

Arcana Magi Pure Vol.7 - c.5

by H-M Brown

Mayumi's eyes twitched. Her head felt the pounding images and voices grafting themselves onto her mind. Her teeth clenched as she resisted the pain. Grey mana entered her nose with a single inhale; visions of endless nothingness through the passage of time, with no beginning in sight. She pulled her hair when a burst of light spread across the darkness at speeds too incomprehensible. History from every angle and perspective simultaneously recorded, but one thing echoed her thoughts.

"Alysia and Megumi are the goddesses; their souls were removed from their bodies."

The revelation repeated over and over to the point that she reached the moment. As fast as the history moved, Mayumi focused and watched as she saw Alysia and Megumi for the time in her life. She heard their voices vividly and recognized them from the pictures on her phone. Suddenly she saw a pair of hands emerge from the mana and push into Alysia and Megumi. Another girl she did not recognize screamed out. Mayumi recognized Darius, but the others were strangers to her. She watched the Vermillion and Orichalcham graft over the souls before history fast forward her away.

Mayumi's stomach churned and she was ready to vomit when it stopped. Struggling to breathe, she looked at the band on her wrist where her soul lied. She lifted her hand to face and saw grey mana around it. Just beyond her view, Mayumi saw Emi lying on the floor. She crawled over, nursing her head, keeping focus on Emi. Her memories of trying to save Emi, to purify her created resistance to the mass amounts of knowledge trying to imprint into her thoughts.

"Emi..." Mayumi pulled her sister over and placed her hand over Emi's chest. "Please... no..."

Emi was not breathing. Mayumi's eyes shifted side to side. Looking for someone or something to help her. "HEEELP! Anyone!"

Mayumi tapped her sister's cheeks. She took a deep breath and pressed her lips onto Emi to give her air. Mayumi placed her hand on Emi's diaphragm giving a push. Two more pushes did not recover Emi. She noticed Emi's band on her wrist. It was moving, Mayumi sensed her soul. Mayumi closed her eyes, taking a deep breath from the pain and sifted thought the knowledge the Manasphere fed her. She sought one thing, a solution to heal her sister, but more than that, she wanted to return their souls.

Mayumi opened her eyes, and lifted her hand. It was shivering. She wanted to try looking one more time, but history showed her she had none at this point. A tear fell down her cheek.

"Emi... I love you."

She raised her hand with the band over her head, and channeled the mana directly from her soul. The band glowed bright covering her hand. She grabbed Emi's band, making it glow bright. She pulled it from Emi's wrists and a hand emerged. Mayumi stood to her feet, pulling Emi's soul completely out of the band shattering it into nothingness. Mayumi carefully laid the soul back into Emi's body. With her hand on her sister's chest, she cast spell that healed Emi. Mayumi felt her body weaken, her vision blurred. With a smile, she leaned closer to the ground, until Emi's hand held her up. The spell stopped and Mayumi collapsed.

"Mayumi..." Emi struggled to move as she held her head from the pain. She saw visions of her sister's fate. "No."

Emi cried. She looked up at the grey mana as her hand felt Mayumi's breathing. She closed her eyes. "I'm so sorry."

Emi sat down and sat Mayumi up. She pulled her into her arms, clasping her fingers at Mayumi's stomach. Emi leaned her head Mayumi's shoulders. Her tear falling down her sister's left arm. Mayumi's hand twitched. She moaned getting Emi's attention. Emi lifted her head up; she felt Mayumi's hands pressing hers.

"You're okay... Emi?"

"Idiot." Emi said teary eyes. "What have you done?"

"I can't... remember... so many visions. It's too much." Mayumi looked at the band in her left hand and saw the Emi's was gone. "Your soul is back?"

"Yes." Emi's eyes stared blankly for a moment, sensed her soul within her heart. "It hurts."

"I'm sorry."

"No." Emi tightened her hug. "Thank you. You never gave up on me."

"You're my sister..." Mayumi as Emi slid her hand over Mayumi's band "I'll always be there for you."

"I know." Emi clenched the band but Mayumi grabbed her sister's hand. "Please."

Emi saw Mayumi's smile. "Don't be stupid! You're life-"

"Is not wasted... because you will live."

"You remember that?"

"It's hazy, but... a little." Mayumi stood to her feet. She walked away from Emi. Closing her eyes, she found a formula within history to open a portal to their world.

"Let's go home. I can sense Valdegaurd is coming."

Mayumi turned to Emi, her hand reached out to her sister. Emi sensed an overwhelming energy approaching. She grabbed Mayumi's hand and scurried behind her. Clutching Mayumi's shoulder they watching a pair of hand emerge from the grey mana. The portal right behind them. Mayumi stared at Valdegaurd despite her shivering hands. Emi noticed her sister sizing up, then she saw it. The hands of Valdegaurd, hesitated to do anything. Despite the fear gripping her heart, she stood beside her sister and stared Valdegaurd down.

Mayumi placed her hand on Emi, leading her to step back towards the portal, while keeping her eyes in Valdegaurd. The sisters stepped through the portal and as it closed, they saw strange hands reach out to Valdegaurd. They remembered seeing one of those hands in their visions. Just before the portal closed completely, they saw Valdegaurd winning the battle. Once the portal disappeared, the sisters both collapsed in shock of what they saw.

Their costumes glowed bright and their original clothes returned over their bodies. They hugged each other immediately and held on tight. Mayumi checked on Emi, looking for any injuries.

"I'm fine."

"I have to make sure."

"Believe me. I'm okay. Thank you."

* * *

On the street below laid a clump of metal, with sheer luster and grey mana cascading to the pavement. Darius looked down at it, observing for any changes. He looked around and saw the grey mana saturating the trees, buildings, even the air. Darius picked up the ore, turning it around to analyze its shape.

"It worked." Darius raised the metal up to the night sky. "Irydia."

A tall woman with long flowing black hair and grey eyes, and dressed in a black gown with a silk scarf approached Darius. "She cannot hide forever."

"Indeed, Myriana." Darius walked past the woman. "Ragnorak is waiting for us."

"What of the twins." Myriana looked up at the roof. "They have returned from the Manasphere."

"They are Victoria's experiment. This ore is mine."

"I must say..." Myriana walked behind Darius. "...your experiment was truly convoluted and unnecessarily complex."

A portal appeared before them, like a door, there was a forest on the other side.

"But the grey mana is stable and the land is saturated in it. I must get a look from beyond the city limits."

They stepped through and standing before them was man. He was taller than them, muscular, and his body covered in a black suit with purple trim, it looked like living skin. His hands were covered in clawed gloves, his helmet only showed his grey eyes. As he stared at a Nocturne gasping for air, he looked down at Darius presenting him the ore.

"One Iridium ore as planned, Ragnorak."

Ragnorak suit reached out and took the ore. It attached the

metal to his back, latching it place, and secured.

"I hope Mother dealt with this Azuré person that she is afraid of. We cannot have any interference. All you have to do is drop this ore where Mother set her Nocturne up."

Myriana placed her hand on Ragnorak's arm. "Did you find the results of the Nocturne here satisfying?"

Ragnorak stared at the Nocturne breathing heavily before him. Its eyes slowly turned from red to grey with a purple blood vessels stretching over the eye as if a hand was grabbing a ball. It stopped writhing and purple lines stretched over its body. The lines glowed bright channeling the grey mana from the ground. Its mouth opened, gathering particles of light, shaping into a purple ball. It fired a purple beam at Ragnorak. The blast struck him but separated into smaller beams, passing around him like water around a rock. The Nocturne ran off into the forest and out into an open light. Ragnorak looked at Myriana, nodding his answer to her question. Ragnorak opened the portal revealing a school campus and walked inside. When the portal disappeared, the trees behind it were filled with holes, decayed and rotted in purple.

Myriana and Darius looked at each other.

* * *

Rumiko opened her eyes. She found herself staring at the night sky. Her body struggled to move. The pain reminded her of her haste in fighting with Keiko. She smiled as watched the grey mana cover her hand. "Wow."

"Amazing isn't it my daughter." Kinomoto stepped into Rumiko's view. She watched her daughter raise her hand up channeling mana, but the hand was shivering. "Foolish child. You should have gone to get medical help. Instead you lie here worse than before."

"Mother... your eyes..." Rumiko saw how grey they were.

"Our eyes."

"What have you done?"

"Brought us closer to the Manasphere." Kinomoto looked around. "The experiment worked. We can survive the grey mana within our world."

"Why?" Rumiko tilted her head and saw a portal leading to grey mist. "Manasphere?"

"Yes. She waits for me."

"Who?"

"Valdegaurd. She opened the gates for me for I am worthy."

"Please... mother..." Rumiko reached out to her mother. "Don't so this. You're hurting our family."

Kinomoto knelt down and kissed Rumiko on the forehead. "I love you."

Rumiko watched her mother step through the portal and it closed. She curled her hands into fists, her teeth clenched, and growl under breath. "DAMN YOU!"

Rumiko's scream made Keiko and Ayane open their eyes, and they sat up. Ayane looked at her hands covered in grey mana.

"No way."

"Ayane." Keiko got her attention and crawled over. "Stay calm."

"Keiko, I can see mana." Ayane sense the mana's energy flowing through her arms and around her body. "It feels weird."

"Take your time, Ayane. You'll be okay."

"Oh yeah..." Rumiko said looking out at the sky. "...everything will be okay."

"Rumi-chan." Keiko and Ayane said and hurried over to their friend. They looked over her and she waved them back with a smirk.

"I'm alive." Rumiko took a deep breath. "Hey, your eyes are grey like mine."

"She's right." Ayane said looking at Keiko's eyes. "Is this what they wanted?"

Ayane stood up to her feet and saw grey mana everywhere. "I don't believe it."

"HEY!" Tomiko's voice from above got Ayane's attention. She directed the crow to land.

"Tomiko!" Ayane said waving her hand as Keiko helped Rumiko to her feet.

"Everyone is over there." Tomiko's hand pointed to another roof where Hideki and Takashi were talking to Mayumi while Sayako and

Emi hugged each other. Tomiko helped Keiko get on as Ayane's ride woke up with grey eyes and stood upright ready to transport.

"Thank you." Ayane said as she climbed on and helped Rumiko on board.

After everyone gathered, Hideki, Takashi, Sayako, and Tomiko were in shock at Ayane's grey eyes. She had no words to say about it. Keiko, Rumiko, Mayumi and Emi stood behind her, nudging her to smile. She does.

"We're here for you." Keiko said.

"Thank you." Ayane turned to the twins. "Where were you guys?"

"The Manasphere." Mayumi said. "We saw Valdegaurd."

"No way." Ayane said. "Did she attack you?"

"No." Emi said. "Some kind of spirits protected us as we escaped."

"I saw two girls." Mayumi said getting everyone's attention. "In some kind of... past. I saw what Valdegaurd did to them. She pulled their souls out just like us. Could that have been Alysia and Megumi, I couldn't tell. My memories are fuzzy."

Hideki spoke. "Alysia and Megumi said the Manasphere can cause memory loss."

"It's because..." Takashi said. "...that place feeds people vast amounts of knowledge directly to the brain."

"Really?" Mayumi looked at Hideki and he nodded.

"From the story they told us," Ayane said. "it seems what you saw may be true."

Mayumi looked at the magical band on her left wrist. "I believe them. It's not their fault. They've been helping us from far away for so long. I have to give them a chance. I have to trust them."

"Still," Sayako said. "they said their souls have been in those shrines for years and helping Valdegaurd, we have to be cautious."

Mayumi looked down, her hand holding her left wrist. Ayane placed her hand on Mayumi's shoulder.

"We are going to help Alysia and Megumi. We need to be their friends first, not their enemies."

Everyone nodded in agreement and Mayumi and Emi smiled.

“Thank you.” Mayumi said and a large purple beam in the distance shot out into the sky behind her and Emi. Everyone in front of them stood in shock as the twins turned around. A large head stretched above the buildings, its purple lines stopped glowing as grey mana seeped from its mouth.

A loud horn echoed out of its mouth as two lights like stars shot out into the sky, one from the valley and one from the far end of the town.

The End.

