

Fairy Tail 170

Chapter 170: Dragon Slayer Vs. Dragon Slayer

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

August, x784.

As Natsu charged forward, the flames shrouding his body condensed into two balls of flame surrounding his fists. Then, when he was in range, he threw a jab at Gajeel's chin, only to stop just before it landed and throw a right knee at his gut.

Grinning at the incoming attack, Gajeel casually raised his right fist to block the knee strike while preparing to retaliate with a left elbow strike. Unfortunately for Gajeel, the power behind Natsu's knee strike was much higher than he anticipated.

"Hmph!" Gajeel grunted as he was sent sliding back, leaving two grooves on the ground. Shaking his slightly aching hand, Gajeel looked at it in a bit of confusion. Then, he turned his attention back to Natsu with an even bigger grin on his face. "You're even stronger than I thought, Salamander. This is gonna be fun."

"I doubt that, Metal Head." Natsu growled. "Trust me when I say this... No one gets away with hurting my friends."

"Heh. Bring it on." Gajeel said excitedly as he charged forward.

Like Gajeel, Natsu also charged forward. This time, it was Gajeel to make the first move, though. Throwing a punch at a range that would be impossible to connect, Gajeel chanted a spell just before his punch reached its full extension.

"[Iron Dragon's Club]." Gajeel chanted, his fist extending quickly towards Natsu's chest.

With razor sharp focus, Natsu turned his body to dodge the incoming iron rod. Then, he continued to move forward. Gajeel, on the other hand, continued to throw [Iron Dragon's Clubs] in Natsu's direction, slowing his progress.

Eventually, the duo fell into a stalemate situation, Natsu's progress stopped completely due to all the iron rods flying at him. Meanwhile, Gajeel would completely break off the iron rods at the end of his arm with each unsuccessful punch, resulting in the ground being littered with iron rods impaling it at strange angles.

Deciding that simply dodging was getting him nowhere, Natsu ejected his flames from the bottoms of his feet and shot himself into the air, doing his best to cover the distance.

"Bad move, Salamander." Gajeel said before taking a deep breath. "[Iron Dragon's Roar]."

In mid-air, Natsu watched as Gajeel brought his hands in front of his mouth like a trumpet. A moment later, a swirling mass of metal shards was shot in his direction. To counter, Natsu brought his hands in front of his mouth in a similar fashion.

"[Fire Dragon's Roar]." Natsu chanted as he blew a stream of fire between his hands.

In the next instant, the two Dragon Slayer's breath attacks met in the middle, pushing against each other for a brief moment. Shortly afterward, Natsu's flames started to overpower Gajeel's swirling metal shards. And as time went by, the flames speed of encroachment on Gajeel's breath attack increased.

"Impossible!" Gajeel shouted in disbelief as he jumped away from his spot.

Not long after he moved, the spot where Gajeel stood was engulfed in flames. Watching the concussive blast as well as the flames that flickered in the spot where he just stood for a moment, Gajeel almost reacted too late to Natsu's next attack.

Using his flames while kicking the air, Natsu was able to change his direction in mid-air, resulting on him falling from directly above the stunned Gajeel. Then, with one final push, Natsu increased his falling speed and set his right foot ablaze.

"[Fire Dragon's Talon]." Natsu chanted as he summersaulted towards the ground and Gajeel.

Hearing the chant, something Alfonzo had been trying to drill into Natsu to use quietly, if at all, Gajeel was just in time to get his arms up over his head. Once again, however, the force behind Natsu's attack was much higher than he anticipated.

On impact, Natsu's fire imbued kick forced Gajeel to drop to one knee while cracking the ground beneath him. Natsu, on the other hand, had no intention of giving Gajeel the chance to regain his bearings.

"[Fire Dragon's Wing Attack]." Natsu chanted as he pushed off Gajeel's arms slightly.

In the next instant, Natsu's arms were both covered in flames as he swept them both at Gajeel, whose balance was disrupted when Natsu pushed off of his arms. Then, he was engulfed in Natsu's flames.

"Argh! Damn you, Salamander." Gajeel roared.

Due to his instincts, Natsu knew the fight was not yet over. So, once he landed on the ground again, he charged forward before the flames dissipated. In a flurry of blows, Natsu continued to assault Gajeel, who had yet to move from where he stood. But with every attack he landed, whether it be a punch, a kick, a knee strike, or an elbow strike, Natsu felt like something was wrong.

'It feels like I'm hitting an iron wall.' Natsu thought to himself.

Before he could ponder any more, a hand covered in dark grey metallic scales shot out of the flames and grabbed Natsu by his face, stopping him in his tracks.

"I'll admit that was pretty good, Salamander." Gajeel said, the flames dissipating shortly afterward. "But play time is over."

Although Natsu could not see it with Gajeel's palm covering his eyes, Gajeel's entire body was currently covered in the same dark grey, metallic scales that covered his hand. Although the clothes on Gajeel's

upper body had been completely burned away and his pants were charred deeply, Gajeel was otherwise unharmed.

"Even after all that, Natsu couldn't take him down?" Lucy asked in surprise.

"Now, it's time to say good night, Salamander." Gajeel said, raising his free hand and slowly transforming it into an iron spear head.

"Hmph! I was thinking the same thing." Natsu said as he grabbed the arm holding his face with both hands.

Natsu then swung the rest of his body back slightly before throwing his feet into Gajeel's abdomen, causing no damage. However, as his feet landed, he also jerked his upper body backward, resulting in Gajeel pitching forward due to the change in his center of gravity.

As a result, Natsu was slammed back first into the ground with Gajeel standing over him unsteadily. On top of that, the grin on Natsu's face gave Gajeel a bad feeling.

"[Fire Dragon's Roar]." Natsu chanted as he blew out a mouthful of flames at close range.

With his eyes wide open, Gajeel did not have the time to defend himself from the breath attack. As a result, he was blown upward due to the concussive force.

Though Natsu also felt the force of the close range explosion, he quickly jumped to his feet. Then, he once again engulfed his arms in flames and lowered his stance.

"[Dragon Slayer Secret Art: Crimson Lotus: Exploding Flame Blade]." Natsu chanted as he pushed himself into the air.

While traveling through the air, Natsu began spiraling towards his opponent, Gajeel, who had yet to regain his senses from the close range explosion. A moment later, engulfed in a spiral of crimson flames, Natsu reached Gajeel and unloaded a barrage of fiery punches, each successful strike causing an explosion that grew in scale. Then, as Natsu finally sailed past Gajeel, the largest explosion yet was triggered as he backhanded the Iron Dragon Slayer towards the ground.

Boom!

As a result, Gajeel was sent toward the ground at a much greater speed than when he was knocked into the air, creating a small crater upon impact and kicking up a cloud of dust and debris. A moment later, Natsu landed next to the dust cloud with slightly labored breathing.

"Damn... That still takes up more magic power than I'd like." Natsu said as he waited for the dust to settle.

"Natsu, are you okay?" Lucy asked as she approached.

"Yeah, never better." Natsu replied with a wide smile. "Alfonzo was right, there really was a fun fight waiting for me if I came to help you, Lucy."

'So, that's how Alfonzo got this guy to listen.' Lucy muttered internally. 'If he hadn't said something about a fun fight, Natsu would have probably followed Alfonzo, and whoever else went with him, into that weird walking building.'

"*Cough* You're better than I thought, Salamander." Gajeel said, pulling Lucy out of her thoughts.

At the same time, the dust settled, revealing Gajeel, who was laid out at the bottom of the small crater with his regular appearance. Though he was burned here and there and covered in bruises thanks to Natsu's final attack.

"Ha! I'm surprised you're still even conscious." Natsu said with a bit of appreciation in his tone.

"Hmph! Don't look down on me." Gajeel muttered in an irritated tone.

"Anyway, since you're a Dragon Slayer, too, I got a question for you." Natsu asked, not bothered by Gajeel's dissatisfaction.

"And what makes you think that I'd answer?" Gajeel asked mockingly.

"Do you know where your dragon parent is?" Natsu asked, once again ignoring Gajeel's snarky reply.

With that, Gajeel fell silent. Then, he looked away.

"I don't know, haven't seen him in years." Gajeel replied quietly.

"Since July 7, x777?" Natsu asked.

In response, Gajeel snapped his head in Natsu's direction. A moment later, however, he turned his head away again.

"yeah." Gajeel replied quietly. "It's been seven years... And he better hope I never find him. Otherwise, I'm gonna kick Metalicana's ass when I do for abandoning me."

'Whoa! Does that mean Natsu really was raised by a dragon?' Lucy asked herself with a shocked expression on her face. 'But everyone in the guild, other than Alfonzo, Lici, and Lisanna, thought that was just Natsu being stupid. Was it really true?'

Meanwhile, back at the Phantom Lord HQ, Alfonzo, Elicia, Erza, and Mirajane were making their way through the corridors of the structure. Although the girls were all tired of fighting the lower ranked members of Phantom Lord at the beginning and urged Alfonzo to quickly deal with them. By now, after facing a few more waves, they were back to fighting as well.

After seeing Alfonzo's creative ways to deal with the cannon fodder, such as spreading a thin layer of a conductive metal on the corridor's floor then sending an electrical jolt into it, the girls also decided to experiment with their own magic along the way.

Eventually, the group made it to the next arena. And to no one's surprise, it was empty, or appeared to be so.

"Okay, I'll take this one." Elicia said, walking towards the center of the room. "He's probably gonna try to..."

Before Elicia could finish her sentence, she side flipped to the right to avoid an invisible explosion.

"... sneak attack me.." Elicia continued in a completely unbothered tone.

"So, you are truly skilled." Aria said, appearing in the middle of the room. "It would have been so sad if you had only been good at sneak attacks."

"Are you aware of the hypocrisy in your statement?" Elicia asked with a smile. "I mean, seriously, I've seen you try to attack twice and both were---"

Once again, Elicia was forced to move from her current location because of an invisible explosion. This time, she shot a large number of her threads from her finger tips and pushed herself into the air with the rebound force.

"Better make that three times." Elicia said as she reached the ceiling of the room before kicking off to avoid another invisible explosion. "I hope you can do more than just sneak attack, too."

At the same time, Elicia shot a number of threads at Aria. However, before she could catch him, Aria vanished and appeared above Elicia.

"[Zetsu]." Aria chanted while pointing his right palm at Elicia.

In the next instant, through her [Magic Power Detection] Elicia notices that several invisible orbs of magic were shot from Aria's outstretched palm. In order to avoid, she ejected threads from all over her body in all directions, using them to slightly shift away from the projectiles, which exploded upon coming in contact with other surfaces in the room.

While dodging, Elicia once again tried to entangle Aria with her threads. However, like last time, Aria teleported away.

"Well, I hope you'll show me more than that." Elicia said as she landed on the floor after Aria stopped his barrage.

"Indeed." Aria nodded after reappearing not far from Elicia. "It seems I will have to go all out during this fight."

As he spoke, Aria noticed that the attacks he had thrown at Alfonzo, Erza, and Mirajane were ineffective. To his surprise, Erza had managed to cut through them all before they could explode, disabling them in the process.

"It is going to be a truly sad day." Aria said as he reached up to his blindfold. "I've finally found opponents that can keep up with me."

At that point, Aria removed his blindfold, revealing his bright purple eyes. At the same time, his magic power seemed to raise to a whole new level.

"And they are going to die." Aria continued, this time with a manic smile on his face.

"Actually manage to land a hit on me before saying something like that." Elicia said, rolling her eyes.

"Hey, is it just me or has Lici gotten more cocky over the past few years.?" Mirajane asked curiously.

"That's Erza's fault." Alfonzo said off handedly. "After she slapped some sense into her and made her see that being proud of your achievements isn't a bad thing as long as you don't go overboard, she started showing pride in her own growth."

"Must you always put it like that?" Erza asked with a slight blush on her cheeks.

"But you literally slapped her." Alfonzo said with a smirk "It was loud enough to wake the dead, too."

"Oh, look, they're starting again." Erza said in a higher pitch than usual as she pointed at the ongoing battle.

Just as Erza pointed out, Aria disappeared from where he stood once again. This time, reappearing to Elicia's right with his palm extended again.

"[Zetsu]." Aria chanted once again.

With his blindfold off, Aria's teleportation seemed to happen even faster than before, leaving Elicia no time to dodge. On top of that, the force behind his [Zetsu] spell seemed to increase, as well.

"Oh, she's using that." Alfonzo said with a raised eyebrow. "Looks like Lici is taking this seriously now."

As Alfonzo spoke, Aria's invisible attacks landed on Elicia. And although the attacks were invisible, the explosions they caused made the air ripple in the vicinity.

To Aria's surprise, however, Elicia seemed to be completely unbothered by the barrage of invisible explosions that detonated around her. Instead, she simply looked at Aria with a disinterested gaze. Then, while Aria was shocked by his spell having no effect, Elicia spun on her heel and landed a roundhouse kick on Aria's cheek, sending him flying into a wall.

"How is this possible?" Aria asked while wiping a trickle of blood from his lips as he stood up.

"I wonder." Elicia replied with a sly grin. "Maybe you're not trying hard enough."

Hearin ghat, Aria was visibly angered. Teleporting once again, he arrived in front of Elicia, this time with both of his hands extended toward her with one hand above the other.

"[Zero]." Aria chanted angrily.

With that, a spiraling current of [Airspace] was fired from his palms. Like before, however, Elicia did not even try to dodge, allowing the spiraling currents and explosions to wash over her.

Once again, Aria was dumbfounded when his attack had no effect. Before he could voice out his disbelief, however, his head was slammed down to the floor due to force applied from above.

Bang!

Upon contact, Aria's head cracked the floor and his eyes rolled back in his head.

A moment later, Elicia appeared with her right foot pressed on the back of Aria's head. Meanwhile, the Elicia in front of where Aria once stood slowly flickered out of existence.

"[Camouflage Magic: False Appearance]." Elicia muttered. "If he were still cool headed, this spell, that only bends light in a certain area to make it look like I was standing there while hiding my real whereabouts, would have never worked on him. His perception of everything in his [Airspace] is too strong. But when you make someone mad enough, they often lose sight of what's around them."