

[Adam C. POV]

The sun had barely risen, casting long shadows across the field as I stood before Warrod, the old man who hired me to train me.

His wrinkled face held a knowing smile as he observed me, sizing me up, and in his eyes, I could almost feel like he could see straight into my very soul.

It was uncanny sometimes.

"All right, young man, let's see what you can do," Warrod said, with a chuckle.

I nodded, then slowly drew my blade from its scabbard. The air around it seemed to crackle with energy, before a brilliant white light shot out from the edge of the sword in an arc, making its way toward him.

"Hmm," Warrod murmured, blocking the attack with a tree he created without even moving. "Powerful, yes. But as I thought, your control is lacking. You have so much power that you basically skipped over the first few hundred steps most mages have to learn." He looked at me, his eyes piercing. "That being

said, you have a... quite scary potential, but you've only just scratched the surface of what you're capable of."

I knew that.

Having said that, Warrod led me through a series of exercises, beginning with simple visualization techniques.

He told me to imagine my power as a raging river, wild and untamed. My task was to picture myself standing in the midst of the torrent, learning to bend the water to my will, guiding it without being swept away.

A bizarre exercise if you asked me, but I trusted his method.

So, taking a deep breath, I closed my eyes and focused on the image he wanted me to paint. At first I felt nothing, but as the hours went by, things started to change.

And before I knew it, I felt the energy within me begin to respond. It was like trying to hold onto a wild animal, so much raw power and chaos.

I had meditated with Zanryuzuki before.

But... never alone.

I had never felt the depths of my power without Zanryuzuki being there to serve as a filter.

No wonder I had almost killed myself.

I had basically asked my Zanpakuto to release a stream of bombs into my body, expecting things to go right.

"It seems you already managed to visualize what I told you," Warrod said, a hint of surprise in his voice. "You're a natural, I must say... I have to admit that I kind of expected this phase of the training to last a few more days, maybe even more."

"Thanks," I replied, keeping my eyes closed, but smiling at him.

"Well, now that you can grasp that image, it's time for the next step on the list," Warrod chuckled, walking toward me, his steps echoing across the place. "Meditation through visualization."

The next part of his training was... more complicated than I thought based on his words. The thing was I had assumed the next part was simple meditation, which I was pretty good at if I do say so myself.

But alas, it wasn't.

In Warrod's words, in order to set myself on the right path, I needed to learn how to let go of the thoughts and emotions that clouded my judgment and fed the chaos within me.

In this world, and most magic-based worlds, magic is often portrayed as a force that is directly connected to the deeper corners of one soul, for better or for worse.

Some would like to think that all a wizard needs is a strong magic type, and an even stronger magic power to back that up, and for the most part, they would be right.

However, the use of magic is not simply a matter of power, reciting a formula, or waving a wand; emotions also play a crucial role in how effectively a magic user can wield their power.

Some of the books I have read about this in the Library of Magnolia say that the emotions of a mage are an integral part of their being and the results they seek when using their magic, as they can either enhance or hinder their abilities.

The strength and intensity of one's emotions can apparently affect the potency and accuracy of their spells, as well as their overall control over their magic.

For instance, if a magic user is feeling angry, frustrated or perhaps filled with hate, their spells may be more powerful but also more difficult to control.

This can result in unintended consequences, such as misfiring spells or spells that have unintended or harmful effects. On

the other hand, if a magic user is feeling calm and focused, their spells may be less potent but also more precise and controlled.

Furthermore, emotions can also influence the type of magic a user can perform. For example, a magic user who is feeling particularly joyful or creative may find it easier to cast spells that involve illusions, while a magic user who is feeling fearful or anxious may be better suited for defensive spells.

Overall, the point is, emotions are a fundamental aspect of magic, and something mages must learn to manage and control in order to effectively wield their powers.

Through practice and discipline in order to enhance the capabilities of their own magic, rather than allowing their emotions to overpower or disrupt their abilities.

I had never given this much thought.

Because I had never faced a problem before when it came to this, but that perhaps was thanks to Zanryuzuki, who seemed to shoulder a big part of our weight without saying a word.

I didn't deserve to learn her Bankai, not yet, not when it had taken me almost dying to realize how much of a burden I was putting my partner through.

"I know this part of our training is difficult," Warrod said, his voice like a gentle breeze. "Your power as well as your thoughts, feelings, and desires are an integral part of you, but you must learn to separate yourself from each of them when necessary, while at the same time, you must also learn how to be one with them."

Be one with my power, and emotions.

But be separated from them.

That's a paradox if I have ever seen one.

I couldn't quite wrap my head around it, but I trusted Warrod's guidance.

I owe it to my blade.

To my partner to overcome this.

Warrod chuckled as if he read my thoughts. "It may seem like a contradictory train of thought, but it's a delicate balance that you must master to become the best version of yourself, as a mage, and as a man."

"It doesn't matter, contradictory or not, I will do what I must," I replied, my voice carrying nothing but determination.

Warrod nodded, sitting on the ground in front of me. "That's all I can ask for. Remember, magic is a reflection of your inner self, never forget that, and talking about things to never forget, I need to take a piss."

I wonder what will happen first. Will I grasp what he's trying to teach me? Or will I get tired of his one joke?

I guess time would tell.

Jokes aside, I would not let this opportunity go to waste.

[Hades Gaebolg POV]

As I walked through the dark, musty corridors of my ship, my mind was filled with the reports I had just read, reports that I found most interesting.

Fairy Tail's up-and-coming star.

A kid, barely beginning his adolescence, had managed to take down a God, at least according to the reports, I would still need to confirm things, but until proven otherwise.

I had to admit.

That was most impressive.

I smiled darkly to myself as I imagined the potential this young boy held. Perhaps I could use him in my organization, perhaps there was a place for him in the world I wanted to create.

It was still too soon to tell.

From what I could tell, he was still under the protection of an old friend, Warrod, and although I knew that I could easily deal with him, it seemed best to leave things as they were, at least for now.

Lost in thought, I eventually made my way to a dimly lit room where I found young Ultear sitting cross-legged on the floor, her nose buried in the book I had given her.

Good.

As I entered, the room fell silent, and Ultear looked up at me with wide eyes.

I could sense the fear in her, but I paid it no mind. Fear was a natural response to power, and I had plenty of that to go around.

The fact she felt fear meant that she wasn't stupid, and that would prove useful in the future.

"Ah, Ultear," I said in a deep voice, breaking the silence. "How is your reading progressing?"

She jumped at the sound of my voice and quickly stood up, clutching the book to her chest.

"It's going well, Master Hades," she replied, her voice barely above a whisper.

I chuckled to myself at her nervousness. "Excellent. I trust you are learning all that you need to know about the Arc of Time?"

Ultear nodded her head fervently. "Yes, Master Hades. I still have a long way to go, but without a doubt the knowledge in this book is incredible."

I walked over to her, towering over her small frame, and gently took the book from her hands. Flipping through the pages, I could see the intricate diagrams and ancient symbols that I had spent years studying, thinking that behind them I would find a solution to Mavis' situation.

I can't believe how naive I was.

I find my past... unbearable.

"It is indeed," I said, nodding my head in approval. "But remember, nothing is ever as good as advertised, so you would do well to expand your horizons, not now, but in time."

Ultear nodded again, her eyes fixed on the book. "I will, Master Hades. I promise."

"Good," I replied, handing the book back to her. "Now, I have more pressing matters to attend to. Carry on with your studies, Ultear, I expect great things from you."

As I turned to leave the room, I could feel Ultear's eyes following me. Despite all the time she had been here, she was still scared of me, despite the lack of reason.

Needless to say, I didn't care.

Fear was a necessary tool in my line of work, after all.

With a dark smile on my face, I continued down the corridor, my mind already moving on to my next plan of action.

Soon, I would wake Zeref up from his slumber, and with it, I would finally learn the root of all magic, and rule the world!