

## **[Third Person. POV]**

### **[Adam Vs. Jellal.]**

The sun had dipped below the horizon in the Tower of Heaven, casting a dim, eerie twilight over the entire structure.

The once calm, blue sea, now churned with violent waves that crashed against the walls of the tower, as the wind howled outside the Tower, rattling the entire place as Adam and Jellal clashed.

Bearing witness to the violent struggle that had been unfolding between two powerful wizards.

Right now, both fighters stood several meters apart, hovering above the sea, one of them smiling, the other not, their eyes locked in a fierce, unwavering stare.

"You can't stop me, Adam," Jellal said with a wicked grin, his magical aura pulsing around him. "Nothing can stop the coming of Zeref."

"Oh, Jellal, so much angst. You're like a walking, talking teen drama, except less entertaining," Adam replied with a smirk as he tightened his grip on his Zanpakuto.

Jellal smirked, his blue hair fluttering in the wind, the waves crashing behind him as he chuckled dryly. "You're quite tenacious, I'll give you that, quite possibly the strongest wizard I have ever faced. But you can't win, no matter what you do, your resistance is futile."

Having said that, Jellal raised his hands and began to summon a torrent of Celestial energy, swirling and crackling around him, growing in intensity with every passing moment.

"Do you ever stop talking? It's almost as if you're trying to drown out your own thoughts, perhaps that is why you can't see how bad of an idea this is," Adam replied, blurring out of sight with a single step, closing the distance between him and Jellal in an instant.

Jellal, caught off guard by Adam's sudden increase in speed, barely managed to react as the latter slashed at him, creating a small rip in the fabric of space itself.

Narrowly avoiding the strike, Jellal stumbled backward, dropping into the sea as the force of the attack tore through the very air around him, blasting him out of control.

"You think this will be enough?!" Jellal roared as he regained his composure, his Celestial energy flaring up once again.

"You think you can defeat me with such a paltry display of power?!"

Adam simply stood there, a faint smile on his lips as Jellal's energy washed over him harmlessly. "If words were a weapon, Jellal, you'd certainly be a force to be reckoned with. Unfortunately, they're just noise."

Jellal growled in frustration, his eyes blazing with fury. "Then let's see if you can handle this!"

With a wave of his hand, Jellal summoned several constellations above him, their light intensifying as they converged into a single point, releasing a beam of pure Celestial energy that shot directly at Adam.

Seeing this, Adam remained unmoved, his Zanpakuto glowing with a deep ethereal light as he stood his ground, his power humming in preparation.

And as the beam of energy approached him, he calmly raised his blade, meeting the attack before it could reach him, slicing right through it, causing it to explode into a million shimmering fragments that rained down upon them both.

"My turn," Adam said, his voice low and dangerous as he raised his left hand. "Bakudo #61. Rikujokoro."

As soon as those words left Adam's mouth, six glowing beams of light shot out from his fingers, quickly wrapping themselves around Jellal's arms and legs, locking his midsection, pinning him down in place.

Jellal struggled against the bindings, but they held him firmly in place.

"Hado #91. Senju Kōten Taiho," Adam said calmly, his right hand outstretched towards Jellal, generating multiple energy orbs of pink glowing energy around himself, before quickly firing them all at once at Jellal, resulting in an exceedingly devastating explosion upon impact.

An explosion that was so intense that the very ground beneath the sea shook violently, as the water around them turned into vapor.

Unable to do anything, Jellal was thrown back by the blast, his body slamming into the rocky shore, creating a small crater where he lay.

"You're strong," Jellal admitted as he struggled to get back up, his body battered and bruised from the attack. "Stronger than we could've imagined, thankfully, we prepared for such an event, just in case."

Adam tilted his head, a curious glint in his eyes as he observed Jellal's form. "Oh really? And what have you prepared?"

Jellal smirked despite the pain, pointing at the sky.

Adam's eyes widened, watching as the magic circles behind Etherion's workings began to form in the sky, aiming down at them. "Etherion."

"Yes," Jellal confirmed, chuckling through the pain. "A weapon of mass destruction, capable of wiping out an entire country in an instant."

"You're crazier that I gave you credit for, that aside, it seems you haven't learned a thing about my power during our little exchange," Adam said calmly, holding his blade at the ready. "Space bends to my will. Raw power alone won't work unless you are somehow able to completely outclass me, and I'm not that good of an actor to pretend that's the case."

"I know," Jellal admitted with a grin. "Which is why, you won't dodge, block, or avoid the attack, at all."

Adam raised an eyebrow, curious as to what Jellal was planning. "Oh really? And why is that?"

"In the rare event something like this were to happen, I made some arrangements, creating a second Etherion cannon right under the Council's nose, linking the activation of both, under

the very same key," Jellal replied, grinning as he did so. "One aimed at you, the other at a place you would die to protect, but can't right now."

"Magnolia," Adam whispered, realization dawning on him as he glared at Jellal. "You wouldn't dare."

Jellal's grin widened as he raised his arm. "You have a choice to make, Adam, you either stop me, and have your precious family die, or you let Etherion hit you, your call. After all, who knows, I just might be lying, then again, maybe I'm not."

Adam gritted his teeth, as he contemplated his options. He didn't know if Jellal was telling the truth or not, and even if by some chance Jellal was indeed lying, and this was nothing but an elaborate ruse to gain the upper hand, he couldn't risk it without being absolutely sure that was the case. "Fine."

Jellal's smile widened at Adam's reply. "An excellent choice, one that I'm afraid you won't live long enough to regret."

"I already have enough with the cannon, stop with the monologue, honestly, have you ever considered the virtue of silence for a change?" Adam replied, waiting as the Etherion cannon charged.

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## **[Adam C. POV.]**

It seemed I was losing this fight by a tactical advantage, one that I wasn't even sure was real.

For all I knew, he could be lying.

And as much as I wanted it, I couldn't take the risk of calling his bluff. And so, I stood there, waiting for the inevitable, as the Etherion cannon charged.

I was pretty sure I could survive the blast, even without using my power to shield myself from it, but just as I knew that, I knew I would not come unscathed if this was the case.

I was durable.

Very durable.

Not impervious to damage.

The worst part was, that nothing I could've done before this dead end, could've changed this possible outcome.

Jellal had people in the council, and those old farts were as easily manipulated as one could expect, meaning that, even if

I had defeated Jellal right away, I still would've faced the same outcome, but at the hands of Ultear, or someone else.

And just like now, I wouldn't have a reliable way to know if they were lying or not.

I sighed.

After this, I would have a heart to heart with the King of the country to have the council members reelected, or at the very least, to have the system changed, this kind of shit is only happening because of them.

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## **[Ultear Milkovich. POV.]**

I stood in a secluded corner of the council's room, using my orb to see the fight between Adam and Jellal.

Adam had proved to be stronger than Jellal, but he lacked something Jellal didn't, the will to do anything in order to win, anything at all.



The scene unfolding before me painted a vivid picture of Jellal's cunning as he spun a web of lies around Adam, ensnaring him in a trap there was no clear escape from.

He had made Adam believe we had two Etherion cannons, ready for use. One of them, aimed at his precious town.

I couldn't help but smile with wicked delight at this. Under my guidance Jellal had truly become a master manipulator.

There was no such thing as two Etherion cannons, there was only one Etherion cannon, the other was nothing but a clever fabrication designed to force Adam into an impossible decision.

It was a lie as convincing as any truth, and Adam's face betrayed his doubt and fear.

I could almost hear his thoughts.

Was he lying?

If so, how can I be sure that's the case?

Would Adam be able to see through our deception? Or would he fall prey to Jellal's words, dooming himself in the process?

I couldn't help but feel a thrill at the prospect of him losing in such a way.

"Checkmate," I muttered, smiling under my breath.