

Ultimatum

A World of Magic Story

Part 14, Power

Chapter 31, Consciousness

Arsen

Arsen wished he hadn't fainted like that. It was already bad enough that he made himself look like a baboon in front of Aurielle and Artemis. But he guessed everyone felt like that once in their lives. After all, it was his first try at something like that. He opened his eyes and saw Artemis sitting near his bed.

She sighed. "Took you long enough, drama queen..."

"Drama what?" He asked.

"Nothing." Artemis quickly added.

He sat up in his bed. "How long was I down?" he asked. "Around a day or so. It's already in the afternoon." she responded. "You needed the rest. Something about that spell just seemed... scary."

"What do you mean?"

"I can't really put it into words that well, but it seemed as if you were lashing out at something. At yourself, even."

Arsen stared down. He had to admit Artemis was at least mildly correct. After Dacien attacked, he was starting to build up fear in his mind, as if he were watching Arsen's every move, waiting to take something else from him.

"What about Aurielle?" He questioned.

"She was worried sick about you, wondering if it was her fault," Artemis answered. Even for Aurielle, that seemed a bit overkill.

"At any rate, it looks like we're gonna be leaving this place soon..." Artemis muttered. Arsen wished that wasn't the case. He still wanted to spend more time here, enjoying the wonderful sights and sounds of Cerulea City like a normal person. Artemis

stood up and walked out the door. “Come on, Aurielle’s waiting!” Artemis beckoned. Arsen dragged himself out of bed and walked out.

Aurielle was at the bottom of the staircase. She looked mad, which was a new one for her. She breathed a sigh of relief when Arsen came into her view. Then her expression went back to being mad. Whether she was going schizophrenic or not, Arsen had no clue. “You worry me like that again, I dare you...!” Aurielle said while pouting. Arsen chuckled a little. “A-Anyways, today’s your last day of training. Tomorrow you’ll be leaving for Shangdao, correct?” He and Artemis nodded. Aurielle studied the two of them for a second. “You two seem different from when you first came here. I guess that means I did my job right, huh?” she chuckled to herself. Arsen couldn’t help but agree with her. The training really did work. He felt faster on his feet, more confident in his abilities, but the fear in his stomach just kept growing regardless. Aurielle patted both of their shoulders, and her expression lightened up. “Well, I say you two take the day off, spend some time together! It’s my treat.” she told the two of them. *Together, huh?* Arsen thought to himself. She took two bags out of her pockets and handed one to each of them. “Here’s some money if anything catches your eye.” Aurielle told them. He and Artemis walked out the mage tower and into the bustling Cerulea City.

Chapter 32, Life

Arsen

Artemis grabbed him by the wrist and started dragging him around like a bag around the city. “Come on!” she told him. Her locks of gray hair waved around in the air, drawing the attention of a few people. Arsen wanted to protest. Being dragged around by Artemis, he felt a weird tugging in his chest that he couldn’t quite explain. They ran past a wooden board with many papers tacked onto it, most of which were advertisements. One paper caught his eye. It was a yellow, large paper labeled ‘The Magius News.’ He signalled Artemis to stop and headed over.

*BREAKING NEWS! CERULEA CITY LEFT IN DISBELIEF AFTER SUSPECTED
DARK ARTS SOCIETY RAID!*

2 weeks ago, a mysterious raid on Cerulea City was attempted by the powerful dark wizard Dacien. Some neighborhoods were completely destroyed and in ruin after the attack, but there were no casualties. The attack was stopped due to the intervention of city protector Aurielle Salore, thankfully. The Magic Council arrived very late to the scene, however, and is still working on rebuilding the small amount of neighborhoods left in ruins after the attack. Dacien has disappeared for the meantime, but Magius News advises people to stay at home and never go alone until further notice. If you have any information at all, please mail a letter to your nearest Magic Council outpost.

“Magic Council, huh?” Arsen muttered to himself. He looked near where the attack happened and saw a green and yellow flag with a star emblazoned on it. He saw people with matching uniforms reconstructing houses that were caught in the crossfire.

“Not the most desirable reputation among the people. I hear they destroyed half of Bell Village while fending off some bandits.” Artemis added. Arsen raised an eyebrow. “Pretty overkill for a defense, if you ask me.” Arsen told her. Artemis pointed toward a gigantic white building. “Wanna check that place out? It seems interesting.” She asked. Arsen nodded.

The building turned out to be a library called the Cerulean Archive. At the entrance were a few flyers, even stating that the library was the 3rd largest in all of Magius, only rivalling the libraries of the New Greek and Citrine Town. He walked in the library and was met with a large area with desks and mats. At the back of the area were staircases leading up into rows upon rows of bookshelves. He went up the staircase. Arsen took a peek at a few of the sections. *The History of Magius So Far*, *Thesis of Mana*, and *Tales of Valor* were just a few of the books he skimmed through. He walked past the Historical Literature section. It was littered with epics and novels such as *Average Day in Magius*, *Pendragon*, *King of Alvaris*, and *Firestorm*. Arsen decided to meet back up with Artemis, who seemed bored out of her mind waiting for him. “You look like you’re having fun...” Artemis murmured.

“What about you?” he asked.

“It reminds me of back in my hometown. My parents kept making me study all of this stuff, preparing me for when I would be a merchant or politician. I hated every second of it.”

“Come on, it’s already getting late.” Arsen told her. She got up and followed Arsen out the door. He stepped outside and took one last look at the quaint sight of the city, hoping he could come here one last time. He thought about his dad, wherever he was, who brought him here when he was little for the first time. *Dad, wherever you are... I*

want to say thank you. For everything He thought to himself. Arsen set off back towards the mage tower with Artemis.