

## Fairy Tail 115

Chapter 115: Meet the Heartfilias

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Hargeon.

June, x782.

At the Taylor Shop in Hargeon, Elicia was performing her monthly inspection. This inspection was mostly to make sure that the employees were living up to the standards of customer service she had set when she opened the store. On top of that, she was also there to check the financial reports and see what fashions were the most popular.

At first, Elicia had made this trip openly. Mainly because she did not have any way to disguise herself. But she realized that was a mistake.

When she did that, the employees would always be on their best behavior. So, she never detected anything wrong. However, one day, she received a letter from a customer.

In the letter, it was stated that there was an employee that was both lazy and rude. That girl was never willing to look in the back when someone asked if they had a piece of clothing in their size. And if people complained about it she would tell them "If you don't like it, you don't have to shop here."

Naturally, the thought of one of her employees ruining her brand enraged Elicia. However, she had no proof. As the owner, she could have fired the girl and been done with it. However, she was smart enough to understand that doing things that way would make the other employees wary of her.

No one would like to work somewhere if the threat of being fired on the owners whim always hung over their heads.

However, the situation changed after Alfonzo brought back the [Camouflage Magic] book. With the spell, [Hiding in Plain Sight], Elicia could enter the shop whenever she wanted and observe the actions of her employees. And that is exactly what she did.

In the end, the accusation in the letter was correct. The girl was lazy and disrespectful to customers, and Elicia saw it all, firsthand. So, she dispelled her magic while she was standing right next to the employee in question, scaring the girl so badly that she fell to the floor.

Needless to say, the girl was fired. Even the manager that she allowed to run the shop in her absence was docked a month's salary for his negligence. Elicia then let all her both customers and employees know that she would be making random visits while in stealth from now on. So, they all needed to be on their best behavior.

Today was another one of Elicia's stealthy visits to the Taylor shop. And she was pleased with the attitudes her employees showed on the job.

She had already been in the store for half a day when a customer that she did not expect walked into the store accompanied by what appeared to be a butler.

The customer, a girl in her mid-teens, stood slightly shorter than Elicia at 5'5" (1.65 m) had brown eyes and quite the buxom figure for her age. She wore her shoulder-length blonde hair loose with the exception of a small side tail on the right side of her head that she tied with a light blue ribbon.

The girl's attire consisted of a sleeveless, white blouse with a light blue collar, a light blue skirt, a black belt with a small pouch hanging on her right hip, and a pair of short, white high heeled boots.

'Oh, it's her.' Elicia thought to herself as she observed the new arrivals. 'I knew I'd probably meet her in Hargeon, but I didn't think it would happen for two more years.'

"Sebastian, I've always wanted to come here." The girl said excitedly as she looked at all the clothes on the racks in the store. "I'm glad I came along with Father on his business trip this time. Otherwise, he would have never let me come and visit this store."

"Indeed, Miss Lucy." The butler, Sebastian, said with a gentle smile. "I'm sure your mother, Lady Layla would have liked this place as well. She had quite the love of clothing."

Even though a glimpse of sadness passed through the girl, Lucy's eyes when Layla was mentioned, the smile on her face was radiant. Just knowing that she had something in common with her deceased mother was enough to make her happy.

'And that confirms it.' Elicia said to herself with a nod. 'Well then, let's build some connections for the future with the real main character of this world, Lucy Heartfilia.'

With that thought, Elicia started walking toward Lucy and Sebastian. As she did, she slowly lifted her [Camouflage Magic]. As she faded into sight, all the normal civilians who saw her were shocked while her employees had beads of cold sweat on their foreheads. They were just glad that one example of how decisive Elicia is when it comes to unruly employees was enough to keep them on the straight and narrow.

"Hey, you two have a different air around you." Elicia said cheerfully as she approached. "And I can tell that the young lady is a fan of mine. I mean, she's dressed head to toe in my products."

Upon hearing Elicia's voice, Lucy and Sebastian turned away from the clothing rack they were looking at. While Lucy opened her eyes wide after registering the words, "my products." Sebastian took a step in front of Lucy in case he needed to protect her.

'I didn't sense this person at all.' Sebastian thought to himself. 'Where was she all this time?'

Before Sebastian could contemplate where Elicia came from any further, Lucy rushed past him, pushing him to the side as she passed. Although Sebastian stumbled, he quickly regained his balance. However, Lucy was already standing in front of Elicia and gripping her hands excitedly.

"Oh my God~~~~!" Lucy screamed excitedly. "You're Elicia Taylor, the one who makes all these beautiful clothes. On top of that, you're an S-Class wizard from Fairy Tail. I read your interview in Sorcerer Weekly."

"Well, I wasn't the only one interviewed for that article." Elicia said with a smile.

"I know!" Lucy replied with the same level of enthusiasm. "Alfonzo Marcus was interviewed with you. He's the youngest S-Class wizard in the history of Ishgar. And he's invented and improved so many things. Plus, he's really handsome."

"Well, it looks like my fiancé and I have a fan." Elicia said with a grin.

Hearing the word, "fiancé," Lucy froze. In the interview, it was not mentioned that Alfonzo and Elicia were engaged. The reason was simple, actually. Both wizards were very good looking. So, the editor and chief of Sorcerer Weekly decided to not mention it. He would sell more copies if it wasn't widespread, after all.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to..." Lucy said, a bit embarrassed.

"It's fine.' Elicia replied, not losing her smile. "Fonzie already has four fiancées. So, it would be unreasonable of me to get upset if someone thought he was handsome. And since it was my idea for him to have more girls, it bothers me even less."

"Huh?" Lucy exclaimed in confusion, her mind seeming to short circuit. A moment later, she regained her wits and continued. "He has more than one? It was your idea? Why do I understand the words you're saying but not the meaning of the sentences?"

"Hehehe." Elicia giggled at Lucy's shocked expression. "Don't worry about it. If you spent any significant amount of time around him, you would understand."

"Uh... If you say so." Lucy said, not sure how else to respond.

'She'll probably be the first one Alfonzo goes after on his own.' Elicia thought to herself. 'Although she's not particularly strong, Fonzie like the fact that she was the most down to earth out of everyone in the guild. Plus, her tsukomi game is pretty strong, too.'

"Anyway, since you're here and you've looked around a bit, did you see anything you like?" Elicia asked, blatantly changing the subject.

Once again, Lucy's eyes lit up.

"I did, I like everything!" Lucy replied excitedly. "If I could carry it all, I would buy one of everything."

"Well, we do work with the Seto Group for all our shipping needs, you know." Elicia said, slipping into her businesswoman persona. "So, if you really wanted to buy it all, we could make sure it got to your home."

Instead of just lighting up, Lucy's eyes started shining like a pair of torch lights. However, before she could make the purchase, Sebastian interrupted.

"Although that would be wonderful, Miss Lucy, I don't believe your father would agree with such a purchase." Sebastian said.

"\*Sigh\* I know, Sebastian." Lucy said, the wind now taken out of her sails.

"Well then, instead of quantity, might I interest you in a quality item?" Elicia asked with a smile.

"Huh? What do you mean?" Lucy asked in confusion.

"Since this is your first time here, you may not be aware." Elicia said. "But I do custom work as well. I can even have it finished today if you can wait."

Once again, Lucy's enthusiasm returned.

Meanwhile, Elicia could see in Lucy's eyes that the girl knew she was attractive, which she was. But Elicia felt pride well up inside of her when she read that Lucy thought her sex appeal would rise to a whole new level if she had a custom dress from the best new designer in Fiore.

Lucy was ready to agree immediately. However, she glanced at Sebastian before she did.

"I don't see the problem, Miss Lucy." Sebastian replied to Lucy's unasked question with a smile. "You will need an evening dress for tonight's party. I do believe that was the reason we came here in the first place, after all."

"Oh, I almost forgot." Lucy said, sticking out her tongue and knocking her knuckles against the side of her head.

'Hey, I do that, too.' Elicia thought to herself with a smile.

"Well then, why don't you follow me to my office/workstation." Elicia said, making a half turn and gesturing to the back of the shop. "First, I'll take your measurements. Then, I'll sketch a few designs for you to choose from."

"Wait!" You'll sketch the designs on the spot?"

"Yes, the dress will be one designed specifically for you." Elicia replied.

"Awesome!" Lucy cheered excitedly. "What are we waiting for, let's go."

Like that, Elicia led Lucy into her office. Meanwhile, Sebastian waited just outside until Lucy's measurements were taken. After that, Elicia sketched a few dress designs. In the end, Lucy chose one that looked like a long black qipao dress with golden accents, a long slit that exposed her left leg, and a golden sash that wrapped around her waist and hips. She even threw in a pair of black and gold high heels for good measure.

Then, Elicia got to work. With her magic, the most time consuming part of the process was cutting the fabric. However, with her threads, she was able to cut several pieces at once.

The whole time she worked, Lucy sat next to her and they chatted.

"So, you really seem to be into Sorcerer weekly." Elicia said as she made the last cut on a piece of fabric.  
"Can you use magic, Lucy?"

"I can." Lucy replied with a nod. Then, she continued as she pulled a golden key out of the pouch on her waist. "I'm a Celestial Spirit wizard."

"Oh, I hope you're not like the last two I met." Elicia said with a slight frown.

"What do you mean?" Lucy asked in a confused tone.

"Well, one was a dark wizard I had to fight." Elicia replied. "And the other was a powerful wizard from Blue Pegasus---"

"You mean Karen Lilica, right?" Lucy asked excitedly. "She's one of my idols. But I read that she cancelled her contracts with all her Celestial Spirits. Sorcerer Weekly didn't say why, though."

"Oh, that's because of me." Elicia replied. "She was mistreating them, like, really badly. So, I punished her and made her cancel the contracts."

Elicia then gave a brief overview of what Karen had done to Leio and Aries without going into the details.

To that new information, Lucy opened her eyes wide in disbelief.

"But she was such a powerful Celestial Spirit wizard." Lucy said with her eyes still wide open. "Why would she do that?"

"Because she only saw them as tools." Elicia replied. "But they aren't just tools, they're living beings just like you and me."

"Exactly, my spirits are my best friends. I would never want to do anything to hurt them."

"That's good, then." Elicia said with a smile. "I was entrusted with those two's keys. If I get to know you better, I might just entrust them to you."

Lucy smiled brightly at that. A moment later, however, her expression dimmed.

"I don't know if we'll get the chance to meet again, Miss Taylor..." Lucy said in a dejected tone.

"Just Elicia." Elicia interrupted.

"Oh, okay, Elicia." Lucy said with a smile creeping back onto her face. "Like I was saying, I don't know if we'll get to meet again. My dad doesn't let me go out that often."

"Que sera, sera." Elicia said, moving on to sewing the fabrics together.

"K Sarah, Sarah?" Lucy asked.

'Oh, they don't speak Latin here.' Elicia said to herself as if she spoke Latin.

"It means what will be, will be." Elicia explained. "Meaning, if we're meant to meet again, we will."

"I see." Lucy replied.

With that, the two continued to chat about everything and nothing. Eventually, Elicia finished the dress and Lucy went into one of the changing rooms to try it on.

During the time Lucy was changing into the new dress, a new arrival entered the shop. This time, it was a relatively tall man with black eyes, slicked back, well-trimmed hair, an extremely meticulously well-maintained mustache, and a strong, square jaw.

"Master Jude." Sebastian greeted as soon as he noticed the new arrival.

"Sebastian, where is Lucy?" Jude, or Jude Heartfilia, asked in an authoritative tone.

"Sir, she is trying on a dress she had created for tonight's party." Sebastian replied respectfully.

"I see." Jude replied. "If her dress was created for her today, does that mean that the owner of this shop is here?"

"That is correct, Sir." Sebastian replied. Though, he did not like where this conversation was going.

"Good." Jude said with a nod. "Then, go and inform her that I will be buying this shop."

In response, Sebastian gazed at Jude with disappointment that he hid by bowing his head.

Ever since Jude's wife and Lucy's mother, Layla passed away from Magic Deficiency Syndrome, Jude's personality changed. He stopped caring about his daughter's happiness and believed there was nothing in this world he could not attain with his money. On top of that, he went to great lengths, sometimes morally grey, to keep his fortune and image. Sebastian was just happy that Jude had not yet crossed a line that would disappoint Layla's soul in Heaven.

Before Sebastian could carry out Jude's orders, however, a voice sounded out from the back of the store.

"There's no need to have him call for me." Elicia said, her usual smile gone from her face as she approached Jude and Sebastian.

"Good." Jude said with a nod. "Now, name your price."

"The shop is not for sale." Elicia said bluntly, causing Jude to frown.

"You must not know what me buying this shop represents." Jude said. "With my company's resources, I can make it so that people all around Ishgar will be able to buy your products."

"You didn't do your research before coming here, did you, Jude Heartfilia?" Elicia said, clearly unamused by Jude's claims.

In fact, Jude had done absolutely no research about Elicia's Taylor Shop. He just saw how popular it was when he entered and decided that he could make it better. However, when he saw the shop sign, he did remember barely reading a report about it from one of his field agents named Kitagawa... or something like that.

"What difference does that make?" Jude asked, a bit of annoyance leaking into his tone.

"I already have a cooperative relationship with the Seto Group." Elicia said bluntly. "And with them, my clothes reach people all over the world, not just Ishgar."

"Damn that Seto Group." Jude muttered before he turned around.

After that, without another word, Jude left the shop.

"Now, that was just rude." Elicia said with a slight frown. "He didn't even say goodbye."

At that moment, Lucy, having heard the whole conversation between Elicia and her father, opened the door of the changing room. Then, she approached Elicia with her head lowered.

"I'm sorry about my father." Lucy said from behind Elicia.

Hearing Lucy's voice, Elicia spun on her heels. Then, when she saw Lucy in the new dress, she smiled brightly.

"Wow!" Elicia exclaimed. "You look amazing. Come back to my office again. I'll check to see if I need to make any adjustments. Oh, and we have to do something about your hair. That little side tail will not do."

Like that, Elicia dragged Lucy back into her office once again. Then, she made a few minor adjustments to the dress, put her hair up in a bun, and even did her make-up at no extra charge. After that, with a promise to meet each other again, Lucy and Sebastian left the shop and went to attend the party.