

Fairy Tail 278

Chapter 278: Command Tact

After being yanked away from Hughes, Coco, who was now being held in one of Elicia's arms, blinked her eyes in confusion.

At the same time, Hughes retracted his hand slowly while his ever present smile began to twitch in annoyance. Then, he raised his head to see the one who got in the way of him completing his king's orders.

But when he caught sight of the one who stopped him, Hughes could not help but open his eyes wide in surprise.

"Amazing!" Hughes exclaimed with an amused smile on his face. "Knightwalker was right. You really do look amazingly similar to the late Captain Phyllis."

Hearing Hughes' exclamation, Coco finally snapped out of her daze. Then, she looked at the person who was holding her. And like Hughes, she also opened her eyes wide in surprise.

"Miss Elicia..." Coco muttered with tears in her eyes.

Although the person Coco was closest to in the Royal Army at present is Panther Lily, that was not always the case. In fact, before she committed suicide, Elicia Phyllis was the one who raised her. In fact, Coco saw her more as a mother figure than anything else.

Hearing the longing in Coco's voice, Elicia looked at her with a complicated expression. Though it was not to the extent that most of her weird admirers, she could tell that the little girl in her arms was drawn to her.

"*Sigh* I know what you're thinking." Elicia said, smiling at Coco awkwardly. "But I'm not the Elicia you know. I'm her counterpart from the world you've been stealing magic from."

Although she already knew that, Coco could not help but feel a bit disappointed. Still, the way she gazed at Elicia made the Fairy Tail wizard feel a bit uncomfortable.

'Stop looking at me like that.' Elicia thought to herself as she averted her gaze from the big, tear-filled eyes that stared at her. 'You're making me feel like I'm about to abandon a puppy.'

"As heartwarming as this is, I have orders to fulfill." Hughes said as he pulled a cylindrical magic wand with a flat disc and a spherical lacrima near its center from the inside of his uniform jacket. "But before I take you to see His Majesty, allow me to show you an amazing time at the Royal Capital's amazing amusement park!"

With that said, Hughes raised his wand like a conductor who was about to start directing an orchestra. Before he could wave the wand, however, a thin thread wrapped around it.

"Huh?" Hughes exclaimed in confusion, staring at the thread wrapped around his magic weapon.

"I'm not really a fan of amusement parks." Elicia said, a thread extending from the tip of the index finger of her free hand. "So, I'll take that, too."

Like that, Elicia jerked her index finger. At the same time, she retracted the thread extending from it. A moment later, Hughes' magic wand was held securely in her hand.

"Hey, give that back!" Hughes shouted angrily.

"No, I think I'll hang on to it." Elicia replied with a smile. "Fonzie might find the sigils interesting, after all. As for you, I'd rather not have you telling the rest of the army what happened here. So..."

As she spoke, Elicia slowly lowered herself and Coco from the ceiling. Then, once she reached the floor, the first thing she did was put Coco down on the floor right next to her. After that, she used her threads to strap Hughes' magic wand to her back. Then, she pointed both her hands at Hughes, who had turned around to run away.

"Thread Magic: Thread Entanglement]." Elicia chanted as she jerked her arms backwards.

In the next instant, threads from all directions rushed towards Hughes. Then, they wrapped him tightly from just below his neck to the bottoms of his feet.

Thud!

And due to the momentum from his attempt to run away, Hughes ended up falling to the floor, face first.

"Ow... That hurt." Hughes muttered. "I think I might have broken my nose."

"Alright, that's done." Elicia said with a refreshed expression. Then, she looked down towards Coco. "Now, what do you think about giving me that key?"

"Miss Elicia, you're back!" Coco cried as the tears finally fell from her eyes. Then, she dropped the key in her arms and threw herself at Elicia. "I missed you so much."

Sighing in exasperation, Elicia could only smile wryly as she used her threads to catch the key to the Anima before it slammed into the floor as Coco wrapped herself around her torso like a koala. Unfortunately, Elicia knew that she had to break this little girl's illusion. Before she could, however, another voice spoke first.

"Pathetic." An elderly voice said from the top of the tracks of the roller coaster in the center of the amusement park. "I advised His Majesty from promoting you to the Captain of the Third Magic War Division. It seems he should have heeded my advice."

"Byro!" Hughes exclaimed as he raised his head, revealing his face that was covered in his own blood. "Your timing is amazing. Now that you're here, we can get the key back."

"What do you mean 'we'?" Byro asked in a disdainful tone. "The Royal Army has no place for such a failure."

As soon as he finished speaking, Byro reached into his robe and pulled out a pair of vials. Then, he threw one of them down at Hughes, intending to finish him off before taking care of Elicia and Coco.

"Wait, are you serious?" Hughes asked with disbelief in his tone.

Before the vial could land on him, however, Hughes was dragged away from where he lay by Elicia's threads.

Shatter!

A moment later, the vial shattered when it hit the floor. Then, as soon as the liquid in the vial made contact with the floor, it burst into a torrent of searing hot flames that began spreading towards Elicia, Hughes, and Coco.

"I really don't like this kingdom." Elicia said while shaking her head. "Everyone is so cut-throat."

"You actually saved me?" Hughes asked, disbelief still in his tone.

"Yeah, I think Mystogan will have a use for you when all this is over." Elicia replied. "For now, you should wait outside. You'll only be in the way here."

"Huh? What do you---" Hughes began to question. "Ahh~~~~~!"

Before he could finish, however, Elicia flicked her fingers and sent Hughes flying through the air towards the entrance to the amusement park. Then, she patted Coco on her head, drawing the little girl's attention.

"I need you to get out of here, too." Elicia said gently. "Protecting you while fighting this guy won't be easy."

Though reluctant, Coco nodded her head before she released Elicia. Then, Elicia used her threads to move Coco to the entrance. Though, she did it much more gently than she did with Hughes.

A moment later, just before the flames from Byro's vial could engulf the spot where she stood, Elicia leapt backwards. Then, she shot her threads towards the roller coaster tracks where Byro stood and pulled herself towards it.

"Thinking to face me in close quarters? A good plan, indeed." Byro said as he watched Elicia approach his position at high speed. "But it won't be that easy."

A moment later, Byro threw the second vial he had been holding towards the flames. Then, before it could shatter on the floor, the heat shattered it first.

As soon as the liquid in the vial came in contact with the air, several violently spinning cyclones were generated. Then, before long, the cyclones swept up the flames, creating several flaming cyclones that rampaged through the area.

With the changes in the situation, Elicia was forced to catapult herself in a different direction. But to counter Elicia's new path, Byro threw another pair of vials that resulted in several more flaming cyclones appearing between himself and Elicia.

Undeterred, Elicia changed directions once again, circling around the first set of flaming cyclones to try approaching from the other side. And just like before, Byro threw out another set of vials to block her path.

"It's useless." Byro said as he watched Elicia scurry around the rapidly burning amusement park. "You should just give up and bring Coco and the key to me. At least your punishment will be swifter if you were to do so."

Instead of responding, Elicia continued to move around, trying to find a way through the flaming cyclones to reach Byro. At least, that is what Byro thought.

In reality, Elicia had cast her [False Appearance] spell before she had her illusion fire her threads at the roller coaster tracks. Then, while Byro was distracted, she began moving around the park in a wide arch, hoping to sneak up on Byro from behind.

Unfortunately, the flames were spreading much faster than she expected. So, she could not get too close to her target.

"Well, this sucks." Elicia said from atop the park's Ferris wheel. "Although my threads are flame resistant, winds like that make them a little hard to control. Not that I couldn't though."

Deciding that going into the flames herself would be her last resort, Elicia placed her right hand on her hip while she scanned the amusement park for another way to deal with Byro. And with that action, she felt something touch her forearm. Looking down, she saw the magic wand she had taken from Hughes was still strapped to the back of her waist.

"Oh, this could be fun." Elicia said as she grabbed the wand by its handle. "But how do I make this thing work?"

Then, for the next few minutes, Elicia split her attention between controlling her illusion and trying to figure out the mechanism behind Hughes' magic wand. Meanwhile, Byro was growing impatient with how slippery his prey seemed to be.

"I've had enough of this." Byro said as he reached into his robes to pull out a new vial. Before revealing the vial, however, he froze after hearing the sound of something moving at high speed. "What is that?"

Looking around for the source of the sound, Byro eventually noticed the cars of the roller coaster climbing the steep incline that led to his position. On top of that, they were moving much faster than they should have normally been.

"She's using Hughes's wand, the Command Tact... But how?" Byro asked himself. "When did she have the time to? She's been scurrying around the park to avoid my flaming twisters."

Just then, Byro glanced in the direction where Elicia should have been. And sure enough, he saw her dodging between two flaming twisters. At that moment, however, his eyes opened wide when he saw her figure vanish after grazing the flames.

"An illusion? But when?" Byro asked, looking around frantically.

Bang!

Before Byro could find where Elicia was hiding, however, the roller coaster's front car crashed into him while he was distracted. Naturally, the impact sent Byro flying off the top of the tracks and soaring through the air.

"Finally figured it out." Elicia said happily as she watched Byro fly through the air. "Now, let's try the other move... What was it called again? Oh yeah, now I remember. [Hell Tornado]."

With her chant, Elicia waved the wand, Command Tact in a circular motion. Then, the tracks of the roller coaster began to disassemble themselves and reassembled into a spiral aimed at Byro. ON top of that, the roller coaster cars moved along the new set of tracks at ten times their normal speed.

Seeing the roller coaster approaching once again, Byro frowned in anger. Then, he once again reached into his robe and pulled out another vial. Instead of throwing this vial, however, Byro used his free hand to remove its cork. Then, he put the vial to his lips and drank the vial's contents in one gulp.

"I've had enough!" Byro roared as his body began to expand. "I no longer care about dragging you before the king. Instead, I will destroy you myself!"

As Byro's body expanded, his voice took on a much deeper tone. And after a few seconds, he had turned into an enormous octopus.

As soon as his transformation was complete, Byro spun in midair, blowing away not only the roller coaster cars, but all the tracks, as well.

"Almost forgot about that potion." Elicia muttered while watching Byro rampage around in his new form. "Either way, he should be easier to catch now, right?"

With that, Elicia raised her hands, ejecting a large number of threads from her finger tips. A moment later, the threads were divided into eight groups, with each group moving to secure a tentacle.

"You think these flimsy threads will be enough to stop me?" Byro shouted as soon as he noticed the incoming threads. At the same time, he followed them back to their source with his eyes. "Finally! I found you!"

With that, Byro began spinning like atop, cutting apart Elicia's threads as he made his way over to the Ferris wheel. Unfortunately, he did not notice that he was moving over a large number of the threads that Elicia had laid down beforehand just in case Byro found her position and decided to attack at a closer distance.

Thanks to the trap Elicia laid, Byro's rotation speed slowed gradually as he made his way closer to the Ferris wheel. Then, just as one of his tentacles was about to strike, more than likely toppling it in the process, he came to a complete stop.

"What?" Byro cried in surprise. Then, he finally noticed that all his tentacles were tightly bound. "How? When?"

"And that's the end of that." Elicia said, hopping down from the top of the Ferris wheel with her right leg raised high. "I would say it was fun... But then I'd be lying."

Bang!

Just as her words fell, Elicia's right foot, charged to the limit with magic power, slammed down on the top of Byro's head. Luckily for him, he was in the form of a giant octopus. Otherwise, the force behind Elicia's kick would have been enough to splatter his head and split the rest of his body down the middle.

But because he was in the form of an octopus, he was simply knocked unconscious rather than meeting a rather gruesome end.