

Arcana Magi - c.15: Chisame Murakami, Sentinel of Genbu

by H-M Brown

Chisame Murakami was born in Japan on December 22, 1999, during the Winter Solstice. Her life was average at best. Good grades, good friends, and loving parents, Daisuke and Ayako. She grew up loving fantasy stories. Told to her by her grandparent's during bedtime, it was always a dream to have magical powers. She fell in love with art and after receiving her first sketchbook, she drew fairies and heroes. Even though she knew it was not real, her drawings made them feel real.

At the age of ten, she dreamt of herself floating in water. It felt suffocating and hard to breath. She tried to swim for the surface but she could not tell up from down or left from right. She woke up from shock and saw her hands covered in mist. The child moved her bed sheets to the side and found her whole body in mist. She screamed aloud and attracted her parents. She told them she there was mist all over her body, but her parent's did not see it. They told her it was a dream but she insisted its there. Her parents left her alone and Chisame huddled into the corner of her bed, hugging her knees and cried.

For the next year, she kept to herself. Her isolation pushed away her parents and her friends. Now eleven, she made drawings of herself covered in mist and her dreams. It allowed her to clear her mind. The drawings also concerned her parents. They tried to talk to Chisame but because they would not listen to her the first time, she just ignored them. She wanted to find answers to this mist and her dreams.

On a Sunday afternoon, Chisame visited a bookstore to buy 'The History of Art'. She walked along the art aisle and found the book she wanted. When she took the book off the shelf, a small piece of metal fell to the ground. She knelt down and picked it up. It was a brooch, shaped like a green turtle shell with a lavender gem embedded in the center. It was beautiful, reflecting off her green eyes. She attached it to her blouse and smiled.

After purchasing her book, Chisame returned home and went to her room. She stood before her mirror and admired the jewelry. She felt strange as she watched the mist move around her body like the flow of water. She backed away from the mirror and bumped her into the wall. She threw one of stuffed bears at her reflection and jumped onto bed closing her eyes.

When Chisame opened her eyes, she found herself in a world of darkness. She tried to figure out where to go, for there was no direction to walk. She called out for her mother and father but there was only her echo. Her heart beat, wanting to jump out of her chest. She felt as though someone watched her nearby. She turned around and saw a giant green and black turtle sticking its head closer to her. Her face reflected off its lavender eyes. Chisame woke up in her bed screaming and swung her pillow around as though she attacked the giant turtle. Her parents came in to calm her, but she pushed them away. They tried their best to reach for her but she refused.

In the morning, Chisame drew the sketch of the turtle as her hands shook violently. She went to school and did her best to move on. She reminded herself that it was just a dream, even though the mist was real. As she sat in class, all she could do was draw the turtle in her dreams. While she drew the eyes, she remembered it being lavender just like the gem on her brooch. Looking closely at it, she realized the brooch looked like a turtle. She drew the brooch in the same page as the turtle and wondered. Unfortunately, her teacher saw Chisame and scolded her for not paying attention to class.

When Chisame returned home, her mother wanted to talk to her. Chisame sat down and told her about the dream. She believed that it

had something to do with the brooch, but her mother told her it was all just a dream. Chisame was upset that her mother would not listen. Without saying a word, she returned to her room. She sat on her bed holding the brooch on the palm of her hand. Gazing at the gem, she thought about her reflection off the turtle's eye. It felt like the creature peered into her heart.

Chisame went to the bathroom and splash water on her face to relax. She felt the water and saw a faint mist on the liquid. As the water poured out of the faucet, she placed her fingers under the running water and felt its movement trickle through her fingers. It was like in her dream. She moved her hand away from the water, cupping a little in her hands. She stared at the liquid shivering in her hands and she took a deep breath. The mist flowed over the surface and with one thought in her mind. Rain. The water levitated into her hand and startled her. The water burst and rained on the floor. She reached for the door to run away but she paused. She made water move.

Chisame returned to the sink. She filled it with water and thought about the mist flowing over the surface. The mist moved the water like she wanted. High over her head she thought about rain and said the word aloud. The water burst into droplets of rain and fell on top of her. Chisame laughed out loud, a joy that overwhelmed her as she repeated this feat over and over. Chisame heard her mother knock on the door and she opened it. Soaking wet and the floor filled with puddles of water, Chisame hugged her mother and told her she would be fine. Chisame never told her mother what happened or what she did.

When night fell, Chisame held the brooch in her hand and watched her mist flow over it. She held it close to her heart. She took a deep breath gathering courage. This time if she saw the giant turtle she would not be afraid. She closed her eyes and listened to her heartbeat. The brooch let out a pulse after each heartbeat. It felt like two feet jumping one at a time. Chisame felt the mist around her body and relaxed herself. Her heartbeat and the pulse merged. She

felt the warmth of the mist and she opened her eyes into the world of darkness again.

She saw a light in the distance and there the giant turtle stood. Its slow male voice apologized for frightening her. Chisame said it was okay and she approached the turtle. It introduced itself as Genbu and welcomed her to the Temple Plain. When she asked where that was, Genbu said it was within the Void of Life, where the four elements of the earth co-exist. Chisame sat down on her knees and asked about the mist surrounding her body. It told her that was mana, a source of natural energy flowing within the elements of life. She listened to Genbu explain how mana existed in all things natural, including herself. Chisame smiled as she looked at the mana around her arms.

Chisame's brooch appeared before her and Genbu told her the brooch was for the Sentinels. Chisame asked what a Sentinel does and it told her to lead by example. She could choose whatever path of her life she wanted. It could not interfere with her decisions. She asked what happened if she refused and it told it would give her its blessing for a good and healthy life. Mana, the brooch, her dreams, she felt a purpose for all that happened. Genbu said she knew what she wanted for her life, and she agreed. A living fantasy presented to her. To saw wonderful things that no one could think of. She said she would accept the role of the Sentinel and Genbu told her to give the brooch its name. She stretched her right arm out and called its name.

Fable.

The brooch burst into droplets of light pushing the gem outward. The light slid over her right hand, forming a glove. The gem rested on the back of her gloved hand with four arrows stretching out like a compass. Lavender lines slid from the gem over her glove and a disk materialized over her forearm. It was flat and had a green and black turtle design. The edge had a thin sharp metal band around it. Chisame looked up at Genbu and asked why she received a weapon.

It was not what she wanted. Again, Genbu told her, that she was free to make her choices, even refusing to fight.

Chisame woke up. She held the brooch between her two fingers and held it over her face. At first, she said to herself that did not want to use it to fight, but she shook her head. She acknowledged everything she saw was a dream, but now she felt much better because she learned what the mist was. It was like all the heavy weight fell off her back. She may not want to use the brooch to fight, but she wanted to see what she could do with her powers.

Between now and her twelve birthday, Chisame told no one about her powers. Not only would her parents or her friend not believe her, but she may frightened them off. She re-connected with everyone, apologizing for her behavior. Luckily, her parents felt the apology was unnecessary and were happy she was okay. As for her friends, she only salvaged two Noriko and Megumi, but it was good enough for her. She would secretly practice controlling water and never once did she call out for Fable. She never looked for trouble and trouble never came for her.

Two weeks after her twelfth birthday, Chisame headed home from school and walked by a Shinto shrine. She climbed up the steps as cars drove by. She walked under the gate and passed the well. She approached a small temple with a bell and rope beside it. As she prayed, a strange humming sound interrupted her. The Sentinel looked around and saw no one was there. She prayed for a good new year for her parents, friends, and herself. When she reached for the bell, something knocked her to the ground. The Sentinel opened her eyes and saw a horrifying creature.

It looked like an ostrich, but twisted, disfigured, and no feathers. When it opened its mouth, Chisame screamed at its sharp teeth. A thick green liquid sprayed into her eyes. It burned her eyes and the world became a thick blur. She could see the movement of the monster, but did not know what it was going to do. She slid backwards trying to feel her way around. She turned to her belly and crawled to escape. She felt something sharp jab her leg and she heard the sound of a hum coming from what may be the creature.

Chisame cried for her parents as she felt her body dragged along the ground. She tried her best to pull away but there was nothing for her to grab. With one last pull she felt herself break free, her knees scrapped the ground. She heard the creature hum one more time and it faded away. Chisame cried as she covered her eyes and felt the sticky liquid that blinded her. She opened her eyes one more time. The Sentinel saw a mist covered shadow stand over her. She felt the shadow's hand pressing her forehead. Chisame felt warmth that was calm. She heard a woman's monotone voice asking if she was all right, as sirens blared in the distance. Everything went dark.

Chisame woke up and felt herself lying on a bed. She did not know where she was and could barely see anything. The world was a blur to her. She heard a woman identify herself as Doctor Jodie Corbin, assuring the child she was safe. Chisame heard her parents entering the room and she felt her mother's hands caressing her cheeks. She cried asking why she could not see and they told her she lost her sight. She would have to have an examination to see how much was lost. The last clear vision she had was the monster attacking her. It was such a horrific memory that Chisame's mind cracked. She never said another word as everyone talking sounded distant.

The healing process was hard for Chisame. She just did whatever her parents asked and her doctor instructed without question. She tried to focus her eyes to see but even with the glasses on she could get only forty percent of her lost sight back. It was enough to navigate without a walking cane, but discerning what the objects and people are would be too difficult.

When Chisame returned home, it was a quiet moment. Her friends wanted to meet her that day, but Chisame was not ready for visitors. She spent her first week in her room as she recovered. She only came down when her parents told her. Her mother returned the brooch but Chisame threw it to the corner out of frustration. Knowing she could not see well enough to make the water move, the way she did, was upsetting. To make it worse, drawing was very difficult at that time. She wanted to give up on everything.

Chisame's parents called her down and Chisame navigated her way into the living room. Despite her blurred vision, her memories of how the house was set up made it easy to move around. They sat her down and gently told her, that she had to go to a school for the blind. She made no resistance or objection to the plan. She just nodded and headed back to her room.

As she reached the stairs, there was a knock at the door. Chisame felt her mother pass by and heard her open the door. An old woman with long white hair, stood at the door. She spoke with a monotone voice that caught Chisame's attention. She remembered hearing that voice from that day. The woman introduced herself as Mage Karyn Mayweather. She said she rescued Chisame from the animal that attacked her. Chisame approached the woman as she felt her mother's hands on her shoulders. The Sentinel reached out to Karyn and she felt the old woman's hand. She recognized the calming warmth and without hesitation, Chisame snapped out of her disconnect and embraced the old mage thanking her.

After everything calmed down, Chisame listened to Karyn explain that she tried to see her in the hospital but she was too late. Chisame said she could not see anymore and Karyn knew what caused it. The liquid that animal clurred Chisame's vision with was a magic based acid solution. Not even medicinal magic could fix her eyes. However, she knew a doctor who created an experimental pair of eyeglasses to deal with Chisame's condition. The term medicinal magic threw her parents off. Chisame asked if that was something made from mana and Karyn said yes. Her parents did not appreciate Karyn making stuff up, especially calling herself a mage. With a sigh, Karyn asked Chisame to channel her mana and cast a spell. Chisame did not understand the term channel and her parents refused to hear anymore.

As her parents prepared to escort Karyn out of the house, Chisame felt her way upstairs and into her room. She crawled all over the floor feeling for the brooch. She found it and hurried out of her room. Just as her parents closed the door on Karyn, she held the brooch on the palm of her hand and called Fable. Her parents stood

there with eyes wide open as they looked at the gauntlet and the disk. Her mother opened the door and there stood Karyn waiting for an invitation back inside.

Everyone sorted out the situation and now Chisame's parents believed magic exist. They do not understand why the world does not know about magic. Karyn said magic has a very long and terrible history. To put it simply, if Regs, as people with magic called them, knew about the existence of magic, there would be chaos in the world. War with magic would be inevitable and devastating. The silence was eerie.

Karyn presented her offer to help Chisame with the new pair of eyeglasses. Of course, Chisame and her parents would have to go to Merydia to get them. Karyn assured that she would pay all the expenses. There was a sense of reluctance on the parent's part. Would there be a price to pay? It seemed too good to be true. Chisame herself wanted those glasses, if it meant seeing again. Of course, Karyn warned that it was experimental but they have worked so far. Chisame practically begged and they said they would think about it. By the end of the week, Chisame and her family left for Merydia. No one would hear from the Murakami family again, for they became citizens of Merydia. Chisame received her new glasses and was happy to see clearly again. She even enjoyed her magic training from Karyn.

They used the time to learn about the Sentinels in history books but that information was scarce. They learned what the items look when they are not weapons, a ring, a bracelet and a pendant. Even talking with Genbu did not produce much result, since it repeated the same story to Chisame about how to be a Sentinel and its creed about not interfering with a Sentinels life. In fact, Genbu said that Sentinels pass their items to another person or hid the item every time they quit being a Sentinel. So Sentinels are never the same people. Chisame hoped to meet them one day and get to be their friend.

Now thirteen, Chisame and Karyn took a flight to Los Angeles to present the success of the new glasses. Unfortunately, the captain

had to make an emergency landing at Newark. The pilot allowed the passengers to get off the plane. They saw Mystic Intelligence agents not only keeping the flight a secret, but also working with security and the military because of reports of a terrorist attack in Hackettstown.

As Chisame and Karyn sat in a café, Danica popped up from behind a sign asking Karyn if she was Alysia. A complete stranger, they stared at her answering no, and noticed the ring with the red gem. Chisame identified it as one of the Sentinel items they saw in their research of the Sentinels. She took her brooch out of her pocket and followed her with Karyn's permission. Chisame followed Danica and saw two men following her. She saw them channel mana, ready to attack. She noticed a child finished drinking from a water fountain near the restrooms. The Sentinel secretly, and without anyone watching, cast a spell from that fountain. She took out the attackers by creating a slippery puddle that sent them sliding towards a set of stairs to the parking lot. Chisame then stood behind the pillar as Oryn appeared and stood before Danica. She heard and saw everything that happened in the conversation.

Chisame saw two more girls in the second floor and watched Alysia and Brie call for their items. She heard Oryn call them Alysia and Brie. Chisame saw the gems on their weapons and confirmed they were also Sentinels. Before she could react, the Sentinels ran off into the monorail terminal. Chisame called for Fable and before she knew it, there was an explosion from the terminal. The second floor shattered to pieces and she saw a group of men fall down to the ground floor. Using a shield spell to protect herself, everything became chaotic as people ran for their lives. When Chisame lowered her shield, she saw the Sentinels on the second floor surrounded by military soldiers. She did know what to do and hoped that Karyn was on already on her way.

Everyone watched Danica jump off the broken ledge and dove straight for Oryn. Chisame saw Oryn use a switch spell that replaced herself with the Mystic Intelligence that phoned for reinforcements. Chisame ran as fast as she could, casting a spell that created a thin

puddle of water. She slid on the water with Fable shifting over her glove.

There was a clang.

Chisame looked up at Danica in the eyes, saving the agents life. As the agent ran off, Danica stumbled back as Chisame shifted the disk to her forearm, and introduced herself.

"I am Chisame Murakami, Sentinel of Genbu."

"Danica Leandros, Sentinel of Seiryuu." The Sentinel said while taking a defensive stance.

On the second floor, Alysia and Brie looked at each other as they realized all the Sentinels are finally together.

"Put your weapons down and your hands over you head!" The soldiers said to Alysia and Brie as Fynir hand signaled a plea to the girls to comply.

"We need to get down there Brie." Alysia said.

"If we jump I'll slow our fall."

Alysia nodded and the girls jumped down. Brie channeled her mana during the descent.

"RISING PILLAR!" With a swing of the hammer, a sonic burst bounce off the floor and made the ground rise slowly with a flat surface. The girls landed on the top with enough height to jump down again to the ground floor. The landed right before Chisame and Danica.

"I'm Brie Williams, Sentinel of Byakko." She said as she ran up to Chisame and Danica with excitement and joy.

"I'm Alysia Morales, Sentinel of Suzaku." She said as she approached the Sentinels with a cold look in her face.

"You're voice?" Chisame said.

"It's a long story." Alysia said. "Right now we have to get out of here."

"You're surrounded!" A male voice said to the girls. Soldiers, airport security, and the FBI surrounded the Sentinels armed with weapons. Mystic Intelligence agents then pulled out wands and guns that made the other agencies looked at them strangely.

"Really,' Danica said looking at the wands. 'you agents brought sticks to a swordfight."

Alysia, Brie, and Chisame saw the bloodlust in Danica's eyes. They wondered what was wrong with her as she slid her tongue over her lips.

"Danica,' Brie said. 'why are looking at them like that?"

"They want to kill us. And they're not afraid to die. It will be tasty."

"Brie what have you gotten us into?" Aysia said after hearing Danica's comments.

"Me? Danica is a Sentinel. I'm sure she's joking."

"No she's not." Chisame said as they watched Danica lift Epic over her head.

"Drop your weapon!" The soldiers and agents said as one of the men took a gulp and inched his finger closer to pulling the trigger.

"STAND DOWN!' Fynir said as he stepped in front that soldier, pushing the assault rifle downward. "That's an order!"

"I would do what he says." Karyn made her way around the unoccupied pillar Chisame stood in. She walked toward the girls as Mystic Intelligence agents lowered their weapons. She could hear her name whispered from them in the crowd. Suddenly radio calls from each law agency called to stand down and secure the perimeter while EMS took care of the injured. Everyone but Mystic Intelligence looked at each other confused, even the Sentinels. The call went through one more time to stand down and everyone complied. As Karyn spread her arms open to guide the girls away, Alysia looked around noticed something was missing.

"Wait,' Alysia said to Brie. 'where's Oryn?"

"She must have used that switch spell to escape." Danica said as Alysia turned her head looking everywhere for Oryn.

"Don't worry Alysia.' Brie said. 'We're safe now."

Karyn and the Sentinels walked past the military and law agencies as Fynir approached them.

"Wait!' Fynir said as Karyn turned around with cold look in her eyes. 'I just want some answers."

"One hundred men versus four little girls is not my idea of law enforcement." Karyn turned around, as Fynir thought for a moment and lowered his head. Karyn focused on the Sentinels and kept them moving forward to the nearest exit.

"Madam Karyn,' Chisame said. 'how did you get them to not shoot us?"

"It's not something for me to brag about. Just know I wouldn't let anything happen to you four."

"Hey, you're voice is the same as Alysia's.' Brie said as Karyn eyes opened wide. 'I'll make sure you smile just like her."

Karyn looked at the emotionless face on Alysia.

"What happened to you?" Karyn said.

"It's a long story." Alysia said.

Hearing Alysia and Karyn speak with a monotone voice irritated Brie. As they exited the airport, Brie, Chisame, and Danica looked at the Alysia and Karyn. They noticed that their hair was white as well.

"Are you a fan of Madam Karyn?" Chisame said.

"I've never heard of her." Alysia looked at Chisame with a cold expression that did not faze the Sentinel of Genbu.

"Can we get out of here first,' Danica said interrupting the conversation. 'and sort everything later?"

They stood outside before a black van. It was waiting for them and Karyn opened the door for the girls. They stood their confused as they saw a Mystic Intelligence agent in the driver's seat. As Karyn opened the door, Fynir hurried outside and around to talk to the driver. Everyone watched Fynir dismiss the driver and sat in driver's seat.

"Put away your weapons and get in." Fynir said.

"Where are you taking us?" Karyn said Fynir looked at Alysia and Brie.

"I don't know what's going on, but I did not order for reinforcements to surround you. If you tell me what's going on, I'll do what I can to help."

Fynir and Karyn looked at each as the Sentinels waited to see what would happen. Alysia approached Fynir and looked at him.

"If I tell you what happened to me, will you help us?" Her emotionless eyes added more to Fynir's need to solve the mystery. She saw him nod in agreement and placed his hands on the wheels.

"Yes. I'll do what I can to help."

Alysia transformed Saga back into a bracelet and entered the van. The Sentinels did the same and followed Alysia. The girls sat in the back, with Alysia and Brie setting their bookbags on their laps, and Karyn sat in the front passenger seat. As Fynir drove off, a limo followed them.

The van moved along the airport highway heading for an exit. It drove by an intersection where a limo pulled out and followed them. Just as Fynir turned onto the exit ramp, a fireball struck short of the van, but the impact shattered the glass. They looked back and saw the limo with two people sticking their bodies out of the sunroof. Alysia saw who it was.

"Oryn and Jonas."

"Hang on." Fynir pushed the accelerator peddle down as he turned onto the northbound highway. It was clear of heavy traffic except for the southbound side that looked like a parking lot. He switched lanes with each shot fired by Oryn and Jonas. Each shockwave created shrapnel that pelted the van.

Alysia made her way to the back window. She channeled her mana as everyone watched her aim her hands outside. Heat gathered around her wings, her mist feathers stretched outward. Alysia thought about killing Oryn and created a small red and blue fireball. Remembering what Oryn put her through, this was one time she would make an exception about killing another person.

"ASHES TO DUST!" Just as Alysia cast the spell, Fynir jerked the van to the side making the Sentinel miss. Her spell melted the left side of the limo, bursting the tire, and the back tire rolled over the melted tar. She watched the vehicle turned off into a grassy ditch and Oryn and Jonas survived. Alysia looked back at Fynir as he kept driving. "Why?!"

"Do you want to go to prison for murder?!"

"I... I..."

Alysia looked at everyone, seeing the judgment in their eyes and the smile on Danica's face. She hugged her knees looking away never saying a word. All she could think about was the pain and suffering she went through. A chance to kill Oryn meant that the woman would never put another person through Therapy again. To never have to live without emotions, or losing family and friends. It was a silent moment for everyone, until Brie saw something that brought a smile on her face.

"I see Karl." Brie pointed to a gas station on the southbound side.

Alysia looked out the window in Brie's direction and saw Karl standing outside of the van with Suzie looking inside.

"Fynir," Brie said as they drove by the gas station. "those are our friends who helped us. They don't know that Oryn is nearby. Please we have to get them."

At first she thought Fynir was going to say no, but instead he nodded as he drove past an exit sign with the words 'U-turn one mile ahead' written.

Within minutes, Fynir pulled up into the gas station as Karl and Suzie looked up in their direction. Brie jumped out of the van and embraced the couple.

"Are you girls okay?" Suzie said as she hugged Brie.

"Yeah, but we have to go, Oryn is nearby."

Alysia did not say a word as she climbed in the van and saw Reya resting in the back. She climbed to the back ignoring everyone and lay next to Reya shedding a tear. All she could think about was what Fynir said and how she felt about not killing people.

"Reya, would killing Oryn end our pain? My pain?"

To Be Continued...

