

Arcana Magi - c.3: Five Months Later...

by H-M Brown

Oryn sat on her desk rubbing her fingers on her forehead. She spent the past five months overseeing Alysia's therapy sessions and training. She had little sleep even though the results satisfied Oryn. She prepared to present Vyndor and Board of Directors, the Sentinel of Suzaku. Oryn placed a security card in a small brown enveloped with the company logo Avalon Tech Enterprises stamped. It was marked in ink, 'For Suzaku'. She used whatever spare time she had searching for the Sentinels. Everywhere around the world, Avalon Tech Operatives searched with little success.

The latest financial reports saw the stocks dropped another fifteen percent. Though Oryn's plans succeeded in controlling Alysia, without the other Sentinels, her plans will fail. The company would have to file Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. The phone rang and Oryn set it to teleconference mode. It was Vyndor on the other line.

"Good morning Oryn."

"Vyndor. I was getting ready for the presentation and..."

"I cancelled it."

"Why?" Oryn's eyes opened as though she awoke from bed.

"The Board of Directors are not happy with the direction you're leading the company with your Sentinel project."

"You have to get them off my back."

"I understand. Their lack of vision is frustrating, but my patience has its own set of limits."

Oryn leaned back on her seat and sighed.

"I haven't heard anything new from any of our operatives. I didn't think..."

"That's exactly why we are in this situation, Oryn. You didn't think things through."

Oryn stood to her feet and pressed her hands on the surface of her desk. She curled her fingers. They slid over the surface. She growled under breath at the fact that her boss was right. She felt like such a fool.

"Oryn, are you sure Suzaku has no way of contacting the others like telepathy or lucid dreaming?"

"She doesn't know who they are. We went through every inch of her memories and found nothing. We even tried to manipulate her mana and staff to contact them. We got nothing."

"Very well. We'll take what we got moving forward. Just don't repeat with Suzaku like last time."

"But..."

"It's July. You had your chance. This project is over, Oryn. Since you have conditioned her to be your bodyguard, Suzaku will remain under your care. We'll be moving on to other business."

Oryn sat on her seat and felt the failure of her project. She closed her eyes knowing that her dream to prove her theory will go unfulfilled.

"Yes Vyndor."

The phone clicked and a ring tone deafened the office. Oryn pressed the off button to stop the noise. The room turned silent. She stared at the phone. She had so many things to say to Vyndor. She wanted to threaten him and hold his feet to the fire. Instead, she screamed ripping the phone off its chord and threw it out onto the red carpet. The phone broke and spread its pieces across the floor, right at the feet of an unflinching Reya.

"Madam Oryn." Reya said. "They are ready."

Oryn calmed herself and looked at the catgirl saying nothing. She thought about not going to the presentation. She just wanted to stay at her desk and not bother with anything anymore.

"Shall I tell them you won't be attending this morning, Madam Oryn?"

"No. I'm coming. First, clean that mess."

"Yes Madam Oryn."

Minutes later, Oryn and Reya stood in the elevator heading down to Level B4. Neither spoke as the numbers on the panel counted down. Oryn thought about why she embarked on this experiment. Her theories that she spent so many years trying to prove made her rethink her strategy.

“Reya, take some notes.” Oryn said.

The teenaged girl looked up to her boss with her lifeless yellow eyes. Her pupils opened wide from therapy. She awaited a command like a robot.

“Yes Madam Oryn.” Reya took out her personal touch pad.

“I will be having a personal bodyguard. She will stay in your quarters. I want you to give her the tour of the company while I get her clothing to meet the dress code.”

“What's her name?”

“Suzaku.” Oryn presented Reya with the sealed envelope. “This is her security card.”

“Understood.” Reya took the envelope as she finished typing down her orders and put it away.

The elevator reached Level B4 and the doors opened. They entered into a lobby with that only elevator. Oryn and Reya approached the door and stood in front of a security panel. First Oryn swiped her security card, then, the screen panel asked for her numbered password. Each digit had three letters to form a word, except for nine, which had four letters. She entered her password — 137594. She placed the five fingers of her right hand on a scanner, a red line slid under them. Finally leaned her eyes to a camera, where a thin red line slid over her eyes. The panel turned green and gave Oryn clearance to enter. Reya opened the door for her boss and followed her inside.

Oryn and Reya stood before a large facility. It had a high ceiling that was unreachable. They walked past computer terminals and tables with medical equipment. By the walls were curtains that had gurneys with medical scanners. At the far end, was a door with a sign that read ‘Therapy Room’. Reya turned her head away and not thought about it. They arrived before a large curtain atop five steps.

They met with Jonas, Anna, Marcel and Lyn at the bottom step. Oryn stood ready to give her speech to her friends and employees in the project. Everyone waited by the monitor where the Board of Directors would appear. Nothing happened. The look of sorrow on Oryn's face brought doubt and whispers. She looked out to each worker who feared the worse. Her colleagues waited patiently to hear her say something. She cleared her throat and took a deep breath.

"I would like to first thank all of you for your efforts in this project. It had been a long five months to get to where we wanted. Unfortunately, our inability to acquire the other three Sentinels has worn out the patience of the Board of Directors. This project is official terminated."

Gasps filled the air. Everyone whispered to each other wondering what will happen next. They turned to Oryn as her hand rose for their attention.

"Archive all the files and take the rest of the day off." Oryn said. She walked toward her colleagues as the crew followed her orders. In an hour, the worker shut off the computer and the project ended. Everyone left the facility except for Oryn and her colleagues, and Reya. Once the area cleared of all employees, Oryn turned to her friends with cold eyes.

"Yes, the project is over. Their project. My project has only begun."

The four listened as Oryn picked up a vial of blue liquid labeled Alysia Morales. It sat next to a used syringe on a grey tray.

"We didn't get this far just to end everything at this point." Oryn set the vial back on the tray. "We'll find a way to get the other three Sentinels. This company is full of manipulative red tape that we can get funding without anyone knowing. We can still get in touch with the operatives."

Oryn walked to the curtain as Ann picked up a small time box on table by the stairs.

"It you're willing to see this to the end, I assure you, the reward will be worth it." Oryn stood before the bottom step looking up at

the curtain. She turned to Jonas. He walked up to a chord by the curtain and pulled on it. Oryn's eyes opened wide as her smile removed the sadness. She stood in awe with what she saw, as the sound of footsteps drew closer to her.

Alysia walked toward Oryn. They dressed her in what called a Mage Suit. A teal and pink suit covered her body from neck to toe. Accessorized in a light blue, a pair of mini-gloves, mini-boots, and a short sleeve shrug jacket. Her misty teal and white feathered wings flapped a little out of reflex. Her long hair turned white as snow, laced with streaks of light blue. The results of the blue liquid injected into her during therapy. Two flat teal and pink hairclips attached on top of her hair. They looked like a pair of antennas. Alysia turned thirteen two weeks earlier in June. Since her accident in February, she grew in height and she no longer looked like a little child, but a young lady. She stood before Oryn, a lifeless being, to serve the woman.

"Suzaku."

Alysia lifted her head up. The pupils of her teal colored eyes widened. One could see into her eyes and stare deep into her mind, if there were any left intact.

"I am returning your bracelet. Take it." Oryn nodded to Anna and her colleague removed the trinket out of the tin box.

Without saying a word, Alysia raised her left arm up. Being left handed became an after effect of being in therapy. Alysia stared at Oryn as Anna slipped the bracelet on. Alysia lowered her arm and waited for her next orders.

"Good. Reya?"

"Yes. Madam Oryn." Her cat ears twitched at the call of her boss. She stepped forward and stood next to Alysia.

"Suzaku, this is Reya Everheart, my Personal Assistant. You'll be sharing a room with her at all times. She will provide you with what you need. Reya will give you a tour of the company to familiarize yourself. Proceed." Oryn stepped aside.

Reya stroked her grey hair and approached Alysia with a smile.

"It's nice to meet you Suzaku." Reya took Alysia's right hand. "We're going to be great friends. I'll show you around and get you settled in." Reya led Alysia out of the facility. Once they stepped inside of the elevator room, Reya closed the door all the way. She opened the envelope and took out the security card.

"This is your security card. Do not lose it. Take it."

"Alysia raised her hand up and Reya placed the card on her palm. It had Alysia's picture, but her name written on it read Suzaku Zentharis. Alysia did not react to this name change but her real name echoed in her thoughts.

"We're going to test the security clearance here. You know your password?"

Alysia nodded.

"Good. You may proceed." Reya watched Alysia go through each level of security. She typed in the password — 324652 last, and the security pad approved. Alysia stood ready for another command and Reya began the tour.

Alysia and Reya stopped at Level B3 first. They entered a decontamination room. The girls put on a protective suit and opened the other door once air sterilized. They walked past various rooms with large glass windows. Each room had its own decontamination room to prevent any mishaps. The pipes in the ceiling would release water to flood the rooms. Alysia stood before a window and watched elf scientists and human mages handling vials of chemicals. A fairy flew by them and pressed a button to start a centrifuge. Another room had a female human mage and male fairy scientist looking into microscopes analyzing bacteria. The last room Alysia saw had a female elf wizard and male troll scientist testing out a super strength serum on lab rats.

On Level B2, they watched employees test the latest magic technology. One male elf wizard stood in front of a mannequin and cast an ice spell with a wand. It flew past the mannequin leaving a thin layer of ice on half its face. The tester took a clipboard and marked an 'x' on it. A female dwarf scientist typed on the computer

to make a gauntlet open and close its arm. She took a wrench and tightened a bolt on the joint. Reya directed Alysia to look up and they saw a male troll and female human floating in the air. They wore glowing boots that lost power and together they fell onto a blue mat under them.

On Level B1, Alysia followed Reya in a single hallway. It went around the floor in a square. Each door led into the sleeping quarters for employees who cannot go outside the building. Each room required a security card for entry. Showers room stationed at each turn of the corner. The girls passed by a pair of fairies wrapped in towels, talking about their day at work. They saw an exhausted male elf removed his tie as he greeted a human female with a kiss. Alysia and Reya arrived at the door to their room. Reya ordered Alysia to try her security card to see if it worked. With one swipe, the door unlocked. The room had only two dressers, two beds, and one lamp, nothing else. It looked sterile and generic. Reya found clothing on Alysia's bed and handed the Sentinel a business suit to change into. Minutes later, Alysia finished dressing herself. Reya examined the outfit and tugged the blouse to straighten it.

They continued the tour and stood in the lobby. Alysia watched people slide their security cards over a blue light. That allowed them access to the elevators. At the security station, the guards explained to her what she would do at the front desk. A tall bald man introduced himself as Zach West, the head of security. Meeting Alysia for the first time threw him in a loop when he looked at white and blue hair. He thought it was just a wig like Reya's hair and ignored it altogether. As he escorted the girls to the security room, he expressed his objections to Oryn assigning a child to be her bodyguard. That duty fell into his jurisdiction and placing a child in high-risk position would raise questions. Nevertheless, he complied due to Oryn's threats and showed the monitors of every secured room in the complex. Zach taught her how to use the equipment they have available and how to respond to emergencies. They left the office together and Reya took Alysia's hands and ran off.

The girls rode the elevator up the high-rise building. They stopped first at the mailroom and payroll departments of the first floor. Everyone on the floor paid no attention to the girls. They sorted out mail and payroll typed up the newest checks. On the second floor, they stood in Archives. The girls walked back and forth along the rows of file cabinets and computers. The floor was like an endless maze. On the third floor, they arrived at the cafeteria. Alysia's stomach grumble and with chuckle Reya felt hungry too. Alysia received a tray from Reya and they stood before the counter with a buffet of food. The chef gave the girls a bowl of soup, salad, and juice as instructed by Oryn. They walked to a table isolated from all the employees there and ate quietly.

After lunch, Reya explained that all the offices run from the fourth floor to the fourteenth floor. Those departments deal with day-to-day activities with all of Avalon Tech Branches in America. All the global operations occurred at the main headquarters in New Avalon, Merydia. They arrived on the fifteenth floor, the offices of Human Resources. Alysia sat on chair in front of a table. Reya had her sign all forms needed for the company records. Alysia signed her name Suzaku Zentharis. After handing over the documents to the director, they approached a set of stairs near the main elevators. They climbed up to the sixteenth floor where the conference rooms lined up along the hallway. Each room had removable walls to increase or decrease the size of the room.

Finally, they arrived on the seventeenth floor, the Executives Offices. The girls passed each room where an executive of each department talked or phones or typed on their computers. Each one had a secretary, who waved hello to Reya and Alysia. They stood before the big wooden doors, the entrance to Oryn's office. Reya saw a bare metal desk across from hers and noticed that both desks faced each other. Reya showed Alysia her desk with her computer and office supplies. She led Alysia to the bare desk and ordered to sit there. As Alysia sat in her seat, Reya went to her desk and picked up the phone.

"Madam Oryn, we're here."

“Excellent, send her in.” Oryn said and Reya hanged up the phone.

“Madam Oryn wants to see you Suzaku.” Reya opened the door and Alysia entered.

Alysia stepped inside alone as the door closed behind her. The young teen walked on the red carpet towards Oryn's desk. She saw the woman sitting with her hands folded. Alysia stood before Oryn's desk and looked up to the executive waiting for an order. Alysia's eyes followed Oryn as the woman approached her. Oryn walked around the teen. She examined Alysia's body, wings and hair, until she came face to face.

“You're such a pretty girl.” Oryn caressed Alysia's cheeks. ‘I am jealous of your lovely hair and wings.’ Oryn rubbed her hands through Alysia's wings and watched them turn to mist. When they reformed back to normal, Oryn smiled at Alysia. She never got an affectionate response from Alysia. She took the Sentinel's hand and led her to the window. Oryn stood Alysia in front of her and rested her hands on the teen.

“With your help, we'll find your three friends, and you won't feel alone anymore.”

A soft, gentle, and lifeless voice spoke.

“What is feel?”

To Be Continued...

