

Arcana Magi Zero + Pure - c.14

by H-M Brown

Walking down the hallway, Ayane approached Megumi carrying brooms in hand. "I found more."

"Good." Megumi took some brooms. "We should have enough now."

Megumi and Ayane entered a classroom. Inside, all the desks have been moved into a circle and in the middle the girls - now dressed in school uniforms with their own lockets — began to craft the brooms with strings together. Rumiko used her kunai to cut the head of the broom off and handed it to Tomiko. Alysia and Mayumi checked the stings tightness. Ayane sat next to Karin and handed her the brooms. As Megumi joined Emi, Rumiko spoke. "Are you sure this going to work?"

Alysia nodded. "Yes, Copy and Paste will double our numbers. Although this will be the first time Meg and I will be using it on other people."

Megumi nodded. "Just understand that what your copies experience will be passed onto you when they spell ends. So if they hurt, you will feel it."

The girls looked at each other and Emi spoke. "Will you have enough Mana to cast a spell this big and send Karin back to Byakko?"

"Eryn Hall said he will be sending over a group of Mana Spirit that specialize in heavy Mana so we can manage."

Karin tightened the string. "They better hurry up and get here. The Arcadians could be show up any second."

Rumiko spoke. "They could have just gone back to Byakko and not bother with us."

"True, but we have Victoria and they're not going to leave her with all that information behind." Karin paused for a second. "How

much has Valdegaurd used the Infinite Knowledge to get an edge?"

The girls stopped and listened to Karin.

"So much wealth of information in her head, she could be unstoppable."

Ayane resumed tying the broom together. "We all can do it Karin. I know I have."

"What?" Karin looked at Ayane watching her work on the broom. "We have no idea how dangerous that can be."

"It's painful, but it's worth the trouble given how many people suffered and died by the Arcadians."

Tomiko stared at Ayane, and looked down. "Senpai, don't this to yourself."

"I'll be okay. Once I get a handle on it, no one will ever have an edge over us." Ayane stood up the broom. "There, it looks like a person now."

The door opened and Rumiko threw her Kunai knife. It struck the wall and a scream shouted from outside. "Don't kill us!"

A small paw like hand waved and sounded like a kid. "We are friends."

Entering inside were five small plushy like Mana Spirits. Tomiko and Ayane hid their chuckles, then turned away fighting from laughing.

"Keep laughing at us." The Mana Spirit with bristles for hair said and pointed at Mayumi. "It's not our fault her mind was broken."

"Uari!" A small winged Mana Spirit said with a girls voice. "Don't be mean. We have to help them. I am Ieri."

The other Mana Spirits lined up and bowed to the girls.

The fat one with a man's voice. "My name is Oiri."

The bouncing black and white ball with ears and a woman's voice. "I am Euri."

And a white and teal cat like spirit with two tails, and ears flopping along the side of its face and orange eyes. She spoke. "I am Aori. We were sent here to assist Alysia and Megumi with Mana Management."

The girls bowed except for Karin. Karin looked at everyone at

first. She shrugged her shoulders and bowed as well. "That's... interesting."

Mayumi lifted up her crafted broom. "Its how we greet or show respect in Japan in our world."

"Strange, having different territories with different rules. We're just one single world with one single ruler. That I am about to overthrow and change everything." Karin sat down. Her heart beating fast, she clutched her chest. "I'm in over my head."

As Karin covered her mouth, Alysia sat next to her. "Well, you don't have to change everything. You said it yourself, your world is at peace, and it's just Valdegaurd betrayed."

Mayumi spoke. "Aly-chan is right. You just have to have Valdegaurd arrested and face a trial."

"Aly-chan?" Alysia looked at Mayumi and watched her wave her hands in apology. Alysia smiled and nodded. "Mayu."

As Mayumi smiled, Karin planted her hand on Alysia to get her attention. "I'm scared, but I won't give up. Help me get home."

Alysia nodded and stood up. "Are the brooms ready?"

"Yes!" Everyone said and each girl lifted up their crafted broom people.

"Mayu, Rumiko, you're with Meg and I."

Emi waved. "Everyone else, you're with me."

The girls looked to each other and Megumi smiled crossing her arms. "It's time for a crash course."

Aori walked up to the girls and the Mana Spirits approached Alysia and Megumi. "Ieri and Oiri will be assigned to Alysia, and Euri and Uari will be assigned to Megumi. They will assist you in managing your Mana while you are maintaining three spells at once. Meanwhile, I will be helping the rest of you girls learn the new spell. Be ready for a fast lesson and pay attention, time is very short now."

Alysia looked at the Mana Spirits. "We can still do Copy and Paste for you and the Mana Spirits so you don't have to get yourselves hurt fighting Valdegaurd."

Ieri spoke. "Thank you, but our priority is your health and safety."

Euri climbed up on the desk. "We understand you see yourselves as adults now, but to us you are still children."

Aori nodded. "Right, although helping us is a very adult thing to do, that doesn't mean you've grown up now. You still have a lot of childhood left and despite what happened to all of you, Valdegaard did not take away your ability to enjoy your youth and have happiness in your hearts."

Karin thought it over and nodded. "Right. I'll keep that in mind."

She stood up before everyone and picked up her broom person. "All right, as soon as Alysia and Megumi open a portal for me, I'll open one to your world and we leave at the same time. Let's begin!"

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Moments later, the copies ran around the school building. Ayane and Tomiko positioned themselves by the main garden. They looked outside and saw Alysia, Megumi and Karin waiting around. They kept an eye on the doorway to the area and were accompanied by Marel and Barel. By the front entrance, Mayumi, Emi and Rumiko hid behind the shoe lockers watching for anyone outside. Eryn Hall and Fro were at the front doors keeping low. As other Mana Spirits patrolled the school, a shadow appeared outside of the garden. Alysia looked up and waved for the shadow to move aside. High in the air was Tomiko struggling to move with the wind cuffs around her ankles and wrists. Rumiko floating on a Mana Glider pulled over the roof.

"Keep your spell under control. They'll see us."

"Sorry. It's my first spell."

Emi floated over. "You'll get the hang of it Tomiko. It'll be fun."

"I'll do my best." Tomiko noticed that the girls were in costumes while she was in school uniform. "How can you all wear that? It looks like you can't breathe."

Ayane smiled. "Well... heh... it is supposed to help minimized getting hurt."

Karin, with her staff in hand, turned to the girls. "Keep it down, Lys and Meg are concentrating."

Rumiko floated to Karin with her arms crossed. "How long is this

spell going to take?"

They looked at Alysia and Megumi struggling to focus their portal spell while maintaining the Mana. As Ieri and Oiri fed Mana to Alysia and Euri and Uari whispered guidance and encouragement to Megumi, a loud muffle started to distract them. Everyone turned to Victoria, who was tied and gagged. As Mayumi and Ayane held down with Aori sitting on her head, Rumiko floated over and punch her in the stomach. "Keep it down."

Mayumi spoke. "Hey, she's our prisoner. We don't do that."

"After what she has done to our world and everyone else, I don't care."

Ayane spoke. "Mayumi is right. We shouldn't do this. We're not like them, and once we turn her over to the Society, she's going to face prison time for her crimes."

After Karin checked on Alysia and Megumi, she looked up to the sky and saw an endless blue. "So this is what lies above the Manasphere."

Aori nodded. "That was never there before."

Mayumi looked down. "Sorry."

"No." Aori smiled. "It's so beautiful what you created. We're very happy."

"What are you guys going to do once we get home?"

"Don't worry about us. We'll be fine. The school building below has given us ideas, but we have to focus on the current situation."

"Valdegaud."

"Yes."

Ayane looked below and waved to everyone. "Everyone, everyone something is happening below."

Rumiko saw five portals open up below. They were above the school and Victoria started laughing under her gag.

Below the copies and Mana Spirits saw large shadows. Alysia, Megumi and Karin looked up and they screamed as a missile exploded above them, and the flames and oil enveloped them. Four more missiles detonated on the school reducing it to rubble.

The girls above began screaming and clutching their heads as

the experience of the copies struck their heads. Their entire bodies felt the agonizing pain of the flames and oil. Their spells gave out, and each girl plummeted to the flaming debris below. As Victoria screamed from the fall, Aori looked to the Mana Spirits. "Slow their descent!"

The Mana Spirit cast their spells and covered everyone in a light teal glow. They each were planted in a safe spot that was not in flames. Euri looked around and found Marel pulling Barel out of the rubble. Aori checked on the girls and found their eyes glazed, breathing heavily from the shock. "Can you move?"

Alysia moaned and shivered. "He... help..."

The Mana Spirits tended to the girls, and other spirits began to mourn their dead. A loud thump shook the area. It multiplied into a frenzy. It was an earthquake and Eryn Hall limped toward everyone with Fro over his left shoulder. There was terror in his eyes. He waved his hands for everyone to run. "Get everyone out of here!"

As Alysia lifted her head up, she saw a giant robot tower over the school. Armored soldiers marched over the rubble with medics on the scene. While the troops chased away the Mana Spirits — firing their guns and casting spells at them — the medics gathered around the girls to check on their vital signs.

The lead medic shined a light over Megumi's eyes. "She's in shock."

"They all are." Another medic said and a portal opened up to a facility on the other.

Karin's eyes trembled. As she struggled to reach for her staff, she saw the Arcadians waiting with scientists and doctors. "No..."

A medic checked on Karin. He gasped and waved over the lead soldier. "It's Captain Mayweather."

As Karin looked at the lead soldier stand over her, the girls struggled to push away from the medics, who were lifting them onto the gurneys.

"Step aside." The he stood over Karin and aimed his gun at her head. "By order of President Supreme Sharalindria Valdegaud, you are found guilty of high treason, punishable by death."

As he cocked the hammer back, his soldiers were running back from where they chased the Mana Spirits. One of them vanished, and his clothes and armor collapsed over the rubble. "What?"

A battalion of Mana Spirit from the plushy looking to the humanoid to the unusual chased down the soldiers. While each Mana Spirit was shot down, each soldier was vaporized. The medics ran leaving the girls behind and Victoria hurried to the portal. Some of the Mana Spirits gathered around the girls, releasing them from the gurneys and protecting them.

As the girls regained their strength, Alysia took a deep breath and hopped in the air. "Mana Glider!"

Karin watched Alysia head for the Golem. "Get back, don't take on the Golem!"

As Karin recovered her staff, the Golem raised its arm up at Alysia, making a magic circle appear, and she made a large fireball appeared over her staff, Saga. "PYRO MEALSTROM!"

Alysia flicked the spell at the Golem. The intense heat made the metal red. The pilot's spell tried to activate, but the magic circle disappeared and spell exploded on impact. The Golem stepped back from the impact. The other Golems made their magic circles appear. As Alysia flew higher in the air, the other girls flew under the other Golems arms and got behind them.

Ayane focused her thoughts and accessed the Infinite Knowledge. She pointed at a tube by the shoulders. "Cut this off and make their arms drop."

The girls nodded and Rumiko used her Kunai knife to puncture a hole in the Golem she was at. Megumi summoned her sword Torako from her sketch book Fable and sliced the tube from the other Golem. Each girl found a way to cut open the connections. The Golems arms dropped, but they still could walk, and they began to march towards the Mana Spirits.

Eryn Hall below waved at the girls with his uninjured arm and pointed at the portal. "Go! We'll cover you!"

Ayane looked at Megumi. "That goes to Byakko."

Karin flew by the girls and aimed her staff. "I have your portal

spell ready. Hurry!”

The girls flew towards the front line where the portal is at. Victoria was beyond the portal, her bound and gagged removed by Myriana. As Karin got close to the portal to the Byakko Universe, she opened a portal to the Seiryu Universe and revealed their hometown. “Go!”

Alysia saw the portal. “The Arcadians are there!”

“I’ll figure a way out when I go through the portal.”

Alysia and Megumi stopped by Karin as each girl flew through the portal. Alysia hugged Karin and veiled her friend in a light teal glow. “Come with us.”

“I can’t.” Karin tightened her hug. “My people need me.”

She pushed Alysia off and received Megumi’s hug. “You have a home with us... always.”

“Thank you.” Karin floated back and watched Alysia and Megumi join the girls on the other side. As the portal closed they all waved to her.

“Good luck Karin!” They said together and the portal closed.

Karin looked at the portal below starting to close. She flew head first at high speed while Aori watched on. Karin’s eyes looked back at her and she remembered the Mana Spirits words. “You still have a lot of childhood left and despite what happened to all of you, Valdegaurd did not take away your ability to enjoy your youth and have happiness in your hearts.”

Karin looked forward at the portal and nodded. She dodged each spell and bullet flying past her. Karin felt a sting on her leg from a nearby spell that exploded. She spun around bit and refocused herself. She pushed hard towards the spell and she made it through. Karin stumbled over chairs and desks. She slammed into the wall, her staff broke in half. Karin brushed dust off her costumed skirt and saw a shadow scurry under a desk. She watched the soldiers and Arcadians surround and aim their spells at her. As the door behind them closed, Karin laughed out loud and her body was covered in a teal glow. She vanished.

Darius approached the wall and picked up Karin’s broken staff.

“Alysia...”

Karin heard the alarms sound and approached the elevator before anybody appeared in the halls. As she approached the main entrance, a guard stopped her. He looked up at a female guard and they tapped their fingers. Karin stepped back as they created a very weak spell to attack her, the guard's eye gave Karin a signal, and she smirked creating a spell of her own. The front entrance exploded and Karin pretended to be searching the guard's pockets. He signaled her to the left pocket. She found a pin shaped like a staff. Karin pretended to punch him in the stomach and left the guards behind on the floor with minor injuries. The guards turned to each other with a smile and nodded. They watched Karin take flight and their eyes trembled in awe. They watched the guards outside aim their spells and weapons, and they gave up because Karin was out of range.

Karin flew high into the open sky, with the sun shining through the clouds. With the forests in the distance and the ocean nearby, she laughed and spun around in the air cheering. “Ohh... it's so wonderful to be young and stupid again.”

* * *

In Seiryu, the girls saw the city in ruins. As they descended, smoke rose and melted buildings dripped. The sun's warm light and beautiful blue sky made the city look like an alien world. Alysia closed her eyes and her Mana Glider turned off. Mayumi dove fast and caught her. She landed on the ground with Alysia in her arms. She felt Alysia breathing. “Thank goodness.”

The girls landed. Each one collapsed on the ground, nursing the pain their copies experienced from the explosion. Megumi limped over. Emi followed and they sat around their sisters.

Emi spoke. “What happened?”

“Lys, cast another Copy and Paste spell on Karin before we left. Idiot. Always pushing herself without thinking.” As Megumi caressed Alysia's face, Ayane and Tomiko checked on Rumiko.

“I hope Karin got away.”

Alysia slowly opened her eyes. “She did. My Copy and Paste spell

didn't take damage.”

Ayane helped Rumiko to her feet. “Are you okay?”

“Yeah. Thanks.” Rumiko looked around at the destruction and saw melted limbs across the street. “The people... Is it over?”

“I don't know.” Ayane heard the sound of rubble moved around. Ayane and Rumiko looked behind.

Tomiko pulled a man out of the debris and she looked back. “He's breathing.”

“Our home.” Ayane's tears fell and Rumiko hugged her.

As Tomiko hurried to them, a large dog and fox arrived around the corner sniffing around and spotted the girls. “We found more survivors!”

As the adults arrived to check on the children, their cries echoed out into the sky.

TO BE CONCLUDED...

