

## Fairy Tail 671

### Chapter 671: Dropping the Ball on x789

Shortly before eight o'clock, the ladies living in the Mansion on the Lake, including the six maids, arrived at the central plaza in Magnolia. When they did, they find a large number of citizens congregating, curious to know what the event that was advertised on their iPhones was all about. And in opposite corners of the plaza, they could see two large stages set up. Though, they were veiled in darkness.

"Wow! A lot of people showed up, didn't they?" Marin asked in a tone filled with awe.

"Yeah." Cana replied while looking around with her eyes lighting up. "There are a lot of street vendors set up on the streets leading to the plaza, too."

"It's not bad for something set up on such short notice." Elicia said. "Fonzie really has some good connections. He got all of this set up and approved by the town in only a little more than a week and a half."

"I know, right?" Sun added. "Just imagine if he had gotten this idea earlier in the year. I bet it would be set up in the capital instead."

"That's definitely the case."

Turning around at the sound of the familiar aged voice, the group of ladies saw two short, elderly men approaching through the crowd. The identities of these two men were two of the most well-known figures in Fiore. The first being the third guild master of the Fairy Tail guild, Makarov. And he was

accompanied by the man with the most political power in the kingdom, the king of Fiore, Toma E. Fiore, himself.

The two old men were also accompanied by a slim, petite young woman with wavy light green hair that reached the middle of her back, bangs that mostly covered her forehead and frame her face and dark green eyes wearing a strapless white dress that exposes half of her thighs with a floral pattern at the top of her dress and slits on either side of the skirt portion. On top of that, she wore a tiara with seven gemstones set in it, a pair of earrings, each with two gemstones set in them, a silver necklace, and a pair of long white gloves with frills at the ends.

This young woman was Toma's daughter, Hisui E. Fiore, the princess of Fiore. And when she saw Elicia, she smiled happily before stepping forward and grabbing her hand.

"Miss Elicia, it's been too long." Hisui said with a smile. "And I'd like to thank you again for all those beautiful dresses you created for me this year. I've had something wonderful to wear to each event I had to attend in my capacity as the princess of the Kingdom."

"Don't mention it, and please call me, Lici." Elicia replied with a smile of her own. "You know that making clothes is my passion."

"I'll say." Makarov said, cutting in with a chuckle. "She's been making them ever since she first came to the guild all those years ago."

Hearing that, Hisui smiled. However, she started to look all around Elicia only a moment later.

"Um... Where is Amar'e?" Hisui asked somewhat bashfully. "I haven't seen him since the last time you visited me to drop off the dresses. But he's just so cute that I wanted to see him again."

Despite being almost eighteen years old, Hisui spent most of the time when Elicia brings Amar'e with her to drop off any of her orders playing with Amar'e. And the reason for that was simple. As a princess, most of those she interacts with have an agenda. However, children as young as Amar'e are so pure that Hisui can't help but appreciate them.

"Oh, he's at Mira's sister's, Lisanna's, place." Elicia replied with a smile. "We wanted to bring him and the other kids with us, but we'll probably be out here way past their bed time. And since Lisanna couldn't get a sitter, either, she decided to watch them."

Elicia then looked back to the maids who were following behind the group of ladies.

"As for them, they deserved a night off." Elicia said while smiling at her group of loyal maids. "And despite the fact that they insisted on staying at home to watch the kids, Fonzie basically forced them to come out and enjoy themselves."

"I see." Hisui replied. "Well, it's too bad I won't get to see him before we leave tonight. Anyway, Alfonzo's notification said that there would be a show like nothing we had ever seen before. But what exactly does that mean?"

"Well, I have an idea about that." Elicia replied. "But I don't wanna spoil the surprise."

Like all of Alfonzo's wives and girlfriends, Hisui pouted when Elicia would not spill what she thought she knew about tonight's festivities. However, unlike the rest of Elicia's harem sisters, she did not press her for information. Instead, she only nodded her head before the smile reappeared on her face.

"Well, I'm certainly looking forward to it." Hisui said.

Not long after that, while the entire group was engaged in conversation, the lights on one of the stages came on, drawing the whole plaza's attention. Standing on the newly lit stage was the announcer for the Grand Magic Games, Loli Chapati wearing a stylish wig and a tailored suit.

"Hmph!" Elicia snorted after seeing Loli's suit. "He would have looked better if he were wearing one of my suits. And I would have definitely made him one if Fonzie had told me about this beforehand. Stupid Fonzie."

Hearing that, everyone nearby could not help but laugh. Even so, they paid attention to what Loli was about to say.

{"Hello, everyone in the town of Magnolia and watching from around the continent on their iPhones."} Loli said into the microphone in his hands in a charismatic, upbeat tone, his voice echoing all over the plaza and the nearby streets while simultaneously being broadcast to everyone watching on their iPhones. {"I'll be your host for this evening, Loli Chapati. And for those who don't know me, I'm the usual host for the Grand Magic Games."}

At the mention of the Grand Magic Games, the plaza exploded into loud applause while Loli smiled happily watching the people get so excited.

{"Now, I'm sure you're wondering exactly what is going on tonight, right?"} Loli asked before pausing briefly for dramatic effect. {"Well, from what I was told, the people at Sixth Sense Holdings thought that celebrating the end of one year and the beginning of a new one should be done on a larger scale. You know, since no one ever knows what could happen from one day to the next."}

Once again, the crowd broke into a loud applause.

{"So, they got together as many of the best acts in the entertainment world as they could to perform for you all tonight."} Loli continued. {"That way, the beginning of the new decade can start in a grand fashion. So, why don't' you all help me in thanking Sixth sense Holdings for tonight's proceedings."}

Once again, the crowd applauded loudly. However, since they were facing the stage where Loli stood, they did not notice the fact that the one behind them had been finally lit, as well. Nor did they notice the person who stepped onto the stage dressed in a colorful performance costume.

{"Well then, if all of you are ready, let the first ever New Year's Extravaganza begin."} Loli said once he saw the signal that the first performance was ready. {"Now, let's welcome our first act for the night, Ishgar's favorite songstress, Lunar~~~~~! Edomae~~~~~!"}

{BGM: "Your Gravitation (My Bride is a Mermaid OST)" – Lunar Edomae}

With that, the music started playing from the speakers on the opposite stage, prompting everyone in the crowd to turn around. When they did, they saw the familiar, petite figure of Lunar Edomae waving at them from the stage. And as the music started to pick up, Lunar began to sing and dance passionately.

"So, that's why Lunar was here." Sun said while bringing her right fist down into her upturned left palm. "It makes sense now."

"Yeah, it really does." Ultear added excitedly. "And now, I'm curious to see just who else has showed up for this event."

And over the course of the next few hours, many acts took to the two stages one after another. There was a skit put on by Rabian's theater troupe from Scheherazade. A group of nine young women going by the name Mu's sang two songs.

The first, which raised the atmosphere of the crowd was called "START:DASH!!" and the second, which brought the event to its first climax, was called "Snow Halation." And to everyone's surprise, the one who seemed to be the most excited about this group of young women was Brandish. Though, Irene saw through her reasons quick enough.

"It's because their name is the same as your last name, isn't it?" Irene asked with a teasing smile on her face after Juliet asked Brandish why she seemed to like the group so much.

In response, Brandish turned away with her cheeks reddening. Then, in a voice small enough that she thought she would not be heard over the excited crowd, she said, "So what?" Naturally, when Irene started laughing uproariously at Brandish's response, she knew that she had failed at keeping her thoughts to herself.

The acts continued between the two stages until about 11:30 pm. After that, Loli once again took the microphone into his hands as he walked out onto the stage.

{ "This has been a great show so far, hasn't it?" } Loli asked into the microphone.

In response, the crowd cheered as usual. However, because the crowd was already so excited from all the great performances, it did not seem like it. Even so, Loli continued with a smile on his face.

{ "I know! It's been incredible!" } Loli said, answering his own question. { "And once again, let's thank Sixth Sense Holdings for putting all this together." }

This time, despite already being excited, the crowd cheered loud enough to make a difference.

{ "Now I know what you're thinking." } Loli continued once the crowd calmed down. { "Why is he stopping the show now, right? Well, we're just taking a little intermission. There will be some reporters from some of the most popular news outlets, for example, Sorcerer Weekly, walking around and interviewing people in the crowd to get their impressions of the show. Then, once they've had their chance to ask their questions, we'll get back to the show. You all can wait that long, right?" }

The crowd cheered loudly again. And before the noise could even die down, the reporters from the different media outlets were already in the crowd interviewing anyone they could from the more famous people present to ordinary townsfolk, all to put into their next articles. And that went on until about 11:59 pm.

"Alright, It's about time." Alfonzo said from the center of the crowd while wearing a disguise.

In the next instant, Alfonzo knelt on the stone road of the plaza. Then, he placed his hands on the ground and flared his magic power.

The flare of magic power caught the attention of all the Fairy Tail wizards present, though they had all relocated to the Kardia Cathedral by now, causing them to all look in Alfonzo's direction. When they did, what they saw was tall pole shooting up into the air with a colorful ball at the top. And on that ball, the year, x789 was inscribed. Shortly after the wizards, the normal townsfolk and visitors from other towns and cities also noticed the raised pole, as well.

"I knew it." Elicia muttered with a smile while looking up at the ball.

At the same time, Loli, seeing the pole that was raised in the center of the plaza, raised the microphone to his mouth once again.

{"Ladies and gentlemen!"} Loli said excitedly. {"It's almost that time. The time to say goodbye to x789. Are you ready to welcome the new year? If so, count down with us!"}

As soon as Loli reached that point, using his [Electromagnetism Magic], Alfonzo manipulated the visible light above the ball to start a timer.

{"Ten! Nine! Eight!"} Loli counted into the microphone while the people in the crowd joined him.

As the countdown continued, the ball at the top of the pole lowered. When it started to descend, Alfonzo, in a burst of speed, disappeared from below the pole. However, he continued to control the light show and the lowering of the ball.



'Ah! Now I get it.' Laxus, standing at the altar in the Kardia Cathedral, thought to himself while watching the ball drop through the Cathedral's windows. 'That's what he meant when he said the ball drops. But how did he have an idea like that before I even called him on it? That guy's mind works in strange ways.'

\*Zap!\*

"I feel like there are some weird thoughts running through your head, Laxus." Alfonzo, now dressed in his tuxedo to act as Laxus' best man, said as he appeared next to Laxus and the rest of the bridal party.

Not only the those participating in the wedding were in the Kardia Cathedral at this moment. Instead, all of the Fairy Tail guild's members and some of the others who were invited to attend had moved into the Cathedral, as well.

"Whatever." Laxus replied. "You're just lucky you're not late. Otherwise, Chico and Saya would have skinned you alive."

{"Three! Two! One!"} Lali's countdown continued.

January 1, x790.

{"Happy New Year!"} Loli's voice over the speaker system mixed with the crowd's excited cheers as the ball reached the bottom of the pole.

At that very moment, the wedding ceremony began with the bridal party walking into the venue. At the same time, a new act started on the stage opposite Loli. However, instead of a musical performance, it was another theater troupe. Alfonzo scheduled it this way so that the sound from the performance did not disrupt the ceremony too much.

Then, after the wedding ceremony ended and Laxus was officially married to Chico and Saya, the final act of the night stepped onto the stage. And to everyone's surprise, it was Lunar once again.

{BGM: "Lunarian (My Bride Is a Mermaid OST)" – Lunar Edomae}

Then, once that song ended, Sun climbed onto the stage with Lunar to perform the last song of the evening.

{BGM: Dan Dan Dan (My Bride Is a Mermaid OST) – Sun Seto & Lunar Edomae}

{"And that brings this New Year's Extravaganza to a close."} Loli said once the music stopped. {"Once again, let's thank sixth Sense Holdings for sponsoring such a magnificent show. And let's hope that this is just the first of many more shows like this to come. Thank you for coming! And everyone, please make sure to get home safely!"}

Chapter 672: It's Almost Here... And Everyone Seems to Be Looking Forward to It

Six months have passed since the ball dropped, ushering in year, x790. During that time, not much of note has happened. The wizards of Fairy Tail continued doing their jobs while destroying as little as possible. The only exceptions being the four problem children, Cana, Gray, Erza, and Natsu. Unfortunately for Lucy and Wendy, that meant that they were dragged into a lot of the collateral damage issues thanks to three of those four being on the same team as them.

Also, both little Elicia and Romeo have officially become members of the guild, having went on their first quests earlier in the year. And to celebrate their children's achievements, Macao and Maes paid Alfonzo to whip up a feast for the day they both came back after successfully completing their first quests.

Another thing to take note of was the fact that Bianca had her first birthday on the twenty-fourth of March. And like they had done with Amar'e's first birthday, Alfonzo and Mirajane invited everyone they knew to a party at the Mansion on the Lake. And to everyone's surprise, Darkness once again managed to keep all her... proclivities ... in check through the whole party.

As soon as she left, however, Darkness just about exploded from all the pent up tension, though.

Other than those few things, Alfonzo was once again invited to Era. And like last time, he was asked to join the Ten Wizard Saints. And this time, since he did not need to worry about God Serena, he accepted. However, he made it quite clear that he had no interest in participating in the Magic Council's business. Instead, as the strongest of all the Wizard Saints, he would only act when the continent was in danger.

Other than that, the only thing Alfonzo did was train with Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish for the upcoming Grand Magic Games. And over the months, their teamwork has improved tremendously. Alfonzo even took another page from the X-Men comics, and with the help of his [Electromagnetism Magic's] ability to control light to an extent, came up with a magic item that produces hard light constructs.

And although hard light constructs would help with battle training, he used it to simulate any type of event he could think of that might happen during the Grand Magic Games. As a result, the confidence Team Steel Threads had built up during the last two months since the magic item was created, had sky rocketed.

However, Ur has not been too happy with Alfonzo ever since he told her about the hard light projectors that he created. And the reason was simple. Alfonzo refused to install them in the guild hall's training rooms. And it wasn't because he wanted to keep the magic technology to himself. Rather, it was because none of his guild mates were careful enough to not destroy the delicate items needed to project the hard light constructs.

However, in the present, Alfonzo, with a disappointed expression on his face, floated down from the sky and landed in front of his mansion's front door after ending his solo training for the day.

"Damn it, I lost again." Alfonzo muttered as he placed his hand on the doorknob and injected some magic power into it. "I knew it would be tough, but I didn't expect it to be this hard."

["Don't be so down."] Bedlam said with a smile from Alfonzo's inner world. ["It's only been what? five years since you learned our names, right?"]

"Yeah, I guess." Alfonzo replied. "Still, I really don't like losing."

["Oh, quit your bitchin'."] Rio said with a scoff. ["How long does it usually take for a Soul Reaper to get as far as you have?"]

"\*Sigh\* I know." Alfonzo said as he pushed the front door open and stepped into the mansion. "It usually takes ten years, at the very least. Still, I don't like it."

["Besides, you're way ahead of everyone else by at least a few years."] Bedlam said. ["I mean, didn't Lici say it would take her at least two years before she could even manifest Scylla? And she's the furthest ahead after you."]

"I know, I know." Alfonzo grumbled. "But losing to myself is just pissing me off. Plus, I wanna be ready for... Well, you know."

The reason for Alfonzo's pause was simple, Maria, who had come to greet him at the door just arrived. And he did not want to mention any of his meta-knowledge in front of her.

"Welcome back, Master Alfonzo." Maria said with a smile while bowing politely. "I hope your training went well."

"\*Sigh\* Let's not talk about that." Alfonzo replied while shaking his head. "Anyway, where is everyone else?"

"Madams Elicia and Shizuka are in the living room playing with Amar'e, Bianca, and Calvin." Maria replied. "Madam Mirajane is in the kitchen preparing lunch with Grayfia while Madam Sun assists them. Madam Marin is in the Grotto with Miss Brandish, discussing a new release."

"Oh, Erza isn't with them?" Alfonzo asked as he started walking towards the living room with Maria following him at a respectful distance.

"No, Sir." Maria replied. "She and Madam Lucy left about an hour ago to take a quest with Mr. Gray, Mr. Natsu, and Miss Wendy."

"I see." Alfonzo said with a nod. "What about everyone else?"

"Mistress Rika is also out on a quest." Maria continued. "But I'm sure you already knew that, as she left yesterday with her team."

Alfonzo nodded in response.

"Mistress Saeko is in the training room, instructing Mr. Sasuke in his swordsmanship." Maria said, continuing her report. "Madam Cana is at the guild hall. Apparently, her father brought back a rather rare liquor from his last quest."

"Yeah, and I'm sure she could not resist extorting him for it." Alfonzo said with a chuckle.

"It would seem so." Maria replied with a giggle of her own while covering her mouth with one of her hands.

\*Beep!\* \*Beep!\*

At that moment, Alfonzo's iPhone beeped, notifying him that he received a text message. So, he pulled his iPhone out of his pocket before looking at the screen.

"Looks like Ultar is at the guild hall, too." Alfonzo said after reading the text message. "And she, or rather her mother, is inviting me to dinner tonight with Gildarts. Well, I guess I'll go. I haven't had dinner with them, especially Gildarts, in a while. They just better not ask me to cook."

With that, Alfonzo, followed by Maria, entered the living room. And when Alfonzo saw Elicia, Shizuka, Amar'e, Bianca, and Calvin sitting on the floor and playing together, he could not help but smile brightly.

"Hey, Daddy's home!" Alfonzo said loudly and cheerfully with a huge smile on his face.

Immediately, all the eyes in the room turned to face Alfonzo after his declaration. When they did, smiles appeared on all five faces. Then, without waiting for anyone else, Amar'e stood up before running towards Alfonzo as fast as his little legs could carry him.

"Daddy!" Amar'e cheered happily.

Smiling even wider, Alfonzo scooped the running Amar'e into his arms and hugged him. Then, he stepped forward and joined the rest of the room's occupants.

"Hey, Mar'e, how ya doin'?" Alfonzo asked while approaching the others.

Like Amar'e, both Bianca and Calvin were excited to see their father. Unfortunately, However, neither of the two children were able to move as quickly as Amar'e. While Bianca could also walk, she was unstable in her steps. Calvin, on the other hand, had not learned how to walk yet.

Even so, Alfonzo eventually picked up both his daughter and his second son after putting Amar'e down. After that, Alfonzo joined Elicia and Shizuka in playing with the children until Mirajane called everyone to eat.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Onibus.

"Men!" Ichiya shouted as he walked out of one of the training chambers in the Blue Pegasus guild hall after a grueling workout. "There's no way we'll come in any lower than number one this year. Men!"

"You're absolutely correct, Master/Big Brother/Master Ichiya." The Trimens replied in unison, though their term of address was different for Ichiya.

"Seriously, can you all please standardize that/" Sorano asked in a tired tone. She then shifted her gaze to Ichiya as she continued. "Don't get too over confident, Ichiya. I heard Alfonzo and Elicia will be participating in the Games this year."

"Formidable opponents they may be." Ichiya replied while striking a handsome pose. "However, you mustn't forget, we are Blue Pegasus!"

"Ichiya!" All the members of Blue Pegasus cheered after hearing Ichiya's declaration.

In response, Sorano only rolled her eyes before looking away. However, when she saw Yukino clapping along with Ichiya's impassioned speech, she could not help but smile wryly. But when her gaze landed



on Karen, who seemed to be staring off into the distance, she could not help but approach the green-haired model with a touch of concern.

"Hey, Karen... Is everything---" Sorano began to ask.

Yet, before she could finish her question, Sorano heard Karen muttering to herself. Then, she once again rolled her eyes before walking away and heading to the showers.

"I can't believe that crazy heifer hasn't given up yet." Sorano muttered to herself as she walked away.

At the same time, anyone who approached close enough to Karen to hear her mumbling, also turned around and got some distance away from her as quickly as possible.

"Elicia, I can't wait." Karen sad quietly with bloodshot eyes. "Finally, I'll be able to taste your punishment in a public place. Oh, how I've looked forward to this, ever since the Grand Magic Games was first announced."

Meanwhile, Bob watched his children with a smile on his face while Jenny stood next to him., He then turned to Jenny with a calculating light in his eyes.

"Jenny, this should be a perfect opportunity." Bob said. "During the Grand Magic Games, you'll be able to show off your good points. Then, you'll be able to make that boy fall in love with you."

'Then, it should be much easier to make him join Blue Pegasus.' Bob thought to himself. 'And when he comes to Blue Pegasus, his girls will come along with him. Then, Blue Pegasus will have all the most beautiful men and women in Ishgar among its ranks.'

"Yes, Master Bob." Jenny replied with a strong nod and a serious expression on her face. "I'll do my best."

'I'll show that Mirajane that I'm not just after Alfonzo for his ability to make me stronger.' Jenny muttered to herself. 'And when I show him my true self, he'll definitely fall for me, too. Then, I'll be able to join his family and show Mirajane that she's not better than me.'

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Quatro Cerberus Headquarters.

"They're finally going to compete this year." Ikkaku said excitedly while dancing around on his toes. "This is definitely news worthy of my Happy Dance."

"You're really looking forward to fighting Elicia again, aren't you, Ikkaku?" Yumichika asked with a smirk on his face. "\*Sigh\* Seeing her create new, beautiful, clothing is the true wonder."

"I would tell you you're wrong, but it won't make a difference." Ikkaku replied while continuing to dance.

"Elicia, huh?" Bacchus, who was sitting at a nearby table, said to himself while listening to the conversation between Ikkaku and Yumichika. "I'll admit, I wouldn't mind seeing her again. But I'm sure she doesn't want to see me."

"I just hope she doesn't try to kill you again." Goldmine said while shaking his head before taking a sip from a martini. "Then again, Alfonzo will probably stop her if things come to that."

In response, Bacchus grimaced while remembering just how close to dying he was when he truly angered Elicia. However, he managed to shake the fear from that day off while smiling in self-deprecation.

"Even so, I hope I finally get a chance to fight with Alfonzo." Bacchus said. "And since I've finally come to my senses, the chances of him killing me is much lower."

"Probably." Goldmine replied with a nod. "I'm actually surprised that he never tried before. I know I would have."

"\*Sigh\* Me, too." Bacchus replied while shaking his head.

"Surprised that he never tried to kill you?" Goldmine asked curiously. "Or the fact that you would have tried to kill yourself if you were in his shoes?"

"Yes." Bacchus replied, receiving an understanding nod from Goldmine in return.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Margaret.

"I'm truly looking forward to facing Alfonzo in battle once again." Jura, with his palms pressed together while sitting at one of the tables in the Lamia Scale guild hall, said in a peaceful tone. "I'm curious to know how much stronger he has gotten."

"Do you really think you stand a chance?" Ooba Babasama asked while leaning her face on her right hand while it was being supported by her elbow on the table.

"More than likely, no." Jura replied without an ounce of shame. "However, I'd like to know just how far I have to go to reach his level. To think, someone so much younger than myself has reached such heights."

"Yeah, he was named one of the Gods of Ishgar only a few months ago." Ooba added. "This almost doesn't seem fair to everyone else. And he's what? Eleven years younger than you are?"

"That's right." Jura replied. "But since he can only compete in one event and one battle, it should be fine."

"Lyon! You have to show her your {Love}." Sherry said while clenching her left fist to her chest and spreading her right arm out theatrically while the word, "love," reverberated strongly.

Sherry's outburst interrupted Ooba's and Jura's conversation, causing them to look in the direction of Sherry's voice. When they did, they saw Team Lamia Scale, Lyon, Sherry, Yuka, and Toby, along with Takashi, Rei, and Sherria sitting at a table together. On top of that, Lyon was clenching his fists with a determined flame burning in his eyes.

"\*Sigh\* Oh to be young again." Ooba said as a small smile spread across her aged face.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Mermaid Heel Headquarters.

"So, we'll be competing against Alfonzo and Marin, huh?" Anko asked as she took a seat at the bar on the Mermaid Heel guild hall's first floor. "I've never fought any of them. I wonder how this will go. Too bad Cana's not on their team, though. That would be fun."

"I'm not sure." Yoruichi replied from the seat to Anko's left while shaking her head. "But I'm sure keeping our title as the strongest guild in Fiore will be much harder than winning it."

"He can't really be that strong, can he?" Rangiku, who came with Anko to the bar, asked. "I mean, I know you said he's stronger than you. Plus, he became a Wizard Saint. But... There's only one of him, right?"

"Don't underestimate the rest of his team." Yoruichi replied. "He's not the only one who is stronger than me, you know. I'm pretty sure I'd lose to Lici, too."

"Really?" Rangiku asked skeptically. "But [Thread Magic] doesn't seem all that strong to me. I'm sure Haineke could slip between any of her thread constructs and cut them apart from the inside."

"That might be possible if her threads were normal threads." Yoruichi replied with a shrug. "But I guess you'll have to see her in action to believe me."

"Well, I know exactly what she's capable of... Well, that was two years ago, though." Anko said, cutting back into the competition. "And the way she played with Sand and Sound Jōnin and Chunin let me know just how strong she was."

"I won't lose to her again." Sui-Feng muttered while clenching her fists.

"What?" Rangiku asked in a surprised tone. "You lost to her, Sui-Feng?"

In response, Sui-Feng only gritted her teeth.. But her non-answer was enough of an answer to let everyone know the situation.

Meanwhile, Retsu, sitting at a table not too far away from the bar, watched the four members of Team Mermaid Heel while her disciple, Kagura, the fifth member of the team, sat across from her sipping a cup of tea.

"Master, what do you think our chances of keeping the championship at this year's Grand Magic Games are?" Kagura asked after placing her teacup on the table.

In response, Retsu turned away from the bar and looked at Kagura with her ever-present, gentle smile.

"The chances are not high." Retsu replied in a gentle tone, which caused Kagura to lower her head. "But nothing is certain until the battle has been fought. So, work hard my disciple. And as long as you do your best, you will have nothing to regret."

Hearing that, Kagura raised her head and looked into Retsu's eyes. Then, she nodded her head strongly. Meanwhile Retsu continued to smile gently. However, her thoughts were not so gentle.

'Hopefully, you'll push that boy to show his true power.' Retsu thought while internally licking her lips. 'And if his power is enough, I may be able to have the fight I've been looking for, for nearly a century'

Chapter 673: The x790 Grand Magic Games Begin!

"It's almost time." Marin said while standing in the suite she, Alfonzo, and the rest of Alfonzo's harem stay in when they are in Crocus. "I wonder what the preliminary round will be like this year?"

Not only Alfonzo and his harem were in the room, however. The three children are also there. But that was to be expected. On top of that, Brandish, the last member of Team Steel Threads was in the room as well.

"Does it matter?" Brandish asked in her usual, almost bored, tone. "All we have to do is win. Then, we'll be in the main event."

"Well, Brandish isn't wrong." Alfonzo said with a smile while holding the sleeping Bianca. "But depending on the event, it may be harder than we expected."

"Even so, I know we're gonna make it, ya see?" Sun said in a bubbly tone.

"Sun's right." Elicia replied with a smile. "We've been waiting too long for this. There's no way we're going home before the Grand Magic Games officially start."

"\*Sigh\* And there goes Lici raising flags again." Ultear said while holding Amar'e, who like his sisters, was also asleep.

"No, this time she didn't raise a flag." Cana said with a smile. "If they can't make it to the real games, then this thing is rigged."

"Besides, if they don't make it, they'll have to deal with my punishment." Irene said with a sadistic smile on her face.

Immediately, all five members of Team Steel Threads began to shudder in fear of what Irene could possibly cook up as a punishment.

July 1, x790.

\*Buzz~~~~~!\*~!

At that moment, a loud alarm sounded over the city of Crocus. Shortly afterwards, a light shined into the sky from the city's central plaza.

{"Hello! Hello! Can everyone hear me?"} Mato's high-pitched voice said while being projected over the city. {"You all know what time it is, right? It's time to pick the eight guilds who will compete for the title of Fiore's strongest. So, I ask that all teams report to the central plaza where I will explain the rules of this year's preliminary game."}



Moments later, guild wizards from all over the city could be seen rushing from their hotels to the central plaza outside the Flower Light Palace, Mercurius, hoping to be the first to arrive and maybe gain an advantage in the upcoming preliminary event.

"Well, I guess that's our cue." Alfonzo said as he handed Bianca to Mirajane. "This should be fun."

"Good luck." Mirajane replied while receiving her daughter from Alfonzo before pecking him on the cheek. "Break a leg."

"Just make sure it's the opponents leg, okay?" Ultear said in a somewhat sadistic tone.

"Be sure to fight with honor." Erza said as she looked over the members of Team Steel Threads.

"Of course!" Sun cheered excitedly.

"We'll be watching." Lucy said with a smile.

"Yeah, shoot 'em dead." Rika added.

"We'll await your return." Saeko said.

In response, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, and Sun smiled before nodding their heads. Meanwhile, Brandish also nodded. Though, there was no smile to be seen on her face.

After that, the group of five made their way out of the room at a brisk pace. Then, they headed down stairs to leave the hotel. However, when they stepped out of the elevator, they ran into the rest of the Fairy Tail wizards, who were gathered to send them off. Even Makarov was present.

"Make us proud, kids." Ur said with a smile as she raised her right hand with her thumb extended and pointing her index finger to the sky.

A moment later, all the other Fairy Tail wizards made the same gesture.

\*Bang!\*

Unfortunately, the moment was ruined when Alfonzo launched a chunk of metal at Natsu's forehead when he breathed a jet of fire into the air. However, when Gajeel leapt to eat the chunk of metal, everyone started laughing at the usual act.

Yet, Team Steel Threads did not stay to laugh and be rowdy with the rest of their guild, instead, they walked through the hotel's lobby and made their way outside.

Once they were outside, the five wizards picked up the pace. And despite leaving the hotel so slowly, they were still one of the first ten teams to reach the central plaza. Still, when they arrived, they had a lot of time to observe the other teams.

"Oh, Mermaid Heel beat us here." Marin said while frowning at Yoruichi and Sui-Feng. "Of course they did, those two are basically speed demons."

At the end of Marin's line of sight, Yoruichi, Kagura, Sui-Feng, Anko, and Rangiku stood. And they were watching Team Steel Threads, as well, while chatting amongst themselves.

"Blue Pegasus is here, too." Sun said, pointing at the wizards of Blue Pegasus. "Oh, Kai is with them, too."

Where Sun pointed, the other members of Team Steel Threads could see Sorano, Karen, Jenny, and Kai surrounding Ichiya, who was smiling as he usually did. Meanwhile, Karen was staring at Elicia with desire while Kai stared at Sun with a mixture of longing and acceptance. Jenny, on the other hand, stared at Alfonzo with a determined, lovestruck look in her eyes. Lastly, Sorano looked at the group with an apologetic expression, feeling a bit of second-hand embarrassment from her team mates.

"I know she's been on Blue Pegasus' team ever since the first Grand Magic Games, but I was hoping that she would sit this one out." Elicia said after turning away from Karen's fervent gaze, which made Karen blush at the perceived neglect play.

"You didn't really think that was possible, did you?" Marin asked with a grin. "She's so into you that it's not funny. She even tried to make you change your mind on your wedding day, remember?"

"Ugh! Don't remind me." Elicia groaned to Marin's amusement.

"But how did they beat us here?" Brandish asked in an almost lazy tone.

"Because their hotel is right there." Alfonzo replied while pointing at a hotel that was only a few buildings away from the plaza.

Seeing where Alfonzo was pointing, Brandish nodded her head in understanding.

"Besides, I'm more interested in that team over there." Alfonzo said, pointing at another team of five wizards.

Where Alfonzo pointed, there was a group of five wizards standing, four young men and a young woman.

The first of the five is a slim, yet muscular young man of average height with spiky blond hair that juts out in all directions with a prominent bang hanging in front of his forehead and slanted blue eyes with slit pupils. He wore an earring in his left ear with a metallic pendant hanging from it, a blue vest with gold accents and grey fur lining, a cream-colored top under the vest that showed off his abdomen, a pair of dark blue gloves that reach the middle of his biceps, showing off his white guild emblem on his left shoulder, a pair of cream-colored loose-fitting pants that resembled Natsu's and were held up by suspenders, as well as a pair of dark blue galoshes that reach to the middle of his thighs and attach to the top of his pants on the outside.

Next was another young man of average height with messy, shoulder-length black hair and red eyes with slit pupils. He donned a grey long sleeve shirt with brown cuffs, a pale blue sash tied around his waist with a waist guard made of four cloth pieces hanging from it. On each cloth piece, a stylized cross with fan-shaped arms is embroidered. For footwear, he wore a pair of armored boots that reached his knees. And on top of all of that, he wore a black cape that trailed down to his feet with golden accents, a

grey collar, and a white ribbon tying it together. Also, there was a guild emblem sewn over the left shoulder.

Third was another slim young man of average height with long, straight blond hair and deep, green eyes. He wore a crimson red mask with gold edges that covered his nose, eyebrows, and cheek bones, leaving only his forehead and the lower half of his face visible. His attire consisted of a long, red vest with gold accents that reached his knees that was closed at the waist with a few buttons, a cream-colored long sleeved shirt with cuffs that flared out, and a pair of tan pants and knee-high black boots. He also wore a three-layered jabot around his neck and a large brimmed, crimson red hat to match his vest and mask with large pink plumage on the left side.

The fourth member of the team that caught Alfonzo's interest was a massive, muscular man with a spiky, shoulder-length light green hair and light grey eyes. He wore a simple black headband over his forehead to keep his hair from getting in the way. As for his attire, he only wore a pair of white, pin-stripe pants, black shoes, a yellow cloth wrapped around his waist and secured with a brown band, and brown arm bands that covered his forearms. He also had a number of tattoos on his shoulders and biceps with the rest of his upper body left bare.

The last member of the team was the young woman. She was of average height with a considerably curvaceous figure with facial features that made her look eastern, black eyes, and lower back-length dark purple, almost black, hair left to mostly hang freely down her back. However, she also had a pair of dango loops on either side of her head with small braids hanging from each, and bangs that framed her face and hung down over her breasts. She wore a strapless dress, reminiscent of a cheongsam with a slit on the left side that exposed her thigh, that was two-toned in color, blue in the front and black in the back. She completed her outfit with a pair of black, mid-calf height boots and a pair of two-toned shoulder-length gloves that matched the color of her dress.

"Hmm? Who are they?" Marin asked curiously. "I don't recognize their guild emblem. But those two give me a feeling similar to Natsu, Gajeel, and Wendy."

The two Marin was talking about were the black-haired young man and the spiky, blond young man.

"Well, that doesn't surprise me." Alfonzo said with a smile. "They're Dragon Slayers, after all."

"And the guild they're a part of is called Sabertooth." Elicia added. "They're a fairly new guild. But they've gained a lot of fame due to their twin Dragon Slayers, Sting Eucliffe and Rogue Cheney."

Hearing that, Marin and Sun opened their eyes wide. Brandish, on the other hand, was not surprised by the news, as she had already been keeping up to date on the more famous guilds in the kingdom.

At that moment, having noticed Team Steel Threads gazes, the five members of Sabertooth all turned to look in their direction. And when they did, the Fairy Tail wizards all noticed expressions filled with superiority on the Sabertooth wizards' faces. They even saw a hint of disdain coming from the twin Dragon Slayers.

"You know, I don't like the way they're looking at us." Sun said, her bubbly tone nowhere to be seen.

"Yeah, I think we're gonna have to show them why Fairy Tail is the strongest." Marin said, her competitive spirit coming to the forefront.

"I agree." Brandish added concisely.

'Well, it doesn't surprise me that they look at us like that.' Elicia thought to herself while listening to her team mates with a smile on her face. She then continued her thoughts after waving at the members of Sabertooth in a friendly manner which made the five wizards either snort or scoff at her show of

friendliness. 'I mean, Jiemma has been brainwashing them into thinking they are the strongest for years without any notable feats to back it up.'

'That disdain in Sting and Rogue's eyes isn't even meant for us.' Alfonzo thought to himself at the same time. 'It's more than likely because they always wanted to fight Natsu and Gajeel. But every year they've seen the Grand Magic Games, neither of those two has been on the team. They probably think they are weak, too. Man, I wonder what they would think if they actually fought them. Without a seven year gap in their training plus all the extra training they've been doing with the gravity chambers, those two don't stand a yellow snowball's chance in hell of ever beating them.'

Meanwhile, the rest of the teams who planned on participating had all reached the plaza. That included Lamia Scale and Quatro Cerberus. And as soon as the last team arrived, Mato spoke again.

{"Alright, it looks like everyone is here."} Mato said in his energetic tone. {"But this time, we're gonna do something a little different. Instead of testing your teams speed, agility, brains, or even luck like we have in the last few years, we'll be testing just one thing. We wanna know who can hit the hardest. So, for this year's preliminary round, each team will send one member up to hit the Magic Power Finder with their strongest attack. And the eight teams with the highest scores will get to move on to the real show starting later today."}

Chapter 674: Grand Magic Games Preliminaries; Part 1

{"Alright, it looks like everyone is here."} Mato said in his energetic tone. {"But this time, we're gonna do something a little different. Instead of testing your teams speed, agility, brains, or even luck like we have in the last few years, we'll be testing just one thing. We wanna know who can hit the hardest. So, for this year's preliminary round, each team will send one member up to hit the Magic Power Finder with their strongest attack. And the eight teams with the highest scores will get to move on to the real show starting later today."}

Hearing that the crowd burst into a slight uproar with those confident in their strength cheering happily. Meanwhile, those who had lower single attack strength grumbled at the unfairness.

For those who are unaware, the Magic Power Finder is a magic item used to quantify the strength of a magic spell. Meaning, when the Magic Power Finder is struck with a magic spell, it will rate the strength of the spell that hit it with a score ranging anywhere from 1 to 9,999.

However, before the crowd could get too rowdy, a magic circle was activated right in front of the gates to the Flower Light Palace, its light drawing everyone's attention.

{"Now, so that we're not out here all night, please step into the magic circle you see in front of you."} Mato said in his usual upbeat tone. {"When you do, each team will be randomly relocated to one of the arenas set up for this event. Then, the winner in each arena will be the team to move on. Got it? Good. Now, let's get going."}

With that said, the wizards in the plaza started to step forward.

{"Oh, and don't worry about being separated from your teams."} Mato added just before the first wizard stepped into the magic circle. {"The magic circle can detect your guild emblems. So, you will be transported to the arena where the rest of your guild mates ended up."}

"Does that mean we have to wait until everyone else is done before we can get out of these so-called arenas?" A random wizard from a less than well-known guild asked, shouting up into the sky.

{"An excellent question."} Mato replied. {"And to answer your question, the answer is no. As soon as the wizard representing each team has taken the test, they and the rest of their team will be teleported back to the plaza. After that, they will be free to return to their lodgings."}



With that said, Mato waved his hand. Then, his projection turned into eight separate images, each showing one of the arenas, a barren land with nothing but a Magic Power Finder device floating on one side of the area. Meanwhile, flashes of light started popping on the other side of the area before guild wizards took their places.

Not only did each view show the various arenas. But there was also a scoreboard to the side of each arena's view. However, because no one had struck the Magic Power Finder Device yet, there were no values on any of the scoreboards.

"So, who should do it?" Alfonzo asked as he and the rest of his team walked towards the teleportation circle.

"Not me." Brandish replied. "Although I'm confident in defeating most wizards in a fight. [Command T] doesn't have any offensive power."

"Same here." Elicia added. "Well, that's not exactly true. But my magic is best suited to support my physical abilities and creativity."

"I'm not really the best when it comes to one-hit power, either." Marin said with a shrug. She then turned to look at Alfonzo and Sun. "So, that leaves the two of you."

"Well, do you wanna do it?" Alfonzo asked Sun with a smile.

"Hmm?" Sun hummed in thought while tilting her head cutely. A moment later, she shook her head and replied. "No, I think you should do it. You have the highest destructive power out of all of us."

"If you say so." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "Well then, let's put the fear of God (of Ishgar) into the others on our platform."

In response to Alfonzo's little joke, Elicia, Marin, and Brandish all rolled their eyes. Sun, on the other hand, smiled cheerfully as she hugged Alfonzo's arm just before they all stepped into the magic circle.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #6.

A moment later, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish found themselves standing in one of the arenas among about an eighth of the wizards who entered the magic circle before they did.

Looking around, the five were unable to see any of the guilds from the favorites to make the main event. They could also see a projection of the scoreboard everyone in Crocus was able to see floating above the Magic Power Finder Device. And just like it was before they stepped into the magic circle, it was still empty.

"Randomly teleported my ass." Alfonzo muttered after looking around. "It's clear they have an idea who is going to make it through the prelims. And they made sure to split up all those teams."

"Well, it wouldn't be any fun if all the strong teams eliminated each other in the prelims, would it?" Elicia asked with a smile.

"\*Sigh\* I know." Alfonzo replied. "Anyway, look at all these guys discussing who should go up. They're just wasting time. By now, they should all know which of their team mates has the strongest single target attack, right?"

"They probably are trying not to show off too much of their capabilities." Brandish said, analyzing the other teams' thought process. "That way, they can keep a trump card in reserve."

"Whatever." Marin said. "Let's just get this over with. I wanna go back to sleep. Go, Fonzie! I choose you!"

With that, Alfonzo, Elicia, Sun, and Brandish all looked at Marin strangely. While Sun and Brandish just thought Marin's phrasing was over the top and unnecessary, Alfonzo and Elicia were thoroughly dumbfounded by her exclamation.

'Where the fuck did that come from?' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'Pokémon don't even exist in this reality. And I haven't started introducing the story yet. I mean, I'm still trying to work out what to add to TVs when I invent them.'

'Marin is in a class of her own.' Elicia thought to herself. 'I mean, she was kind of an otaku in her source material. I wonder if that's why she can somehow find things that relate to her past life.'

"What?" Marin asked while shrinking under the incredulous gazes of the other. "It wasn't that weird, was it?"

Deciding to worry about that later, Alfonzo turned around and started walking towards the Magic Power Finder. And as he got closer and closer, he attracted more attention from the other wizards in the arena. By the time he reached his optimal attack distance, every eye in the arena was focused on him.

However, not just the eyes in the arena were focused on Alfonzo, as the first wizard to step up and attack, both those still in Crocus, as well as the wizards in the other arenas were watching him, as when Alfonzo got close to the device, screens of all the other arenas showed up in each arena.

"Oh, I've got the whole kingdom watching me now, huh?" Alfonzo asked himself with a smile. "Well then, let's put on a show."

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #5.

"Oh, it looks like Alfonzo is making his move." Jura said with a peaceful expression on his face. "Let's see just how strong he's gotten over the years."

"Is he really that strong?" Lyon asked. "I mean, I know he's one of the Ten Wizard Saints, but so are you, Jura."

"I assure you; he is that strong." Jura replied.

"Yeah, I remember Takashi and Rei talking about how strong he was." Yuka added. "Apparently, he can rain down lightning from the sky. And that's him attacking casually."

"Either way, we'll find out shortly. Jura said while watching the screen of Arena #6.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #8.

"Hey, Yoruichi, have you ever seen Alfonzo go all out before?" Anko asked curiously.

"Just once." Yoruichi replied. "Well, I saw it from a distance. But I still remember that ray of purple light that connected the ground to the sky. And that was after drilling through almost thirty feet of solid rock."

"Are you serious?" Rangiku asked in a disbelieving tone.

"If you don't believe me, you can ask Kagura." Yoruichi replied. "She went on that quest, too."

Hearing that, Sui-Feng, Anko, and Rangiku all turned to look at Kagura, who calmly nodded her head in return.

"I was even further away than Yoruichi when that happened." Kagura said. "But the amount of power was like nothing I had ever felt before that point. And that was almost six years ago."

"Well, let's just wait to see how much stronger he's gotten since then." Yoruichi said, putting an end to the discussion while she and the other members of Team Mermaid Heel watched the screen.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #2.

"Oh, Fairy Tail looks as if they are going to be the first to take this little test." The young woman from the Sabertooth guild, Minerva Orland, said with a smirk on her face while looking up at the screens.

"He's one of the Ten Wizard Saints, right?" Sting asked. "I wonder just how strong he is."

"Does it matter?" Rogue asked emotionlessly. "Dragon Slayers are the strongest. There's no way he could be stronger than us."

"That's right." Sting replied. "Since Natsu and Gajeel aren't on the team, they're probably only sending out weaklings. Especially since their Lightning Dragon Slayer lost last year."

"Well, what do you expect." The masked young man, Rufus Lore, said while touching his right index and middle finger to his right temple. "I have no powerful feats from this Alfonzo Marcus in my memory."

"That's right!" the light green-haired young man, Orga Nanagear, shouted while raising his fists into the air. "Sabertooth is the strongest!"

"Be quiet." Minerva ordered while watching the screen like a hawk.

Immediately, the four Sabertooth wizards fell silent. Then, like Minerva, they watched the screen, as well.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

Like the wizards in the eight arenas, all the people in Crocus were watching the screens floating above the city. And after seeing Alfonzo take the first step forward, aside from the members of Fairy Tail, Retsu was the most interested in his results.

Ever since the day she had worked with Alfonzo to bring down Irene before she switched sides, Retsu had been looking forward to Alfonzo's growth. The potential she could sense from him during that fight was immense. So, she was quite interested to see how much he had grown since the last time she saw him fight.

"Show me your limits." Retsu said quietly while watching the floating screen. "Show me that I was not wrong about you."

Meanwhile, in another part of the city Itachi and Kisame, who had been tasked with keeping track of the growth of the wizards participating in the Grand Magic Games from year to year, were also watching the screen showing Alfonzo.

"Hey, that's the girl who stopped us from capturing the Nine-Tails brat that one time, right?" Kisame asked while pointing at the screen.

"It is." Itachi replied while watching the screen with his Sharingan active. "And if it weren't for the fact that she was protecting Naruto, I have a feeling that she would have been quite difficult to deal with. But more importantly, we need information on what the other members of Fairy Tail are capable of, just in case Pain decides we need to attack Magnolia to retrieve the Nine-Tails."

In response, Kisame simply nodded his head while returning his attention to the screen.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #6.

"Alright, let's go." Alfonzo muttered quietly.

In the next instant, Alfonzo flared his magic power to its limit, putting pressure on everyone unlucky enough to be in the same arena as him.

"What the hell?"

"How can this be?"

"Impossible!"

After feeling the weight of Alfonzo's magic power, every wizard in the arena, with the exception of Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish, were forced to their knees, with some of the weaker ones being either pressed flat on the ground or falling unconscious.



\*Zap~~~~~!\*

Alfonzo then raised his hands to his sides. As he did, he was coated in arcs of violet electricity. Then, he focused all that electricity into his palms. So, it looked as if he were holding a pair of violet orbs surging with electricity. However, that did not last for long, as instead of only using electricity, he added other aspects of the Electromagnetic Spectrum, as well.

First, the color of the orbs paled significantly when Alfonzo added radio waves into the mix. Then, they took on a redder hue as he added microwaves. Following that, the color seemed to turn grey once infrared radiation was added into the mix. Next, the color turned to a bright white as he used visible light to manipulate the orbs' color. Following that, Ultraviolet Radiation and X-Rays were combined with each orb. However, because of the visible light manipulation, the color did not change again.

"I think that should be enough." Alfonzo muttered while letting his gaze shift between the orbs in his hands. "I really don't wanna have to worry about controlling the gamma radiation to not hurt anyone or the environment if I were to add that, too."

With that decided, Alfonzo brought his hands together, combining the two orbs into one larger one. Then, he aimed his hands at the Magic Power Finder. However, he did not finish casting his spell immediately. Instead, he stopped to think for a moment. Then, he used his [Metal Magic] to levitate the Magic Power Finder into the air. All the while, his hands and the orbs of Electromagnetically charged magic power raised along with it.

Then, when Alfonzo was certain that he would not harm anything, or anyone, when he cast his spell, he nodded to himself.

"[Electromagnetism Magic: Final Flash]." Alfonzo chanted.

In the next instant, a sound that was hard to describe could be heard everywhere in Arena #6, forcing all the weaker wizards to cover their ears. Luckily, the sounds were not broadcast along with the images. Otherwise, more than a few eardrums would have been blown out as collateral damage from the spell.

At the same time, the beam of bright, sparking, white light that was fired from the orb in Alfonzo's hands crossed the distance to the Magic Power Finder in what seemed to be the blink of an eye. Then, while striking the Magic Power Finder, the beam continued forward, lighting up the sky.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

At the same time, east of the city, a pillar of white light rose into the sky, lighting up the majority of the city as if the sun was rising. And although no one other than the Grand Magic Games' organizers knew exactly how far away the preliminary arenas were located, they all could tell that they were not exactly close to Crocus.

Despite that, Alfonzo's spell was able to be seen from every corner of Crocus. And that left most of the people in the city slack-jawed in amazement. However, there were a few exceptions. For example, the wizards of Fairy Tail wore expressions that said: "As expected." Though, there were a few who wanted to fight Alfonzo immediately after seeing his display of power. \*Cough\* Natsu. \*Cough\* Gajeel. \*Cough\*

Meanwhile, Retsu continued to smile while watching the pillar that lit up the eastern sky. However, her usual gentle smile was replaced with one that was radiating so much bloodlust that it was a wonder that anyone staying in the same hotel was still conscious.

In another corner of the city, both Itachi and Kisame watched the light pillar with dumbfounded amazement in their expressions. While Kisame was simply in awe, Itachi's mind was working at high-speed.

'I can't let the rest of the Akatsuki find out that Alfonzo Marcus is really this powerful.' Itachi thought to himself. 'If they find out, there's a much greater chance that they will hold off on trying to get the Nine-Tailed Fox until after Naruto returns to the village. And that would not only put the village in danger, but Sasuke would be in greater danger, as well. But what should I do to make them believe that he's no threat, so they'd rush to their deaths on their own?'

"Itachi, just how strong does someone have to be to cast a spell like that?" Kisame asked.

"Don't believe what your eyes are telling you." Itachi replied in a disdainful tone. "That attack is just flashy. All show, no substance. Besides, did you see how long it took him to prepare it? Believe me, Alfonzo Marcus is no threat."

Hearing that, Kisame turned away from the eastern horizon to look at Itachi. And he just held that position for a while. Then, when he saw that Itachi's expression did not change after saying that, he nodded in understanding. Then, he smiled slightly while turning back to look at the dimming light pillar in the distance.

"The Sharingan really is amazing." Kisame said. "If you weren't here, I would have thought he was too much for even Pain to deal with."

'Thank goodness he's not only dumb but extremely trusting of his allies.' Itachi thought to himself while nodding to Kisame's words.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #6.

Around that time, Alfonzo's [Final Flash] fizzled out. When it did, everyone looked up. However, when they did, they were unable to find the Magic Power Finder. Then, they looked at the scoreboard to see Team Fairy Tail's score.

"What does this mean?" A male wizard asked in a confused tone.

The reason for such a question was what was posted on the scoreboard. No one knew how to react what they were seeing.

{Magic Power Finger

Rank Name Score

Fairy Tail ERROR}

After seeing the scoreboard, everyone turned to look at Alfonzo, who was confidently walking back to the rest of the team. Then, when he felt everyone's gazes on him, Alfonzo smiled brightly.

"If any of you can evaporate the MPF, too, I don't mind letting you have this round." Alfonzo said before continuing to walk forward.

And just as Alfonzo said, after the Grand Magic Games Executive Committee verified that the Magic Power Finder had indeed evaporated thanks to the heat and energy produced by Alfonzo's spell. They then granted Alfonzo a score of infinity before teleporting Team Fairy Tail back to the plaza.

Meanwhile, after hearing the verdict on Fairy Tail's score, nearly seventy percent of the teams in that arena gave up directly. Then, after a few teams tried their luck, scoring no higher than 998, the rest of the teams gave up, as well.

Chapter 675: Grand Magic Games Preliminaries; Part 2

After Alfonzo's display of not just destroying, but evaporating, the Magic Power Finder, the entire city of Crocus and the other seven Preliminary Arenas fell into a tense silence. However, that silence did not last long, as Blue Pegasus's, Lamia Scale's, Mermaid Heel's, Quatro Cerberus', and Sabertooth's teams decided they would not be out done.

And when the audience saw those five guilds start to move, they all cheered in excitement.

"Come on, Lamia Scale!"

"Let's go, Blue Pegasus!"

Mermaid Heel, I love you!"

"Sabertooth is the strongest!"

"Do it, Quatro Puppy! \*Smack!\* Ah! \*Cough\* I mean, Quatro Cerberus!"

Cheers like those rang out throughout Crocus so loudly that even those who were not woken up by the loud buzzer at midnight, found themselves awake and interested in the proceedings. Meanwhile, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish stood just outside the central plaza and watched the screens like everyone else.

"So, who do you think is gonna get the highest score?" Alfonzo asked curiously with a smile on his face.

"You mean other than you?" Brandish asked in a dry tone.

"Naturally." Alfonzo replied. "Not to sound arrogant, but can't none of them fuck with me."

"Bring it down a notch, Fonzie." Elicia said in a somewhat reprimanding tone.

"Take it easy, Lici." Alfonzo said as he reached out to start combing his fingers through Elicia's hair. "I'm talking about single target attack damage. I know I'm out classed in a few categories by some of them. For example, I can't compare to Jura in defensive techniques. Nor am I as quiet as Yoruichi when I move at top speed."

"But you didn't say that your defense is weaker than Jura's or your speed is lower than Yoruichi's Marin pointed out, playing devil's advocate.

"Well, that's because I'm not sure." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "But I'm not counting myself out."

"Oh, look, the first one is attacking." Sun said, drawing everyone's attention to the screens.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #5.

After discussing with his teammates, Jura, the leader of Team Lamia Scale stepped forward with a peaceful expression on his face. However, everyone in the arena could feel his magic power roiling just under the surface, ready to be unleashed in a devastating attack. The closer Jura got to the Magic Power Finder, the further away the other wizards stepped from it.

\*Smack!\*

Once Jura stopped, he slapped his palms together while flaring his magic power to its limits. Then, he surged his magic power into the ground underneath the floating Magic Power Finder.

"Now!" Jura said sharply as he cast his spell. "[Rumbling Mount Fuji]."

\*Boom!\*

With that, the magic power Jura sent into the ground exploded upwards, destroying the ground as it did so. Then, along with debris that was sent flying from the ground, Jura's magic power slammed into the underside of the Magic Power Finder. And just like the debris, it, too, was sent flying into the sky.

Meanwhile, Jura, with his expression still peaceful, watched the devastation his magic power caused. At the same time, the other wizards in the arena, although they could only see Jura's silhouette, had to admit that his silhouette against the bright light of his spell mixed with the flapping of his Wizard Saint's robe was quite the sight.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

"Not bad." Alfonzo said with a nod. "He's gotten quite a bit stronger while training in the gravity chambers."

"Yeah. That would be hard to take head on." Marin replied with a nod of her own.

"If you ever took that spell head on, you'd be in for some serious punishment." Elicia said sternly.

"Oh, no!" Marin shrieked playfully with a hint of mischief in her tone. "Please, don't punish me, Mommy!"

Hearing Marin's exclamation, a few people near the place where the five Fairy Tail wizards were watching the rest of the preliminaries from turned to look at their group with strange expressions.



"OMG!" Elicia exclaimed in exasperation. "Why did you do that? Now everyone's gonna think we're perverts."

"Aren't we?" Marin asked while tilting her head.

"Even if we are, don't spread it around." Elicia shot back. "\*Sigh\* Erza's bad habits are rubbing off on you."

Marin only chuckled good naturedly at that.

"Oh, Jura's score is out." Sun said, once again drawing everyone's attention to the screens.

{Magic Power Finder Scoreboard

Rank Name Score

Fairy Tail ∞ Lamia Scale 9238}

"What! It's over 9,000!" Alfonzo shouted in an exaggerated show of shock.

That outburst caused the four ladies to stare at him blankly with Elicia's stare being the most damaging. However, her blank stare melted away a moment later as her blank expression turned into one on the verge of tears an instant later.

"Fonzie~!" Elicia whined. "I wanted to say that~!"

"Hahahaha!" Alfonzo laughed loudly. "You thought you would be the first to say it, but it was me, Alfonzo!"

"Oh! My! God!" Elicia shrieked while pulling her hair. "Stop taking these lines from me, Fonzie~!"

Alfonzo's and Elicia's little act only made Marin, Sun, and Brandish stare at them with confusion in their eyes. However, when they realized that neither Alfonzo nor Elicia had any intension of explaining what they were talking about, they simply returned to watching the screens to see how the others were doing in the preliminaries.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #3.

"Alright, I'm going." Bacchus said after watching Jura.

"No, I think I should go." Guy said while placing one hand on Bacchus shoulder while using the other to raise his thumb with a smile on his face. "Your youth is meant to explode in a different setting."

\*Shine!\*

Then, Guy's smile shined inexplicably for a moment.

"Yeah, I think we should let Guy go up." Yumichika said casually. "Your new martial art focuses more on redirecting force, right?"

"\*Sigh\* Fine." Bacchus said, backing down surprisingly easy to anyone who had not seen his changes.

"Don't worry, trust in Guy." Genma said while taking the senbon he usually kept in his mouth into his right hand. "He's got a lot of power. Especially if he uses the [Inner Gates]."

"Yeah, I know." Bacchus replied. He then turned to look at Guy with a grin. "Give 'em a show, Guy."

In response, Guy gave Bacchus another thumbs up. Then, he walked towards the Magic Power Finder confidently.

A few moments later, Guy was standing a few yards away from the Magic Power Finder. Then, he took a horse stance and clenched his fists tightly. He then agitated his magic power and used it to force open his body's limiters.

"[Gate of Wonder, Open]!" Guy chanted.

Immediately, Guy's skin reddened thanks to the increased blood flow while a vein started to bulge on Guy's forehead. At the same time, thanks to the force of his increased magic power, guy's hair stood straight up. And to top it all off, the unlocking of his limiters made Guy start secreting a blue-colored sweat that immediately vaporized upon contact with the air, making it look as if he had a flame-like aura surrounding his body.

A moment later, Guy stepped forward with his left foot while drawing his right fist back into position to throw a punch. Then, while precisely directing all the power of his body into his right arm, Guy slammed his foot down while throwing the punch.

"[Daytime Tiger]!" Guy shouted with youthful passion as he threw the punch.

\*Roar!\*

Guy's punch contained so much force that instead of pushing the air in front of his fist forward, it was compressed. Then, when the pocket of compressed air finally burst, the air was pushed forward with great velocity. On top of that, with his magic power control, Guy shaped the rushing air into the shape of a white tiger without letting it lose its density. Meanwhile, the wind was so strong that it sounded just like a tiger's roar as it rushed forward.

\*Boom!\*

Less than a second later, the [Daytime Tiger] slammed into the Magic power finder with enough force to send it flying from its position. And Guy, without even waiting for his score to be calculated turned around, closed the [Gate of Wonder], and raised a thumbs up in his team's direction.

"See that? My youth is burning brightly." Guy said while his muscles repeatedly twitched from the strain opening the [Gate of Wonder] put on them.

Earth Land, Ishgar, kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #2.

"I'm going." Sting said, wanting to show off his power.

"Go." Minerva replied with a nod while watching the other screens. "Don't disappoint me, Sting. Sabertooth is the strongest."

"I know." Sting replied with a nod of his own. "And I'll make sure everyone knows it, too."

With that, Sting walked forward, leaving his teammates to watch him from behind.

"Princess, are you sure that was the right decision?" Rufus asked. "I mean, with my [Memory Make Magic], I could probably do what that guy from Fairy Tail did without showing what everyone else is capable of."

"I know, Rufus." Minerva replied without looking at the wizard in red. "but I want to keep that magic a secret until the main event starts, at least."

"I see." Rufus replied.

Not long after that short conversation, Sting was standing in front of the Magic Power Finder. He then took a deep breath before turning slightly and stretching his right arm backwards with its fingers outstretched, as well. Meanwhile, his left arm was slightly bent in front of him.

"[Dragon Slayer Secret Art: Holy Ray]." Sting chanted while motes of light gathered on his fingertips from the surroundings.

While the expressions of the other wizards in the arena turned from those of disinterest at watching a new player try to compete with those that everyone knew was already in the big leagues to ones filled with shock at the fact that Sting just called his spell a [Dragon Slayer Secret Art], the shock intensified when they felt the amount of magic power that Sting was concentrating into his hand.

A moment later, Sting flashed forward with his right fist now clenched. Then, once he was in range, he swung his fist, coated in light, at the Magic Power Finder.

**\*Boom!\***

Then, as soon as Sting's punch landed, the gathered light exploded, obscuring the view of everyone watching. At the same time, the sound of the arena floor being destroyed could be heard, even over the sound of the explosion.

"Good." Minerva said simply while turning to look at the scoreboard for their arena. Now, let's see by how much Sting surpassed the others.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

"Whoa! That was pretty cool." Marin said. "The light show, I mean. The way the light looked like it was rushing to gather in his hand was cool."

"Yeah, it wasn't bad." Brandish added. "But it wasn't all that strong. I mean, I've seen Natsu tank harder hits than that from Laxus... And Gajeel... And Gray... You know what? The list is just too long to name."

"Well, he does fight just about everyone, all the time." Elicia said with a giggle.

"Yeah, that's our Natsu." Alfonzo said with a nod.

'Well, back in the canon, Natsu tanked that attack with only one hand during the GMG in x791.' Alfonzo thought to himself while watching the screens. 'Meaning, Sting had a year more to train. On top of that, Natsu was pretty much still at the same level as when he fought on Tenrou Island. So, it's really not that strong.'

"Oh, look, the scoreboard has finally been updated." Sun said, also not all that impressed with Sting's power.

As she spoke, Sun pointed up at the combined scoreboard where there were now four names listed. And that naturally drew Alfonzo's, Elicia's, Marin's, and Brandish's attention.

{Magic Power Finder Scoreboard

Rank Name Score

Fairy Tail ∞ Lamia Scale 9,238 Quatro Cerberus 9,028 Sabertooth 5,138}

"Oh, that was stronger than I expected." Alfonzo said with an impressed tone.

"Which one?" Brandish asked.

"Sting's Secret Art." Alfonzo replied. "I wouldn't have been surprised if it was a thousand points lower. I guess I underestimated him a little too much."

"Well, he is a Dragon slayer, you know?" Marin said while rolling her eyes. "They always have a way of surprising people, don't they?"

"\*Sigh\* I guess you're right." Alfonzo replied while shaking his head. "Dragon Slayer's are bullshit."



In response, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish all nodded their heads in agreement. Then, they all turned to look in a particular direction when they felt a surge of magic power flare up in anger.

"Who is that?" Sun asked with a slight frown on her face. "Their magic power feels so gross."

"Yeah, it almost feels like a dark wizard." Marin added. "But there's no way any dark wizards would be in Crocus at this time, right?"

As soon as Marin's words ended, several wizards in the city sneezed at the same time. And the most notable of which was Ivan Dreyar, Makarov's son and Laxus' father, who was irritated that Laxus was not representing Fairy Tail this year, as he intended to make contact with him and try to pull him over to his side to gain the ultimate power Fairy Tail was hiding, the Fairy Heart.

Unfortunately for Ivan, he had no idea what Fairy Heart was exactly. But the face he would show when he found out that Fairy Heart was actually the first guild master, Mavis Vermilion, who had been freed from the lacrima she was sealed in, and was currently watching the preliminaries with Makarov and Ur, the expression on his face would probably be a sight to see.

However, Ivan was not the wizard flaring his magic power in anger. Instead, that was Jiemma Orland, Minerva's father, as well as the guild master of Sabertooth, who, for some reason, is convinced that his guild is much stronger than any other guild on Fiore.

"Anyway, it looks like Mermaid Heel and Blue Pegasus will be stepping up next." Elicia said. "I wonder who they'll send up."

"Well, I'm almost certain that Mermaid Heel will send up Yoruichi." Alfonzo said. "I mean, that [Raijū Senkei] spell was pretty strong when she used it against Erza. So, she'll probably use that."

"Yeah, I remember that." Marin said in a sour tone. "As much as I hate to admit it, she's really strong. I probably would have never been able to punch her if she didn't let me back then."

"\*Sigh\* Probably not." Elicia replied. "Anyway, let's just keep watching."

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #8.

"Well, I'm up next." Yoruichi said, proving Alfonzo's prediction correct. "This won't take long."

In response, the other members of Team Mermaid Heel simply nodded. Then, using the [Flash Step], Yoruichi vanished from where she stood, reappearing in front of the Magic Power Finder an instant later.

"[Shunkō]." Yoruichi chanted quietly without wasting time.

In the next instant, Yoruichi's magic power spiked. Then, the orange long sleeved shirt she was wearing over her battle attire exploded before being vaporized by the large, white wings made of [Lightning Magic] that sprouted from her backless battle attire. At the same time, her arms were wrapped in the same [Lightning Magic], as well.

"[Shunkō: Raijū Senkei]." Yoruichi chanted once again.

Then, the large [Lightning Magic] Wings on Yoruichi's back began to change, taking the form of a large circle resembling a drum that floated above her head. And once this drum was formed, Yoruichi pointed her right index finger at the Magic Power Finder.

\*Boom!\*

In instant later, the Magic Power Finder was engulfed in a column of white [Lightning Magic] while the area behind it was gouged out in a straight line. A moment later, when the [Lightning Magic] dissipated, the Magic Power Finder could be seen smoking while the ground that had been gouged out was glowing bright red.

"Alright, let's go back." Yoruichi said as she turned around.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, GMG Preliminary Arena #1.

After seeing the other guilds take their turns, without discussing with the rest of her team, Karen started walking toward the Magic Power Finder with determination burning in her eyes.

"She's gonna use that spell, isn't she?" Sorano asked.

"Probably." Ichiya said with his trademark smile spread across his face. "She's going to show everyone what Blue Pegasus is made of. Men!"

"\*Sigh\* I guess I'll go after her." Sorano said while shaking her head. "She's going to need some help when she's done."

Meanwhile, Karen continued to walk forward. However, her mind was filled with only one thought as she flexed her fingers that were adorned with magic rings.

'I'll let you see how strong I am now, Elicia.' Karen thought to herself as she reached her optimal attack range. 'Then, when you see how much I've grown, you'll definitely make me your pet. And finally, you'll punish me just the way I deserve.'

While those thoughts were running through her head, Karen flared her magic power to its limit. At the same time, her face reddened while she began to pant slightly.

Seeing Karen's current state, the other wizards in the arena thought she was pushing herself as hard as she could, which was correct. But it was not the whole story. Only Sorano, who knew Karen the best of all those present, knew what was going through the green-haired beauty's head.

'\*Sigh\* Even if you were to break the MPF, too, she wouldn't accept you.' Sorano thought while approaching Karen from behind and shaking her head. 'But whatever you need to tell yourself to get the proper motivation, I guess.'

In the next instant, Karen drew both of her arms back, the rings on her fingers thrumming with magic power.

"[Ring Magic: Nova Stream]." Karen chanted as she thrust both of her fists forward.

\*Boom!\*

With that, streams of different attribute magic power shot from Karen's rings before combining into one large column of chaotic magic power. Then, the column slammed into the Magic Power Finder with great force. However, unlike most of the other spells that were seen during these preliminaries, there was no explosion. Instead, the column continued stretching forward while taking the Magic Power Finder along with it.

Finally, when Karen's spell sputtered out, the Magic Power Finder could be seen in the distance, about a mile away, emitting smoke.

At the same time, Karen stumbled. Yet, before she could fall to the arena floor, she was caught.

"I got you." Sorano said as she threw one of Karen's arms over her shoulder. "Let's head back, you need rest after using that spell."

Karen did not respond, however, as she was too exhausted from pouring all of her magic power into that spell. Even so, she glared at Sorano, who, although she still did not like very much, Karen had come to respect her over the years.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

After Karen's display, the other guilds hesitated for a moment. However, they soon scrambled to be the next ones to show their power after that. And by the time they were all finished, the overall scoreboard, that showed the top eight teams, looked like this.

{Magic Power Finder Scoreboard

Rank Name Score

Fairy Tail ∞ Mermaid Heel 9,983 Lamia Scale 9,238 Quatro Cerberus 9,028 Blue Pegasus 8,700  
Sabertooth 5,138 Final Fantasy 5,022 Twilight Ogre 1,999}

And when Alfonzo and Elicia saw the final rankings, they stared at the name of the team in seventh place with dumbfounded expressions on their faces. However, before Marin, Sun, and Brandish could ask them what was wrong, Mato's voice rang out for the last time.

{"Well, folks! That's it!"} Mato shouted energetically. {"The eight teams have been decided! So, I hope you're looking forward to this year's Grand Magic Games! I'll see you bright and early at the Domus Flau! Until then, good night!"}

With that, all the projections, except for the one showing the overall scoreboard vanished from the night sky. Then, all the wizards returned to their lodgings so they could be well rested for the beginning of the Grand Magic Games later in the morning. And that went double for the eight teams that would be competing.

Chapter 676: It's Almost Time

"Hey, have any of you heard of that guild in seventh place before?' Marin asked while Team Fairy Tail made their way back to the Sixth Sense Hotel.

In response, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Sun shook their heads, with Alfonzo and Elicia still having contemplative expressions on their faces.

"I have." Brandish replied while nodding her head. "Unfortunately, I don't know much about them."

"Anything you do know could be helpful." Alfonzo said, the curiosity in his tone evident for everyone to hear.

Nodding her head once again, Brandish took a moment to organize her words before she started her explanation.

"Well, they're a relatively new guild in Fiore." Brandish said. "I don't have much information on their members, but I know they were all picked up and trained by their guild master, Edea Kramer, and her husband, Cid."

'Of course.' Alfonzo and Elicia thought simultaneously.

"Do you know anything about the team they sent to the GMG?" Elicia asked curiously.

"Unfortunately, I don't." Brandish replied while shaking her head. "The only thing I know is their names. But I have no idea what they're capable of."

"I see." Elicia replied.

"Then, what was the name of the one who attacked the MPF tonight?" Sun asked curiously with her eyes sparkling. "He was a little cutie. I mean, that little pointy hat, those big yellow eyes... They were adorable."

"Really?" Marin asked, her interest peaked. "When they took their turn, I must have been watching a different screen. I don't remember seeing anyone like that at all."

"Yeah, me neither." Elicia added in an excited tone. "I don't remember seeing anyone like that."

"Yup! He was so cute." Sun replied with a nod. "He couldn't have even been four feet tall. His face was completely black, which was kind of weird, but still cute. He wore a blue jacket and green pants with red boots and brown shoes. And they all look just a little bit too big for him. Ooh! It was so cute."

Hearing Sun's description, Alfonzo and Elicia both had a pretty good idea of the wizard's name. Meanwhile, Marin's eyes were sparkling in anticipation of seeing the little cutie. Brandish, on the other hand, finally answered Sun's question, proving Alfonzo and Elicia's hypotheses correct.

"That would be Vivi Ornitier." Brandish said. "From what I know, he's only twelve. He was only nine when he started his career as a wizard, though. He even has a chance to break Alfonzo's record as the youngest S-Class wizard in Fiore."



"That actually seems like a lot of information." Marin said in response. "I thought you didn't know much."

"That's actually public knowledge." Brandish countered. "When I said I didn't know much, I meant that I didn't know what any of their wizards are capable of."

"Oh, I get it now." Marin replied.

By now, the group of five had arrived at the hotel's entrance. A moment later, they separated in front of the elevators, with Brandish going to her own floor and the others heading up to the suite on the top floor.

"Hey, Sun, did you get to see the other members of that Team Final Fantasy?" Elicia asked curiously.

"Unfortunately, no." Sun replied while shaking her head. "I only happened to glance at the screen for Arena #4 when he went up to attack the MPF. His team mates were never in the frame."

"Well, we'll find out about them when the main event starts later in the morning." Alfonzo said with a smile. "There's no point thinking about it for now. Instead, we should focus on getting as much rest as we can. We don't wanna be spent for tomorrow's event, right?"

"Fonzie's right." Elicia added. "We're all strong and experienced enough to adapt to anything. So, don't worry about it."

"By the way, there was another guild I had never heard of in the top eight." Alfonzo said. "I don't think they'll be much of a challenge, though. I mean, look at their score."

'Well, it's not like I never heard of them at all.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'I mean, they were in the canon. But since Fairy Tail never declined after the Tenrou Island Incident, I didn't think I'd ever see them in this life.'

"Oh, you mean that one, Twilight Ogre, right?" Sun asked. "Yeah, I never heard of 'em, either, ya see?"

"I have." Marin replied. "In fact, they tried to barge into Magnolia and set up shop there a few years ago. But you were off in the Hidden Leaf Village, Fonzie."

"Seriously?" Alfonzo asked with his eyes wide in surprise. "Didn't they know that we've been there for, like, the last hundred years or so?"

"Wait, why didn't I know about them either?" Sun asked. "I didn't leave for that long at any time, did I?"

"Oh, that was when you got tricked to go back to the Merfolk Capital with your parents and that crazy prince tried to brainwash you." Marin replied.

Hearing that, Sun pouted at the memory of that event.

"I should have cut his thing off with Kanade in her release state." Sun said, sounding uncharacteristically dark.

While Elicia and Marin nodded in agreement, Alfonzo, despite the fact that he would have likely done worse if he did not care about starting an all-out war with the Merfolk, could not help shuddering at the thought of that. Especially since that meant that the guys privates would have been cut into, at the very least, three pieces.

"Anyway, back to twilight Ogre." Alfonzo said, bringing the conversation back on track. "Why the hell would they have tried to set up shop in our town?"

"Oh, it's because they didn't believe the rumors about our guild's strength." Elicia replied. Even after seeing Laxus and the Thunder God Tribe win the Grand Magic Games. I really don't understand what was going through their minds."

"Then, how did that mess get settled?" Sun asked with her head tilted to the side.

"Natsu and Gajeel handled it." Marin replied with a shrug.

"They worked together?" Sun asked with her eyes widening in surprise.

"Probably not." Alfonzo replied with a grin. "If I had to guess, they only looked like they were working together. They probably just beat them up at the same time because one of their fights got interrupted, right?"

Alfonzo turned to look at Elicia and Marin when he asked for confirmation to his assumption.

"That's right." Elicia replied with a smile.

"Yeah, and as soon as they were done, Natsu and Gajeel started fighting again like nothing happened."

"Thought so." Alfonzo said as he reached out for the doorknob of their suite.

As soon as the four stepped into the suite, they were congratulated by all the others, even the children, who were woken up by the loud buzz that preceded the preliminaries. Then, after a little small talk, the whole group laid down for bed. They would have to wake up early to get to the Domus Flau, after all.

The next morning, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish were gathered in the hotel's lobby and talking to Ur and Mavis.

"Remember, you have to be observant to make the best of your talents." Mavis said, passing on her wisdom to the younger generation. "And if you ever have any doubts about anything, we're always here to offer our advice."

Hearing Mavis' kind intensions, Team Fairy Tail could not help but smile while they nodded in understanding.

"Just do your best." Ur added after Mavis finished. "As long as you do that, with your strength, you should have nothing to worry about. And even if you lose, you'll have no regrets."

"Your confidence in us is awe-inspiring." Alfonzo said in a dry tone.

"I just gotta keep your head from getting too big." Ur shot back playfully.

"Oh, don't worry, Tear does a really good job at that." Alfonzo said while waggling his eyebrows.

Hearing that, Elicia, Marin, and Sun shook their heads while smiling wryly. Meanwhile, Ur's left eyebrow started to twitch fiercely at hearing an insinuation about her daughter's sex life from her son-in-law. Mavis and Brandish, on the other hand, started to blush. Though, Brandish's blush was quite slight in comparison to Mavis, who was blushing from the base of her neck to the tips of her ears.

"Anyway, we'll see you guys at the stadium." Elicia said with a wave while grabbing Alfonzo to pull him out of the hotel before Ur lost her temper and tried to flash freeze him.

Letting himself be pulled away, Alfonzo laughed at Ur's expression before gesturing that he was only messing with her just before he was pulled out of the doors. Then, as soon as he was gone, Ur exhaled an exasperated sigh before smiling fondly.

"Well, let's get going, First Master." Ur said as she turned to Mavis. "It's going to be a chore to keep those ruffians in line... just like every year."

As she finished speaking, Ur saw Mavis' blushing face, and she could not help but giggle.

'I guess that joke was too much for her.' Ur thought to herself as she placed her hands on Mavis' shoulders and guided her towards the elevators so they could get the wizards of their guild organized.

If only Ur knew, Mavis was actually embarrassed because she was remembering the time she came to Alfonzo's house while she was still a wandering spirit. Unfortunately, during that trip, she barged in on Alfonzo and Ultear having sex. On top of that, she remembered the face Ultear was making while Alfonzo pounded her from behind and made her apologize for being so demanding.

In fact, just thinking about that scene was making mavis' lower abdomen warm up.

'I know she was apologizing the whole time, but she looked so satisfied while she was doing so.' Mavis thought to herself. 'Is sex really that good? Or is it sex with Alfonzo that's that good?'

Back in the city, it did not take Team Fairy Tail to reach the Domus Flau, a large, circular, stone battle arena that seemed to be inspired by Roman architecture. As they approached the entrance, despite this not being the first time they had entered, they could not help but marvel at how large it was.

"\*Sigh\* No matter how many times I see this place, I can't get over how incredible it is." Marin said while looking around like a tourist.

"Yeah, it's amazing." Sun replied while looking around like Marin.

"Those statues are the most impressive part of this whole structure, to me." Brandish said, adding her opinion.

The statues Brandish was referring to stood at the corners of the Domus Flau and faced towards its center, as if they were watching over the competitors. Plus, their armor and large magic staves with circular ends made them look like they were there to keep the integrity of the competitions that would be held in the arena.

"Those chains always stood out as weird to me, though." Elicia said while pointing at the large chains that surrounded both the Domus Flau and the four statues surrounding it.

The chains Elicia mentioned were connected to both the ground and a large circular fixture connected to the arena's outer walls, stretched around the entirety of the Domus Flau. Though, other than aesthetics, no one seemed to know their purpose.

"We can talk about how amazing the Domus Flau is later." Alfonzo said, hurrying the ladies along. "For now, we need to get to the waiting area before the Games start. And if we're lucky, we might even get to see the other teams before everything begins."

Hearing that, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish nodded their heads. Then, they quickly entered the Domus Flau along with Alfonzo before quickly heading to the waiting area to wait to be introduced. On top of that, they hoped they would be able to chat with the other teams a little before the Grand Magic Game started.

However, when they arrived at the waiting area, they were surprised by what they saw.

"Failure will not be tolerated again." Minerva said, lecturing the four members of her team. "Remember what my father said, if we are not the champions at the end of this competition, the consequences will be dire."

"Is she serious?" Marin asked in a whisper after hearing Minerva talking to her teammates. "It's a competition, winning and losing is par for the course."

"Well, ever since I saw that Jiemma guy last year, I thought he was a little crazy." Elicia replied, not bothering to lower her voice, with a shrug.

Immediately after Elicia finished speaking, all five members of Sabertooth turned to glare at her.

"What?" Elicia asked in an innocent tone. "That's just the impression I got."

"Watch your tongue, wench." Rufus said seriously. "You should know your place. The strong don't take too kindly to insults from the weak."

With that, the atmosphere in the waiting area froze. At the same time, Jura and Yoruichi lead their teams into the waiting area just in time to hear what Rufus said to Elicia.

"Well, things aren't gonna end well for that guy." Yoruichi said while shaking her head. "Alfonzo's gonna make him regret those words."



"Indeed." Jura replied. "I just hope he doesn't do anything that might get him, and his team disqualified."

In actuality, that was exactly what Rufus was hoping for by insulting Elicia like that in front of Alfonzo. After seeing Alfonzo's performance in the preliminaries, the members of Sabertooth realized that they had little chance of winning with him participating. Yet, they were unable to defy their guild master's, Jiemma's, orders to win. So, the only way they could think of was to find a way to get Team Fairy Tail disqualified.

In other words, even if Elicia had not spoken without thinking, like she was so prone to do, Rufus and Minerva had planned to anger Alfonzo to the point that he attacked them outside of the competition at some point. As for Sting, Rogue, and Orga, they were not included in this plan. As Dragon Slayers, Sting and Rogue were too proud to do something like that. Orga, on the other hand, was not smart enough to pick the right time to do so.

To Minerva's and Rufus' surprise, however, Alfonzo was not angered enough to do or say anything. However, the rising pressure in the waiting area made it obvious that he was well and truly angered. But not for the reasons they thought.

Alfonzo was old and mature enough to not get angry just because someone insulted one of his wives. Instead, he was angered because he saw right through their plan. And he was thoroughly disgusted by it. For a guild who claimed they were the strongest at every opportunity to act like that, was something that his pride in his job as a wizard would not accept.

"No holding back." Alfonzo said solemnly, giving an order that everyone understood, though there was nothing in the way of context.

In response, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish all nodded.

"Oh, great." Yoruichi said while shaking her head. "Now, the rest of us get to suffer because these newbs got too big for their britches."

"Well, at least he won't kill anyone like God Serena, the former number one among the Wizards saints would have for that insult."

Yoruichi then grinned challengingly.

"But I gotta say, I'm looking forward to facing them when their going all-out." Yoruichi added.

And that marked the moment when Team Fairy Tail decided to show everyone in Fiore why they were considered the strongest guild in the kingdom for nearly as long as they had been established.

Chapter 677: Introducing the Competitors

"Alright, everyone!" Ichiya said loudly as he led his team into the waiting room. "This is our year! Blue Pegasus will come in first place this year! Men!"

However, the cheers Ichiya expected did not reply to his manly exclamation. Instead, his teammates looked at the state of the waiting room with trepidation. The atmosphere in the room was just too heavy for even Jenny or Kai, the two who supported Ichiya the most, to cheer openly.

"Huh?" Ichiya, confused by the lack of a response, intoned in confusion.

A moment later, Ichiya finally noticed the atmosphere in the room. And when he saw what caused it, a standoff between the members of Team Fairy Tail and Team Sabertooth, his eyes widened and a drop of snot oozed out of his rather large right nostril.

"Oh my, what's going on here?" Ichiya asked after taking a handkerchief out of his suit pocket and wiping his nose. "Come now, although we're competitors, we should strive to be friends outside of the competition. Now, how about we put down all this animosity and get together for a cup of tea after the events for today come to an end."

As he spoke, Ichiya walked between the two teams. Then, he tried to grab Alfonzo's hand and pull him over to make up with the members of Team Sabertooth.

\*Smack!\*

\*Bang!\*

"How many times have I told you not to touch me, you little gremlin?" Alfonzo asked after slapping Ichiya's hand away without taking his eyes off the members of Team Sabertooth.

Although Alfonzo only slapped Ichiya's hand away, Ichiya's whole body was sent flying while spinning like a top thanks to the force. Then, he slammed into a nearby wall. Luckily, Alfonzo controlled his strength enough to make sure that Ichiya slammed back first into the wall. Otherwise, when the opening ceremony started, he would more than likely have a huge bruise on his large nose.

"\*Sigh\* That idiot's never gonna learn, is he?" Sorano asked while shaking her head with a smile full with schadenfreude.

Meanwhile, Karen, seeing that Elicia was part of the stare down, sprinted forward to ask her what was wrong.

"Elicia, did these new comers do anything to make you angry?" Karen asked, glaring at the members of Team Sabertooth with hostility.

In response, Elicia smiled cunningly. A moment later, outside of Karen's field of view, Elicia's eyes were filled with tears while she started to pout in an extremely aggrieved way.

"Yeah, that guy called me a wench." Elicia said, sounding as if she would cry at any moment, while pointing at Rufus. "He really hurt my feelings."

Immediately, Karen's glare zeroed in on Rufus, its intensity making the blond take a step back on reflex. Meanwhile, everyone who knew about Karen's obsession with Elicia could only shake their heads, feeling a bit of pity for Rufus. They then turned to look at Elicia, whose teary-eyed expression had turned into a wide, cheshire grin by now.

'She's so vindictive.' Everyone who saw Elicia's smile thought to themselves simultaneously.

Eventually, the staring contest ended when Team Fairy Tail decided to just show Team Sabertooth what a bad mistake it was to make enemies of them. Around that time, the rest of the teams entered the

waiting room. However, they did not have much time to examine them. Because, Loli Chapati's voice echoed throughout the arena shortly after the last team to arrive, Team Final Fantasy, stepped into the waiting room.

{"Ladies and gentlemen, hello and welcome!"} Loli said over the arena's broadcast system. {"Like always, I'm your host, Loli Chapati! And with me is former Magic Councilman, Yajima, here to do color commentary! And together, we would like to welcome you to the x790 Grand Magic Games."}

{"Hello, everyone."} Yajima added, his smile was audible in his tone. {"I'm glad to be here with all of you again."}

{"Now, I'm sure most of you saw the feats of power everyone showed during the preliminaries last night."} Loli continued. {"So, you've probably all seen the names of the teams competing in this year's Games. Still, I am obligated to introduce them to you. Though, I must admit, I really like this part. So, without further ado, help me welcome the eight qualifying teams!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

"Hey... Um... Is anyone else a little nervous?" Marin asked while smiling nervously.

"Nope."

"Nah."

"Not really."

"Of course not."

Elicia, Alfonso, Sun, and Brandish replied to Marin's question in that order, making Marin blush a little in response.

{"First, the team who came in eighth place, with a Magic Power Finder score of 1,999 during the preliminaries, it's their first appearance in the Grand Magic Games."} Loli said, starting his introductions. {"In fact, they are the first of three first time appearances in the Grand Magic Games this year. Now, let's give it up for the members of Team Twilight Ogre!"}

With Loli's announcement, five young men that no one in the waiting room deemed a threat, walked towards the large entrance leading to the arena. However, all those waiting to be introduced noted that they all looked like the minor villain type.

\*Cheer~!\*

The lack of heavy cheering made it obvious that the audience thought so, as well.

{"Next, in seventh place, with a Magic Power Finder score of 5,022, is the second of the three first timers in the Grand Magic Games."} Loli continued once the cheers for Twilight Ogre settled down. {"This guild has gotten quite a bit of renown for destroying Dark Guilds since it was created eight or nine months ago. Now, join me in welcoming Team Final Fantasy~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~!\*

With that, another group of five, this one consisting of two males and three females, with the young boy, Vivi among their ranks, stepped through the large doors into the arena. However, with their names having just been called out, everyone was able to focus on them.

The first of the unfamiliar wizards, and the one who seemed to be their leader, was a fair-skinned young man standing at about 5'10" with unruly brown hair and light blue eyes with a diagonal scar between his eyes and wearing a white V-neck shirt under a black, leather, bomber jacket, black pants with three, interconnected red belts, black boots, and black leather gloves. This young man also had a strange sword with a revolver's cylinder and handle integrated into it strapped on his back, as well.

"Hey, that looks like the sword Mira uses when she takes on her [Satan Soul: Gilgamesh] form, doesn't it?" Marin asked in a whisper.

Alfonzo, Elicia, Sun, and Brandish all nodded in response before going back to observing the members of Team Final Fantasy.

"That's Final Fantasy's ace, Squall Leonhart." Brandish said, introducing her teammates to the members of Team Final Fantasy. "From what I've been able to gather, he was raised by their guild master and her husband from a young age after he was orphaned."

The second member of Team Final Fantasy was a beautiful young woman, appearing to be in her early-twenties with black hair flowing down past her waist and tied off near the ends to create a dolphin tail split, red eyes, an athletic, yet slender, figure and relatively large breasts standing at 5'6". Her attire consisted of a white, sleeveless crop top that exposed her toned abdomen, a black, pleated mini skirt

with a black leather belt and suspenders to hold it in place, black and red elbow length gloves, and red ankle-length boots with black socks.

"And that's Tifa Lockhart." Brandish said, pointing at the black-haired young lady. "She's a hand-to-hand expert. But I really don't know much more about her than that."

"She's really pretty." Sun muttered while watching Tifa walk towards the doors.

"She is." Elicia added with a nod. "I'd love to get my hands on her."

"That's such a misleading statement." Marin said with a grin.

"It's really not." Alfonzo countered. "Lici meant that in every sense of the word."

"You know me so well, Fonzie." Elicia said with a grin. "But I could make something much better looking for her to wear. And she'd still be able to show off that figure of hers perfectly."

The third member of Team Final Fantasy was another beautiful young woman, looking to be about eighteen years old and standing at 5'3", with green hair tied into a ponytail, green eyes, a red, sleeveless top with gold accents, a purple skirt, purple shoulder pads, red bracers, and red, high heeled boots with a slender western sword strapped on the left side of her waist. Also, as she got closer to the doors leading to the arena, she looked to be rather uncomfortable.



"That's Terra Brandford." Brandish said, introducing another member of Team Final Fantasy. "The rumors say that she's not completely human. Though, only the members of her guild seem to know what the other half of her bloodline is. And that's Aerith Gainsborough."

Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, and Sun then shifted their gazes to the last unknown member of Team Final Fantasy. She, Aerith, was also quite beautiful, appearing to be in her early twenties, standing at 5'4" with long, light-brown hair styled into a long braid with a white ribbon tied at its base and emerald green eyes wearing a calf-length white dress with a low neckline that showed off some cleavage, a red bolero jacket over the dress, three bracelets on each wrist, a gold, silver, and bronze bracelet on each, and brown boots. She also carried a mage's staff in her right hand.

"From what I know, she's pretty good with [Healing Magic]." Brandish said, continuing her introduction. "But she's also got pretty good control of offensive magic, too. And the last one is Vivi Ornitier, who I talked about earlier on our way back to the hotel."

The rest of Team Fairy Tail nodded in understanding as the members of Team Final Fantasy disappeared past the doors to the arena.

\*Cheer~~~~!\*

"Big surprise, they're a hell of a lot more popular than Twilight Ogre." Alfonzo said in a dry tone.

"Well, that's probably because they don't look like the villains of the week." Elicia added.

Although Marin, Sun, and Brandish did not recognize the term, "villains of the week," they understood the meaning. So, they all nodded their heads in agreement.

{"Next up is the last of the new comers to the Grand Magic Games!"} Loli shouted, continuing his introductions of the competitors as the crowd's cheers died down. {"In sixth place, with a score of 5,138, Let's welcome Team Sabertooth~~!"}

With that, led by Minerva, the members of Team Sabertooth started walking towards the arena's entrance. And as they passed Team Fairy Tail, they all looked in their direction with provocation, before snorting and continuing on their way.

"Those brats don't know the immensity of heaven and earth." Alfonzo said disdainfully. "They're courting death."

"OH, dear God, please stop, Fonzie." Elicia said in an exasperated tone. "No one in this world is ready for a Xianxia protagonist."

In response, Alfonzo only smiled at Elicia. Meanwhile, the rest of their team decided to just ignore them, as they were once again using terms that they were not familiar with.

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

{"So, Yajima, let me ask you what you think of the three new comers to the Grand Magic Games."} Loli said as the cheers for Sabertooth died down. {"Do you think any of them have a chance at making an upset and becoming this year's champions?"}

{"Of course."} Yajima replied. {"They all have a chance. But it won't be easy overcoming the teams who have been here so many times before."}

{"I see."} Loli replied. {"Well then, let's continue. The fifth place team, with a Magic Power Finder Score of 8,700, is one of the most popular guilds in Fiore thanks to their charming ladies and handsome gentlemen. But you shouldn't think that looks are the only things they have going for them, as they have the potential to fly just like the mythical beasts they are named after. Everyone! Help me welcome Team Blue Pegasus~~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

Before Team Blue Pegasus even stepped out into the arena, the cheers were deafening. And when they finally entered the arena under Ichiya's lead, they got even louder.

{"Next up is the guild that epitomizes wild manliness!"} Loli continued. {"With a score of 9,028, in fourth place are the Wild! men of Quatro Cerberus~~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

With Bacchus in the lead, Guy, Genma, Ikkaku, and Yumichika made their way into the arena. And although their applause was not quite as loud as Blue Pegasus', it was clear to everyone that Quatro Cerberus still had its fair share of fans.

{"Moving on to the top three teams, in third place, with a score of 9,238 and led by one of the illustrious Ten Wizard Saints!"} Loli said, pausing to build tension. "Give it up for the team who just might break the balance, Lamia Scale~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

Just like Blue Pegasus, Lamia Scale's welcome from the crowd was intense. In fact, it might have been even louder than the cheers Blue Pegasus received. Meanwhile, Team Lamia Scale, led by Jura, walked calmly to the arena's entrance, nodding at both Team Fairy Tail and Team Mermaid Heel as they passed.

{"Next up are last year's champions."} Loli continued loudly. {"The only all-female guild in Fiore, the Jewels of the Deep! With a Magic Power Finder Score of 9,983, nearly reaching the limit and taking second place! Ladies and gentlemen, join me in welcoming the ladies of Team Mermaid Heel~~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

If Blue Pegasus' and Lamia Scale's welcomes could be considered deafening, the volume of Mermaid Heel's welcome was loud enough to seemingly shake the entirety of the Domus Flau.

Meanwhile, Team Mermaid Heel, led by Yoruichi walked calmly towards the arena's entrance. Along the way, Yoruichi turned to look at Team Fairy Tail with a mischievous grin, though the serious glint in her eyes could not be hidden.

"Well, it looks like it's time." Yoruichi said while looking at Alfonzo. "We've heard that keeping the title as champion is harder than getting it in the first place. But don't think that taking it from us will be easy. We'll show you why we won it in the first place."

In response, Alfonzo maintained eye contact with Yoruichi while wearing a confident smile.

"I would expect nothing less." Alfonzo said, confidence radiating from his entire being. "But we'll show you the difference between us and other wizards when we compete. So, you better bring your best, or you'll have no idea how you even lost."

As Alfonzo's words ended, the two held eye contact for a moment longer. Then, Yoruichi turned away and led her team into the arena.

As soon as Team Mermaid Heel stepped into the arena, the cheers exploded. If before Team Mermaid Heel entered the arena, the volume of the cheering seemed to shake the Domus Flau, then there was no doubt that the newly raised volume was doing so.

{"And last, but certainly not least, is the guild, who until last year, had been the reigning champions and holding the title of Fiore's strongest guild!"} Loli, after a long pause to let the audience calm down, continued. {"Led by the newest of the Ten Wizard Saints and the man who evaporated the Magic Power Finder while lighting up the eastern sky of the capital as if he were bringing the sunrise! The guild with plans to regain their lost glory with a completely new roster of team members. Give it up for Fairy Tail~~~~~!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

With Alfonzo's fame as a magic item crafter that made the lives of citizens all over Ishgar, let alone Fiore, easier, the crowd went absolutely crazy. And if you add Elicia's fame on top of that, the cheers from the crowd could be heard from every corner of Crocus when Team Fairy Tail was introduced. In fact, the cheers were so loud that Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish could only exchange glances, because they knew that if they even tried to speak to each other, they would not be able to hear what the others were saying.

So, the five Fairy Tail wizards shrugged before making their way into the arena. And when they did, all they could do was take in the sight of every person in the stands, other than the members of Sabertooth, standing and cheering at the top of their lungs.

The group of five then took in the sight of the Domus Flau from the same view as all the other competitors for the first time. Just like when seen from the outside, the Domus Flau looked as if it was inspired by the Roman Coliseum in Alfonzo's and Elicia's past life. There were three levels of seating, each higher than the last. As for the arena area in the center, it was large enough to hold a town the size of Magnolia, making it possible to host some truly large events.

Meanwhile, as they looked around the Domus Flau from the inside, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, despite her nerves, and Sun waved to the cheering crowd. Brandish, on the other hand, only followed along with her usual, somewhat bored, expression on her face.

{"Now that all the teams have been introduced, I'll give the stage to the Grand Magic Games' most popular figure."} Loli said once the cheers died down. {"Mato, take it away!"}

{"Thanks, Loli."} Mato said in his characteristic tone as an image of Mato appeared on all the Lacrima-Vision screens set up around the Domus Flau. {"The first game of this year's Grand Magic Games is called, 'There can only be one.' So, I ask that each team select a member to participate. Then, once your member is selected, all the others should vacate the arena. Once the eight chosen wizards are the only ones left in the arena, I will explain the rules of the game."}

With that, the words, "There Can Only Be One," replaced Mato's images on the screens. Then, the discussions between the members of the guilds began to see who would participate in the first event of the x790 Grand Magic Games.

Chapter 678: Grand Magic Games, Day One; Part 1: There Can Only Be One

{"Thanks, Loli."} Mato said in his characteristic tone as an image of Mato appeared on all the Lacrima-Vision screens set up around the Domus Flau. {"The first game of this year's Grand Magic Games is called, 'There can only be one.' So, I ask that each team select a member to participate. Then, once your member is selected, all the others should vacate the arena. Once the eight chosen wizards are the only ones left in the arena, I will explain the rules of the game."}

With Mato's announcement, all the wizards on the arena grounds began talking amongst themselves, trying to decide who would participate in the first event of the Grand Magic Games. However, considering the fact that the rules for the game would not be announced until all eight participants were decided, the uninformed decision could put the wizards at an unintended disadvantage.

"Since we can only participate in one event during the first four days of the GMG, we don't need to worry about getting exhausted, right?" Marin asked in a serious tone. "So, the only question is, who wants to go first."

"That's not exactly true, Marin." Elicia said while holding up her right index finger. "Remember, there's also the battle round after each event. And although the competitor in the event has never had to fight in the battle round that follows, that doesn't mean it's not possible."

"Lici's right." Alfonzo added. "But I don't really think we need to worry about that too much. Remember, the battle rounds are chosen to entertain the audience. And watching someone who is spent from the event wouldn't exactly be entertaining."

"That's true." Elicia replied with a nod. "Then, that leads us back to Marin's question, who should go up first?"

"I think Sun should go." Alfonzo said while nodding in Sun's direction.

"Me?" Sun asked in a confused tone. Though, it was clear to see she did not mind going up for the first event. "But why?"

"I just have a feeling." Alfonzo replied.

'It's because the name of this event reminds me of Highlander.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'And as the only swordsman on our team, you fit the bill the best. But the only one who would understand my feelings on the matter is Lici. And judging by the way she just rolled her eyes at me; she knows exactly what I'm thinking.'

"If you wanna go, then it's fine with me, Sun." Elicia said after rolling her eyes at Alfonzo. "But don't pay attention to what Fonzie said. He's probably thinking something stupid."

'If Lici/Elicia says that, then it's probably true.' Marin and Brandish thought at the same time. 'I mean, she does a whole lot of the same, too. And only Fonzie/Alfonzo seems to ever understand what she says or thinks.'

"Okay, then I'll go." Sun said with a strong nod.

"Then, that's settled." Alfonzo said with a smile. "And remember, no mercy. We're going all out. Fairy Tail will not tolerate being mocked."

"Of course." Sun said, her expression turning serious in an instant.



With that, Alfonzo, Elicia, Marin, and Brandish returned nods of their own before vacating the arena.

{"Oh, it looks like Fairy Tail has already decided on their competitor for this event."} Loli said. {"and it looks to be Sun Seto, the daughter of the Seto Group's CEO."}

{"That's not a bad choice."} Yajima said. {"From what I know, Sun is quite well rounded and uses a combination of [Sword Magic] and [Water Magic]. She's considerably strong, as well."}

{"Wow! Then I'm really looking forward to Sun's first appearance in the Grand Magic Games."} Loli said excitedly. {"Now, we just have to wait for... Wait, it looks like the other guilds are making their moves, as well. Let's see... From Mermaid Heel, Rangiku Matsumoto. From Blue Pegasus, Kai Mikawa. From Quatro Cerberus, Yumichika Ayasegawa. From Sabertooth, Rogue Cheney. It looks like Lamia Scale is sending up Toby Horhorta. Final Fantasy is sending up Terra Branford. And finally, Twilight Ogre is sending up... Uh... Hold on, which one is he again? Oh goodness, this is embarrassing..."}

Hearing Loli stumble over the name of the Twilight Ogre representative, the crowd could not help but start laughing. Meanwhile, the members of Twilight Ogre were livid. Then the participant from the guild shouted his name loudly. Unfortunately, no one could hear it over the crowd's laughter.

{"This is really unlike you, Loli."} Yajima said while shaking his head. {"But then again, it really is hard to tell them all apart. The only one who really stands out is their leader, Thibault."}

{"\*Sigh\* I know, I'm really not at my best with this one."} Loli said in a dejected tone. {"Well, if he manages to stand out in this event, I'm sure the whole kingdom will remember his name, right?"}

However, before the conversation between Yajima and Loli could continue in the broadcast booth, Mato's face once again appeared on all the screens in the arena.

"Whoo~~~~~! Go, Sun, daddy is rooting for you~~~~~!" The shout of a doting father rang out over the arena just as Mato opened his mouth to explain the rules of the event.

Being interrupted just as he was about to speak, for the first time since the Grand Magic Games first happened, Mato's expression turned into something other than a smile, something that was quite curious considering that Mato's face was only a mask. Yet, no one questioned it... Aloud, anyway.

{"Please, settle down."} Mato said in an annoyed tone.

Yet, the cheering from the overly doting father did not stop, constantly cheering for Sun.

"He said calm down!" An angry woman's voice shouted a moment later.

\*Bang!\*

And with the sound of that loud impact, the arena fell silent while the people sitting closest to the impact tried their best to edge away from its cause.

{"Thank you."} Mato said with a nod. {"Now, where was I? Oh, yes! \*Cough\* Now that the eight competitors have been chosen, allow me to introduce the rules of the event, 'There can be only one'."}

When Mato reached that point, the center of the arena, where the eight wizards stood, rose into the air. Now, the eight competitors stood on an octagonal, floating ring.

{"During this event, all eight wizards will fight to be the last one standing."} Mato continued. {"Meaning, they must be the last one standing on the floating platform they are on right now. So, if anyone is knocked off the platform, knocked unconscious, or surrenders, they are disqualified. And remember, there's no killing allowed, okay?"}

"Well, that's about what I expected." Alfonzo said from his spot in the stands that was reserved for the competitors. "I mean, it's basically a king of the hill event."

"Yeah, and you had us train for something like this back in Magnolia." Marin said.

"And our training was much harder than this." Elicia added. "I mean, we had to fight with all the S-Class wizards in the guild, other than Irene, that is."

"Even so, this won't be easy." Brandish said. "One of the Dragon Slayers from Sabertooth is participating in this event."

"That's true." Alfonzo said with a nod. "he's the Shadow Dragon Slayer. And he has the ability to turn his body into shadow. Still, I have faith in Sun. She's a lot more resourceful than her happy go lucky personality would suggest."

No one could argue that point. So, they all turned their attention back to the arena to await the beginning of the event.

{"Now, if you please, would all the competitors take a starting position at one of the platforms corners?"} Mato asked, his voice projecting throughout the Domus Flau.

Immediately, the eight wizard followed Mato's request. Then, they all looked around at the other competitors warily while deciding what course of action to take once the event started.

{"Good."} Mato said after seeing everyone in their starting positions. {"Then..."}

With that, all the competitors' expressions turned serious.

{"Get ready~~~~~!"} Mato said, drawing out the suspense.

Meanwhile, Sun inhaled a deep breath.

{"Go~~~~~!"} Mato shouted, signaling the beginning of the event.

"[Voice Magic: Howling Voice]!" Sun shouted as soon as Mato gave the signal.

In the next instant, everyone in the arena was forced to cover their ears due to the loud voice. At the same time, a shockwave was fired from Sun's mouth, traveling straight across the octagonal platform, headed right for the wizard standing opposite her. And as it just so happened, that happened to be the unnamed wizard from Twilight Ogre.

{ "I don't know if anyone can hear me, but Sun from Fairy Tail has started the event with a big move." }  
Loli shouted, trying to be heard over Sun's voice.

\*Bang!\*

"Ahh~~~~~!" The Twilight Ogre wizard shouted in pain as he was hit by the soundwave.

At the same time, the wizard from Twilight Ogre was sent flying off the platform. Luckily, the platform was not floating too high off the arena floor. Otherwise, as disoriented as he was, he could have been seriously injured by the fall.

Meanwhile, while everyone was still reeling from Sun's [Howling voice], Sun dashed to her left to attack her next target.

"Sun, although I admire you, don't think I'll let you defeat me." Kai said after noticing that Sun was rushing towards him.

Although Kai was affected by Sun's spell, as an Orca Merman, he was a bit more immune to its effects than the others. So, while wearing his space suit to protect himself from the great outdoors, he took a fighting stance, ready to fight back against Sun's assault.

"Sorry, Kai." Sun said while [Requipping] Kanade onto her left hip. "But Alfonzo said to not hold back. So, I can only apologize. [Water/Sword Compound Magic: First form: Water Surface slash]."

At that moment, Sun was clearly not in range for her iaido draw technique. However, as she swung her sword, the water she had compressed around her blade flew along its trajectory, aimed straight at Kai's chest.

However, Kai, showing his prowess, raised his arms in front of his chest to defend against the compressed water blade.

"I don't think so!" kai roared. "[Enhancement Magic: Full Body Enhancement]."

As Kai chanted his spell, he took a few steps forward to avoid being pushed off the side of the platform by the force he could sense behind Sun's attack.

\*Bang!\*

\*Grind!\*

Unfortunately, kai underestimated the power behind Sun's attack. As a result, he was forced backwards, his feet leaving two trenches in the ground that he was dragged past. Yet, Sun did not take the time to see the outcome of her attack, as she was forced to turn around and parry an sword strike.

\*Clang!\*

"Terra Branford." Sun said while making eye contact with a pair of green eyes.

"That's me." Terra replied in a small voice.

Terra then rotated her sword, pushing Sun's blade to the outside of her body. Then, she placed her free hand on Sun's abdomen.

Realizing that Terra was more than likely about to cast a spell, Sun's eyes widened. Then, she quickly raised her left knee, slamming it into Terra's forearm with enough force to send Terra's hand straight upwards.

"[Fire Magic: Fira]." Terra chanted; her tone somewhat flustered as her arm was knocked upwards.

In the next instant, from Terra's hand, a spiral of flames was fired into the sky lighting up the entire arena.

"Ah! Damn!" kai's shout could be heard as the flames heated up the platform.

The reason for Kai's shout was simple, just as he regained his footing and managed to push away Sun's attack, a shadow approached him from the ground. Then, just as he relaxed his muscles, Rogue rose from the shadow in front of him.

"[Shadow Dragon's Slash]." Rogue chanted once he materialized into his physical form.

\*Bang!\*

With his chant, Rogue's right arm, up to his elbow, was coated in shadow. Then, he threw a punch at Kai's chest.

Unfortunate for Kai, Rogue chose the perfect moment to attack, as he had just released the tension in his muscles. So, although he was able to get his hands up in front of rogue's attack, he was unable to brace himself properly. As a result, kai was thrown from the platform, becoming the second one to be eliminated from the event.

{"Wow! Kai Mikawa is the second contestant to be eliminated."} Loli shouted vigorously.

{"Indeed, Rogue chose the perfect opportunity to strike."} Yajima said, sounding impressed. {"And the speed he moves at when in his [Shadow form] is quite impressive."}

{"Yes, it is!"} Loli shouted energetically. {"And it looks like he's on the move again."}



Meanwhile, Sun, after causing Terra to misfire her spell, threw a front kick, that Terra blocked with the flat of her sword. However, the force behind Sun's kick sent the Final Fantasy wizard flying.

"[Water/Sword Compound Magic: Seventh Form: Drop Ripple Thrust]." Sun chanted as she drew her blade back into a thrusting position.

Seeing Sun's action, Terra's eyes widened slightly. Then, she gathered another [Fire Magic] spell on her free hand, preparing to fire it at Sun to stop her advance.

"[Poison Claw]."

Hearing that chant from behind, Terra was startled. She then quickly looked behind her and saw Toby standing in her flight path with his fingernails extended and ready to strike her in the back.

"Damn." Terra muttered as she lowered her hand holding the [Fire Magic] and pointed it at the ground.  
"[Fire Magic: Flare]."

\*Boom~~~~~!\*

In the next instant, a large explosion occurred directly under Terra. As a result, her trajectory was changed, and she was thrown over Toby.

"Huh?" Toby confusedly intoned before reaching up to scratch his head. "Did she just blow herself up? Argh~~~~~!"

"\*Sigh\* He did it again." Yuka grumbled from Lamia Scale's spectator seats. "How in the world did he forget that his claws were coated in his [Paralyzing Poison Powder] again?"

"I think that's just something we should be used to by now." Lyon muttered.

While that conversation was happening, Sun, who was still rushing forward to attack Terra with her [Drop Ripple Thrust], shot through the explosion. And although she did not see Terra on the other side, when she saw Toby just standing there with a pained expression on his face, she decided that he would be her next target.

"Well, I guess we're getting sixth place for this one." Yuka muttered as he watched Sun send Toby flying off the ring with her thrust.

{"And that brings the number down to five!"} Loli Shouted excitedly. {"So far, this is contestant Sun's second elimination. I wonder how many more she will get before everything is all said and done."}

Then, as if to answer Loli's question, Sun turned her gaze upwards and noticed that Terra was still flying through the air. Plus, she had turned around to use another spell to stop herself from flying off the ring. However, sun had no intension of letting her do so. So, she took another deep breath, this one audible to everyone in the Domus Flau.

"Oh, shit." Alfonzo muttered. "she's not playing around this time."

At the same time, Alfonzo created ear muffs for everyone in Fairy Tail with his [Metal Magic] that could absorb sound. And all of the Fairy Tail wizards wasted no time putting them on.

"[Voice Magic: Howling Voice – Overload]." Sun shouted as she aimed her spell at the airborne Terra.

Once again, everyone in the Domus Flau's audience seats was forced to cover their ears. However, those in the ring were not so lucky. But after the first time, they had diverted some of their magic power to protect their ears, knowing that the first time would not be the last time Sun used a spell like that. Still, Yumichika, Rangiku, and Rogue all flinched when they heard the loud noise, Especially Rogue, who as a Dragon Slayer, had exceptional senses when compared to other wizards.

But Terra was the unluckiest of everyone present, as not only did she have to defend against the sound of Sun's voice. But the shockwave that accompanied it was also dangerous. And although she tried to block it with another [Fire Magic] spell, without the proper footing, she was still pushed even further away from the ring. As a result, Final Fantasy ended up taking fifth place in the first event of the Grand Magic Games.

Meanwhile, after recovering from the loud sound, the Quatro Cerberus representative, Yumichika, and the Mermaid Heel representative, Rangiku, were engaged in a sword fight. Unfortunately, because both of their ears were ringing thanks to Sun's spell, they did not hear the approaching Dragon Slayer as he rose from a shadow nearby.

"[Shadow Dragon's Roar]." Rogue chanted, completely unheard by everyone other than Sun.

In the next instance, a conical blast of [shadow Dragon Slayer Magic] was exhaled from Rogue's mouth, engulfing both Yumichika and Rangiku.

"Ah!" Yumichika exclaimed as he noticed a moment too late.

"Damn." Rangiku cursed while she was in the same boat as Yumichika.

\*Boom!\*

In the next moment, both Yumichika and Rangiku were blasted out of the ring, with Rangiku using Yumichika as a cushion. As a result, Quatro Cerberus took fourth place while Mermaid Heel received third.

{"And with that, we're down to two contestants!"} Loli shouted with passion. {"Sun Seto from Fairy Tail and Rogue Cheney from Sabertooth. Yajima, who do you think will come out on top?"}

"[Water/Sword Compound Magic: Second Form: Water Wheel]." Sun chanted before Yajima could answer Loli's question.

Suns' sword, swung while summersaulting, cleaved through Rogue's shoulder while he was recovering from his spell. However, instead of harming the Shadow Dragon Slayer, it simply passed through him as the affected area turned into shadows.

"Ha! It's no use." Rogue said coldly as Sun landed on the platform and quickly turned around to face him. "No matter what you do or how impressive your swordsmanship is, you can't cut a shadow."

"You think so?" Sun asked while tilting her head cutely. "Well, I won't know until I try, ya see?"

{"I'm not sure, Loli."} Yajima said, finally answering Loli's question. {"But we're definitely about to find out real soon."}

Chapter 679: Grand Magic Games, Day One; Part 2: Alfonzo Makes a Statement

{"Things are really coming down to the wire now, aren't they?"} Loli asked while watching Sun and rogue exchange offense and defense. {"Honestly, it looks like this could go on for a while."}

{"Indeed."} Yajima added. {"While Sun seems to have the upper hand when it comes to combat techniques, none of her slashes have been able to damage Rogue, who can turn his body into shadows at will. However, thanks to Sun's skill in swordsmanship, Rogue has been unable to land a decisive blow, as well."}

And just as Yajima said, Sun and Rogue have been in a stalemate ever since they were the only ones left on the floating platform. And had it not been for Rogue's [Shadow Form], Sun would have claimed victory quite a while ago. Yet, she and Rogue have been exchanging blows for the last forty-five minutes with no clear winner in sight.

"Although it's not obvious yet thanks to her technique, Sun is starting to get tired." Alfonzo said while watching the ongoing event.

"Yeah... Rogue really is a bad match for her." Elicia added.

"How does someone even hit a shadow?" Marin asked.

"Well, it's not really about hitting the shadow." Alfonzo said. "It's more about making it so that the shadow can't exist."

"Huh?" Marin intoned confusedly. "What do you mean?"

"Well..." Alfonzo said, starting his explanation.

Meanwhile, Sun, like Alfonzo said, was starting to get tired. Though, her fatigue was not physical. Instead, it was mental. Because as a mermaid, her physical qualities were much better than most humans. So, it was more likely for Rogue to tire out physically before she did.

However, the mental strain she was under was something else. Not only did Sun have to worry about keeping her guard up and attacking whenever Rogue showed an opening, which did not work at all thanks to his [Shadow Form]. She also had to multitask and come up with a way to damage Rogue despite his intangibility.

'I can't keep going like this.' Sun thought to herself as she dodged an attack from Rogue's shadow covered right foot. She then continued her thoughts while counterattacking with an upward slash, to no avail. "Should I just destroy the whole platform? I mean, that's probably what my guild mates would do, right? No... That's not how I want to win. Alfonzo said show no mercy and make Sabertooth know they made a mistake. And that's what I wanna do.'

\*Clang!\* \*Clang!\* \*Clang!\* \*Clang!\* \*Clang!\*

While continuing to think of a way to get past Rogue's shadow form, Sun skillfully parried all the punches and kicks Rogue threw her way. While doing so, she could tell that Rogue was also starting to get frustrated with the stalemate.

'Maybe he'll make a mistake I can take advantage of.' Sun thought to herself. She then mentally shook her head at that idea. 'No, that's not how Fairy Tail wizards do things.'

As that thought came to an end, Sun blocked another one of Rogue's punches. However, when she did, she noticed something strange. Rogue's [Shadow Form] flickered for a moment.

'What was that?' Sun thought to herself while playing back the last exchange in her head. A few moments later, Sun widened her eyes in realization as she exclaimed internally. 'Now I get it.'

With that, Sun parried another one of Rogue's attacks. Then, she took deep breath that was audible from every seat in the spectator stands.

"Ha! Haven't you grown tired of trying and failing?" Rogue asked. "Even if your soundwaves can affect me while I'm in my [Shadow Form], as long as I remain in that form, you won't be able to hurt me with your subsequent attacks. So, why don't you just give up?"

Ignoring Rogue, Sun slowly exhaled. However, instead of just exhaling air, she released a large amount of [Water Magic] from her mouth. Then, with her magic power control, she surrounded both herself and Rogue in a large column of water.

Seeing the large amount of water surrounding him, Rogue stopped to look at it for a moment. Yet, he quickly returned his sight to Sun.

"Although this is quite impressive, water can't harm a shadow, either." Rogue said in a tone filled with superiority. "You really should just give up. After all, it's normal that you lose to me. I'm a Dragon Slayer, After all."

In response, Sun only shook her head at Rogue's lack of insight. Meanwhile she controlled the water surrounding them, trying to find the right position, density, and angle of the water.

"\*Sigh\* Your stubbornness will only lead to more pain." Rogue said, sounding a bit disdainful that Sun refused to give up. He then chanted in a cold tone. "[Shadow Dragon's Waxwing Flash]."

Intending to end things quickly, Rogue flared his magic power. He then turned into a shadow once again. Then, he rushed forward, and when he was in range, he spread his shadow self around Son.

"Ah! I think I finally got it." Sun said in a cheerful tone. "[Water Magic: Megiddo]."

Then, just before Rogue could start pummeling Sun from every direction by materializing his hands from the shadows, a bright light fell over everything inside the column of water Sun was controlling. In fact, the light was so bright, that there were no longer any shadows inside the column of water. And



unfortunately for Rogue, in a place where shadows could not exist, he is also unable to maintain his [Shadow Form].

"What the...?" Rogue exclaimed in confusion. "How is this possible?"

"I really wanna tell you how I did it, but..." Sun said as she sheathed Kanade once again. "... if I do, Alfonzo and Lici will yell at me for explaining my abilities like a third-rate villain. Sorry. [Water/Sword Compound Magic: Secret Form; Tidal Wave]."

As soon as she finished chanting, Sun drew her sword much faster than the naked eye could follow. And with the sword draw, Sun spun in a full circle. Thanks to that, a circular wall of compressed air was forced outward with Sun as the center point.

\*Bang!\*

Unfortunately, that meant that Rogue was hit by this wall of compressed air before it slammed him into the water column.

\*Splash!\*

With that, not only Rogue, but the entire column of water was sent flying towards the edges of the ring. And with the damage Rogue took because he was unprepared for Sun's attack, he was too disoriented to stop himself from being washed over the edge of the platform.

{"And that's it~~~~~!"} Loli shouted over the broadcasting system. {"In a stunning turn of events, Sun has overcome the Shadow Dragon Slayer's ability to turn into shadows with a brilliant show of intelligence. And with that, the first event, 'There Can Be Only One,' has come to an end with Sun Seto from Fairy Tail taking first place!"}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

While the crowd went wild with Loli's announcement, Sun with a wide smile on her face, stood in the center of the floating platform, which was currently lowering itself to the ground, while waving at the crowd.

"She did exactly what you said she would need to do to win." Marin said while looking at Alfonzo with astonishment.

"Of course she did." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "Although Sun is all happy go lucky, she's really quite intelligent when she takes the time to think through a problem. In fact, she's one of the more intelligent members of the guild."

"Not that the bar is all that high." Brandish said in a dry tone.

No one argued with that statement.

"Anyway, now we just have to wait until the pairings are picked for the battle rounds." Elicia said with a smile. "I wonder which of us will fight today."

"Only time will tell." Alfonzo replied with a shrug.

Not long later, sun joined the rest of her team in the seating area and received praise from not only the members of Team Fairy Tail, but all her guild mates sitting in the stands behind them, as well. Meanwhile, everyone could see Minerva berating Rogue for losing. On top of that, the anger Jiemma was feeling due to the loss could be felt by the entire section where Sabertooth was seated.

{"Okay, Ladies and gentlemen!"} Loli shouted over the cheers, drawing all the attention in the arena onto himself. {"With the event for the first day over, why don't we take a look at the scores?"}

With that, all the screens in the Domus Flau displayed the current scores at the same time.

{Overall Scoreboard

Rank Team Score

Fairy Tail 10 Pts. Sabertooth 8 Pts. Mermaid Heel 6 Pts Quatro Cerberus 4 Pts. Final Fantasy 3 Pts. Lamia Scale 2 Pts. Blue Pegasus 1 Pts. Twilight Ogre 0 Pts.}

{"I gotta say, some of our newcomers did quite well for their very first event, didn't they?"} Loli asked after reading out the scores to the audience.

{"Indeed."} Yajima replied. {"And that proves that you can't look down on anyone. There are powerful wizards hidden everywhere in Fiore."}

{"Well said."} Loli said with a nod. {"Now, it's time we move onto the second part of today's action, the Battle Round. And for those who don't know, each day, the Battle Round goes a little something like this. Each day, the eight teams will be paired up for a one-on-one duel with the contestants being chosen by our sponsors to give you, the audience, the most entertaining duels each day. So, are you all ready?"}

"Yeah~~~~~!" The crowd shouted in unison with great fervor.

{"Great!"} Loli shouted just as enthusiastically. {"And as it just so happens, I just received the matchups for today's Battle Round. So, let's see here... \*Rustle\* \*Rustle\* Ah... Why is this thing so hard to open? Huh? Oh, crap, this thing is still on."}

{"Calm down, Loli."} Yajima said comfortingly.

{"Right, just gotta stay calm."} Loli murmured while continuing to try and open the envelope with the match list inside. {"Okay, here it is. Now, let's get ready."}

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

Once again, the crowd cheered loudly, completely unbothered by Loli's little mistake.

{"Alright, then the first match for today's Battle Round will be between..."}

Loli said, pausing for a moment to build suspense. {"Alfonzo Marcus from Fairy Tail versus Orga Nanagear from Sabertooth. It looks like this will be a duel between two masters of channeling electricity. Yajima, any predictions of how this will go?"}

{"Well, Alfonzo is one of the Ten Wizard Saints."}

Yajima replied. {"But judging by how is guild mate, Rogue, performed in the earlier event, I doubt Orga will go down easily."}

{"I see."}

Loli said while nodding his head. {"Stellar insight as always."}

"Sabertooth is the strongest!" Orga shouted from his seating area before jumping down into the arena.

"Don't hurt him too bad, Fonzie." Elicia said as Alfonzo stood up to face his opponent.

"I'll try not to." Alfonzo replied as he stepped forward. "But no guarantees."

Alfonzo then took another step forward. And with that step, he vanished from the seating area in a burst of speed before reappearing near the center of the arena.

\*Cheer~~~~~!\*

Seeing Alfonzo appear in the ring from nowhere, the crowd once again cheered excitedly.

"He's gotten a lot faster." Yoruichi said with her eyes narrowed. "He's much faster than I was before Bumble Bee and I left for home."

"You're still faster, though." Sui-Feng said, not wanting to admit just how fast Alfonzo was, as he was even faster than she was.

"At my top speed, maybe." Yoruichi replied. "But I'm not sure if he was going all out. I mean, look how leisurely he looks."

And indeed, Alfonzo looked almost uninterested in the upcoming match.

{"Okay, for the uninformed, I'll give you a quick rundown of the rules."} Loli said just as Orga reached a good starting point. {"Each fight during the Battle Round will be one-on-one like I said. Each battle will have a time limit of thirty minutes. The winner will be decided when one contestant is deemed unable to continue. And should the match go until the time limit, it will be considered a draw. As for the scores, winners get 10 points. Losers get a big fat 0. And a draw will result in both teams receiving 5 points. Everyone got that? Good. Then, let the match.... Begin!"}

"Hah! You use electricity?" Orga asked once the signal was given while flaring his magic power to its limits. "Well, you'd better come up with another strategy. Because you ain't got nothing on me."

"Sure, buddy, whatever you say." Alfonzo replied lazily, showing just as much disdain for the members of Sabertooth as they had shown for Fairy Tail in the waiting room. "Look let's just get this over with, okay? Use all your strongest spells now. Because if you don't, you won't have a chance to later."

"Why you!" Orga shouted, enraged by Alfonzo's dismissive attitude. "I'll show you what a true master of Lightning looks like!"

Orga then raised his arms and pointed them at Alfonzo with his palms facing each other a few inches apart. Then, his arms started to crackle with black lightning. After that, those sparks began gathering between his palms, creating an orb of black lightning that continuously grew in size.

"Ooh~~~~~!" The crowd's interest in the strange colored lightning was clear.

"Oh, black lightning?" Alfonzo said in a bored tone while raising an eyebrow. "So, you're a God Slayer. Not bad, I guess."

As Alfonzo continued to speak in that dismissive tone, Orga grew more and more enraged. As a result, the voltage of his lightning grew proportionally.

"So, what if you know about [God Slayer Magic]." Orga said as his spell neared completion. "What can you do about it? [120 mm Black Lightning Cannon]."

With Orga's chant, the orb of lightning, as big as a 120 mm mortar, was fired in Alfonzo's direction. However, Alfonzo did not even seem to react.

"Hah! Can't even react, can you?" Orga shouted, gloating over his anticipated easy victory.

However, just as the [120 mm Black Lightning Cannon] was about to hit Alfonzo, his hand was engulfed in violet electricity. Then, he calmly raised his hand in the black lightning projectiles flight path. And with little effort, Alfonzo caught Orga's spell.

Seeing that, Orga's eyes widened in surprise to a comical degree. Meanwhile, the crowd fell silent.

As one of the Ten Wizard Saints, everyone watching the match expected Alfonzo to come out of this exchange unharmed. However, they expected him to dodge the attack. But when he simply caught it, no one knew exactly what to say.

"Hmm... When Natsu fought the Fire God Slayer, I didn't get to examine the God Slaying property in his flames." Alfonzo said casually while examining the ball of lightning in his hand. "But now, I think I might be able to imbue my metals with the God Slaying property if I study this. Thanks, man."

As he spoke, Alfonzo looked at the orb of lightning in his hand from every angle. Then, when he reached the end of his speech, he created a metal container before stuffing the lightning orb into it. And when that was done, he clipped it onto the sash he wore around the waist of his combat attire.

"So, is that it?" Alfonzo asked the dumbfounded Orga. "Or do you have anything else for me?"

"Damn you!" Orga shouted, completely incensed by Alfonzo's taunt. "I'll beat you up real good!"

With that, Orga charged forward, his body crackling with black lightning.



"\*Sigh\* Oh well, I guess not." Alfonzo muttered while watching Orga approach. "Well then, I guess I'll end this."

As he said that, Orga reached his optimal range. Then, he threw a heavily telegraphed overhand right.

"Dude, even if you're angry, you can't be this bad in hand-to-hand combat, right?" Alfonzo asked as he, with his hands coated in violet electricity, swatted Orga's punch to the side. He then continued while cutting off the flow of electricity to his hands as he threw a combination of punches into Orga's torso. "I mean, every other wizard I've ever met who practices some kind of [Slayer Magic] is pretty good. Have you been slacking off, or something?"

While speaking, Alfonzo landed a left hook to Orga's ribs. He then followed up with a right uppercut, followed by a left uppercut to his abdomen. Then, when Orga doubled over, he continued speaking while landing a right hook to the side of Orga's head.

"Or have you just fought people weaker than you?" Alfonzo asked as his hook landed on Orga's head. "I mean, your magic is pretty powerful. So, you could probably overwhelm all your opponents with little effort before, right?"

Dazed from Alfonzo's blow to the head, Orga staggered. However, he could still hear Alfonzo, though through the ringing of his ears, he could not make out what he was saying. Still, he could hear the dismissive and disdainful tone he was speaking in. and that angered him even further.

So, with all his might, Orga once again reeled back his fist and threw a haymaker at Alfonzo's head.

"\*Sigh\*" Alfonzo sighed in disappointment as he ducked under Orga's punch.

\*Bang!\*

Then, he threw a heavy uppercut that landed on Orga's chin, snapping his head back and sending him flying into the air.

"Well, it's been a while since I've used this one." Alfonzo muttered while watching Orga rise into the air. "I won't use a weapon this time, though. I don't wanna break any bones, after all. Well, here goes. [Electromagnetism Magic: Flash Point]."

With Alfonzo's chant, a pair of electrified rails appeared on either side of him and were pointed at Orga in the air. Then, Alfonzo simply vanished from where he stood.

\*Boom!\*

A moment later, Orga slammed into the ground, kicking up a cloud of dust.

\*Boom!\*

Shortly after that, a sonic boom sounded around the Domus Flau, causing everyone to cover their ears. Luckily, none of the shockwaves caused by the sonic booms were able to harm the audience, as a magical barrier was erected around the arena.

"Thirty-seven." Yoruichi said in an impressed tone.

"Thirty-seven what?" Rangiku asked curiously.

"Alfonzo made thirty-seven passes before sending the Sabertooth boy crashing into the ground." Retsu, who was sitting right behind Team Mermaid Heel, said, answering Rangiku's question.

"And he probably could have gone even faster." Yoruichi added. "But if he had, he risked permanently injuring that guy. He's really gotten quite terrifying since the last time I saw him fight."

Upon hearing that, the rest of Team Mermaid Heel fell silent like the rest of the audience and waited for the dust to settle. However, they did not have to wait too long, as Alfonzo swung his arm, generating a gust of wind that blew away the dust.

And with the dust cleared, everyone could see Orga lying at the bottom of a shallow crater with bruises all over his body and his eyes rolled up into the back of his head, clearly unconscious.

Immediately upon seeing Orga's state, Sting, Rogue, and Rufus jumped down from the stands to rush to Orga's side. All the while, they glared daggers at Alfonzo.

"Hey, why so serious?" Alfonzo asked while tilting his head in mock confusion. "I mean, I didn't kill him. Hell, I didn't even cripple him. He's just gonna be sore for a few days."

\*Smack!\*

Alfonzo, after not receiving an answer for a few moments, slapped his right fist into his upturned left palm with an expression of realization on his face.

"Oh, I get it.!" Alfonzo exclaimed. "You all wanna avenge your friends loss. Even though winning and losing are part of any competition."

Reaching that point, Alfonzo's expression turned deadly serious.

"Well then, you're all welcome to try any time." Alfonzo said as he flared his magic power to its limit.

Immediately, the entire Domus Flau began to shake under Alfonzo's magic power pressure, making it hard to breathe for everyone present. However, Sting, Rogue, and Rufus had it the worst. Immediately upon feeling Alfonzo's power, they all felt their backs break out in cold sweat.

Even Jiemma, sitting behind the Team Sabertooth seating area, opened his eyes wide in amazement. He had been certain he was the strongest wizard on the continent, despite having never faced any of the Wizard Saints. Yet, his whole world view had just been flipped on its head.

"You all made a terrible mistake trying to goad me into getting disqualified." Alfonzo said in a menacing tone. "And Fairy Tail intends to show you just how big of a mistake that was. Had you just faced us head

on, we would have at least tried to make things look interesting. But now, the kid gloves are off. And you're about to see just what Fairy Tail's strongest team is capable of."

With that said, Alfonzo's reeled in his magic power. Then, he turned around without another word, leaving the entire arena in shocked silence as he returned to his seat.

{"UH... Um... Well... That's the end of the first battle."} Loli said, still trying to collect himself after feeling how massive Alfonzo's magic power was. {"And the winner is Alfonzo Marcus of Fairy Tail."}

Chapter 680: Grand Magic Games, Day One; Part 3: The End of the Day's Festivities and Meeting Team Final Fantasy

Alfonzo's duel with Orga left the crowd of the Domus Flau in shocked silence. Never did anyone think that Alfonzo would be able to handle someone able to qualify for the Grand Magic Games as easily as he did. But after feeling his magic pressure that shook the whole arena, they found themselves reassessing what it meant to be powerful.

Yet, Loli's words finally brought the crowd back to the here and now. By then, however, Alfonzo had already returned to his seat and was chatting casually with the rest of his team.

After a few more beats, Sting, Rogue, and Rufus, with nowhere to vent their frustration, picked up Orga and helped him out of the arena, taking him to the medical bay in the Domus Flau. Meanwhile, Minerva stared at Alfonzo with narrowed eyes for a while before leaving her seat to meet up with the rest of her team.

"Looks like Minerva has taken interest in you, Fonzie." Elicia said in a teasing tone while nudging Alfonzo with her elbow.

"Just so long as it only stays as interest, I won't have to do anything Sabertooth will regret. Alfonzo said while glancing at Minerva. He then turned his attention to Jiemma, who was sitting in Sabertooth's seating area and seething in anger. "But something tells me that I'll have to do something before the festival ends."

"Yeah, that guy looks like he's ready to go to any lengths to win." Marin said, a slight frown marring her face.

"Should we just get rid of him now?" Brandish asked while spinning her dagger, or rather her [Soul Armament], Hecatoncheires, between her fingers. "That way, we won't have to deal with something so tedious later."

"We can't do that." Sun said while shaking her head. "He hasn't done anything wrong."

"Sun's right." Alfonzo said as he reached over and started combing his fingers through Sun's hair. "But if he decides to fuck around, he'll definitely find out."

In response, Elicia, Marin, Sun, and Brandish, though she was annoyed at having to wait to deal with something she knew would be annoying, nodded their heads. Then, they turned their attention back to the other Battle Rounds. And they were just in time, as Loli had introduced the next match, Kagura versus Lyon.

Unfortunate for Lyon, although his mastery over [Ice-Make Magic] had improved significantly over the last couple years, he was still no match for Kagura, Retsu's disciple, as her [Gravity Magic] combined with her swordsmanship, was too much for the Ice Wizard to handle.

"Hmm... It looks like Lyon has been slacking." Ur said in an annoyed tone. "I think I'll have to talk to Ooba Babasama about giving Lyon some special training."

Hearing that, Gray, Ultear, Meredy, and Wendy, who were all seated around the woman who taught them how to be wizards, shuddered. A moment later, however, Gray snapped out of his painful recollections of Ur's training.

"Please tell me you'll be going to Lamia Scale for that, Master." Gray said, almost pleading for that to be the case.

"Of course not." Ur replied without even looking back. "I'm the master of Fairy Tail, I can't just leave for that long."

"Ugh!" Gray groaned.

"I think I understand why Gray is acting like that." Ultear said with a mischievous grin.

That caused Ur, who was staring at Gray when he groaned, to turn her attention to Ultear.

"Why? What's wrong with Gray?" Ur asked curiously.

"You remember when I went with Alfonzo and Juvia back when Alfonzo upgraded the Lamia Scale training facilities, right?" Ultear asked, her mischievous grin widening.

That question was enough to make Ur understand where her daughter was going with this.

"Well, Lyon kinda fell for Juvia at first sight." Ultear continued, despite the fact that she noticed the spark of realization in Ur's expression. "And he's just as obsessed with Juvia as she was with me, you, and Gray when she first saw us."

"Ugh!" Juvia groaned, partly in annoyance while the rest was from embarrassment after remembering how unbearable she was in the past.

"I see." Ur said with a smile while nodding her head. She then continued while throwing up her hands as if asking, "What can I do about it?" "Unfortunately, if I intend to train Lyon, he'll have to come to Magnolia for that. There's just no other way around it."

Meanwhile, Loli announced the next match, Tifa Lockhart of Final Fantasy versus another random wizard from Twilight Ogre. And there was no suspense to that match, as Tifa flattened him with a single punch.

And the final match of the day was between Karen of Blue Pegasus and Genma from Quatro Cerberus. And this match ended up being the longest of all the matches, ending just before the timer ran out with Karen as the winner. Though, she was covered in cuts and bruises from the intense battle.

"She ruined another one of my pieces." Elicia said in a menacing tone, her hair starting to float up from the magical pressure she was releasing.



"Calm down, Lici." Alfonzo said while pulling Elicia onto his lap and wrapping his arms around her to make sure she didn't do something she would regret. "I think that was on purpose. I mean, look at the way she's stealing glances over here. She was probably hoping you'd lose it and tie her up before kicking her ass."

Hearing that, Elicia calmed down enough to notice that Karen was blushing slightly, though she was trying to keep it in check, while glancing in her direction periodically.

"That sneaky..." Elicia grumbled.

"I think it would be an even bigger punishment if you acted like you didn't notice she ruined one of your outfits, Lici." Marin chimed in.

"But she might try even harder to get Lici's attention if she does that." Sun pointed out.

"Hmm... That could be possible, too." Marin replied with a nod. She then threw her hands up as she continued. "Well, I don't know what else to tell you."

"Just ignore her." Brandish said, throwing in her two jewels. "Anything else would be too bothersome."

"No... She'd probably get off on that, too." Elicia said in a huff. "She'd see it as neglect play, or something."

"I think you should just talk to her and tell her how disappointed you are in her." Alfonzo said with a shrug while hugging Elicia a little tighter. "I mean, that usually hurts a lot more than getting scolded."

"Yeah, I remember the last time my mom said that to me." Sun replied with a nod. "I almost cried while telling myself I would do better, so I didn't have to see that look on her face ever again."

The rest of team Fairy Tail all nodded in response while remembering the disappointed faces of their parents.

{"Well, everyone!"} Loli shouted after Karen and Genma were no longer in the arena. {"That ends the festivities for the first day of the x790 Grand Magic Games. So, before we end the show, let's take a look at the scores after one day."}

With that, all the screens in the arena, which were showing Loli and Yajima in the broadcasting booth, switched to showing the overall scoreboard.

{Overall Scoreboard

Rank Team Score

1. Fairy Tail 20 Pts.

2. Mermaid Heel 16 Pts.

3. Final Fantasy 13 Pts.

4. Blue Pegasus 11 Pts.

5. Sabertooth 8 Pts.

6. Quatro Cerberus 4 Pts.

7. Lamia Scale 2 Pts.

8. Twilight Ogre 0 Pts.}

{"After seeing scores like that, I'm not sure what to think>" } Loli said before turning to Yajima and continuing. {"Yajima, what do you make of this?"}

{"Honestly, it's too early to tell."} Yajima replied with a smile. {"But I'm sure that the rest of the Games will be filled with excitement. I'm sure we're in for some amazing days of magic."}

{"I know you're right about that, Yajima."} Loli said excitedly. {"Well then, we can only look forward to it. So, with that, the first day of the Grand Magic Games have come to an end. We'll see you back here, at

the Domus Flau, for day two at the same time tomorrow. Until then, be safe and enjoy the festival atmosphere around Crocus."}

And with that, the audience started to get up from their seats and make their way to the arena's exits. Meanwhile, the contestants, having a different exit from the general crowd, made their way through the Domus Flau's interior.

"Oh, isn't that Final Fantasy's team?" Marin asked while she walked through the Domus Flau with the rest of her team.

Just as Marin said, walking a little ahead of Team Fairy Tail was Team Final Fantasy. And after hearing Marin's voice, Aerith turned around to see who was talking about them. Then, when she recognized who it was, she turned back to Squall and spoke quietly.

Shortly afterward, Team Final Fantasy stopped and turned around in unison, seemingly waiting for Team Fairy Tail to catch up.

"Hey." Sun, as energetic and friendly as ever, greeted the members of Team Fairy Tail. She then turned to Terra and continued. "That was a good fight in the event. It's too bad we couldn't have a proper sword fight, though."

"Sorry to disappoint you, but I'm not really a swordsman." Terra replied. "I only use it to protect myself when the opponent gets too close for my magic to be effective."

In response, Sun tilted her head in confusion.

"But you rushed me with your sword before casting any magic at me, though." Sun said, not seeing why she would do that if she wasn't really a swordsman.

"That was because..." Terra said, sputtering a little after it was pointed out.

"It's because she just doesn't wanna admit being a bit of a battle junkie like the rest of us." Tifa said with a giggle.

"Speak for yourself." Vivi, Terra, and Aerith said in unison.

"\*Sigh\* Why are they so loud?" Squall muttered to himself. "Well, at least Zell and Selphie aren't here. Otherwise, getting them to stop would be impossible."

Squall then shook his head before stepping forward with his hand extended for a handshake.

"It's nice to meet you." Squall said while looking Alfonzo in the eye. "I'm Squall Leonhart. I've been looking forward to meeting you for a long time. Unfortunately, thanks to training and missions, I've never had the chance to make it to Magnolia."

"I see." Alfonzo, said accepting the handshake. "Well, I'm Alfonzo Marcus. It's nice to meet you as well."

"Are you one of Fonzie's fans?" Elicia asked curiously while looking Squall and the rest of his team's outfits up and down with scrutiny.

"Although that's true, that's not why I wanted to meet him." Squall said as he retracted his hand.

"Squall wants Mr. Marcus to make him a new gunblade." Vivi said quietly.

"Should have known." Marin said with an understanding nod. "That happens much more often than one would think."

"I can imagine." Aerith said with a nod of her own. "He is the best magic item crafter in the world, after all."

Smiling at Aerith for the compliment, Alfonzo then turned his attention back to Squall, his smile having completely disappeared that fast.

"Well, I don't mind making something for you." Alfonzo said, having entered his business mode. He then raised his right hand and started rubbing his thumb and the tips of his other fingers together as he continued. "But it won't be cheap."

"I expected as much." Squall replied with a nod. "Hopefully, bringing my own materials will lower the price, though."

"Of course." Alfonzo said with a nod. "And since you said you're often short on time, why don't you come back to our hotel to discuss the details. You know, since we have the time right now."

Hearing that, Squall exchanged glances with the rest of his team. Then, after receiving nods from all of them, he turned back to Alfonzo.

"I don't see a problem with that." Squall said. "I'll just have to talk it over with Master Edea. But I'm sure she won't have a problem with it, either."

"She'll probably wanna come along, too." Tifa added.

"Maybe even bring the rest of the guild over to meet the renowned Fairy Tail." Aerith continued.

"Ugh! I hate crowded places." Terra groaned.

"I just hope their all nice." Vivi said in barely a whisper.

"Don't worry." Marin said, holding herself back from pulling the little cutie, Vivi, into a hug. "Everyone in our guild is nice. And since we're staying in the Sixth Sense Hotel, they probably won't even start a brawl."

Hearing that, the other four members of Team Fairy Tail looked at Marin with disbelieving expressions.

"Tempting Murphy, huh?" Alfonzo asked in an amused tone. "And it wasn't even Lici this time. This is new."

"Ah, crap!" Marin exclaimed. "You're totes right. I raised a flag, didn't I?"

"Hehehe." Tifa giggled. "I'm really looking forward to this. They seem like fun."

With that, the two teams chatted for a little longer before splitting up to go on their own way. While Team Final Fantasy went back to their hotel to talk to Edea Kramer, their guild master about visiting the Fairy Tail guild to discuss business and make friends, Team Fairy Tail returned to the Sixth Sense Hotel to celebrate their good showing on the first day of the Grand Magic Games.

On top of that, Alfonzo started preparing a feast for the guests that would arrive later. However, even if they did not show up, he was sure that his guild full of gluttons and ruffians would be able to polish off the feast with no problem.