wall. As soon as she touched the rope a car screeched to a halt. When Mayumi started climbing, the two men in the car got out and grabbed her by the waist. The crows and Rumiko dove down at the men and fought them off, but the crowd caught up swallowing them all.

Unable to see what was going on, Mayumi felt a hand. It was Rumiko, struggling to hold on. Soon the both heard the loudspeakers of the Society calling out orders to the officers, and the chaos reached riot levels. Mayumi tightened her grip on Rumiko, watching the ninja do everything she can to keep her.

"Rumiko." Mayumi pulled herself to Rumiko but something held her down. "I'm stuck."

"Mayumi." Rumiko said trying to pull her closer. "I'm not letting you go."

"We got the Priestess." A woman yelled from the crowd.

Rumiko's fingers slid apart as Mayumi screamed. Two pairs of hands pulled the twin's legs across the ground, separating the girls. Rumiko watched as Mayumi disappeared in the crowd, and the tear gas spread around, blocking her sight.

TO BE CONTINUED...

