

Fairy Tail 252

Chapter 252: Shattered Crystal

As Alfonzo, Marin, and Yoruichi, left the laboratory where Kabuto was performing his foul experiments, Kagura and Guren remained still, with their blades locked.

"I see." Kagura said, a hint of understanding flashing past her eyes. "So, you were only here to separate us, correct?"

"Well, you're quite sharp." Guren said with a smug smile. "Not that it matters, anyway. By the end of today, all of you will---"

Before Guren could finish her sentence, however, she felt the gravity around her increase sharply. To Kagura's surprise, however, she was not forced to her knees. Though, she did stiffen for a moment before rotating her magic power to counter the effect of the [Gravity Magic].

"Oh, so the one manipulating gravity was you." Guren said. "But now that I'm expecting it, what else can you do?"

"If you think [Gravity Magic] is my only means of combat, you are sadly mistaken." Kagura said as she put more force into her hands holding her katana, Archenemy.

Just as Kagura's strength reached its peak, Guren allowed herself to be forced backward. At the same time, she quickly ran through a series of hand signs.

"[Crystal Magic: Crystal Needles]." Guren chanted as dozens of needles formed from pink crystal appeared surrounding Kagura from all directions.

Kagura, noticing the projectiles around her, took a stance with her sheathed sword. Then, just as the needles were fired in her direction, she began swinging the sword at high-speed. As a result, with excellent swordsmanship, she managed to destroy all the incoming needles before they could even graze her.

In the meantime, Guren ran through yet another series of hand signs.

"[Crystal Magic: Pentagonal Imprisonment]." Guren chanted once again as she slammed her palms onto the floor of the cave.

In the next instant, pink crystals grew from the ground around Kagura. As they did, Kagura was eventually covered from the bottom up in these crystals, completely sealing her movements.

"And that marks the end of this little game." Guren said, standing to her feet with a smug smile on her face. "It's a shame, however. I would have enjoyed playing with you more. Unfortunately, my Crystal magic is too much for the likes of you to handle."

As her words fell, the crystals enveloping Kagura's figure began to disintegrate into crystal dust. Seeing the completion of her Jutsu, Guren, without waiting to see its outcome, turned around and started making her way out of the chamber.

Before she could get too far, however, Guren quickly spun on her heels to block an incoming strike with her eyes widened in surprise.

"[Slashing Form]." Kagura said, naming her attack as she brought her sword down with a large amount of force.

Guren, on the other hand, slightly rotated her [Jade Crystal Blade] as soon as the two weapons collided, parrying the slash to the side.

That turned out to be a smart decision, as Kagura's skill with her blade was honed to a high degree. In fact, if Guren had blocked the slash in the conventional manner, not only would she have lost her [Jade Crystal Blade], but she would have lost the arm on which it was attached, as well.

"How are you still alive?" Guren asked with a mixture of confusion and frustration in her tone as she tried to gain some distance from her opponent.

Instead of answering, Kagura lunged forward with her sword drawn back to thrust.

"[Strong Form]." Kagura said, once again naming her attack.

In fact, the reason Kagura was not turned to dust like the crystals encasing her was due to her use of [Gravity Magic], forming a thin repulsive barrier around herself after she noticed what Guren was aiming for. Although she usually only uses her [Gravity Magic] to slow down or immobilize her foes as she mainly relies on her swordsmanship in battle, that does not mean that she has no other way to apply her magic.

In fact, after joining Mermaid Heel, that was the only way she fought. However, after getting to know Yoruichi, that bad habit was beaten out of her rather quickly, forcing her to develop other ways to use her [Gravity Magic], even if her swordsmanship remained her primary means of attack.

Back to the exchange, Guren performed a quarter turn, letting Kagura's thrust sail past her torso. Then, raising her right hand, the hand with the [Jade Crystal Blade] attached to it, she aimed a slash at the side of Kagura's neck, aiming to slash the vital artery.

Titling her head back, dodging the slash with a paper-thin margin, Kagura pulled her sword back. Instead of aiming another slash or stab at Guren, however, she slammed the pommel of her sword into Guren's abdomen.

"Gah!" Guren coughed from the sudden impact.

As she doubled over due to the unexpected strike, Guren lowered her raised arm in an attempt to slash Kagura. Unfortunately for her, Kagura had already stepped back to return the battle to a range that suited her swordsmanship.

Though she had taken some slight distance, Kagura decided that giving Guren the time and space to weave hand signs would not only be dangerous, but foolish. So, right after avoiding Guren's slash, Kagura returned a horizontal slash of her own.

"[Crystal Magic: Crystal Armor]." Guren chanted as Kagura's sword approached before she could raise a proper defense with her weapon.

In the next instant, just before Kagura's attack landed, Guren was covered in a thin, yet dense, layer of pink crystals.

Shatter!

Although the [Crystal Armor] was not enough to stop Kagura's slash in its entirety, it did more than enough to protect Guren. Even if it did shatter on impact while Guren was sent flying.

Surprised by the outcome, Kagura continued her attack a beat slower than usual. Meanwhile, Guren, having been blasted away, righted herself before slamming into the wall of the corridor just outside the cave. Then, as if the wall was the ground, she landed against it feet first and stood there without falling as she ran through another, longer, series of hand signs.

"Crystal Magic: Tearing Crystal Falling Dragon]." Guren chanted while holding her final hand sign.

In the next instant, the wall Guren stood on began to crystalize around her. As the crystal extended, it began changing shape as it extended out from the wall, taking on the form of an eastern dragon with pink, crystal scales and jade-green eyes.

Then, once the head was fully formed, the crystal dragon shot forth, the formation of its body hollowing out the wall, as it approached Kagura.

Kagura, on the other hand, slashed her sword down at the crystal dragon once it was in range.

Clang!

Unfortunately, this dragon was much denser than the hastily formed armor that her last slash was able to shatter in one blow. As a result, she was sent flying back into the room where the battle began. And due to the sturdiness and force behind the rushing crystal construct, her hands were left slightly numb after the collision.

Then, for the next few minutes, Kagura was forced to evade the crystal dragon that was far more sturdy than she expected, unable to break it even after putting everything she had into both her [Slashing Form] and [Strong Form].

On top of that, Guren did not remain idle, either. Using her training as a shinobi under Orochimaru, she sneaked in both projectile and melee attacks of her own from tricky angles while avoiding all of Kagura's counter attacks.

As a result, Kagura was covered in shallow wounds, her white clothes dyed red by her own blood. Though, the will and determination in her eyes had not been diminished in the slightest.

Guren, on the other hand, was in comparably better shape. Though, it was obvious that her magic power reserves were dwindling quickly as she continuously launched Jutsu at her opponent. On top of that, she was utterly flabbergasted at the fact that Kagura had not been turned into a crystal statue after being struck by so many of her attacks.

As she had demonstrated by turning both the corpse of the child and the wall she stood on for a short time into crystals, Guren had the ability to convert matter, whether organic or inorganic, into crystals that she could manipulate with her [Crystal Magic]. Yet, even after having her crystals make contact with and cut into Kagura, she was unable to do the same to the young swordswoman.

'How is this little girl still flesh and blood?'] Guren thought to herself as she moved across the ceiling of the cave. 'By now, she shouldn't still have the magic power necessary to fend off my [Crystal Magic].'

In most cases, Guren's thoughts would have been correct. In this case, however, her battle experience was working against her. Although she realized that Kagura was a practitioner of the [Style of the Undrawn Long Sword], she was used to her opponents flowing their magic power into their weapons to empower them further.

Kagura, however, was completely different in this regard. Her sword, Archenemy, was too powerful to require extra magic power from its wielder. As a result, Kagura's magic power reserves had not dipped much during this battle. Though, after Kagura finally formulated a counterattack strategy, that would change.

'No, that doesn't matter.' Guren thought to herself as she reached a point on the ceiling just above Kagura. 'Whether from turning into a crystal statue before being shattered, or from a blade to the heart, this girl will die today.'

Seeing the opportunity to make her final strike, Guren's focus heightened as she produced a volley of [Crystal Needles]. At the same time, the crystal dragon, whose body had coiled around the room to cut off any escape routes, charged forth with its jaws open wide.

'Now!' Both Guren and Kagura thought simultaneously.

At that moment, several things happened in quick succession. First, Guren allowed herself to fall from the ceiling, dropping towards Kagura's predicted evasion spot. Second, Kagura dropped down into a

crouching position to avoid the volley of [Crystal Needles] before scurrying to the side to avoid the crystal dragon. And third, Kagura swung her sword upward.

"[Gravity Magic: Crawling Catastrophe]." Kagura chanted.

"What?" Guren exclaimed as she could not avoid the incoming slash.

From a low position, that best made use of her superhuman agility, Kagura empowered her slash with er [Gravity Magic], changing the direction of the gravitational force around her blade while increasing it tenfold. As a result, the power of her slash was multiplied by a large amount.

Meanwhile, Guren's surprise came from the fact that this was the first time Kagura had empowered her attacks with her magic, something she had miscalculated due to the power behind each of Kagura's earlier strikes.

The resulting slash was true to its namesake. As a result of the added power, Kagura's sword cleaved straight through the neck of the crystal dragon. And although she had not planned for it, Guren's stealthy attack turned out to be her end, as well, as she was also slashed through by the upward slash.

On top of cutting through both Guren and her crystal dragon, the air pressure from Kagura's slash continued along the path of her sword, splitting the room and part of the hideout with a highly compressed wind blade.

A moment later, as Guren's body, cut in half from head to crotch, fell to the cave floor, Kagura was covered in the blood and organs that rained down from Guren's corpse. Fortunately, she was able to get up a repulsive gravity field over her body in time.

Looking over her opponent's corpse, Kagura released a melancholic sigh. Though she was not opposed to killing dark wizards, this time, she had no intention to do so. As she was unable to sense Guren due to her abilities in stealth, she had no idea that Guren had been falling from directly above her when she made her attack.

"*Sigh* Though I would have rather taken you in alive, I do not pity your outcome." Kagura said as she stood from her crouching position. "For all the evils you have committed, this is a rather fitting end for one such as you. Though, I would have liked for you to receive justice from the proper authorities."

After speaking her piece, and as the crystal dragon broke down into motes of magic power, Kagura made her way out of the cave, moving towards the hideout's entrance.

"Though I could see if any of the others require my assistance, I think my help would be most needed at the shelter." Kagura muttered to herself as she made her way through the caves. "I would imagine that Bacchus is not much help when it comes to tending to the victims of this incident. And the number of those we rescued would be a bit much for only Mirajane to provide aid to alone."