

Fairy Tail 291

Chapter 291: The Exam Continues

Only a few seconds after leaving the ship, Alfonzo appeared at the top of the mountain where the six caves for the exam were located.

"You're almost as fast as I am now." Laxus said with a smirk.

"Even if you're faster than me, I can still kick your ass." Alfonzo replied with a smirk of his own. "In fact, I always have."

"Don't get too full of yourself, things won't always be the same." Laxus replied confidently.

"We'll have to see about that." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "Anyway, they should be showing up soon."

"Who do you think will be here first?" Laxus asked, already having an idea to the answer.

"Probably Mest and Wendy." Alfonzo said with a slight frown.

"Huh? I thought it would be Fried and Bickslow." Laxus replied.

"Did you forget what kind of magic Mest uses?" Alfonzo asked.

"Nope." Laxus replied with a smile. "I never knew to begin with. That guy just isn't interesting enough for me to care."

"Fair enough." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. Then, he turned his attention towards the beach. "Look, they're here."

Following the direction of Alfonzo's finger, Laxus saw a young man of average height and a little girl, Mest and Wendy, appear on the beach.

"[Teleportation Magic], huh?" Laxus muttered. "Yeah, I guess I could see why he got here first."

"Yeah, anyway, do you wanna go first, or should I?" Alfonzo asked.

"Let me." Laxus said as he raised his right hand to the sky.

A moment later, Laxus' entire right arm was covered in yellow lightning. Then, he fired that lightning up into the sky.

Meanwhile, on the beach, Mest and Wendy were scanning their surroundings, looking for any clues as to where the attacks Makarov mentioned could possibly come from.

"Remember Wendy, we have to be careful until we reach the caves." Mest said as he cautiously took a step forward.

"Right." Wendy replied with a determined nod.

Before she took her first step forward, however, Wendy's head snapped upwards and her eyes widened in surprise.

Boom!

Before Wendy could say anything, though, a bolt of yellow lightning fell in front of Mest.

"Argh!" Mest shouted as he was sent flying backwards.

Splash!

Although he was not struck directly, the lightning traveled through the sand, shocking Mest and temporarily paralyzing him. On top of that, the impact from the lightning strike sent him flying backwards before he splashed helplessly into the sea.

"Mest!" Wendy shouted as she ran towards where Mest floated atop the water. Then, when she was close enough, she put her hands on his chest and chanted a spell. "[Heal]."

With her chant, Wendy gathered the clean air in the surroundings and used it to restore Mest, who was only slightly injured to his peak condition.

"*Pant* *Pant* Thanks, Wendy." Mest said while shaking his head and getting his breathing in order. "I never expected the attacks to come from above."

"I think that was Laxus' magic." Wendy said. "It was a yellow bolt of lightning."

"I see." Mest said. Honestly, I didn't even see it."

At that moment, both Fried and Bickslow arrived at the shore as well. Then, without a word, they simply flew past Mest and Wendy and headed straight for the mountain.

"*Boom!*

Before the new arrivals could get too far, however, the lightning struck again. This time it was blue, though.

Reacting quickly, Bickslow controlled his dolls to move around the lightning bolt and the two continued on to the mountain.

"Well, considering how often they train with Laxus, I guess it makes sense that they have gotten used to dodging lightning, huh?" Mest said.

"Yeah." Wendy nodded.

"Anyway, we should just go." Mest said. "I'll just teleport us to the foot of the mountain."

"Okay." Wendy replied with a nod.

In the next instant, Mest put his hand on Wendy's shoulder before they both vanished from where they stood. A moment later, they appeared in front of the six paths and chose one randomly. Immediately afterward, the marking over the cave changed, letting the other participants know that the cave had already been chosen.

Then, shortly after Mest and Wendy entered their cave, Fried and Bickslow arrived at the mountain wall, as well. And although both of them were uninjured, there were light burns on Bickslow's other three dolls.

"Damn it, Alfonzo!" Bickslow bellowed to the sky. "Are you trying to destroy my babies?"

Boom!

As if responding to Bickslow's shout, a bolt of blue lightning fell from above, aimed at the top of Bickslow's head. Before it could strike him, however, Fried tossed his sword upward, attracting the lightning before it could do any damage.

"Stop provoking him, Bickslow." Fried said, let's just go inside."

"Tch! Fine." Bickslow replied after clicking his tongue.

Luckily, Fried's sword was one he commissioned from Alfonzo in the past. So, although it did not have any extra offensive options, it was sturdy enough to come away from being struck by lightning without taking any significant damage. Also, thanks to the sheath on his hip, Fried was able to recall it to himself at any time.

So, after retrieving his sword, Fried and Bickslow chose one of the unoccupied caves and entered without hesitation.

Around that time, Elfman and Evergreen also reached the shore. But since Evergreen's speed was much faster than Bickslow's, she barely even slowed down and rushed straight for the caves.

"Ever! slow down! Slow down!" Elfman shouted as Evergreen narrowly avoided the falling lightning bolts.

"What are you panicking for?" Evergreen asked with a smirk. "I thought you were a real man. Don't tell me you're afraid of a little lightning."

"Of course I'm a real man!" Elfman shouted in return. "But it doesn't hurt to be careful."

Like that, Evergreen continued to tease Elfman while avoiding the lightning. Eventually, they arrived at the caves and Elfman instructed her which one to enter as she flew into the opening on the mountain wall. Meanwhile, Levy and Gajeel had just finished their swim from the ship.

"So they're chucking lightning at the people trying to get to the caves, huh?" Gajeel asked with an excited expression.

"Yeah, but you can handle it, right?" Levy asked.

"Of course." Gajeel said as he held up his right fist. "[Iron Dragon's Club]."

A moment later, Gajeel punched out and his arm elongated into an iron rod. Then, he sent it flying forward before it slammed into the ground and stood upright in the sand.

"Good thinking." Levy said with a nod. "Using a lightning rod is a great idea. But if you do that, then the people behind us will just follow the path, won't they?"

"Not if you knock all of them down when we get to the caves, right?" Gajeel asked with a grin. "Then, they'll have to deal with a bunch of iron rods that will conduct the lightning all over the place."

"I see." Levy replied with a smile. "Then, let's go."

With that, Gajeel created a number of lightning rods on the path to the caves. As a result, other than Gajeel's magic power getting slightly depleted, they were in more or less the same condition as when they arrived on the island.

Then, when the duo reached the caves, after choosing one but just before entering it, Levy turned around and wrote the word [Earthquake] in the air with her Light Pen before pushing it towards the center of the path she and Gajeel used to arrive at the caves.

A moment later, just as the [Word Magic] reached the ground, the beach began to shake. As a result of the shaking, all the iron rods that were stuck in the ground fell over and spread across the beach.

"Perfect, now let's go inside." Levy said, nodding at her work with satisfaction.

Then, the two turned around and entered their chosen cave. Fortunately for Levy, and Unfortunately for Gajeel, the cave they chose was the only one that allowed a free pass to the second round of the exam.

After Levy and Gajeel entered the cave, the beach stayed quiet for about twenty minutes, thanks to Fried's [Enchantment]. But once it timed out, the next pair of teams made it to the beach at nearly the same time.

Jumping out of the water with Marin in her arms, Sun's fish tail transformed back into her human legs as she landed. A moment later, Juvia, followed closely by Lisanna, left the water as well.

"Juvia... Juvia actually lost...?" Juvia questioned in a disbelieving tone.

"Told you Sun would get here first. Marin said with a smile while sticking out her tongue.

"We don't have time to wait around." Sun said, wearing an uncharacteristically serious expression. "Alfonzo and Laxus are throwing lightning. We need to get going before we get caught up in that."

"Right." Marin replied, her expression becoming serious as well.

With that, Sun and Marin did not waste time and started running towards the mountain wall.

"Come on, Juvia." Lisanna said, pulling on Juvia's arm. "We need to get moving, too. [Take Over: Animal Soul: Harpy]."

With that, Lisanna's arms turned into the wings of a bird with feathers the same color as her hair. Her legs also transformed into avian legs with talons and feathered thighs, also the same color as her hair, along with floppy, harpy ears.

Then, with her talons, Lisanna lifted Juvia and started flying towards the mountain, quickly overtaking Sun and Marin, while dodging lightning bolts along the way.

"I wish I could fly." Sun said in a somewhat dreamy tone. "It looks fun."

"Focus, Sun." Marin said sharply as she [Transformed] one of her daggers into a long iron rod and made a lightning rod before jamming it into the ground to attract an incoming bolt of lightning. "We can figure out how to make you fly later. For now, we need to get out of this mine field."

"Right." Sun replied, her expression turning serious again as she started running.

Retrieving her dagger after the lightning bolt hit it, Marin also followed after Sun.

'I'm glad Fonzie used nonconductive metals for my daggers.' Marin said with a smile as she continued to run.

A short while later, Juvia and Lisanna entered one of the caves. Then, while Sun and Marin were about halfway to the mountain, Gray, Meredy, Cana, and Lucy arrived on the island.

"Stay close to me, Meredy." Gray said as he made his casting gesture.

"Got it." Meredy said with a nod.

"[Ice-Make: Moving Shelter]." Gray chanted as he slammed his hands down on the sand.

A moment later, Gray and Meredy were covered by a transparent igloo. Then, when they started running towards the mountain, the igloo surprisingly moved with them. Ignoring lightning bolts, Gray let the igloo absorb all the damage. Luckily, none of the lightning bolts were strong enough to destroy it in one shot, allowing Gray to repair it with his magic power whenever its durability fell below a certain point.

Meanwhile, as soon as they reached the beach, Cana reached into her card pouch and pulled out a combination of cards. Then, she grabbed Lucy by the arm.

"Huh? What are you doing, Cana?" Lucy asked in confusion.

"We're moving." Cana said solemnly as she ran her magic power into the cards in her hand. "Just don't bite your tongue, alright?"

"What are you---" Lucy began to ask.

"[Card Magic: Lightning Dash]." Cana chanted, deciding now was a good time to use one of the new spells she developed in the time leading up to the exam.

A moment later, Cana's legs were covered in currents of lightning before she took a step forward.

Boom!

"Kya~~~~~!" Lucy screamed in surprise.

With that one step, Cana shot forward at nearly the speed of sound, kicking up a cloud of sand as a result of her sudden acceleration. But that one step was only the beginning. With each subsequent step, her speed increased.

In theory, if Cana was given enough time and her body was strong enough, she would be able to move at speeds comparable to Laxus when he took his [Lightning Form]. Unfortunately, as she was not used to moving at such speeds, nor was her body that strong, her maximum speed was capped at around Mach two.

Still, it was more than enough to reach the mountain before either Gray or Sun's teams.

"You could have warned me first." Lucy complained while supporting herself on her hands and knees while dry heaving thanks to the nausea.

"Sorry." Cana said with a smile. "But still, that was amazing. What a rush. It was great being able to really let go like that."

Seeing the satisfied smile on Cana's face, Lucy's discontent expression turned into a happy smile of her own before it once again changed to a resolute one.

"If Cana is willing to go all out like that at the start, then I guess I should do the same." Lucy thought to herself. "There's no way I'm letting her leave the guild. And I'm sure Alfonzo would be devastated if she broke up with him over something like this.'

Little did Lucy know, Alfonzo had no intention of letting Cana go, even if she did not become an S-Class wizard after the exam. Instead, he would more than likely bend her over his knee and give her a spanking for having such a stupid thought.

Though, there's a good chance Cana would not really see that as a punishment.

Either way, thanks to Cana's new spell, she and Lucy were the sixth team to enter one of the caves. And they were shortly followed by Sun and Marin, leaving only one cave for Gray and Meredy to choose.