

Arcana Magi - c.14:

Arrivals

by H-M Brown

Karl drove along the interstate at high speed. Switching lanes, left and right, driving around the cars. He saw Suzie in the back, from his rearview mirror, as she shielded Reya from rolling side to side.

"Could you slow down Karl? We don't want to get pulled over by the police."

"Sorry." Karl slowed down and stayed on one lane. 'It's just that I want to get to the airport before the girls do.'

"Well we're not going to get them if we end up in a jail cell. Remember we have Reya with us and we're not her parents."

"Okay." Karl reached for the radio and turned it on. As a commercial ended, the news broadcast resumed.

"We're going to take you live with Casey Lance in Hackettstown, New Jersey where an explosion ripped up the neighborhood streets. Casey what is the situation so far?"

"Dan,' A woman's voice said. 'at first it was believed to be a terrorist attack, but eyewitnesses said that it was caused by a girl with some kind of red and blue... fireball. It has been reported that the girl may have escaped the local authorities. Because she is a minor, local authorities are debating whether to reveal a sketch of the suspect to the public."

"That sounded like Alysia?" Karl said.

"I think it is her. That may have been her spell we saw in that web video."

Karl nodded as the couple listened on.

"Government officials have taken eyewitnesses into custody for questioning. They have also locked down the entire town. No one is allowed in or out. Residents are very concerned as to what happened. We have been told by an undisclosed government agency,

to stay back twenty blocks from the impact zone. All airspace around Hackettstown is blocked off. Back to you Dan."

"We have received word from Transit Corporation that all trains heading in and out of Hackettstown have been cancelled due to the explosion. All trains will end at Mt. Olive Station. Also, there will be delays, as Transit Police conduct mandatory bag checks at all stations."

Karl lowered the volume and looked up at his rearview mirror.

"If Alysia and Brie were in Hackettstown, do you think they would take the train?"

"If so, they could be riding it to the Airport." Suzie said.

"That's the first place we'll check before going into the terminals."

"Okay."

Karl switched lanes on the highway, with heavy traffic building up ahead. He hopes it will not delay them. He passed by an exit sign for Dover-Train Station, where an unmarked car headed for that exit.

In that car, Fynir sat in the passenger seat looking at the station map. He saw the timetable read Dover and as he reached for the CB radio. He took the microphone from the radio and saw the highway exit sign to Dover. He pressed the button and spoke to an agent.

"Are the girls still on the train?"

"Yes. The conductor said they are still asleep.' The agent on the other line said. 'I gave him your instructions. The train will be waiting when you get there."

"Good. I'll be there in ten minutes." Fynir placed the microphone on the radio hook. He folded up the timetable as the car exited the highway and stopped at an intersection. The elf changed frequencies and contacted dispatch.

"Did you get a hold of someone from the Witness Protection Division in Seattle?"

"Yes.' The female dispatcher said. 'We were able to get a hold of Agent Harold Pendell."

"Put him on this channel.' Fynir looked up at the male human driver dressed in business attire as he turned the corner. 'It's one of those days, isn't it?"

"I wouldn't know sir.' The driver said switching lanes on the road. 'I'm usually on the desk."

"I see."

"Agent Fynir Robinson?" A man said over the radio.

"This is him." Fynir said as he saw the sign to Dover Train Station on the side of the road.

"Sorry for the wait. This is Agent Harold Pendell of Witness Protection Division. How can I help you?"

"I'm looking for the agent in charge of the Brie Williams case." Fynir waited for a response. It took quite awhile.

"I'm overlooking her case." Harold finally answered.

"Do you know that she is here in New Jersey?"

"You must be mistaken, she is here in Seattle. I just checked on her a few minutes ago."

Fynir lowered the microphone and his eyes trailed off into confusion. The elf looked at the train station in the distance and responded.

"Okay, I'm glad to hear that. Thank you.' Fynir ended communication and thought about what Agent Pendell just said. It did not make sense to Fynir and became suspicious to the situation. He took an onboard computer on the dashboard and activated the search section of the computer. He types in Brie's name and found that her file was classified. He tried to override it but he received another classified message. 'No. I shouldn't be blocked out."

"Is everything okay sir?" The driver entered the parking lot of the train station.

"Yeah. Just park over there.' Fynir pointed to the parking space with the view of the train parked in front of the station. The place was crawling with local, state, and transit police officers. Dogs sniffed around and the FBI talked with a few Mystic Intelligence agents. As Fynir and the driver stepped out of the car, the elf saw an agent wave him over to a small group of men. They were the heads

of their respective departments waiting for the elf to arrive. 'I'm Agent Fynir Robinson.'

"I'm Chief John Anderson of the Transit Police Department.' He shook Fynir's hand. 'Would you mind telling me what's going on here?"

"It's classified.' Fynir walked away from them heading for the train. 'Are they alright?"

"What do you mean it's classified?" Chief Anderson said as Fynir turned around startling the officer.

"These girls are under witness protection.' Fynir climbed aboard the train as everyone followed. Fynir approached the conductor as they quietly looked at the seat and saw the girls sleeping under the blanket. 'Are they alright?"

"We did our best not to wake them up."

"That fight took a lot of energy from them.' Fynir said under his breath. He led the chief and the conductor out of the train and gathered everyone. 'Where are they heading?"

"Newark Airport." The conductor said as the driver walked past them.

"Here's what we're going to do. We'll let them go to the airport. Chief alert all your officers not to engage the girls. Only if they leave with someone suspicious, get the girls out, and arrest that person on site.' Fynir turned to one his fellow agents with a walkie-talkie when he saw his boss arrive by car. The elf approached the young woman in a business suit. He told her the situation and his plan.

"Fynir, you're practically shutting down the entire airport."

"I know, but I think there is something wrong here. If we let the girls go maybe we can flush out Quillian."

"Where are they?"

"Asleep.' Fynir looked back at the train. 'They haven't woken up yet. They used up their mana in Hackettstown when they fought that creature."

The elf looked back at his boss. He wanted to tell her but rather wait and find out from the girls themselves.

"Fynir, I can see it in your face you have something else in mind."

"No, I just want to get this over with. So will you contact airport security?"

"I'll get you that clearance. But you're going on that train and follow the girls. If everything goes south, you bring them in right away."

"Alright." Fynir left his boss and headed for the train as she coordinated with the other agencies.

As the train rolled out of the station, the driver sat in the car, and picked up a cell phone. He scrolled through the phone number listing and pressed Oryn's name on the screen.

At Avalon Tech, Oryn sat in her desk answering the phone as Jonas watched the news on the television screen and Anna worked on her laptop.

"Yes." Oryn listened to the driver.

"The girls are on the train to Newark Airport."

"Good work." Oryn pressed a button on the phone switching from outside calls to the Therapy Room. "Vyndor."

"Yes Oryn." The Vyndor said on the other line.

"We're heading out to get the girls and the third Sentinel."

"Excellent. The Therapy Room is almost rebuilt. The new part will be fully operational by tomorrow."

"We'll have the Sentinels ready once we re-capture them."

"Actually Oryn, I don't want those Sentinels. Your orders are to kill them and recover the items."

"But Vyndor..."

"The Board of Directors are not happy that you lost the girls. I am not happy that this whole thing happened. The Sentinels are compromised. We are going to select new candidates to be Sentinels. Understood."

Oryn took a deep breath and calmed herself.

"I understand." She hung up the phone and placed her hands on the desk looking down. Staring at her notepad with instructions from Danica's parents, she felt that all of her efforts failed. But, she refused to believe she could not get Alysia and Brie and the other Sentinels under her control. Especially Alysia, who she liked the

most. She looked up to Jonas and Anna with a decision. 'Vyndor's orders are to kill the Sentinels and recover their items. But I refuse to accept that. We're going to take them alive and erase their minds.'

"Then let's go." Jonas said as he followed Oryn out of the office.

"Anna, monitor everything from here." Oryn said.

"Okay."

Danica exited out of the security checkpoint and customs. She had no problem with her fake passport and drew no suspicion from them. It took long for the lines to move and she found out why. Everywhere she looked, there were armed guards with dogs sniffing around. Airport security randomly checking bags. Finally, she noticed Mystic Intelligence agents talking with the FBI and armed soldiers. She walked past them without a worry. She knew she had her sword Epic and would not hesitate to fight her way out. As she walked by the shops and restaurants while looking for an exit, she saw someone with long white hair sitting behind a sign that read bagels and coffee two dollars. Danica thought that was Alysia as she had seen her in the internet video. Danica walked along the sign and with a false smile, she peeked around the corner.

"Excuse me, are you Alysia?" Danica jerked her head back and saw an elderly woman with lowered eyebrows. Across the table, there was a girl with long black hair and glasses set before her green eyes. She had a magazine called Japan Today, and a wheeled suitcase set beside her seat. 'You're not Alysia.'

"The last I checked," The elderly said with a monotone voice. 'I am not Alysia.'

Danica did not say a word as she walked away from the two. She turned back and saw the woman and girl looking at her. It was as though they were analyzing her. Danica hurried around the corner and leaned on a wall. The feeling she got from them unnerved her for a moment. With one deep breath, she saw people standing before her with their eyes fixed in place. She turned around and saw a television embedded in the wall. It was the news reporting from

Hackettstown. The closed caption text mentioned that a white haired girl caused an explosion in a neighborhood. The people whispered terrorist as Danica read the description of the explosion having a red and blue color. She remembered in the video that Alysia's spell was red and blue.

"I wonder if that's why she is not here yet." Danica said to herself. She left the monitor and found herself thinking of whether she should wait or leave. As she walked toward a map display, she noticed two men watching her pass by. They didn't look like any of the security guards or agents wandering around. She wondered if they were from Avalon Tech Brie mentioned in their conversation over the internet and figured that could be them. Danica stood before the map, pretending to look for a way out. She read the directions to the monorail and figured that would be the best way for her to leave.

Danica followed the signs to the monorail and saw the arrows point upstairs to the second floor. She looked back and saw the two men were gone. The Sentinel stopped and looked around for a moment. When she faced the monorail again, Oryn stood before her looking down.

"You are the Sentinel of Seiryuu."

"Sorry you have me mistaken for someone else." Danica walked around Oryn to get by, but the woman grabbed the Sentinel's hand. Danica looked up and saw Oryn staring at the ring with a smile.

"I have to say if it wasn't for my employees recovering that website of ours, we would never have known you would be coming here. Despite Brie's efforts, most of what you both typed was recovered."

"So you know who I am?" Danica pulled her arm off from Oryn and found herself surrounded by people watching her. They all acted casually as the patrons and passengers walked by not noticing what was going on.

"My name is Oryn Zentharis. It is a pleasure to meet you Danica Leandros." Oryn politely hand gestured Danica to take a seat with her. The woman noticed Danica's hesitation. 'I can assure you, that it

would not be a good idea for both of us to engage in fighting. After all Mystic Intelligence is everywhere, and willing to look the other way."

Danica saw an agent passing beside them and with a smile on his face, ignoring them completely. The Sentinel realized that this was trap. She crossed her arms and stood in defiance.

"You can tell me right here."

"You're parents taught you well. They are aware of you coming here. In fact they offered you to work for me."

"What?"

"Oh yes, we did a little digging and found out who you really are. Your parents filled out all the paper work and now you work for Avalon Tech."

"I work for no one."

"Let's not be hasty.' Oryn walked around Danica examining the teen. 'I understand you want power. I can give you that power."

"You realize,' Danica said as Oryn stood in front of her looking away. 'the power I want you can't give."

"How do you know?' Oryn suddenly turned around and towered over the teen. 'I can get you certain things you want."

Danica saw her hand with the ring lifted up by Oryn. Both of their eyes locked onto the red gem and Danica understood what Oryn offered. To have the power of the other Sentinels, Alysia's staff in particular. Growing up with her parents, Danica was not convinced. She knew there was a price.

"I answer to you only Oryn?"

"Of course."

Danica looked to her left and to her right watching the movements of Oryn's group. She then looked up at Oryn and her eyes noticed past the woman, two bright flashes of light. She noticed a winged staff in the air behind a potted plant, pulling back down. It took a flash of her memory to realize that it was Alysia's staff in the internet video she saw. Danica noticed Oryn shifted slightly to see what was behind her.

"It's a very nice offer Oryn." Danica said making the execute look back at her.

"To be leader of the Sentinels, to do whatever you want. Doesn't that sound better?" Oryn smiled.

"No.' Danica said as Oryn's smile turned off. "There is something I want, but you couldn't give it to me. And that's my little secret."

Danica stepped back looking up with a wave as Oryn turned around and saw Alysia and Brie with Saga and Legacy in hand. They waited at the top of the escalator, keeping their weapons aimed at Oryn.

"Hello Alysia. Hello Brie." Oryn said loud enough for the girls to hear her.

Alysia and Brie did not say a word to Oryn. They saw most of the people standing around, confused of the entire situation. The two hesitated to act for fear of harming them by accident.

"You're Danica?" Alysia said with her monotone voice that made Danica jerk her head back. "We heard what Oryn said. Take a good look at me, because this is what she'll do to you if you say yes."

"I only have one interest." Danica stared at Alysia's staff and admired the teal jewel without raising suspicion from the other Sentinels. She then noticed Brie's hammer and was curious about what it can do.

"Come on Danica.' Brie said. "Let's go."

"Very well." Danica sighed playing along. She walked past Oryn without fear. As Danica rode the escalator, Oryn crossed her arms.

"You won't get far girls." Oryn said.

"Why?" Alysia said when she saw Oryn signal the agent to get on the walkie-talkie.

"I spotted the white haired girl that attack Hackettstown at the monorail station. She is heading for monorail station."

"Whoa." Danica ran up the escalator as Oryn waved the employees to go. There were ten of them, who blended in the crowd.

The Sentinels ran into the monorail station, Alysia and Brie grabbing their bags set at the top of the stairs. The train just finished unloading its passengers, as the girls tried to navigate

around them. Alysia reached out for the door when it closed. The train rolled away as she felt a hand on her shoulder. She turned around startled, and there was Fynir, holding his hands up at Saga aiming at him.

"Easy. I'm going to hurt you."

"Where did you come from?" Her monotone voice stunned Fynir.

"I just got off the last monorail that's all. You're safe. It's alright." Fynir guided Alysia's staff down and saw a group of men blocking the entrance. "What is going on?"

Everyone looked at Oryn's men standing with glazed eyes. Watching them walk slowly toward them, with no life in them.

"What is wrong with them?"

"Oryn brainwashed them." Alysia said with hands shivering that caught Danica and Fynir's attention.

"No way. I'm not going out like this." Danica said as she stood ahead of Alysia, Brie, and Fynir. She exposed the ring on her finger, curled her hand into a fist and pulled it back.

"ARISE... EPIC!!"

Danica threw a punch downward and the ring burst into droplets of light creating a puddle on the floor. The lights rose up and gathered around the red gem. Four arrows emerged around it like a compass, and rested at the bottom of the hilt that stretched outward. A sky blue hilt formed, with its emblem of two pink petals, crossing each other like wings. Danica uncurled her hand and guided the hilt up where a blade of light emerged from the puddle. When Danica gripped the hilt, the light disappeared and the green crystal blade appeared. She pulled the sword out of the ground, swung it with one hand, and held it over her head ready to strike.

Danica channeled her mana, wind gathered around the blade, as Alysia and Brie realized what she was about to do.

"AEROBLAST!"

"NOOO!" Alysia and Brie reached out as Danica swung Epic downward.

A sharp blast of wind blew all of Oryn's employees out of the train station, falling to the second floor inside the airport. A plume of dust

and shattered glass rained down on Oryn and the people on the ground floor below. It caused havoc throughout the terminal as everyone ran for safety. Soldiers, agents, and airport security tried their best to calm things down.

As the dust settled, Brie ran up to Danica and pushed the smiling Sentinel.

"Are you crazy? You could have killed somebody."

"Hello those guys don't care what happened to us. We have to be willing to push back."

"They don't have mana, Danica."

"You're Brie right?" Danica looked at the kid as she nodded.

"Those guys have no intention of being nice to us. We have to defend ourselves by whatever means necessary."

"They're brainwashed."

"It doesn't matter."

"It does matter." Alysia said holding her head, trying to maintain her composure. She had a lot to say but the monorail arrived and escape was near. Looking through the windows, they saw soldiers inside with rifles in hand. Their exit was blocked.

The Sentinels ran back inside the airport and they stood by what was left of the second floor. Below, the people screamed for help as Oryn looked back at them resting on one knee. The Sentinel's looked back, as the soldiers lined up right behind them. Alysia turned to the soldiers, moving Brie behind her, as she held Saga up at the soldiers.

"Put your weapons down." One soldier after another said as they aimed their rifles at the girls.

"Stand down!" Fynir said standing between the Sentinels and the soldiers. "Right now!"

"We got our orders." The leader of the squad said as one of them aimed the rifle at the elf.

"Orders he says." Danica said looking back at everyone with corner of her eyes. She jumped off the second floor with Epic over her head. Shots fired as Alysia spun Saga in front of her and Brie, channeling her mana.

“PYRO SHIELDER!” Saga lit aflame and every bullet fired burst on the shield. It protected her and Brie as Danica used the wind to both guide and cushion her decent.

Danica saw Oryn smile as she held Epic over her head. The thoughts of her parents giving her away to that woman to be her slave invoke anger in her heart. She let out a roar as the bullets stopped firing and Alysia turned off her spell. All everyone could do was watch Oryn as she moved to the side quickly. Danica saw Oryn cast a spell to replace herself with the agent who worked for her. It did not matter to the Sentinel as she swung Epic overhead to the scream of the agent.

Then a clang silenced the area.

Danica's eyes grew wide as she landed on her feet and saw a green and black flat disk, with the appearance of a turtle shell, block Epic. Danica stared at the weird weapon as she noticed a thin metal blade on the edge of this disk. It pulled itself back to the forearm revealing a lavender jewel on the back of a gloved hand. Danica stumbled back and took a defensive stand as Alysia and Brie looked down. The Sentinels saw a girl with long black hair and glasses standing between.

“You?” Danica said.

“I am Chisame Murakami. The Sentinel of Genbu.”

To Be Continued...

