

Fairy Tail 217

Chapter 217: The Finals; Part 2 - Figure Eyes and Jutsu Shiki

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

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"That's twice now." Alfonzo said as Elicia returned to the rest of Team Steel Threads after her might with Evergreen. "I guess when she did it against Laki, it wasn't a fluke."

"What do you mean?" Marin asked curiously.

Not only Marin, but Sun was also curious to know what Alfonzo meant.

"I'm not sure when she learned it, or even how she does it." Alfonzo said, beginning his explanation. "But somehow, she can make her [Fairy Dust] match the wavelength of the ethernano in the air. Well, that's not completely accurate... She can make it really similar to the ether nano in the air. That's how she slipped it past Laki's [Magic Power Detection]. But Lici's control of her magic power is better than Laki's, so she noticed the difference."

"Now that you mention it, I wondered how that last attack got Laki." Marin said with understanding in her tone. "Back then, I didn't notice the [Fairy Dust] at all. This time, either."

"Me neither." Sun added. She then clenched her fists in front of her chest with determination in her eyes as she continued. "But I'll train hard. Alfonzo, help me get better magic power control."

With her last sentence, Sun reached out with both of her hands and grabbed Alfonzo's right hand with her eyes sparkling.

"I'm back!" Elicia said excitedly as she finally arrived next to the rest of the team.

Immediately, Sun turned her attention to Elicia, her eyes still sparkling.

"Teach me how to see Evergreen's [Fairy Dust]." Sun said excitedly.

"Oh, my heart hurts." Alfonzo said dramatically. "How quickly I was forgotten."

"Sure." Elicia replied while smiling at Alfonzo's antics. "But we can talk about that later, you and Marin are up."

Gesturing with her chin towards the stage, Elicia reminded Sun that there were more important things to attend to at the moment. Sun, on the other hand, snapped out of her excited state before putting on a resolute expression.

A moment later, Sun looked in Marin's direction, only to see a similar resolute expression on her face. Then, after both girls nodded to each other, they started walking to the ring.

"This isn't gonna end well for them, is it?" Elicia asked, snuggling up to Alfonzo once they were alone.

"*Sigh* Probably not." Alfonzo replied while shaking his head. "They've worked together a lot over the last year, or so. But Fried and Bickslow have been working together since they started their careers as wizards. The gap in experience will probably be too much to overcome."

"Even worse, Bickslow hasn't used his [Eye Magic] during the tournament" Elicia said with some worry on her face. "Do you think he'll use it during this fight? You know, to show off, or something."

"I wouldn't put it past him." Alfonzo replied solemnly. "Unfortunately, he's got the most magic power of the three in the Thunder God Tribe. Meaning, he could make use of it with no issue against either Marin or Sun."

"*Sigh* And that would turn the fight into a three on one instead of a two on two." Elicia added, her worried expression deepening as she spoke.

"Either way, this will be a good experience for them." Alfonzo said in a soothing tone. "I doubt they would do anything to really hurt them. But if Sun went all-out, she could probably fight both Fried and Bickslow alone. Though, she would still lose in the end."

"The fighters for the next round are ready." Makarov's declaration interrupted Alfonzo and Elicia's conversation, drawing their attention to the ring. "The second round between Marin Kitagawa and Sun Seto of Team Steel Threads and Fried Justine and Bickslow of the Thunder God Tribe... Begin!"

"Sun~~~~~! Daddy is rooting for you!" Gozaburo shouted at the same time.

As soon as the start signal was given, ignoring Gozaburo's cheers, Sun drew her shirasaya from an iaido stance with a compressed water blade coating it.

"[Water/Sword Compound Magic: First Form: Water Surface Slash]." Sun chanted as her blade left its sheath.

At the same time, as the water blade left Sun's sword and stretched to cover both Fried and Bickslow, Marin fell back, lining up directly behind Sun as she raised her daggers, pointing one each at Fried and Bickslow.

"[Transformation Magic: Shoot to Kill]." Marin chanted a moment after Sun.

In the next instant, Sun's water blade was right in front of Bickslow and Fried. However, they both looked completely unbothered by it. While Bickslow stood in place with his arms crossed and a smile on his face, Fried drew the sword on his hip and slashed it through the air a few times.

"[Dark Écriture: Reflection]." Fried chanted as the reflection barrier materialized.

Then, Sun's water slash made contact with the barrier. And just as it did when it faced Cana and Meredy's [Unison Raid], the barrier started to give before it would reflect the spell. Unlike the match with Cana and Meredy, however, the combined attack of Sun and Marin was not purely magical.

Craack!

Just as the barrier reached its limit before snapping back and reflecting the spell, Marin's daggers, which had stretched across the ring pierced into the barrier.

"Hmm... I seem to have overlooked the ability of my barrier to block physical attacks." Fried said, slashing his sword through the air a few more times.

"Even if it breaks, we can both get away." Bickslow said after backflipping onto one of his dolls that were floating behind him. "[X Formation], my babies."

"[Dark Écriture: Shield]." Fried chanted once again.

Shatter!

Then, just as the reflection barrier broke, a more solid barrier appeared behind it. As a result, Marin's daggers were stopped in their place while Sun's [Water Surface Slash] splashed against it harmlessly after expending quite a bit of its power breaking through the reflection barrier.

At the same time, an X-shaped beam of energy was fired over the top of the new barrier at Sun, from behind Fried.

"[Water/Sword Compound Magic: Second Form: Water Wheel]." Sun chanted as she summersaulted towards the energy beam. Meanwhile, Marin retracted her daggers before pointing one of them behind her to propel herself forward.

Once again releasing a water blade from her sword, Sun cut Bickslow's attack in half, vertically. However, when she landed on the ring, she was surprised when she felt the air being sliced from behind.

Pivoting quickly, Sun was just in time to bring her shirasaya up to block a stab from behind with the flat of her blade.

Clang!

As soon as she saw Marin, Sun noticed that something was wrong, apart from the fact that she was betrayed. For some reason, everything about Marin was a shade darker than usual. From the tips of her hair to the bottom of her shoes.

"Marin, what's wrong." Sun asked after seeing a somewhat familiar smirk on Marin's face.

Instead of replying, Marin stabbed her other dagger, the one in her left hand, towards the right side of Sun's stomach.

In response, Sun adjusted the angle at which she held her blade, catching the other dagger with the flat of her blade, as well. Then, before Marin could react, she turned her sword, positioning the flat of her shirasaya beneath Marin's daggers, and jerked her sword upward, raising Marin's daggers upward as a result.

Meanwhile, One of Bickslow's dolls, which he had separated and set to surround Sun and Marin, fired an energy blast at Sun, forcing her to step back while Marin regained her posture and charged at Sun once again.

'That would have been the perfect time to stab me while extending her blades.' Sun thought as she parried a slash from Marin's left dagger. 'I wonder why she didn't. More importantly, why is she even attacking me? And why does her smirk look so familiar?'

While she continued to think, Sun gracefully dodged and Parried Marin's slashes and stabs while occasionally moving away from one of the energy blasts from Bickslow's dolls. Eventually, Sun parried Marin in a way that destroyed her balance. At the same time, she slid to Marin's side while sweeping her feet out from under her, turning to face Bickslow at the same time.

Glancing up at Bickslow, who was still standing on one of his dolls with his arms crossed, Sun was surprised to see Bickslow's eyes glowing red.

"So, you're controlling her, huh?" Sun asked, more than ninety percent sure of her assumption. "It probably happened when I jumped forward to cut that one spell apart, right? You probably made eye contact, or something, in that brief amount of time. But it looks like you can only control one person at a time. And you can't make use of the person you're controlling's magic, either."

While questioning Bickslow, Sun also moved forward to pin down Marin. Unfortunately, this would not be a practical solution to her problem.

"Who knows." Bickslow replied, a smirk, the same as the one on Marin's face, plastered all over his own.

'Damn, she always came off as an airhead.' Bickslow thought to himself while his facial expression did not change. 'How did she break down the effects of my [Figure Eyes] so quickly? Is she actually a genius? One of those idiot savants?'

While Bickslow was thinking, Sun looked around the ring, ready to react to a surprise attack. On top of that, she had to worry about protecting Marin, who would happily attack her while under Bickslow's control.

"Wait! Where's Fried?" Sun exclaimed in panic.

"Right here." Fried said, appearing where he stood at the beginning of the fight. "And thank you for giving me the time to prepare."

A moment later, Fried stabbed his sword into the ring. Then, a square shaped barrier appeared around Sun and Marin, extending high up into the sky.

"Okay, you can release her, Bickslow." Fried said casually.

"You got it." Bickslow replied while lowering himself to the ring.

A moment later, Marin's color scheme returned to normal while the smirk on her face disappeared. Blinking her eyes in shock, Marin was thoroughly confused when she found herself pinned to the ring by Sun.

"Um... What's going on?" Marin asked, not remembering the last few minutes of the fight. "And why are you holding me down, Sun?"

"Are you back to normal, Marin?" Sun asked, concern lacing her tone.

"I... think so?" Marin replied, not sure how to answer.

Not feeling that she was being tricked, Sun slowly released Marin from her hold. Then, she drew her shirasaya again and readied herself to continue the fight.

To Sun's surprise, however, Bickslow and Fried stood before her and Marin, who was picking up her daggers and getting to her feet, as well, without putting their guard up at all.

"Are you looking down on us?" Marin asked as she held her daggers in a reverse grip. "Why did you let us get ready?"

Shaking his head in response, Fried decided to explain the situation.

"It's not that we're looking down on you." Fried said. "In fact, you're both quite strong. In a one on one fight, you could both give us some problems. Though, I'm sure that only Sun could beat either of us."

"Yeah, I'm not an in your face fighter, we already know that." Marin said in a huff.

"But when facing both of us, you don't have enough experience working together." Fried continued.

"But why would you let us reset like this?" Sun asked, fully on guard for an incoming attack.

"Because it simply doesn't matter at this point." Fried replied. "The barrier you just saw can't be broken. The only way---"

"I'll be the judge of that." Marin shouted as she raised the dagger in her right hand and pointed it at Fried. "[Transformation Magic: Shoot to Kill]."

"Bang!*

Marin's dagger extended forward at high speed once again. However, before it could reach Fried, who stood unmoving, it crashed into an invisible barrier, that flashed for a moment on impact.

"As I was saying." Fried said, unbothered by the sudden attack. "This barrier can't be broken. The only way for either of you to get out is to defeat the other. Those are the rules I set with [Jutsu Shiki]."

[Jutsu Shiki], a kind of [Letter Magic] that makes use of the same runes Fried employs with [Dark Écriture]. With the use of these runes, Fried enchants a certain area, raising barriers that prevent those trapped inside from escaping.

On top of that, Fried has the ability to set rules those inside the barrier have to follow before they would be allowed to leave. For example, the rule he just explained where only after defeating the person trapped in the barrier with them would either Sun or Marin be allowed to leave the barrier.

"Of course, after defeating your new opponent, you would still have to fight us, alone." Bickslow said, that smirk still on his face. "And let's be honest, that's a fight neither of you can win."

With that, the four fighters fell silent. Meanwhile, the crowd looked on in awe, with one particular member of the crowd shouting "cool" repeatedly. Eventually, before the crowd's amazement could wear off, the silence was broken.

"*Sigh* We admit defeat." Sun said while clenching her fists.

Marin's expression was also filled with frustration. However, she did not argue with Sun's decision.

Although neither Sun nor Marin believed that the barrier was unbreakable, they both knew that neither of them had the destructive power to do so. Well, Sun might if she used her [Secret Form]. But if it didn't work, they would probably be hit by the rebounding water. Not to mention the wind pressure that would be reflected as well.

"Marin and Sun have admitted defeat." Makarov said, announcing the ruling of the round. "The winners are Fried Justine and Bickslow of the Thunder God Tribe."

"A wise decision." Fried said, pulling his sword from the ring before tapping it against the ring's surface.

At the instant the tip of Fried's sword came in contact with the ring, the barriers surrounding Marin and Sun were dispelled.

"If you desire a rematch, we will accept any time." Fried said, turning around and making his way over to Laxus and Evergreen, who had regained consciousness during the fight.

With Bickslow following behind Fried, Marin and Sun also turned around and returned to their side of the ring, vowing that if they ever faced Bickslow and Fried again, they would not lose.