

[Adam C. POV]

As I walked into the guild, the wooden floor creaked beneath my boots, as Erza and Cana trailed behind me, their eyes wide with pride and excitement.

The lively atmosphere greeted us, as did the smell of ale and the sound of laughter, and people fighting.

In the corner of the room, I spotted the old man, Makarov, sitting at a table with a pink-haired kid who couldn't be more than seven by the looks of his body.

Natsu Dragneel.

The kid had a strange aura of warmth that was in tune with the ethernano around that emanated dimly from afar, giving a welcoming vibe to his entire magical presence.

Makarov, noticing me, turned his head up, before greeting me with a warm welcoming smile. "Brat! How was the mission?!"

I waved back, brushing off the question with a smirk. "You know how."

"We completed the mission, and we had time to spare!" Cana replied, crossing her little arms with a proud grin.

I smiled at that, patting Cana on the head.

Erza nodded in agreement, her scarlet hair framing her determined face. "Nothing was strong enough to stand in our way!"

I chuckled, turning to watch the little Natsu curiously.

His innocent gaze darted around the room, taking in the sights and sounds of the bustling guild, I could see that he was afraid, sad, and... maybe, just maybe excited, it was an odd mix.

I took a step forward, eager to introduce myself, but was suddenly stopped in my tracks by an overwhelming sensation that almost knocked me off my feet.

Heat.

Scorching hot and fiery, it radiated from Natsu like an invisible force, sending shivers down my spine, making me feel as if my body was being burned alive down to the bone.

I couldn't move.

The feeling coming from Natsu... was nothing but overwhelming power, forcing upon me nothing but a visceral and all-consuming sensation that engulfed my entire being in shock.

It began as a small spark, powerful, but calm, igniting deep within him, like the birth of a flame. But... as the intensity grew, this aura of heat, of power radiated outward, invading my every sense, until it was coursing through my veins like molten lava, pulsating and demanding my attention.

It was... unbelievable.

This power, this pure and unadulterated power, belonged to Igneel Dragneel, The Fire of Dragon King.

I had no doubts about that.

It seemed my powers were allowing me to feel the Dragon within the young slayer.

Taking a small step back, I coughed, feeling as my breath became labored, each inhalation feeling as though I was inhaling the smoke from a thousand burning embers.

I knew very well that Igneel was sealed within Natsu, well before meeting the kid today, but I never imagined I would feel this...

The power didn't feel dormant as I imagined it would be, it felt alive, like a living entity that danced and crackled within the soul of Natsu, daring me to try and test its might.

This was a warning, a... threat, it seemed.

But it didn't feel like this warning was meant for me.

It was for somebody else, but who...?

I grinned, feeling sweat drip down my forehead.

This overwhelming power I was feeling deep within Natsu, had stirred a primal instinct deep within, a mix of excitement, awe, and terror. The sensation was... intoxicating.

I thought I was strong... but the sheer magnitude of the Igneel's power, that even in this... heavily weakened state was threatening to consume me whole, had left me feeling humbled and rather insignificant in its presence.

To think this kind of power level was my end goal.

I had a long way to go, it seemed.

"Are you okay, brat?" Makarov asked concern etched on his wrinkled face.

I tore my gaze away from Natsu, taking a deep breath to regain my composure. "Yeah, I'm fine. Just... travel sickness you know? unexpected, got a little lightheaded"

Cana frowned, eyeing me skeptically. "But we didn't even travel that far today."

I shrugged, trying to make it seem like nothing. "Just tired, that's all."

"Motion sickness mayhap?" Erza offered, crossing her arms as she looked at me.

I chuckled. "I suppose, but don't worry, it will be fine soon."

Makarov eyed me with suspicion for a moment but said nothing as he motioned for us to join them at the table.

"Hello there," I said gently, extending my hand to the young boy.

Natsu looked at me with wide, curious eyes before breaking into a wide grin, gripping my hand with a strength that belied his age. "Hi! I'm Natsu Dragneel! Who are you?!"

I smiled back, knowing that one day, this young boy would grow up to be a legend in this world, just like those around me. "Just a fellow guild member, Natsu. It's nice to meet you."

Erza smiled warmly, extending her arm. "The name is Erza Scarlet. It is a pleasure to meet you, Natsu Dragneel."

"Cana Clive Alberona, the daughter of fairy tail's strongest wizard Gildarts, and the sister of the third strongest! Adam Clive!" Cana said, pointing at me.

Third strongest...

But...

No, no, wait, she's right.

I can't be second when the old man and Gildarts are still stronger than me.

Natsu, taking what Cana had said as a challenge, beamed with pride, puffing out his chest. "Well I'm the son of the strongest dragon there is! Igneel!"

Cana deadpanned. "Yeah, and my mom is a cat..."

Oh Cana, I don't think he can understand sarcasm yet...

"She is?" Natsu asked, gasping in shock.

Yep, just as I thought.

"Master, are you sure he doesn't need a doctor? He seems a bit too... dumb to be normal," Canas said, glancing at Natsu with concern.

Makarov let out a hearty laugh, patting Cana's shoulder.

"Hahaha, Natsu may not be the brightest crayon in the box, but he has a heart of gold and the potential to become one of the strongest wizards in our guild."

"Yeah, what the old man said!" Natsu nodded, before slamming his little fist on the table. "Now tell me who your brother and father are, so that I can kick their asses!"

I raised an eyebrow at that.

Cana puffed her chest out, pointing at me. "He's my brother."

"Hello agai-" I couldn't finish my sentence when I felt Natsu's little fist, connect with my face.

"Fire Dragon's Iron Fist!" Natsu shouted, his fist engulfed in tiny flames, trying to burn my face, but alas they did nothing, not even warm my face.

I wonder what would've happened if he could use the power of Igneel's decaying soul.

I probably would've died I think.

"Now, now, let's calm down and eat something before-" I began, only to be stopped once again by Natsu, attacking me again.

"Fire Dragon's Claw!" This time, his feet connected with the top of my head, doing like before no damage at all.

I sighed.

He was more annoying in person than I expected him to be.

"As I said before-" I began, but once again, I was interrupted.

I gritted my teeth, repeating a mantra within my head.

He was a kid, a scared little child who had lost everything in the blink of an eye.

"Let's"

"Fire Dragon's Iron Fist!"

That's fucking it.

I turned to him, grabbing his little fist, as a mischievous grin spread across my face.

Taking a deep breath, I raised a single finger, aimed directly at his forehead.

Finding himself unable to move or escape, he looked at me and said. "Ready to... give up?" A hint of nervousness in his voice as his eyes widened, darting from my finger to my face.

"Give up?" I replied, feigning innocence. "No."

"No?" His eyebrows furrowed in confusion. "What do you mean by—"

Before he could finish his question, I flicked him on the forehead with my finger, my strength and precision amplified by the slightest touch of magic.

The unexpected force sent him hurtling backward, his eyes were wide with shock and disbelief as he flew through the roof of the guild like a rocket.

For a moment, time seemed to slow down as he soared through the air, his little limbs flailing helplessly. His expression shifted from shock to pure indignation as he registered what had just happened.

Ahh... It was a priceless sight, one that had me doubling over with laughter.

As he reached the apex of his involuntary flight, his voice echoed through the air, filled with outrage and a touch of fear. "I demand a rematchhhhhhh!"

With the elegance and grace of a sack of potatoes, he plummeted towards the ground, probably around the train station.

"Adam..." Makarov sighed, before bursting into a fit of laughter along with the rest of the guild members. "I was wondering when he would reach your breaking point! Like father like son, Gildarts only tolerated him for two minutes before kicking him through the roof!"

I wiped tears of laughter from my eyes as I gazed at the ceiling, catching my breath, just now noticing there were two holes, one for me, and one for Gildarts. "Well, that was cathartic," I sighed, my voice still shaking with laughter.

"Serves him right," Cana nodded in agreement, a mischievous smile on her face showing she was happy I had done that. "He was asking for it."

"How long do you reckon it will take him to get back?" I asked Makarov.

I knew the answer, but it felt like something I should ask.

Makarov chuckled. "Knowing him, he'll probably be back in... five to ten minutes."

Yep, I knew the answer.

"Well, that's my cue, as fun as that was, I need a shower, and maybe a piece of cake from the bakery down my apartment," I said, rising to my feet. "Want some girls?"

Cana squealed excitedly, flinging her arms around my neck. "Yes!" She giggled, her eyes alight with happiness.

Erza beamed at my proposal, her eyes shining as if I had offered her life itself. "Strawberry cake? For... free? It can't be... are angels truly real? And if so, are you one?"

"It's... just cake," I replied, scratching the back of my head. "The point is, I have a tab there, so it's on me."

"I accept your invitation!" Erza shouted, showing she was unable to contain her excitement.

I feel like I shouldn't have said that... but I don't know why...

Oh well, that's a problem for future Adam.