

[Third Person. POV]

[Year x779.]

[Erza Scarlet.]

[S-Class Trials.]

The sun hung low in the sky, casting long shadows on the lush forest floor. Birds sang, unaware of the battle that was about to take place to decide whether or not Erza was worthy of the S rank title.

Erza Scarlet and Gildarts Clive, stood facing each other, their eyes locked.

Erza was clad in what would one day become her signature armor of choice, The Heaven's Wheel Armor, her eyes were steady, as she prepared herself for the fight of her life.

Gildarts, the guild's Ace, the legendary mage who had taken down beasts that even tenacious wizards dared not approach,

stood confidently, grinning as he looked at the young girl in front of him, the air around him crackling with magic.

The two wizards had come to a remote clearing in the forest behind Magnolia, far from the prying eyes of the civilians, all in order to test the power behind a young woman's conviction.

Since her teacher, and friend had left in a journey of self-discovery, and self-improvement, Erza had been tirelessly honing her skills, seeking to prove that she was not only worthy of the S-class title but of the teachings Adam had imparted to her.

Gildarts, being the proud self-appointed father of Adam, had willingly taken upon himself to test the young girl, eager to witness her progress firsthand.

The tension between them was palpable, Erza knew, despite how stubborn she was that she had no chance against Gildarts, yet despite this, there was a glint of excitement in her eyes.

"Ready?" Gildarts asked, his voice booming across the clearing.

Erza took a deep breath, steeling herself for the battle that lay ahead. "I am, the question is, are you?" She replied, her voice steady despite the nervous flutter in her stomach.

Gildarts chuckled, clearly amused by her response. "It seems my brat rubbed off on you more than anyone would've imagined. The question now is, will you put on a better fight than him?"

With a fierce cry, Erza launched herself at Gildarts, a flurry of swords appearing around her like a deadly whirlwind. Gildarts, smiling at this, raised his left fist, his aura glowing as he braced for the assault.

The swords around Erza's armor flew at Gildarts at full speed, however, with a flick of his wrist, Gildarts disassembled the attack, the air around him shuddering as it tore the swords apart.

"Next one," Gildarts said, as metal shards rained down around him.

Erza, having already anticipated this outcome, was already in motion swapping her Heaven's Wheel Armor for the Black Wing Armor, the dark, feathered wings granting her incredible speed.

"Oh, that one looks cool," Gildarts commented, as she closed the distance between them in the blink of an eye, her blade slashing through the air as she aimed at Gildarts' seemingly exposed side.

Gildarts seeing this, and being mildly impressed by Erza's speed, flared up his magic, disassembling the ground beneath him to propel himself out of harm's way, before launching a counterattack aiming a finger at Erza, sending a wave of destructive magic hurtling towards her.

Erza, realizing she had no way of dodging this attack, stood her ground, changing her armor into the Adamantine Armor, the impenetrable suit, absorbing most of the brunt of the attack with a massive explosion that shook the very foundation of the forest around them.

Gildarts chuckled. "Not bad, but not nearly enough if my brat trained you." Having said that, the Ace of Fairy Tail decided to up the ante to test Erza further, his magic surging as he prepared a powerful spell, one that would decide the outcome of this test.

"I haven't even started!" Erza declared her eyes on Gildarts like two fiery orbs of determination.

"Good, otherwise this would be pretty disappointing!" Gildarts replied as a shimmering, hexagonal barrier surrounded him, gathering a large amount of energy in a singular point. "This spell was inspired by my brat, your mentor, I call it; Chaotic Rumble!"

Erza, sensing the danger, swapped her armor again, this time choosing her Purgatory Armor. The dark, flame-like patterns

on the armor seemed to come alive as she tapped into the fiery power it contained.

She didn't know why or how, but she knew instinctively that Gildarts' spell would be devastating, and that she needed to act quickly if she wanted to do something about it.

"Show me my brat didn't waste his time with you!" Gildarts shouted to the heavens, unleashing his spell in the most Gildarts-like way possible, with a simple punch, unleashing a cascade of destruction that rippled outwards like an all-consuming tsunami.

The ground trembled, trees splintered, and the very air seemed to shatter under the sheer force of his attack, seeming to bend the very fabric of space around the magical force that pushed forward, threatening to consume everything in its path.

Erza, however, was not deterred, on the contrary, she was now more than ever, determined to prove her worth no matter the cost.

So, letting out one last battle cry fueled by her emotions, she charged forward, her Purgatory Armor amplifying her speed and strength many times fold. The ground beneath her feet cracked and melted, unable to withstand the heat radiating from her armor, as she slashed at the incoming wave of destruction, her blade blazing with fiery energy.

The two forces collided with a loud boom, creating a maelstrom of magic and fire that roared like a hurricane.

Gildarts smiled, pouring more energy into his spell pushing the young woman back, however, Erza refused to be outdone, despite knowing very well she would not win this battle, she refused to let this battle end like this, so her own power surged, the fire around her growing wilder and more ferocious in order to match Gildarts power.

"Not bad, not bad at all, brat," Gildarts complimented, his tone showing he had already made a decision.

Then before Erza could say a word, or do anything, Gildarts pushed forward, and with a final burst of power that Erza had no hope of countering, he broke through, shattering her defenses and sending her hurtling through the air like a fiery comet.

She crashed into the ground, her Purgatory Armor cracked and scorched, pain searing through her body.

Gildarts beamed with a small sense of happiness, his barrier dissipating as he gazed at Erza, feeling a swell of pride for what he had seen today, for him it was rather impressive, her growth and determination were out of this world, both being an undeniable testament to her indomitable spirit.

Slowly, painfully, Erza climbed to her feet. Her armor was shattered, her body bruised, but her eyes shone with determination, and acceptance, knowing she had given her all in this fight, and that was what mattered.

Panting, she met Gildarts' gaze, her head held high. "It was a good fight, thanks."

Gildarts walked over to her, a smile breaking across his face. He offered her a hand, which she gratefully accepted, pulling herself upright.

"Well, credit where it is due, you did better than the brat," Gildarts said, his voice filled with a sense of respect. "You've got some serious potential there, no wonder the brat never stopped talking about you, and how strong you would become."

Erza smiled, feeling a sense of pride wash over her.

"I can see that your training with Adam has really paid off. Heck, if you keep this up, you might even surpass me one day, that day being the day I'm no longer alive, but still!" Gildarts chuckled. "That being said, I feel you have what it takes to be an S-Class Wizard, so you passed."

Erza's eyes widened in surprise, the pain momentarily forgotten. "You mean it?" she asked, hope and disbelief warring in her voice.

Gildarts nodded, still smiling. "Of course! Erza, in but a few years, you've grown so much, and you've proven that you have the strength and skill to stand among the best of us. I couldn't be prouder of the warrior you've become, and I can't wait as the father of your mentor, and your senior in the guild to see how high you reach."

At this, Erza felt a rush of emotions wash over her, her vision blurring with tears as she smiled back at the man in front of her. "Thank you, Gildarts, I won't fail you, or anyone," she whispered, her heart swelling with pride and gratitude.

Then as they stood together in the wreckage of their battle, the sun dipped below the horizon, bathing the forest in a warm, golden glow, painting an image of destruction and growth for everyone around.

Erza Scarlet, the young woman that would in time be known throughout the world as Titania of Fairy Tail, had achieved her goal today, her journey of growth under Fairy Tail, and Adam, culminating in this moment of triumph.

That being said, despite this victory, Erza knew this was but the first step in her journey, she still had a long way to go, perhaps too long, but she would not give an inch, she would become the sword that protects everyone in her guild, her family, no matter the cost!