

(Zipper unzips)

(Brynna and Karia gasp for air.)

Brynna:
Oh my god, never again.

Karia:
Nope, never again.

James:
Oh come now, you had plenty of oxygen to maintain yourselves after you shrunk down.

Brynna:
I had to concentrate on both a shrink and an invisibility spell for ten hours, James. And you swing your suitcases around really hard.

James:
Well, we're here, so quit complaining.

Karia:
I never thought I'd get to London like this.

Brynna:
(gruffly) C'mon, let's just get this over with.

Karia:
(whispering) What's her problem?

James:
She has to go in front of her supervisor and explain that the Anti-Arcanists have built a stronghold in her territory. I don't imagine she's excited about it.

Karia:
Oh. What will they do to her?

James:
I'm not sure. We'll have to wait and see.

(Opening Theme)

(Brynna knocks)

Chairperson
The Phrase?

Brynna:
On my mana I swear to be true, my magic and honor belong to you.

(Chairperson unlocks the door)

Chairperson
Miss Ito. I see you had a turbulent flight.

Brynna:
You could say that.

Chairperson
Come on in. You two can wait outside.

Brynna:
Sir, they have information about the Anti-Arcanists.

(A beat of silence)

Chairperson
Very well. They can come in. James, it is good to see you once again.

James:
The pleasure is all mine, Chairman.

Chairperson
Chairperson. We keep up with the times, you know.

Brynna:
Sir, the issue at hand is pressing. The Anti-Arcanists are draining and storing up mana from over a hundred mages in captivity.

Chairperson
(Stoically) How are they storing it?

Brynna:
They have a human capacitor.

Chairperson
Unidirectional inward flow? From whom?

Karia:
My dad.

Chairperson
I'm sorry, Miss...

Karia:
Karia. Nice to meet you, Chairperson.

Chairperson
Your father is the capacitor.

Karia:
I don't know much. Brynna knocked me out before then.

Brynna:
Sleep spell!

Chairperson
Miss Ito, were you able to determine the motivations behind gathering that much mana?

Brynna:
He didn't even know. But it looked like he wouldn't last much longer. They must plan to release it soon.

James:
Do you have any idea what it could be?

Chairperson
Of course.

Brynna:
Wait, what? What could they be doing?

Chairperson
It's trivial. Anti-Arcanists want to stop all forms of magic, so the only reason they would use it themselves would be to put an end to it once and for all.

Brynna:
How do you mean?

Chairperson
They must intend to punch a hole in the mana field.

Karia:
A hole in the what?

Brynna:
You know the electromagnetic field? It's all around us and magnets bend it?

Karia:
Yeah.

Brynna:
The mana field is made up of mana and it's bent by all living things, especially mages.

Karia:
So they want to punch a hole in it? What would that do?

Brynna:
I don't--

Chairperson
Switch the metaphor to the gravitational field. What does a hole look like there?

Karia:
A black hole? They're going to make a black hole of magic?

Chairperson
So it seems.

Brynna:
It's worse than that, Karia. Remember how I told you all living things need mana to survive? If this black hole sucks in all mana, everyone in the world will die.

Karia:
What???

Brynna:
You don't seem surprised, Sir.

Chairperson
Whatever do you mean?

Brynna:
You already knew they were doing this.

Chairperson
It's been their goal for centuries now.

Brynna:
Do you have precautions against it?

Chairperson
Yes, the Mage Tower is equipped with a barrier that separates its magic field from that of the rest of the world. We will be unaffected.

Brynna:
And the rest of the world?

Chairperson
There is little we can do.

Karia:
Are you kidding me?

Brynna:
Excuse me?

Chairperson
Anti-arcanists will wipe themselves out and mages will survive. Those are my two largest goals of my leadership here.

Karia:
You're willing to let billions of people die because it's convenient for you?

Chairperson
I'll gather as many mages as possible to the Mage Tower before it occurs.

Karia:
What about regular people???

Chairperson
They are not my concern.

Karia:
Not your concern???

Brynna:

You have no intention of stopping them?

Chairperson

No.

Brynna:

What if they have similar precautions to protect themselves? They already have powerful mages working for them.

Chairperson

Then at least their numbers will drop.

Karia:

How can you let almost the entire world die? What gives you the right to play God with billions of lives?

Chairperson

I told you, it is none of my concern. Only mages are under my jurisdiction. Non-mages will have to prepare on their own.

Brynna:

But they don't even know magic exists.

Karia:

Because you keep it secret!

Chairperson

(sighs) What more do you want of me, ladies? I advise you to stay here at the Mage Tower and work on preparations for this event.

Karia:

No!

Chairperson

No?

Karia:

No, I'm not going to let this happen. I'm going to stop them.

Chairperson

Stop an ancient society from achieving the goal they've been working toward for millennia.

Karia:

Whatever it takes.

Chairperson
Fine. Have fun storming the castle.

Bryнна:
I'm going with her.

Chairperson
Overseer?

Bryнна:
We're going to stop them.

Chairperson
And how will you do that, pray tell?

Bryнна:
I don't know, but we are.

Karia:
(surprised) Bryнна?

Bryнна:
Let's go, Karia. We have a lot of work to do.

Karia:
You're coming with me?

Bryнна:
Of course I am. What else are queer-platonic partners for?

Karia:
(stuttering nervously) I, um, I don't--

James:
You have me on your side as well.

Bryнна:
Aa! When did you get here?

James:

I'm looking forward to when you two can stop making googly eyes at each other and remember I'm here.

Karia:

Sorry, James. So what's next? How the hell do we stop this clusterfuck from happening?

Brynna:

I have some ideas.

James:

Such as?

Brynna:

Well, if we're feeling especially treasonous we could move this mana hole into the Mage Tower where it would only affect the disconnected mana field.

Karia:

Wouldn't that--

Brynna:

Kill all of the mages gathering together to be safe from the mana hole?

Karia:

Yeah...

Brynna:

It would. So let's label that Plan B for now.

Karia:

Brynna, remember what I said about plans involving killing people?

Brynna:

This isn't killing people, it's saving billions. It's the trolley problem. Besides, where else can we find an isolated magical field?

James:

I can make one.

Brynna:

Wait, you can?

James:

I'm an abjurist.

Brynna:

I thought that just meant you could heal and protect people.

James:

Abjurists control the bend and weave of the Magical Field. With practice I should be able to craft an object that can contain the mana hole to a small area.

Karia:

But how do we put it in there?

Brynna:

Well, we would need someone who could transport objects across space.

(A beat of silence)

Karia:

Why are you both looking at me like that?