

Arcana Magi Memorial

Vol.2 - c.4

by H-M Brown

Two groups of security guards chased Jean-Pierre across the soccer field, unaware that he was actually a clone. As he laughed and taunted them right toward the auditorium, all six guards conserved their energy to keep pace with him. They ran for so long they wondered why he has not tired out. Watching him bump a boy and a girl to the floor, one of the leaders of two squads waved at Madam Mayweather and her group in the distance. They received her signal to surround the building. As she helped the students to their feet, both squad leaders approached the dean.

"Is there anybody inside?" Madam Mayweather said to the students waiting for the guards to catch their breath. The girl answered.

"Music Class finished. We're the last two coming out."

"Thank you. You can go now." Madam Mayweather watched her student's walk away looking back at another group of guards passing by them. She turned her attention to one of the leaders and crossed her arms. "Report Mr. Thompkins."

"We found the intruder near the girl's dorm." Mr. Tompkins said. "He was running around scaring the students and flipping girl's skirts up. He then went to Jones Hall and disrupted an entire class. Then he..."

Madam Mayweather held her hand up interrupting the leader. She got on the radio and switched it to channel one.

"Mr. Bendis come in."

"Yes Madam."

"Have you arrived at the detention room yet?" Madam Mayweather noticed Mr. Tompkins talking on his radio.

"I'm almost there." Mr. Bendis said and Madam Mayweather lowered her head rubbing eyes. "I had to talk to one of my students

about his grades. Sorry.”

“It's alright.” Despite the severity of the situation, Madam Mayweather did not want to fault him for taking care of a student. “Just get there fast.”

“Okay.”

“Madam Mayweather.” Mr. Tompkins said, getting off his radio.

“What?” She said startling the squad leader.

“They have him cornered.”

“Come.” Madam Mayweather said to the squad leaders and they followed her inside. She led them through a row of large doors into the auditorium. The dean saw Jean-Pierre on the stage surrounded by security just laughing. She did not walk any further. Her stone cold face frightened all of security, each of them stepping back. She had her suspicions and did not want to play the part of the fool.

“Madam Mayweather. Come in.”

“What is it Mr. Bendis?”

“The girls ran off.”

“I see.” Madam Mayweather squeezed the radio and short burst of air shot out.

“Also, Azure is with them.”

Madam Mayweather heard the laughter stop and the copy of Jean-Pierre burst into smoke. Her silence was intense. Nobody in the auditorium knew what to expect. No one dared to say a single word. She turned around to exit the building, and security followed her without hesitation.

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As Sora enlarged her blue magic circle to control Aeros, Azure stood before Jean-Pierre ready to fight, but Ciel walked past her to confront him.

“I'll deal with my brother. If you want to help, then keep Hitomi busy.”

“Thank you Lady Ciel.” Hitomi bowed and Azure tried to understand what just happened. “I owe you for that attack chimera.”

“But I want to take him on.” Azure said pointing at Jean-Pierre.

“Idiot.” Ciel said startling Azure. “My brother is uninjured and at

full strength. You wouldn't last against him."

"How do you know?" A blue shield of light flashed beside her. Azure saw Hitomi's hand covered in Mana trying to reach her, struggling to break through the barrier. She was so fast Azure did not have time to react. She just stood there with eyes wide open. As Hitomi hopped back looking over to Sora, Azure stood there unable to move.

"Azure pay attention!"

"Two against one." Hitomi nursed her hand. "That's not fair..."

"Actually..." Sora looked up to the sky, directing Hitomi to turn around.

Aeros flew right by Hitomi. Its left wing knocked her to the ground, providing Azure the opening she needed. As the robot bird flew up into the air to turn around, Azure stretched her fingers out exposing her teal magic circle under Hitomi, ignoring the crushing pain of purple shackles.

"CATAPULT!"

The ground shot up like a piston launching Hitomi into the air. As she waved her arms, the claws of Aeros snatched her in midair and dove toward ground. Her back slammed onto the grass, bouncing up like a ball. She screamed aloud and rubbing her back. Hitomi coughed wondering how she could have allowed her opponent's to get the best of her. When she got on one knee, she noticed Azure struggling to stay on her feet. The servant raised her hand to preparing a spell but the screeching sound of Aeros in the air stopped her. She jumped to the side, trying to locate the golem and instead spotted Sora alone. With Azure stalled, Hitomi took advantage, and ran toward the summoner.

Sora shrunk her magic circle and raised her hand at Hitomi, but she was too slow to cast a counterspell. She felt Hitomi's palm on her stomach, rippling over muscles. For one split second she smiled and made Hitomi growl.

"FORCEBACK!" The flash of purple light pushed Sora across the ground. She lifted her head up and dropped to the ground. However, Hitomi forgot about Aeros, flapping violently towards her. Her eyes

grew wide and remembered that a golem loses control when its summoner was down. Unable to react to Aeros' descent she found herself knocked down. The world spun for a moment and went black.

Azure limped her way to Sora watching Aeros burst into particles of light and return to her friend. She knelt down, turning Sora over to check on her. Azure pressed her hand on Sora's stomach and moan came out of Sora's breath.

"I'm sorry Sora." Azure said but got no response. She looked up at the siblings with fire in her eyes. They have not begun fighting yet. It was just a stare down that did not make sense. She thought they hated each other and were going to tear the place apart by now. Instead, they were whispering, so she focused her cat ears to hear what they said.

"Your friend possesses the Circle of Four?" Jean-Pierre said and saw Azure with the corner of his eyes. He wondered if she overheard him and switched the conversation to French. "I thought it was just a legend mother told us about."

"She is not my friend." Ciel said in French and thought about the glowing shackles on Azure. "But yes, that is the Circle of Four."

"I wonder how she got it."

"Why? You're interested."

Jean-Pierre stared at Azure, wondering what was wrong with her. She appeared frustrated and impatient. For some reason though, he could not help but to crack a smile. That was until the snap of Ciel's finger got him focused on the issue.

"She's not worth the trouble."

"You seem concerned about her. I thought you said she was not your friend."

"I..." Ciel paused, thinking about that last comment. "I thought you were here to take me home?"

"Yes." Jean-Pierre approached Azure and she raised her fists up ready to punch him. "However, I could take her instead and mother could hire her to work for us."

"What are two talking about?" Azure stepped away from Jean-

Pierre.

"Leave her out of this." Ciel said in English.

"Are you willing to come home with me then?" Jean-Pierre said in English.

Ciel did not know what to do. It was never her intentions to involve Azure in her family problems. Looking at Hitomi, she feared what her mother would do to Azure. In fact, knowing what Azure posses, she was one person she would not want to fight. Even if she did agree to let her brother take Azure, it would not stop her mother from coming after her. Ciel knew the obvious answer.

"Fine. I'll go."

"Good. It's settled. I knew you didn't want to try to fight me and I really didn't want to fight..." A fist connected with Jean-Pierre's face, moving his head to the side. He spun around and fell on his stomach. When he lifted his head, blood dripped out of his mouth. Turning around he saw Azure's eyes locked on to him. Whenever he moved, she tracked him like a hawk hunting prey.

"You don't start a fight just to say you didn't want to fight." Azure stepped forward and her shackles glowed purple slowing her down. Mana gathered from the air around her wings, soothing her heart despite the pain. Her Mana reached its limit, and she knew it. She wanted to end this whole thing right now, but she feared her spell was not strong enough to take out her opponent. Azure could tell Jean-Pierre still had both strength to move and Mana left to cast spells.

"Really?" Jean-Pierre laughed out loud. "That's the extent of your power. It seems the story mother told us was just that, a story."

"You're wrong." Ciel said looking at Hitomi. The family servant was very powerful and yet Azure took her down with just one strike back at detention. If it were not for the shackles, Azure's spell would have probably killed Hitomi. Ciel figured what was happening to Azure. Every time she brought out her magic circle, the shackles glowed. It was difficult to understand, but she knew one thing for sure, Azure could become a very powerful Magi some day. Fear and intrigue intertwined, and Ciel wanted to see what this spell could do.

“He's all yours Azure.”

Azure could not believe Ciel called her name. She saw Ciel wink at her and there was a feeling of confidence despite the dangers of unleashing this spell. Still Azure wondered why Ciel had this sudden change of heart. She thought Ciel did not like her. Nevertheless, without further hesitation, Azure dashed toward Jean-Pierre. As he raised his hand up gathering Mana, she felt the wind gather around shackles. With a focused mind, she eased the strength of the spell changing the shackles from purple to teal. As Jean-Pierre waved his hand up in the air to cast his spell, the weight and pain of the shackles ended.

“TOWER DEFENSE!” A circle of light appeared over the grass. Just as Azure was one-step from setting foot on the circle, a tower of light shot up into the air. She shifted her body and spun around dodging the attack. With the aid of the wind, she maintained her momentum forward. She saw Jean-Pierre repeating the spell, littering her path with more towers of light. Azure could see the frustration on his face, once she got past the light pillar. With her hand pulled back she strikes.

“SPIRAL... BURST!” Azure stopped in front of Jean-Pierre and threw her fist making the wind slide past her body. She did not physically connect her fist with his chest, instead pushing the wind like a cannon firing on a ship. The pressure of the air knocked Jean-Pierre off his feet and sent him spinning across the field. As he bounced on the ground, Azure dropped her arm, taking deep breaths. Despite the look of the spell when activated, she did not send him far, nor did any significant damage. The moment he stood to his feet, she saw only bruises and nothing else.

Azure fell to her knees. With her Mana drained, her Chimera spell ended and she returned to normal. She looked to Ciel and Jean-Pierre, both shocked to see her as she was, a normal human. For a moment though, Jean-Pierre could not take his eyes off her, Azure just simply stared. Her heart suddenly jumped delivering a sharp pain. She pressed her hand over her chest and leaned forward, rocking back and forth. Pain consumed her body, burning

throughout her muscles. It overwhelmed her and she wished for it all to stop. A hand on rested on her back, rubbing gently between her wings. The message calmed her despite, even though it was not removing the pain.

"Azure. Are you okay?" Ciel said.

"Stay back." Azure placed her hand on Ciel's shoulder. "You're going to get hurt."

"How?"

"I can't... hold it in." Azure covered her mouth and purple mist spilled between her fingers. As Ciel crawled away to avoid the poison, Azure presented Ciel her hand covered in unstable Mana. She curled it into a fist absorbing the poison into her skin, leaving Ciel and Jean-Pierre speechless. Azure looked away and kept quiet.

The sound of a growl turned everyone's attention to Hitomi, with her hand aimed at Azure. Another burst of Forceback shot toward Azure, but a red magic circle appeared in front of her deflecting the spell. Azure stumbled back looking at the circle. There was no drawing in the center, just runes on the outer edge. She never saw anything quite like it. Azure turned to Ciel and saw her new friend with ruby red eyes and no pupils. Her hands shivered.

"My lady, this my figh..." Hitomi felt a brush of wind building up. She raised her hands up waving for Ciel not to cast a spell. "Please... no."

"Enough Ms. LeBleu." Madam Mayweather said approaching with the guards spreading out to surround Jean-Pierre and Hitomi. "You made your point."

At first Ciel really wanted to cast a spell on Hitomi. To release the anger she possessed at the moment, but Azure limped past her and stood in front blocking her target.

"Move Azure."

"No. It's wrong, and you know it." Azure's eyes made a plea Ciel could not ignore.

Tears fell from Ciel's eyes. With a roar, she fired her spell into the air. Everyone looked up and watched a bird shattered into dust on impact. Ciel's hands shivered and realized what she almost did.

Staring at her shivering hands, she was afraid to look up. That was until Azure placed her hands on Ciel's palms and clasped them together. Looking at Azure's human hands, Ciel felt foolish about how she treated her earlier. Without saying a word, they smiled.

Azure and Ciel made their way to Sora meeting with the security guards, checking on her. When she opened her eyes, she found herself surrounded by their smiles. As Azure took another deep breath, Sora sat up and placed her hand on Azure to check her temperature.

"It hurts." Azure said.

"I know, just relax. Everything will be fine."

"Thank you." Ciel said to her new friends. She turned to her brother and Hitomi, both with hands tied behind their back, led away by security. With her brother looking back, she wished this all had ended differently.

To Be Continued...

