

Fairy Tail 144

Chapter 144: Mirajane's Still Got It

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Lupinus.

July, x784.

The morning after the battle with the centipedes took place on Galuna Island, Gray, Natsu, Happy, and Lucy were walking through the town of Lupinus and making their way toward the town hall. While Natsu and Happy were excited to complete an S-Class quest and show Laxus that he was wrong about them, Lucy was second guessing herself.

'Was it really worth it to break the rules of the guild for a map that may or may not lead me to a Golden Gate Key?' Lucy thought to herself. 'More importantly, we're gonna get punished regardless of completing this quest or not, aren't we.'

"Aww man, Happy!" Natsu said excitedly. "When we finish beating up that bear, do you think Alfonzo will cook it for us when we get back?"

"I hope so, Natsu." Happy replied energetically. "I heard that bear paw is really yummy. And this is an S-Class magical beast. I bet it will be super-delicious!"

Meanwhile, Gray was grumbling off to the side.

"No matter how I look at this, we're gonna be in trouble when we get back." Gray muttered. "I can't believe I got tricked and knocked out by this fire breathing idiot. Then, he somehow convinced me to help him kill the damn bear since we were already here. Not only Gramps, but even Ur is gonna put me through the ringer when she finds out about this."

"Oh, stop complaining, Gray." Natsu said in a disdainful tone. "If you're so scared, why don't you just go back. Lucy and I will take care of this without you."

"Who said I was scared!?" Gray shouted, immediately incensed by Natsu's comment. "I'll show you what a real ice wizard can do."

"Oh really?" Natsu asked with a smirk. "All I hear is a bunch of talk."

"What did you say you pink-haired mouth breather?" Gray asked angrily.

"I'll say it as much as you want me to after you put some clothes on, you perverted ice cube." Natsu shot back.

"I don't need clothes to kick your ass!" Gray replied.

"Oh yeah?" Natsu questioned, drawing nearer to Gray.

"Yeah!" Gray replied, pushing his forehead against Natsu's.

Meanwhile, Lucy watched the two with shock. She wanted to break them up, but she didn't know how. Her desire was even greater when the people of Lupinus started to gather and gossip. Eventually, she reached the limits of her shame and shouted at the arguing duo.

"Would you two knock it off?" Lucy shouted with a red face. "You can settle who is stronger by beating the Inferno Bear. Obviously, who ever does the most damage and lands the killing blow is the strongest!"

Taken aback by Lucy's loud shout, Gray and Natsu drew back from each other and looked at Lucy simultaneously. Then, they glanced at each other before snorting and looking at Lucy again.

"She's right." Gray said with a nod. "We can let our fists do the talking."

"Yeah, that bear won't know what hit it." Natsu said with a battle hungry smile on his face. "Then, I'll show you that I'm definitely stronger than you, Gray! Oh yeah, I'm all fired up now!"

"We'll see about that." Gray replied, wanting to get in the last word.

"Good, now that we've settled that, you really should put on your clothes, Gray." Lucy said as she pointed at all the people that had gathered around the group. "Unless you like showing off the goods to the public."

After hearing that, Natsu and Gray looked around at the crowd. Then, in a hurry, Gray picked up the clothes he had taken off while they walked and put them back on as if nothing had happened. Then, the group of four continued their trip to the town hall to meet Reno Fox, Lupinus Town's mayor.

Fifteen minutes later, the group reached the town hall. Then, after another hour, they completed their chat with Reno and made their way out of town hall.

"So, Alfonzo and Elicia completed a quest in this town eight years ago?" Lucy asked curiously. "They would have only been eleven, right?"

"Now that you mention it, I think that was their first B-Class quest." Gray said with his right hand supporting his chin as he tried to remember the details. "I remember them telling us about it after they got back. Come to think of it, that was around the time Erza joined the guild, too."

"Wow! A B-Class quest at eleven years old?" Lucy asked, sounding impressed. Then, she looked towards Natsu and Happy, who was riding on Natsu's shoulder. "Natsu, do you remember the story from back then?"

"Nah..." Natsu replied nonchalantly. "I didn't join the guild until July 7, x777. So, I wasn't even part of the guild back then."

"Oh, I see." Lucy replied with a nod.

Like that, Gray, Natsu, Hapy, and Lucy continued traveling to the last known area where the Inferno Bear had been spotted. Surprisingly, it was the old castle ruins where Alfonzo and Elicia fought the Lycan and found the rechargeable lacrima he used for his first magic vehicles.

After leaving the town, everything was going smoothly. Natsu was now able to pick up the scent of sulfur and wild beast. So, they knew they were on the right track. Unfortunately, about halfway to their destination, their luck ran out.

About a hundred sixty-four feet (50 m) ahead of them, a white-haired woman with a slim, yet voluptuous, figure of below average height wearing a sleeveless dark red dress with pink frills and a pink ribbon tied into a bow on her chest was leaning against a tree with her head lowered.

Although the quartet could not see her face due to her hair covering it from the side, the distinctive upward ponytail was more than enough to let them know who she was.

"Oh crap! It's Mira." Natsu muttered.

"Damn... Gramps must really be pissed off if he sent her after us."

"Huh? What's wrong?" Lucy asked, confused by Gray and Natsu's reactions. "What do you mean? Mira's so nice. Why do you two seem so scared?"

"You haven't been here long enough to understand, Lucy." Happy replied. "Mira may seem nice and sweet now. But you didn't see her before the accident."

"Accident?" Lucy asked in confusion.

"She almost made an irreversible mistake." Happy continued. "If it wasn't for Alfonzo and Natsu, things could have been really bad."

After he finished speaking, Happy started to pout as he crossed his arms.

"What makes it even worse..." Happy said sadly. "They left me behind when they went on their adventure to help Mira, Elfman, and Lisanna."

"Aww, come on, Happy." Natsu said, sounding a bit annoyed. "I apologized for that like a hundred times."

"If you had to apologize, you shouldn't have done it, Natsu." Happy said, sounding even more sad.

"More important than those two's argument." Gray said, picking up where happy left off. "Mira lost her S-Class rank after that whole mess as punishment."

"What did she do?" Lucy asked with trepidation.

"The same thing we're doing now." Gray replied. "No, I guess that's not right. But she brought Elfman and Lisanna with her on an S-Class quest. Which is against the guild rules."

Hearing that, Lucy gulped a mouthful of saliva. Then, she glanced at Mirajane in the distance just in time to see her raise her head and turn it in their direction.

"Oh man, we're in trouble." Lucy whispered as her body started to shiver.

Although Mirajane was wearing the pleasant smile everyone in the guild had gotten accustomed to over the last two years, the pressure she was releasing was suffocating. Even from the distance, all four could feel goose bumps starting to rise on their arms.

"You four have been very naughty." Mirajane said in a cheerful tone as she approached the group of four. "Stealing an S-Class quest from the second floor isn't good, you know."

"M-M-Mira... Natsu replied, trying to sound as cheerful as she did. "We only wanted to help the people of the town."

"That's quite admirable, Natsu." Mirajane said with an approving smile. "However, you still broke the rules. And Gray, I'm disappointed in you, too. You were sent to bring them back. Instead, you're here breaking the rules with them."

"No... Mira, that's not it." Gray said, feeling the pressure on him increase. "Natsu tricked me and knocked me out. By the time I woke up, we were already close to Lupinus."

"And you didn't try to stop them again after that?" Mirajane asked after nodding in acknowledgement.

Instead of responding, Gray lowered his head in silence, giving Mirajane all she needed as an answer.

"Holy crap, she's scary." Lucy said with her eyes open wide in disbelief.

"She's even scarier than she used to be." Happy added in a whisper. "And she was called the Demon Girl, Mirajane, back then."

"Demon Girl? *Gulp*" Lucy asked in a scared tone. "And you say she's scarier now?"

"A lot scarier." Happy replied with a nod.

As happy and Lucy whispered to each other, Mirajane continued walking toward the group.

Roar!

Just as Mirajane reached the halfway point between the tree she was leaning against and the group of four, an earth shattering roar could be heard from behind Mirajane, in the direction of the castle ruins. A moment later, the smell of sulfur intensified as a black and red blur started charging in their direction.

"what is that?" Lucy asked in a shocked tone.

"It's the Inferno Bear!" Gray shouted.

"Mira! Look out!" Natsu shouted as the Inferno Bear closed the distance.

"*Sigh* And that's why you're not ready for S-Class." Mirajane said without changing her expression.
"Just look at how you're panicking. [Satan Soul: Sitri]."

Momentarily, Mirajane's figure was bathed in a bright white light. At the same time, the Inferno bear had completely closed the distance and was now standing behind Mirajane on its hind legs with its right claw positioned to smash down on her.

The group of four panicked even more when the Inferno Bear finally swung down its paw. However, to everyone's surprise, including the Inferno Bear, its paw stopped before it reached Mirajane.

A moment later, the glow around Mirajane receded. With her left hand raised, Mirajane had stopped the bear's claw without taking damage. Also, her appearance had changed greatly. For one, her hair had grown much longer. Secondly, she had a pair of curved horns on the sides of her head and there were dark marks and lipstick on her face.

On top of all those changes, her clothing had changed to a white and royal blue body suit with a long white dress coat over top of it held closed by a pair of belts around her waist and rib cage. On top of that, she wore a black cloak with a high collar. Then, there were her hands that seemed to have transformed into a pair of metallic claws.

Looking further down, her legs were now exposed with navy blue markings on her thighs. On top of that, her legs below the knee were engulfed in flames.

"That's... Mira's [Sitri Take Over]." Natsu said with cold sweat dripping down his forehead. "Even Erza can only reach a draw with her when she uses it."

"And considering how easily Erza kicks your butt, you wouldn't stand a chance." Gray sniped.

"Like you're any different." Natsu fired back.

Meanwhile, Mirajane tilted her head back and looked up at the 12'4" (4 m) tall Inferno Bear who just tried to attack her from behind.

"If you hadn't done that, you would have got to live a little longer." Mirajane said in a distinctively deeper and more demonic tone. "At least until someone who was qualified to take this quest showed up. But since you attacked me, I can't just let you go."

With that said, Mirajane clench her hand around the Inferno Bear's paw. Then she pulled it forward. At the same time, she performed a high kick with her flame covered right foot, landing on the Inferno Bear's chin and launching it into the air. After that, she seemingly vanished.

In the next instant, Mirajane appeared in front of the Inferno Bear and kicked it higher into the sky, repeating the process three more times. Then, she vanished from her spot once again and appeared in her initial location on the ground.

Once she was back on the ground, Mirajane raised her right hand and pointed its palm at the Inferno Bear, who had finally started to fall toward the ground again thanks to gravity.

"Holy Crap!" Gray exclaimed. "She treated that thing like a teddy bear."

"Argh!" Natsu shouted in excitement. "Now I really wanna fight it to. Man, I'm all fired up!"

"Wow, she's so strong." Lucy said absent mindedly as she watched Mirajane's display of power.

"Aye!" Happy said in agreement.

"Now, it's time to end this." Mirajane said as [Darkness Magic] began to condense in her palm. Once the concentration of magic power in her palm was satisfactory, Mirajane chanted her spell. "[Evil Shower]."

With that, a stream of dark purple energy bullets were shot from the orb of [Darkness Magic] in Mirajane's hand. Usually, the bullets would fly indiscriminately in the general direction of Mirajane's target. However, magic power control has been a focus of those who trained with Alfonzo and Elicia in the mornings. So, she had a fair amount of control over where those purple energy bullets ended up.

Though a few of the bullets missed their mark, soaring off into the sky, the majority of the bullets hit the Inferno bear, leaving a large number of bloody holes in its hide. On top of that, the impact for the energy bullets were strong enough to stop its descent due to gravity.

However, when the spell ended, the Bear started falling again. Then, a few seconds later, it crashed into the ground.

Boom!

Upon impact, the area around the Inferno Bear was covered in a cloud of dust and debris.

Without waiting to confirm its death, Mirajane turned away from the Inferno Bear and started walking toward the group of wizards as she dispelled her [Take Over].

"Now, Gray, would you be a dear and put that bear on ice?" Mirajane asked with her usual, pleasant smile. "I'm sure if I asked nicely, Alfonzo would be willing to cook it for me. And Natsu, would you help him bring it back to the town? We need to let the mayor know what happened and catch the next train back to Magnolia, after all."

"Aye!" Gray and Natsu answered simultaneously.

"Oh great, now they're both talking like Happy." Lucy grumbled.

"Aye!" Happy said happily.

"Shut it, Cat." Lucy said in an annoyed tone.