

Fairy Tail 98

Chapter 98: Linear Cannon

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Resenbool.

September, x781.

Over the next few days, Alfonzo and Sun followed a set schedule. Around sunrise, they would wake up and begin their daily training in the front yard of the Rockbell residence. After that, they would have breakfast with Pinako and Winry. After breakfast, they would head to the hospital to check on the patients of the Techno Organic Virus. Then, after eight hours or so, they would return to the Rockbell residence where they would have dinner with Pinako and Winry. Following dinner, they would go to bed, with Sun sharing a room with Winry so they could have their girl talks.

After several days of observing the patients, Sun, instead of Alfonzo noticed that the coloration of the inflicted's skin was slowly starting to return to normal. Naturally, this caused the doctors who were tasked with looking after these patients to sigh in relief. Meanwhile, the patients, themselves, began to break down in tears after hearing the news.

After examining a few of the recovering patients, the doctors noticed that the muscle and bone density of the areas that were recovering had been raised, when compared to the rest of the body. Meaning, if someone had enough magic power, they would benefit greatly from housing the Techno Organic Virus. Unfortunately, there were not many wizards in Resenbool. On top of that, none of them were miners, so the chances of them being infected were quite low.

Now that the patients seemed to be on the route to recovery, Alfonzo and Sun decided to investigate the mines, the place where the living metal seemed to originate.

"You two need to be careful." Winry said while holding Sun's hands. "Even if you're both powerful wizards, no one knows exactly what that stuff is capable of."

Shortly after breakfast, Alfonzo and Sun were standing outside of the Rockbell residence while Winry, who was worried about their safety, was sending them off.

"Stop fussing over them, Winry!" Pinako shouted from inside the house. "They're professionals, I think they know how to handle themselves."

"*Sigh* I know, Grandma." Winry said, reluctantly letting go of Sun's hands. "But I can't help it. I'm worried."

"Don't worry, Winry." Sun said cheerfully. "Like Granny Pinako said, we're strong. Plus, Alfonzo is an S-Class wizard. So, he'll be able to handle anything that comes our way."

Hearing Sun say that, Alfonzo glanced at his Automail arm and smiled wryly.

"Don't be too confident, Sun." Alfonzo said. "No matter how strong we are, we can still make mistakes. Instead, it's better to always be cautious."

Like Alfonzo, Sun's thoughts returned to the day she fished Alfonzo out of the sea. Then, her expression turned much more solemn.

"You're right." Sun said with a nod. "I'll make sure to be careful."

Smiling at Sun's change in attitude, Alfonzo started combing his fingers through her hair subconsciously.

While Sun narrowed her eyes at the pleasant feeling, Winry looked at the couple in envy.

'*Sigh* I wonder if Ed will ever be that gentle with me.' Winry thought to herself. A moment later, however, she started shaking her head vigorously as her face turned crimson. 'Why do I always think about Ed when I see those two getting all lovey-dovey?'

"Winry, are you okay?" Sun asked after seeing Winry's actions. "Your face is all red, do you have a cold?"

Approaching Winry, Sun placed her hand on Winry's forehead. Then, after a moment, she breathed a sigh of relief.

"No fever, that's good." Sun said.

"Hahaha... I'm fine, Sun." Winry replied in an embarrassed tone. "I think it's because I'm still a bit sleepy."

"Then you should go back inside." Sun said with concern. "Even if you're not sick now, you could still catch a cold if you don't take care of yourself."

"Aww! You're so sweet!" Winry said, pulling Sun into a hug. "But you don't have to worry. I'll go back to sleep after you and Alfonzo head out."

Nodding in satisfaction, Sun returned the hug with a smile.

Meanwhile, Alfonzo watched the whole interaction with a smile of his own.

'If I had to guess, she was probably thinking about Ed.' Alfonzo thought after seeing Winry's facial expressions. 'In the anime, she didn't realize she loved Ed until after her first run in with Scar. I wonder what triggered it in this world. Come to think of it, does Scar even exist in this world? And if he does, does he have a hate boner for alchemists, which should be a kind of wizard?'

A little while later, Alfonzo and Sun bid Winry farewell. Then, they boarded the Vanquish and made their way toward the black iron mine.

Naturally, it did not take long for the duo to arrive at the mine. When they did, they saw that the mine had been cordoned off, surprising neither Alfonzo nor Sun.

"We're here." Alfonzo said as he turned off the Vanquish's engine. "Remember, we need to be careful."

"I understand." Sun replied with a serious expression on her face.

With that, Alfonzo and Sun disembarked from the Vanquish. Then, they cautiously made their way into the mine. Luckily, they had the foresight to get a map of the mine. On top of that, the map had been marked with all the locations where the miners had been inflicted with the Techno Organic Virus.

With the map, it made things much easier for Alfonzo and Sun to find the places where the infections took place. In turn, this would make investigating the source of the virus that much easier, or so they thought. Unfortunately, after searching for four, or so, hours, their search turned up nothing.

"*Sigh* No matter how many times I look, there's no pattern to the infections." Alfonzo said as he looked at the map.

"Does that mean that living metal can move?" Sun asked curiously. "Will it try to sneak up on us?"

"Although that's possible, it's highly unlikely." Alfonzo said while shaking his head. "From what I've been able to figure out by studying the metal I took out of the patients; it doesn't have the ability to think."

"If that's the case, won't it be really hard to find?" Sun asked as she placed her hand on a wall of the mine, running her hand along it as they walked forward. "I mean, this mine is pretty big, we could be---
Ow!"

Before Sun could finish her sentence, she pulled her hand away from the wall. Where her hand was just positioned, there was a jagged area, no doubt left from a pickaxe. And on the jagged stones was a bit of Sun's blood.

A moment later, Alfonzo's eyes widened as he could feel metal rushing toward the wall from the other side. And considering that he had been studying that metal just recently, he knew exactly what it was.

"Sun, get away from the wall!" Alfonzo shouted.

'Damn it, I couldn't even sense it until it started moving.' Alfonzo thought to himself in annoyance. 'Just what the hell is this metal exactly?'

Before Sun could react, however, a slithering mass of silvery metal shot out of the wall, without disturbing the wall in the slightest, at Sun's hand.

In response, Sun opened her mouth and screamed at the incoming metal. However, this was not a scream generated by fear. Instead, Sun was using her magic to defend herself.

"[Voice Magic: Howling Voice]." Sun Chanted as a shockwave left her mouth.

Luckily, Sun's magic was effective against the Techno Organic Metal, hitting it and causing it to splatter against the wall of the mine. Unfortunately, the mine shafts were not sturdy enough to handle the destructive power of Sun's magic.

"Metal Magic: Four Pillar Support]." Alfonzo chanted as the mine shaft began to shake and collapse.

Immediately, four steel pillars appeared, holding up the collapsing ceiling. With that, the shaking stopped. Unfortunately, neither Alfonzo nor Sun could breathe a sigh of relief.

A moment later, on top of the whisp of metal that initially lunged at Sun, more of the metal burst from the walls, all surging toward the injury on Sun's hand.

In response, Sun took a deep breath, preparing to use her [Howling Voice] spell once again. However, before she could, Alfonzo placed a hand on her shoulder, causing her to stop.

"Although that spell is good for repelling it, it's too dangerous to use it in such an enclosed space." Alfonzo said with a solemn expression on his face.

"Then, what do we do?" Sun asked with an equally solemn expression on her face.

"Unless you can control the output of your spell, just focus on dodging it." Alfonzo said. "As long as you can do that, I can take care of the rest."

Immediately after hearing Alfonzo's statement, Sun thought back to what Alfonzo said after their first trip to the hospital. She then realized this situation was part of what he was talking about. Brute force would not be enough to handle this situation. So, instead of insisting on doing something to help, Sun placed her hand on her shirasaya's hilt, ready to intercept or dodge any of the Techno Organic Metal that was able to approach past a certain point.

Seeing Sun's actions, Alfonzo nodded in approval. Although Sun could be quite the airhead, when the situation called for it, she was quite reliable. On top of that, she picked up things quickly.

While Sun got in position to defend herself, Alfonzo flared his magic power, causing it to wash over all the incoming metal. A moment later, he exerted his will on every metal in the range of his magic power.

While some of the Techno Organic Metal came to a halt immediately, most of it still approached Sun, intending to claim her as its host. In response, Sun casually sidestepped the first mass of metal to approach from the front. Then, she drew her sword, sending a mass of metal coming at her from the left flying into a wall.

In the next instant, Sun side flipped, avoiding two more masses of metal before using a much weaker [Howling Voice] spell to send a third flying into the wall.

All the while, Alfonzo was taking control of more of the Techno Organic Metal as time went on.

"[Water/Sword Combination Magic: First Form: Water Surface Slash]." Sun Chanted as she made a wide horizontal slash.

That slash, with water magic flowing on the blade, was enough to send all the metal approaching Sun from the front flying. A moment later, Sun leapt forward, avoiding a mass of metal that approached from behind, and performed a flip through the air.

"[Water/Sword Combination Magic: Second Form: Water Wheel]." Sun Chanted as she swung her sword, following the momentum of her flip.

With that slash, Sun split not only the mass of metal that pass below her from behind, but also a second that dropped down at her from the mine's ceiling. When she landed on the ground again, however, Sun staggered as she coughed up a little blood.

"*Pant* My breathing... *Pant* Got disrupted when I landed." Sun said while wiping the blood away from her lips.

Just when she raised her head, however, Sun flinched, as there was a mass of metal right before her eyes. A moment later, however, she noticed that the metal was not moving. Carefully surveying her surroundings, Sun cautiously stepped away from the floating mass of Techno Organic Metal, and returned to Alfonzo's side.

"Good job, Sun." Alfonzo said with a wide smile on his face. "You gave me all the time I needed to take control of all this metal. Still, controlling something that could be considered alive was much harder than I thought it would be. I mean, it's still metal, right?"

Sun, too tired to respond, noticed that all the metal in the mine shaft they were currently in was completely still.

On top of forcing the metal to stop, Alfonzo could feel more of the metal hidden throughout the mine. So, using his power over metal, he dragged all the Techno Organic Metal he could out of the walls. Then, he smashed it all together and compressed it as much as he possibly could.

Forty minutes later, A basketball sized mass of living metal was floating in front of Alfonzo and Sun. However, it was clear to anyone watching that Alfonzo was struggling. With sweat dripping down his

forehead and the back of his neck, it took everything he had to keep the dense mass of living metal afloat.

"Alfonzo, are you okay?" Sun asked, supporting Alfonzo by holding his waist and slinging his right arm over her shoulder.

"Yeah... *Pant* But we need to... *Pant* get out of this mine so I... *Pant* can get rid of this stuff." Alfonzo said between ragged breaths.

Nodding in understanding, Sun turned around with Alfonzo before they slowly made their way out of the mine.

Nearly an hour later, Alfonzo and Sun, with the ball of living metal floating behind them exited the mine. Then, without taking a break, Alfonzo willed the floating ball to float just an arm's length above his head.

"Sun, *Pant* Be ready *Pant* to catch *Pant* me." Alfonzo said, struggling even more to talk by this point.

Not understanding what Alfonzo intended to do, Sun still nodded her head in acknowledgement. She could feel Alfonzo's current magic power reserves were dangerously low. So, she expected him to suffer from magic power exhaustion when everything was over and done with.

Meanwhile, with great difficulty, Alfonzo lifted his left arm. Then, he placed his palm against the ball of living metal.

"[Electromagnetism Magic: Linear Cannon]." Alfonzo muttered as he pumped the remainder of his magic power through his arm, generating intense arcs of electricity across its surface.

In the next instant, the sound barrier broke. However, by the time Alfonzo and Sun heard the sound, the ball of metal could no longer be seen. Instead, a streak of orange, super-heated air was all the proof that the ball had ever been there.

A moment later, Alfonzo, unable to support himself after expending all his magic power, was blown toward the ground by the shockwave produced when the ball was fired into the sky. Luckily, Sun was ready for such an eventuality, even if she wasn't expecting such a large blow back.

At the same, time the ball of living metal was super-heating due to its speed and air resistance. As it got higher and higher in Earth Land's atmosphere, it began to melt, then vaporize. Though most of it was still intact by the time it exited the atmosphere into space. By that point, however, it no longer mattered, as its momentum would carry it far away from the planet.

Back on the planet's surface, Sun sat down on the ground with Alfonzo still in her arms. Then, she carefully laid him down. Finally resting his head on her lap.

"That was amazing." Sun said after Alfonzo was situated on her lap. Then, she looked up to the sky once again. "I wonder where it will end up."

With her eyes sparkling, Sun imagined what was beyond the sky, while she gently ran her fingers through Alfonzo's hair as she stared off into the great beyond.