

Fairy Tail 234

Chapter 234: Nirvana; Stage 2

At the same time, the battle between Jura and Hoteye came to an end. Though, there was no victor in this battle. Instead, like Hibiki and Sherry, Hoteye also had a change of heart due to the first stage of Nirvana's awakening.

"So, you were one of those who were taken away from the Tower of Heaven?" Jura asked with his palms pressed against each other.

"That's right." Hoteye replied with a nod and a smile. "Brain told me that if I followed him, I would be able to make enough money to free my brother from the tower, too."

"I see." Jura replied with a nod. "That's as good a reason as any to work with him."

"Yes, but along the way, I lost sight of my goal." Hoteye said with a frown while letting his shoulders sag. "Somehow, making money to buy my brother's freedom turned into just making money for the sake of it. I eventually gained the belief that money could solve any problem. So, I always wanted to make more."

"Hoteye, I..." Jura began to say.

"Richard." Hoteye, or Richard, said, interrupting Jura's sentence. "My real name is Richard."

"Well then, Richard." Jura said with a smile. "Please allow me to help you in the search for your brother."

"Would you really?" Richard asked with anticipation swirling in his eyes.

"Of course." Jura said with a nod. "Helping you to reunite with your family would be my honor."

Hearing that, the smile on Richard's face was quite dazzling.

"But first, we have to stop Brain." Jura continued in a solemn tone. "I don't know exactly what he wants to do with Nirvana, but I'm sure he will bring untold suffering onto the Kingdom if his plans succeed."

"Yes, you're right." Richard replied with a solemn nod. "We have to stop him."

Around the same time, while making his way to the base of the pillar of dark light, Yet another one of the [Six Prayers Seals] on Brain's face vanished.

"It seems Hoteye has been defeated as well." Brain said, his expression not changing in the slightest. "No matter, I'm close to attaining my goal. And there is nothing those fools can do to stop me."

Meanwhile, back at the altar that activated Nirvana, Natsu, engulfed in his magic flames, charged forward at Cobra with his right fist reeled back ready to strike. Cobra, on the other hand, stood leisurely

with his hands in his pockets. Then, once Natsu was close enough, he casually evaded the incoming punch.

Exchanges like that replayed several times before Cobra, getting bored with the same song and dance, counterattacked after another one of Natsu's failed attempts.

"[Poison Dragon's Twin Fangs]." Cobra chanted as he lashed his arms at Natsu in the shape of across.

Following the movement of Cobra's arms, a large amount of poison formed into a pair of fang-shaped waves. Reacting quickly, both of Natsu's arms were covered in flames as he swung them in cobra's direction to counter.

"Fire Dragon's Wing Attack]." Natsu chanted as he lashed his arms at the incoming attack.

As a result of Natsu' swinging his arms, the flames coating them elongated before they whipped forward to meet the approaching fang-shaped masses of poison.

Boom!

Exploding on contact, the two wizards were forced apart. As soon as Natsu's feet touched the ground, however, he dashed forward once again. And like that, the clash continued with Cobra effortlessly avoiding all of Natsu's attacks while having his own counterattacks cancelled out by Natsu's magic.

Naturally, Natsu, with his short temper, grew more frustrated as time went by. Then, after a few more minutes of this exchange, his frustration finally morphed into anger.

"Argh!" Natsu screamed angrily after another failed attack. "Why can't I hit you?"

"Ha!" You should have realized it sooner." Cobra said mockingly. "Of course you can't hit me. I can hear all your thoughts."

'Even so, it's getting harder to dodge and counterattack as time goes on.' Cobra thought to himself, keeping his thoughts from showing on his face. 'What is going on? It's like he's getting stronger the longer the fight lasts.'

Although he had no way of knowing, Cobra's thoughts were correct. As Natsu's frustration and Anger grew at his inability to land a hit, he really was getting stronger.

And that was thanks to an incredibly rare form of [Fire Magic], that Natsu seemed to be unaware of, called the [Flames of Emotion]. This particular type of magic seemingly manifests a living flame that incorporates the mental and magical aspects of the user's emotions into their other kinds of [Fire Magic].

"You can hear my thoughts, huh?" Natsu shouted in response. "Then, how does this sound?"

With that, Natsu concentrated extremely hard. And while he was doing so, Cobra's eyebrows started to twitch violently.

"Seriously, what kinda potty mouth do you have?" Cobra asked in annoyance. "And how did you even come up with such colorful curses?"

"[Fire Dragon's Roar]." Natsu chanted while Cobra was reacting to his insults.

Unfortunately, Cobra was still listening to all of Natsu's thoughts. So, he was able to evade rather easily.

Seeing that his sneak attack did not work, Natsu continued spewing flames from his mouth as he moved his head to follow cobra's movements.

Meanwhile, Cobra continued to move away from Natsu's breath attack with a grin on his face. At the same time, he noticed a small row of trees that were too close to each other to slip between and too high to jump over in front of him.

"Not a bad plan." Cobra said. "but you really shouldn't have thought it would be that easy."

A moment before Cobra would be cornered by Natsu's [Fire Dragon's Roar], he jumped. Then, just as he reached the peak of his jump, a large purple cobra swooped down from the sky and caught him before flying up again.

"Seriously?" Natsu shouted as he stopped his spell. "That's gotta be cheating!"

Sneering at Natsu from up in the air, Cobra watched as his companion, Cubellios, opened its mouth and sprayed a fog of poison towards Natsu.

Although Natsu wanted to use his flames to evaporate the poison like he had done before, just as he was about to use his breath attack again, his instincts warned him that it was a bad idea. Then, he leapt away from where he stood.

A moment later, after circling around the fog, Cobra and Cubellios swept through his former location before soaring back into the sky.

Shortly after the spot was vacated, the poison fog descended on the spot where Natsu stood moments before.

Sizzle!

Not long afterward, all the plant life that came in contact with the poison fog began to decay rapidly.

"Natsu, look out." Happy shouted from nearby.

With Happy's shout, Natsu dodged away from where he stood again before Cubellios dive bombed down on his former location again. This time, however, Natsu fired a stream of flames at the flying serpent from his fist in retaliation.

"Ha! That will never work." Cobra said in a mocking tone. "I can hear your thoughts, there's no way you'll ever hit me."

"We'll see about that!" Natsu shouted, the heat of his flames growing with the irritation and anger he was feeling during this fight.

Then, with his flames as boosters, Natsu shot himself into the sky towards Cobra who was standing on Cubellios back. Then, with a summersault, Natsu launched his right foot at Cobra's head.

"[Fire Dragon's Talon]!" Natsu shouted as his flame covered foot came crashing down.

Unfortunately, as Cobra said, he had already heard Natsu's plan of attack. So, with little in the way of movement, he and Cubellios dodged the attack. Then, he took a deep breath.

"[Poison Dragon's Roar]." Cobra chanted as he spewed a stream of poison out of his mouth.

Reacting quickly, Natsu also took a deep breath before the poison arrived and spewed his [Fire Dragon's Roar] once again to meet the incoming attack.

Unfortunately, Natsu, without proper footing in mid-air, was blown away when the fire and poison exploded on impact.

"Natsu!" Happy shouted as he flew at high speed after Natsu.

A moment later, just before Natsu slammed into the ground, Happy managed to catch him before flying up into the air.

"Natsu, are you alright?" Happy asked while holding Natsu.

"Yeah, nice save, Little Buddy." Natsu replied with a smile. Shortly afterward, however, his smile turned into a frown as he continued. "Is that guy a Dragon Slayer, too?"

In response, Happy could only look at Natsu blankly.

"He's been speaking the names of his spells since you started fighting." Happy said in a tone filled with disbelief. "But you're just now noticing?"

"Huh? Really?" Natsu asked with confusion written all over his face. "I wasn't really paying attention."

"*Sigh* That's just like you, Natsu." Happy said with a wry smile.

"Anyway, let's get back in the fight." Natsu said with a battle thirsty grin. "I'm even more fired up now!"

With that, Happy, with Natsu in hand, rushed forward, towards Cobra and Cubellios.

Nearly half an hour later, while the battle between Natsu and Cobra raged on, Brain met up with Midnight a short distance away from the altar. And Midnight, despite all that had happened, was still sleeping atop his flying carpet.

"It won't be much longer." Brain said as he watched the magic power density in the air. "Soon, we will have control of Nirvana and this world will be ours for the taking."

As if to confirm Brain's words, the ground began to shake as stone buildings began growing from the surroundings. Then, before too long, an entire city sprung up from the ground.

"Yes." Brain said as he watched the surroundings change. "This is exactly what I've been looking for."

Once the entire city had risen, the shaking intensified. Then, a chunk of earth rose from the ground with all those in the city rising along with it. In other words, Ur, Ultear, Sorano, Karen, and Jellal were carried into the air along with Brain and Midnight.

"What the hell is that?" Gray, who was unable to make it close enough to where the light pillar originated, asked with disbelief in his tone.

"That must be the second stage of Nirvana." Lyon replied in an astonished tone.

What those who were not close enough to end up in the city that sprouted from the ground were currently seeing was the land mass housing the city rising above the trees in the Worth Woodsea. Being

suspended by six legs that seemed to be made of flexible stones, they could all understand why Hibiki called it a walking weapon of Mass destruction.

Before the walking land mass that was Nirvana began to move, however, a spot on its front began to glow. And to anyone looking from the outside, it would be clear that the glowing point was drawing in ethernano from the air.

A few moments later, when the glowing spot was saturated with ethernano, a beam of black light, most likely [Darkness Magic] converted from the gather ethernano, was fired forward.

Cutting through everything in its path, whether it be the air, a rocky outcropping, or an especially tall tree, the beam of [Darkness Magic] eventually reached the mountain range on the other side of the forest.

Boom~~~~~!

With an ear deafening explosion that shook not only the forest, but much of the land surrounding it, a large amount of rock and dust was sent flying.

Eventually when the dust cloud settled, the effects of the beam were obvious. Part of the mountain range had vanished from where it stood, creating a valley that led from one side to the other.

"Very good!" Brain said excitedly. "With this kind of power at my disposal, no one will be able to stop me. Not that old man, Hades, or those demons from Tartarus. Hahahahaha!"

At the same time, in a village nestled at the foot of the same mountain range, a short, slim, bearded, elderly man wearing tribal attire watched the destruction along with the rest of the people in his village.

This was no ordinary village, however. Instead, it was the village that served as the headquarters of the Cait Shelter guild. The guild that raised Wendy and Carla. Or rather, the guild that was created with the express purpose to do so after Wendy was brought to them seven years ago.

"*Sigh* It looks like the end is near." Roubaul, the master of the Cait Shelter guild, said after seeing the destruction Nirvana caused. Then, he raised a goblet of wine and poured its contents into his mouth as he continued. As a result, Roubaul spilled wine all over himself as he spoke. "Wendy, Carla, please be safe."

"Hey, Master, either drink or speak!" One of the members of Cait Shelter shouted after seeing Roubaul's actions. "Don't do both, your wine is getting everywhere."

Back atop Nirvana's back, after admiring the destruction it brought, Brain turned around and began walking into the building, though it would be more appropriate to call it a palace, that sprouted behind him and Midnight.

"Midnight, stand guard here." Brain said as he walked into the palace. "Do not allow anyone to disturb me. I'm going to take control of Nirvana. Kill anyone who gets too close."

Though Midnight did not reply and still appeared to be asleep, he stopped floating after Brain and waited in front of the palace's entrance, intent on following Brain's order to the letter.