

Arcana Magi Zero + Pure - c.6

by H-M Brown

Nemo's growl frightened the humans. The cubs from every Clan shivered at his snarl. The Elder's presence was overwhelming, and level of pressure pressing down upon them. As Ayane, Sayako, and Rumiko tried to understand what was wrong, Takashi, Hideki and Mrs. Saito arrived with a unit from the Society. Nina approached Nemo with caution.

"Oompa?"

"Silence..." His voice was cold. His eyes directed at Mrs. Saito. "Take the humans back to detainment."

"What?" Nina stepped back and Ayane spoke.

"Don't you understand what the Society is doing?"

"Do you children no understand what your interference has done?!" Nemo turned to the young foxes as the other Elders stared down their cubs.

Mrs. Saito, with the wave of her hand, directed the Society to gather up the humans and escort them back.

"They're torturing people." Sayako said as she led Rumiko towards them. "Even kids."

"She is a member of the Kinomoto Family." The Elder fox said. "You have no idea what they and the Neko Clan has done to our homes, our lands.

Ayane saw past Satoshi's body next to Kenichi the Boar. "I recognize him. From the Kappa Festival."

"heh..." Rumiko smirked at Satoshi. "Good riddance."

"Excuse me." Ayane's mother approached Nemo. His eyes froze her in place. "I don't understand, why are you allowing everyone with grey Mana to be detained like this. My daughter and all these people have rights."

Nemo continued growling as the Society lined up the Magi in a

single file. "I don't have to answer you."

Rumiko looked up at Daimon, the elder cicada. "Sir, did you know what they did to me?"

"Your family betrayed us Rumiko-san. We cannot take risks." His antenna twitched and Rumiko's eyes opened wide. "Siding with the Arcadians has broken our trust. The city is in ruins and many Clans have suffered loses. Some are wiped out completely like the Sika Clan."

The cubs gasped at the news, but Rumiko focus her eyes on Daimon's twitching. Kiba the elder dog and Kameto the elder turtle both walked aside the crowd in opposite directions. Rumiko slowly turned her head as Daimon continued talking about Satoshi's death and the Arcadians taking his soul. Looking at the people lined up and the Society checking on them, she soon realized why the Society and Clan took this course of action.

"My family's students." Rumiko whispered and Sayako turned to her.

"What?"

"Not too loud." Rumiko faced Daimon, still twitching his antenna at her. "We made a mistake. Students from my family's Ninjutsu school is blending in with the people covered in grey Mana. They were affected too like Ayane and I. Look at Elder Kiba."

Sayako looked at the elder dog and saw him taking a long inhale. Picking up the scent without giving away.

"But that still doesn't excuse what they did to Rumiko and the other people. We shouldn't be torturing anyone."

"Look," Nemo spoke to the cubs. "we had a long debate regarding the detainment of these people. We also have one ourselves for members of the Clans that were also affected by gray Mana. This was not easy to agree with but we had to decide fast. Time was not on our side. As for the acts of torture..."

Nemo took a long deep breath and turned to Rumiko. "It was not an easy decision given the current circumstances, we can not separate enemy from ally from victim right now. This was... a necessary evil. The Arcadian's actions have been one step ahead of

us. We need answers now and think of our next plan to deal with this situation.”

Kiba stopped at the second row of people lined up. “If you children would have just listened to us and stayed where we told you...”

Mrs. Saito and the Society channeled their Mana.

“...more lives would not be in danger.”

Five adults cast their spells at the people. Two were killed and three fell to the ground injured. The crowd screamed and scattered. A stampede that overwhelmed the Society and Elders.

Rumiko kept her eyes on one of them, a female, and saw her blend in with the crowd. She channeled her Mana and vanished from Sayako's arms. She appeared in the mid-air above the woman and lights in the shape of kunai knives formed. “BLADE RAIN!”

The spell flew at the woman and struck her right leg. She fell and the Society tackled her. Rumiko landed on her feet but collapsed to her knees, due to her injuries. A make ninja appeared behind her with channeled Mana, but a burst of wind lifted him into the air. Rumiko looked to the left and saw Daimon casting his spell. He released the ninja, landing before the Society.

Nemo and Elders tried to spot the remaining ninja, but the panicked crowd was now scattered. The scent mixed in, difficult to separate.

“Kenichi, do have a track?”

The board sniffed the air. “No. Too many people.”

“We lost them.” Nemo turned to the cubs and Ayane. The children and teens lowered their heads. The elder fox's ears twitched. He turned to the forest. Beyond the tree he saw wings in the shadows. “Tengu? The Karasu Clan was involved?”

“Yes.” Nina said.

Nemo turned to the Elders; all are confused by the revelation. Kiba looked up in the air, and watched Ren circle in the air as the humanoid birds flew up in the air. Gon and the Wisp left Takashi and Hideki to meet up with Ren.

“See ya, Takashi.” Hideki said walking away while the chaos

ensued.

“Hideki?”

“I’ll see you in class, whenever school reopens.”

Ayane approached Takashi and watched Hideki casually walk away from them in the distance.

“Where’s Hideki going?”

“He didn’t say.” Takashi faced Ayane. “I know where they took Mayumi, Emi and the Perez Sisters. Gather everyone.”

* * *

Near the springs, Alysia, Megumi, Mayumi and Emi were escorted by the police and Society units. They were heavily armed with Kevlar vest. What worried the girls was that the Society had guns with them instead of wands. They never saw the Society get to this point. As they walked along the path, Megumi saw a row of trailers ahead, resting on grass. It jarred her to see these temporary buildings lay out like a town on her land. She could only imagine the anger the foxes would have to see this. Each girl was separated and led to a trailer. The girls remained calm as each one was led inside.

Alysia entered. Inside were one table and two chairs. Her escorts led her to her seat. She sat down watching one of the guards place Saga on the table. She reached out for her staff, but stopped. Alysia asked herself what next, if she should touch it. She rested her arms on the table.

The door opened and a man entered inside. He had a suitcase with him. He approached the table and planted the suitcase before Alysia. He opened it and removed files and a recorder.

“Good evening Miss Ah-lee-see-ah Perez. Did I pronounce that correctly?”

Alysia nodded.

“Excellent. I struggle with foreign names, so please forgive me. I am Daisuke Yamamoto.” The interviewer turned on the recorder.

“According to your file, you can speak Japanese, correct?”

Alysia nodded.

“Would prefer to speak English?”

Alysia nodded.

“Okay.” He said in English. “We have informed your father of your detainment...”

“Meg?”

“She is okay. We have an interviewer with her giving her the same information I am about to give you. Your father right now is with your mother at triage, tending to her injuries. With all the battles going on in the city, it took longer for her to arrive. We will bring your father before we begin. We may be under martial law, but we still believe in human rights.”

As the interviewer proceeded to explain Alysia's rights, outside, Mayumi and Emi's mother walked by the window escorted by two policemen. They walk past the trailer where Megumi sat quietly listening to her interviewer. The next trailer was Emi pacing back and forth. The guard opened the door for them. As soon as she stepped inside, she heard Emi gasped.

They stared at each other for a moment. Neither knew how to react or what to say, until the guard spoke.

“Her interviewer will be arriving shortly. Your other daughter Mayumi is the other trailer.”

“I want her here.” Emi's mother said. “Right now!”

“We can't do that.”

“NOW!” She turned to the guard with her eyes stabbing him with anger.

“When the interviewer arrives you may make the request then.”

“You—”

“Mother.” Emi said. “Go to her please. She's... not okay.”

“What do you mean?” Emi's mother approached her, looking at her daughter's costume. “What have you gotten yourselves into?”

“She needs a doctor.”

“Come.” Emi's mother took her daughter by the hand and hurried to the door, but the guard blocked her. “I am taking my daughters. Out of the way.”

“I can't allow that.”

As Emi's mother argued with the guard, Emi stepped to the window. She looked outside and saw the trailer Mayumi was in. She

saw Mayumi sitting behind the table, looking up at someone. She could not tell who was there with her, but there she sensed something was wrong. Someone who should not be there.

“Mom?” Emi turned to the adults. “MOM?!”

“What?”

“Someone is with Mayumi.”

“Who?” Emi's mother approached the window and saw a strange shadow of a woman. “Guard? Who is that?”

The guard looked out the window, and spoke in the radio. “Trailer 732, report.”

There was no response. “Trailer 732, report?!”

There was no response again, and Emi's mother rushed past him.

“Mayumi.”

“Wait, I'll go and check.” The guard walked outside while talking on the radio, as Emi and her mother watched from the door.

Inside the trailer, Mayumi stood by the corner, her heart pounded at the guard laying dead. She looked up at the presence of Victoria Powers and felt overwhelmed. Mayumi recognized the woman's outfit, similar to the one she wore with the Vermillion armor.

“Who are you?” Mayumi said as Victoria spoke into a magic circle, recording what she saw.

“Test subject 006, Mayumi Akamatsu, priestess to the Shrine of Hikari. Her soul remains in containment as per the Soul Transference Project. It would appear the subject had channeled Mana from its very soul to cast a spell to restore Subject 005 — Emi Akamatsu. Subject extraction—”

The guard entered inside, but Victoria cast her spell slitting his throat. He collapsed outside with Emi and her mother watching from the other trailer. Emi ran for the trailer with the guards waving her back.

“Subject's extraction for observation will begin.” Victoria raised her right hand up and a magic circle appeared. As Mayumi channeled her Mana to cast her spell, the bracelet Mayumi wore

that contained her soul glowed bright. She screamed, dropping to her knees. She clutched her wrist. Victoria's magic circle slid over Mayumi, replacing her current costume with her Vermillion outfit, but without the armor. The trailer burst open like a balloon. The force of energy repelled everyone back. Everyone looked up and saw Mayumi floating before Victoria in a hypnotic state. Mayumi took long deep breaths as the jewel containing her soul on her bracelet glowed bright.

Emi struggled to get forward. She rolled back, bumping into a person. She looked up and it was her mother. Alysia and Megumi checked on them, and they all looked up at Megumi. The Perez sisters noticed the bracelet on Mayumi.

Alysia spoke. "It's her soul."

Emi stood to her feet. "Mayumi never got her soul back in her body. She channeled the Mana from her soul to return mine."

"No way." Megumi said.

A guard aimed his wand at Victoria. "We don't have a clear shot. The suspect has a hostage."

Mayumi screamed louder from the pain and Emi's mother reached out to her.

"MAYUMIII!"

"Mom." Emi held her back, but she was slapped across the face.

"Don't you keep me away from her."

Emi's eyes froze in place as her mother walked by.

Mayumi's eyes looked down at her mother and saw her reaching out to her. She was able to twitch her fingers, and stretched them out, but her eyes rolled back and everything went black.

TO BE CONTINUED...

