Fairy Tail 276

Chapter 276: Stopping Coco's Pursuer

While Natsu and Wendy ran around the Royal Capital evading the pursuit from the Royal Army, and he other girls were infiltrating the Royal Caste, Alfonzo and Gajeel were sitting with their backs against the giant lacrima that housed the town of Magnolia and its population.

"Are we really just going to sit here while the others have fun messing with the Royal Army?" Gajeel asked in an annoyed tone.

Although Gajeel had learned how to use [Magic Power Detection], since it had only been a little less than two months, his detection range was not very vast. So, he was unable to keep track of what was going on in the Royal Capital, leading to him complaining in boredom.

Alfonzo on the other hand was sitting quietly. As the creator of [Magic Power Detection], his range was quite vast. Especially since he had created it when he was only nine years old. Therefore, he could keep track of all his friends' movements in the Royal Capital and the castle.

"Our job is to guard this lacrima so the king can't use the people and town as hostages." Alfonzo said with his eyes closed. "Until something serious happens, we won't move."

"But it's so boring up here." Gajeel complained.

Actually, Alfonzo was not only keeping track of the situation with his [Magic Power Detection], he was also circulating his magic power through his [Soul Weapon Embryo]. And although he was not sure how soon he would be able to bring about its first shift, he knew it would happen soon.

However, Alfonzo's eyes opened abruptly when he felt Lucy's magic power signature hanging outside of one of the castle's towers.

Noticing Alfonzo's change, Gajeel quickly turned his head in Alfonzo's direction with a serious expression on his face.

"What happened?" Gajeel asked.

"Lucy's in trouble." Alfonzo replied with a dark expression on his face. "You stay here. I'll go---"

Before Alfonzo could finish, he felt a pair of familiar magic power signatures flying towards the Royal capital at breakneck speed. And as luck would have it, they were headed straight for Lucy, who was now falling from the top of the tower.

"Never mind." Alfonzo said with a smile gracing his lips. "It looks like the trouble has been taken care of. Besides, we have company to deal with."

Looking in the direction where Alfonzo was facing, Gajeel noticed a large muscular figure with black fur flying towards the landmass.

Edolas, Edolas Continent, Royal Capital.

At the same time, Lucy was falling from the hole the Edolas Erza had created in the wall of the tower.

"Kya~~~~~!" Lucy screamed as she felt herself plummeting towards the ground. "I hate this world~~~~~! Ever since I got here, the only thing I ever seem to be doing is falling from the sky~~~~~!"

As she fell, Lucy could see the ground growing closer. And the closer she got to the ground, the more she panicked. Eventually, when she realized that she could not be saved, she closed her eyes and waited for the inevitable.

"*Swoosh!*

Before hitting the ground and being crushed by the rubble that was falling after her, Lucy felt the back of her shirt was grabbed before her downward momentum stopped and she started flying horizontally.

"Huh?" Lucy exclaimed in confusion. "I'm not dead?"

Looking around, Lucy could see the buildings of the Royal Capital whizzing by at high speed. Then, she finally caught sight of Carla who was flying next to her.

"Carla! You're back!" Lucy exclaimed happily. "Then, that must mean the one carrying me is…"

"That's right, it's Happy." Carla replied with a nod.

Having her suspicions confirmed, Lucy's smile grew wider.

"I'm glad you're back." Lucy said with a smile.

"Yeah… We're glad to be back, too." Hapy said while gripping Lucy's shirt. "But can you tell us where it would be safe to land? You're really heavy, Lucy."

"What did you say, you stupid cat?" Lucy shouted angrily.

Like that, Happy and Lucy continued to bicker while Lucy guided the two returning Exceed to where they could find Natsu and Wendy while preparing to help them deal with the soldiers that were chasing them.

Meanwhile, in an underground area of the castle, Elicia quietly retracted the threads she had released to catch Lucy in case no one else was able to save her.

"*Sigh* Looks like everything is gonna be okay." Elicia said with a smile.

"Yeah, I felt Happy and Carla just now." Marin replied with a smile of her own. "But still, not being able to detect sneak attacks with [Magic Power Detection] is really weird."

"I know." Elicia replied with a nod. "Everyone is gonna have to find a way to do it, though. Hopefully, this will be a wakeup call for everyone."

"Yeah." Marin said in acknowledgement. "You and Fonzie are lucky, though. He can use his EM waves to detect people and you can spread your threads around. I wish I had a spell like that."

"Don't worry, Marin." Elicia said while patting Marin on the shoulder. "I'm sure you'll come up with something. Besides, there are all sorts of [Detection magic] books in the guild's library. Maybe one of them will suit you."

"I hope you're---" Marin began to say.

Before Marin could finish, however, both she and Elicia heard the sound of footsteps fast approaching. But since they were under the effects of Elicia's [Hiding in Plain Sight] spell, they were not worried about being discovered.

After a few minutes, Elicia and Marin noticed a small girl with a distinctively puppy-like appearance running down the corridor they were searching. Carried in the young girl's arms was a large key, nearly as large as the girls' body. And behind the fleeing girl was a tall blond man wearing a light red armor.

"Is that guy wearing pink?" Marin asked quietly after seeing Sugarboy.

"Yeah." Elicia replied. "It takes a lot of confidence for a man to pull that off. But I have to admit, he makes it work."

Marin could only nod in response.

"But I think that girl is carrying the thing we've been searching for." Elicia said, pointing at Coco who was running away from Sugarboy. "Do you think you could do something about the guy chasing her?"

"Yeah, I think I can." Marin replied in an unsure manner.

Although it was mentioned that Sugarboy was chasing Coco, he was not doing it in the conventional sense. Instead of running on the ground, Sugarboy was levitating about a foot (approx.. 30 cm) above it while flying after her at high speed with a large, fan-like- sword on his back with a blade that resembled a rose blooming from its hilt.

"Come on, Coco, just give the key back!" Sugarboy shouted from behind Coco. "I'm sure if you do, His Majesty will forgive you."

"No, His Majesty is gonna use the Anima to turn Lily into a lacrima!" Coco shouted, not looking back as she ran away.

"*Sigh* If you won't give it back on your own, I'll just have to take both of you back to his Majesty by force." Sugarboy replied in a disappointed tone.

A moment later, Sugarboy's speed increased sharply. With his increased speed, Sugarboy closed the distance between himself and Coco. Then, just before he reached her, the stone floor rose up in front of him.

"What?" Sugarboy exclaimed in confusion.

Though he was confused by the change in the corridor, Sugarboy reacted quickly, pulling the sword from his back and slashing it into the stone wall that appeared in front of him.

Unlike what would be expected when a sword of that size was smashed into a stone wall, there was no loud sound of collision. Instead, the stone liquified, allowing Sugarboy to pass through it as if he were diving through the surface of a pond.

"Well, I wasn't expecting that." Marin replied as she let her [Transformation] revert to normal.

In fact, even if Sugarboy had not liquified the stones in front of him, he would have been able to burst through it with little effort. Since Marin's [Transformation Magic] only allows her to change the shape and appearance of an object without changing its base properties, the wall she created was actually quite fragile.

"Hmm…" Sugarboy hummed as he looked at the spot where the wall once stood. "I didn't remember a wall being here. And I guess my memory was right. It must have just been my imagination."

Hearing Sugarboy's analysis of the situation, Elicia and Marin could only look at him weirdly. It seemed that this Captain of the Fourth Magic War Division was not the sharpest tool in the shed.

"Well, I'll go after the little girl." Elicia said after shaking her head. "You keep this guy busy."

"Sure." Marin replied.

With that, Elicia shot her threads down the corridor towards the ceiling. Then, once they were securely connected, she swung after Coco. Meanwhile, she dropped her [Hiding in Plain Sight] spell on Marin, allowing her to appear before Sugarboy.

"Oh!" Sugarboy exclaimed after seeing someone new appear in the corridor. "Who are you? OH, wait! You're that girl who appeared with the Captain Knightwalker look-a-like when the lacrima disappeared, aren't you?"

"That's right." Marin replied with a nod.

"Did you come to turn yourself in?" Sugarboy asked with a smile. "The King has ordered your arrest. I'm sure if you turn yourself in, the punishment will be more lenient."

"Nope." Marin replied with a shake of her head. "I'm here to stop you from stealing any more magic power from Earth land."

"Earth Land, I guess that's the name of your world." Sugarboy said, once again taking on a disappointed tone. "Not that it matters, I'll just have to add you to the list of people I'll have to drag in front of His Majesty by force."

"You seem pretty confident." Marin said as she took her usual dagger fighting stance. "Let's see if you're just all talk."

In the next instant, Marin [Transformed] the bracelets she was wearing back into the daggers Alfonzo made her earlier in the day. Then, with quick hand movements, she caught the daggers by the hilts and spun the daggers around her hands masterfully.

"[Transformation Magic: Shoot to Kill]." Marin chanted as she pointed her right dagger at Sugarboy's chest plate.

In the next instant, Marin's dagger extended at high speed. Before long, it was right in front of Sugarboy.

"Oh, that's a nifty trick." Sugarboy said as he parried Marin's strike with his sword.

Once again, instead of the sound of two metals colliding, Marin's dagger softened as if it were liquified on impact. Then, before she could react, Sugarboy charged toward her, once again levitating about a foot from the ground. This time, however, he was carrying his sword at his side, ready to cleave Marin in half.

Swish!

Reacting on instinct, Marin arched her back and limboed under Sugarboy's slash. Then, as Sugarboy passed above her, she flung her legs upward, kicking him towards the ceiling with all her strength. At the same time, she used her [Transformation Magic] to revert her liquified dagger back to its normal state while retracting its blade.

With Marin's kick, Sugarboy flew upward at an angle. However, he seemed to be completely unbothered by it, even though he was about to crash into the ceiling. And the reason was simple. Just like before, he slashed his massive sword at the ceiling, causing it to soften to the point that he sank into it, instead of crashing headfirst.

Before Sugarboy could reorient himself, however, Marin had already jumped to her feet. Then, with both daggers pointed at him, she chanted her next spell.

"[Transformation Magic: Double Shoot to Kill]." Marin chanted.

Although Sugarboy was able to see the two incoming dagger blades, with his awkward position from being pressed into the corridor's ceiling, he was unable to slash at the blades, using his liquefaction ability to soften them. So, he did the only thing he could do, he raised his sword and used it as a shield.

Clang! *Clang!*

The force behind the extending blades was immense. Still, Sugarboy was able to handle it with little effort. And just before he reached the end of the softened portion of the ceiling, he showed his skill with a sword and twisted his blade, resulting in the blades of Marin's daggers being imbedded into the ceiling just to his side.

Then, just as he freed himself from Marin's daggers, Sugarboy pushed off the ceiling and sent himself hurdling at Marin. At the same time, Marin retracted her daggers faster than Sugarboy could approach.

"It looks like fighting at long range won't work." Marin said as she took her fighting stance once again. "And that sword is a major pain. Either way, it's time to end this."

"I agree." Sugarboy said as he approached from the air. "I need to hurry and chase after that girl, Coco, after all."

Once he was in range, Sugarboy summersaulted in Marin's direction, bringing his sword down on her from above. In response, Marin simply side stepped the incoming slash. However, just as Sugarboy's sword touched the floor, the area liquified.

Then, with a quick upswing, Sugarboy launched pieces of the liquified floor along with his blade, obscuring Marin's vision momentarily.

In response, Marin took a quick step back to avoid the liquified chunks of the floor, which turned out to be a good decision. The chunks of the floor that flew past her ended up impacting the walls and smashing holes into them.

'So, his liquefaction ability is a lot like my magic, huh?' Marin thought to herself. 'It changes the material but keeps all the same physical characteristics. But it seems to be a lot less versatile.'

While Marin had that thought, Sugarboy did not slow down his onslaught. Still, Marin managed to dodge all his strikes. Though, it was not as effortless as she would have liked. On top of that, as a result of all his missed slashes, the corridor around the two combatants had turned into a stone swamp.

"If things keep going like this, I won't have anywhere to stand." Marin muttered to herself. "I need to end this fast. Well, I hope this works. [Transformation Magic: Severance]."

With her chant, Marin stepped in towards the downward slash Sugarboy was performing. Then, she slashed her daggers from either side of her body with the thinnest part of Sugarboy's blade being their intersection point.

Swish!

Clang!

As a result of Marin's slashes, Sugarboy's sword was cut off just above its handguard. As a result, the massive blade was sent flying past her.

'O.M.G. I'm so glad that worked.' Marin thought to herself as she watched Sugarboy's blade separate from the rest of the sword. 'Increasing the mass of my daggers to the limit of what I can handle, then forcing all that extra mass onto the edges of the blades while simultaneously sharpening them even further isn't easy. But since it worked, it's time to finish this.'

"Rose Espada…" Sugarboy muttered as he stared blankly at the bladeless hilt in his hands.

Then, while Sugarboy looked at his bladeless hilt in confusion, Marin stepped in even closer before placing her hands on his chest plate.

"[Transformation Magic: Restraint Jacket]." Marin chanted before performing a leg sweep.

In the next instant, Sugarboy's chest plate [Transformed] into a strait jacket that bound his arms and torso. Then, when he was swept off his feet, his greaves were [Transformed] into a pair of shackles, as well.

Instead of falling to the ground, however, once Sugarboy was lying perpendicular to it, he began to levitate. Before he could fly away, however, Marin slammed the pommels of her daggers down on his chest. As a result, a pair of chains shot out of the back of his restraints before burrowing into the floor.

"How do you even do that?" Marin asked in a confused tone. "I mean, you can't even use magic. And I don't feel any other magic items on you."

"Honestly, I'm not really sure, either." Sugarboy replied with a smile. "but it's really cool, isn't it?"

IN response, Marin could only look at Sugarboy with a dumbfounded expression. Then, deciding that thinking about it would only give her a headache, she pulled the chains out of the floor and started dragging her prisoner in the direction where Elicia and Coco ran off.