

Arcana Magi Pure Vol.4 - c.4

by H-M Brown

The sun glare flashed bright beyond the sea of human legs. Mayumi covered her face as her fingers felt the warmth of the street surface sliding along. Hovering over her body were two men and one woman. Their hands held her tight around her thighs and hips. With a squeal, Mayumi rammed her right leg onto one of the men, but the other two pulled her up, dragging her to the car.

"It's okay Priestess." The woman said. "You're safe now."

The adults placed Mayumi in the back seat where the woman sat beside her. The men hopped up front and drove off, just as Rumiko emerged from the mob. Mayumi at first banged on the window, watching the ninja slowly fade away from the distance. She curled her hands, thinking real about whether she should use a spell or not, due to the warnings about casting spells around non-Magi. Mayumi faced forward, channeled her Mana, and gathered a small pocket of air under hand. Soon the voice returned, rattling her mind.

"Purify." It said, and Mayumi watched her spell changed from air to mist. When she looked up at her kidnappers, there was impure Mana around their bodies. The very thing the centipedes imbued her sister's followers with. Fear gripped her heart, because she had not perfected this difficult and dangerous spell. "Purify."

"No" She said out loud and her spell turned back to wind. Her heart raced. She was short of breath. Frustration built up over this intruder pressuring her to cast the Purify spell.

"Oh." The woman said watching Mayumi. "How are you doing that?"

"Gust."

"What?"

Suddenly a burst of air blew right into the front seats. The wind pushed the men forward banging their heads on the dashboard.

Losing control of the car, they slammed into a parked car, where the onlookers screamed from the incident. Mayumi jumped out of the car where the new crowd pulled out their phones and took pictures of the event. Watching them, she realized they were not followers as one of them approached her. She stepped away and pointed toward the car.

"They kidnapped me." Mayumi ran around the car as the crowd listened on. "Please call the police."

Mayumi ran away from the people when the man came out reaching for her, but they held him down. Even though others tried to keep Mayumi around until the police arrived, she ignored them and ran back to where Rumiko was. Her heart raced unlike any she had felt before. She looked back watching her kidnappers held down by good Samaritans.

"Mayumi." Rumiko's said from above. She landed beside Mayumi and approached her. "Are you all right?"

Mayumi remained quiet and felt overwhelmed by the experience. The cold chill from the shock snapped her out. It was strange what just happened.

"Yeah. Did Emi make it in?"

"She did." Rumiko continued examining Mayumi.

"What are you doing?"

"Oh." Rumiko stepped back, coughed, and crossed her arms.

"That was pretty stupid of you. Getting caught like that."

At first Mayumi did not understand why the change in attitude, but she realized that was a ruse. She walked away.

"Well maybe if you held tighter, I wouldn't have been dragged away. Come on."

* * *

Emi waited at the top of the stairs for her sister. She saw the Society officers below stand guard. It was taking longer than she expected. It has been a long time since she felt nervous about Mayumi. She did not know what to do. The first time she had no direction since her Mana awoken. With arms crossed, she paced back and forth. She could almost sense it. A weird feeling slowly

building up in her. She lifted her hands, staring at them.

"Are you okay?" Nina said startling Emi. The fox stepped back. "Sorry."

"It's not your fault." Emi knelt down before Nina presenting her hands. "I sensed... I think I sensed my sister."

"It's alright." Nina said placing her paws on Emi's hands, feeling the shivering palms. "Since you're both twins, chances are you both may develop unique abilities. This could be one of them."

"Sensing each other?" Keiko said and Nina nodded.

"How does it feel?"

"Like she's in danger." Emi lifted her head. "Could Mayumi have been sensing me like this all this time?"

"Hmm..." Nina took her paws off Emi's hands and sat down. "If she had been, this would be the first I know about it."

"This is all my fault." Emi clutched shoulders, gripping them tight. "And I don't know how to fix any of this."

"You don't have to." Mrs. Saito said approaching her with Keiko. "The Society is willing to give you a deal to avoid punishment if you give us everything we ask for."

"Punishment?" Emi thought about the plan to Purge her. All she could do was stare at the ground.

"It was to my understanding the Clans were going to take of the twins." Nina said standing between Emi and Mrs. Saito.

"This is a human issue. We don't need your interference."

"DON'T DECIDE FOR ME!" Emi stood to her feet. Tears in her eyes, glared back with anger. When she felt Keiko's hand touch her shoulder, she pulled away and kept her distance. "Don't any of you fight over me."

Emi stood perfectly straight. Her tone in voice changed. Facing everyone, she got their attention.

"I will take responsibility for all damages I cause, all the followers who are like this, and anybody who died. Whatever punishment you want, even Purge. But I want to be with kitsune so they can train me."

"That's not being responsible Akamatsu-san." Mrs. Saito said

with voice that startled Emi. "Criminals don't get to make demands. The jury gets to decide your guilt or innocence. The reason we're willing to make a deal with you is not to keep you out of prison, but because there is a far greater threat sitting in that shrine you worship and we want to stop it. We... are willing to give you your freedom in exchange for your help."

Emi's eyes trailed off. It was as though a lioness subdued a cub into submissiveness. Nina and Keiko stood beside Emi, lending her their support. They led her away from Mrs. Saito without saying a word. Emi suddenly put distance between herself and Keiko, heading toward the cave with two pillars at the entrance. Her mind focused on her locket, sensing its location. She entered inside and stopped. Drawings lined the stone all, ancient and archaic. Emi approached inside slowly, each step taken as though she were in a museum. Drawings crude and primitive slowly evolved into sophistication and beauty. She lifted her hand up ready to touch with her fingertips, but was short a few inches.

"Amazing." Emi said to the sound of Keiko's exasperation. She watched her examining the paintings, while Nina approached her. "Who drew all this?"

"The Miyazaki Family." Nina said as Emi and Keiko walked further along the cave. "This is where the family maintains all their history. It is also where they hold the mystic staff and the Tome of the Artisan."

"Really?" Keiko said with eyes lit up like a child. She received a nod in return.

"What's are the mystic staff and the Tome of the Artisan?" Emi said looking back.

"They're two of the most powerful magical weapons."

"Saga and Fable, the girl's named them." Nina said.

"Alysia and Megumi." Emi look down at the fox.

"I heard stories about them." Keiko said. "Didn't they have a battle here three years ago?"

"Yes." Nina nodded. "And it took a toll on them."

Nina sat before the most recent painting. Emi and Keiko stood

behind her and looked up.

"This is them?" Emi saw Alysia holding her staff Saga in the air and Megumi levitating the opened book Fable before her. Together they drawing depicted them fighting a large monster over an open forest with the tree trunk in the center. Emi and Keiko could feel the intensity of the battle in the painting. They could not imagine how horrifying the monster was. "They're so close."

"Of course they are." Nina looked up. "They're sister after all."

Emi found the box containing her locket on the altar. She approached it and opened the container. She took it in hand prompting Keiko place her hand over her brooch. "I know I can use this to help my sister, and undo everything I have done."

"Emi." Keiko said. "I don't want to fight you. Please think clearly. There are ways you can help her, to undo what you've done, but that orichalcham suit, is not the solution."

"I hear Hikari." Emi closed her eyes and the sound of whispers echoed in her ear. "I think she is wrong."

"Yes." Nina said leaping on top of the altar and Emi opened her eyes. "She is wrong, and you don't need her or her help. You don't need us either. You are free to choose what you want, but choose because you understand what you want, not because of us, or Hikari, or your sister."

"Be honest." Keiko said placing her hand on the Emi's shoulder. "What do you want to do?"

The whispers stopped. Emi nodded and closed the box. She put it back on the altar. "I do know what I want. I had already told Mayumi at the café. Nina, please train me. I want to be a Magi. I think casting spells is awesome, but I don't want to hurt anybody doing so. Maybe be your Priestess, if Miyazaki-san doesn't mind."

"Of course." Nina said and Emi picked her up, holding her gently in her arms. "But let's take things one step at a time. Starting with your Purification."

"Okay."

"Hey." Keiko said. "If you need want me to help out, I'll ask Goro and see if he can do anything for you."

“Thank you.”

Outside, Mrs. Saito had cast a spell eavesdropping on the conversation inside. She released the Mana she had channeled in the even Emi activated her suit. Hearing what the priestess, she felt relief that that was one problem solved. She walked away from the cave, and saw one of her officers rushing over. He stopped with a salute, then gave her the news.

“Report are coming in. There is strange thing happening to a group of followers.”

“What do you mean strange?”

“Mrs. Saito!” Keiko called out from around the corner. “It's Emi! She's collapsed!”

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Mayumi and Rumiko jumped each rooftop, heading back to the shrine. It was all too familiar for Mayumi redoing this scenario, but this time she slowed down. A strange feeling overwhelmed her. Rumiko came to a stop and returned.

“What's wrong?”

“I feel Emi.” Mayumi lifted her hands up staring at them. “It's like she's in danger. I never felt anything like this.”

“Maybe it's a new ability. I was taught that such things can happen to Magi.”

“I have to get to Emi.”

“I'm sure she's safe now that's she's in the shrine.” Rumiko heard a crowd scream below.

Mayumi and Rumiko looked down at the street and saw the impure Mana building up from the followers. Their bodies twisting and turning, as though they were in convulsions. Mayumi noticed it was taking shape. It was familiar, once it started reaching out into the air.

“No.”

“What is it Mayumi?”

“It's taking shape. Just like at the festival.”

“We're going to need reinforcements.” Rumiko took out a small wooden pipe. She pulled the string attached at the end, firing a light

into the air. Suddenly for as far as the eye can see above the rooftops, Crows flew into the air as though they were coming up from the ground. They practically turned day into night. An endless sea of birds gathering for what rose up from the crowd. Rumiko pulled Mayumi away from the roof they were, giving cover by crowds.

The dark mist reached out into the air. It formed the upper body of a female. Mayumi covered her mouth as Rumiko's eyes trembled. Even the crows retreated from the mist creating a perimeter, unsure of whether to strike or not.

“It can't be.” Rumiko said shuffling her feet back.

“Emi.” Mayumi watched the dark mist completely form into her sister's upper body. It stared out at the sky, arms outstretched, letting out a shrieking scream that rattled the ears of everyone. It was Emi's own voice that projected it. It caused a ringing, the crows freaked out. For Mayumi and Rumiko it a long ping in their drums. As soon as it went away, Mayumi struggled to regain her sense of direction. It was then she turned and saw the shrine of Four Mythic Beasts in the distance, just beyond the dark misty body of Emi. “I have to get back to her.”

TO BE CONCLUDED...

