

Fairy Tail 145

Chapter 145: Punishments and Rewards

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

July, x784.

While Mirajane was showing the four rule breaking Fairy Tail wizards what an S-Class wizard was capable of, Alfonzo, Elicia, Ultear, and Erza were busy on Galuna Island, working in two groups. The first, consisting of Alfonzo and Erza, was working to repair the wall that Erza had all but destroyed the night before.

While the second, Elicia and Ultear, was performing a search and destroy mission. Their targets? The remaining centipedes on the island. And considering they were all rushing back to the cavern under the temple before Elicia and Ultear intercepted them last night, that was where they started.

In the end, the two groups spent the entire day completing these tasks. And when they did, they confronted Moka about getting their payment. Naturally, Moka paid them. Though it could not be said he did so without any hesitation. In fact, when handing over the 1.5 million jewels, Bobo had to physically pry his fingers off of the cash. They did, however, receive everything they were promised and planned to return to the port in Hargeon the next morning.

Back in Magnolia, as the sun was setting, Elfman and Lisanna, who had been out on a quest together for the past few days, returned to the guild hall.

Upon opening Fairy Tail's doors, the pride they felt after completing an A-Class quest without their big sister was evident. Not that this was the first time for either of them to complete an A-Class quest without Mirajane.

In fact, they had both completed A-Class quests alone in the past. Still, every time they completed one without Mirajane made them feel that they were getting closer to the point where they would no longer make their sister worry.

"Mira~~~! We're back~~~!" Lisanna shouted cheerfully, looking forward to hear her sister's words of welcome.

"Oh, Lisanna, Elfman, you're back." Makarov said, surprising the two as they were expecting to hear Mirajane's voice. "Mira is out running an errand for me at the moment. But she should be back before too long."

"That's rare." Lisanna replied while tilting her head as she approached the bar so that she and Elfman could report on their quest.

"It's nothing to worry about." Makarov said, waving his hand dismissively. "A few troublemakers broke the rules and stole an S-Class quest from the second floor. I just asked her to bring them back."

"If that's all, Mira should be back soon." Elfman replied with a nod. "She'll handle your request like a real man."

"But she's not a man, Elfman." Lisanna said sounding a little fed up with her brother's catch phrase. "Anyway, Master, who was it that broke the rules?"

"Who could it be but that hot head, Natsu." Makarov replied in annoyance. "He somehow even managed to rope Lucy and Gray, who I originally sent to bring them back, into this. The punishment waiting for them will be harsh, indeed."

"Oh, Natsu." Lisanna said, sounding somewhat worried about Natsu. "I wanna feel bad for you, but I know what kind of dangers can happen when someone does something they aren't ready for."

"Anyway, why don't the two of you tell me about your quest." Makarov said, noticing that Lisanna's mood was dropping. "I would assume the two of you completed it successfully if the expressions you were wearing when you came in are any indication."

Recognizing Makarov's intention to change the subject, Elfman and Lisanna exchanged glances. Then, with the pride in the work they had done returning, they both smiled and began happily recounting their experiences on their quest.

After an hour, Elfman and Lisanna's report ended and they decided to order themselves some dinner. And considering that they had done a good job, they decided to be fancy about it.

"Hey, Alfonzo!" Elfman shouted loud enough that he could be heard from anywhere on the first floor of the guild hall. "Lisanna and I wanna cash in some of our points to have you cook a dinner fit for a real man!"

Though it was not surprising that Alfonzo did not respond to Elfman's shout, both he and Lisanna found themselves a bit disappointed.

"Looks like you two are 0 for 2 today." Makarov said with a wry smile on his face. "Alfonzo is out on a quest. He left with Elicia, Ultear, and Erza yesterday."

"Aww man.... That sucks!" Lisanna said, pouting hard as she did so.

Bang!

At that moment, the guild hall's doors were flung open. Standing in the now open doors was Ur in her usual light brown leather jacket and black pants.

"Did I just hear that my daughter was out on a quest?" Ur asked as she strode into the guild hall.

"Ah... Welcome back, Ur." Makarov said after taking a swig from his mug of ale. "How was that 10-Years Quest?"

"Eh... Not much different from any other S-Class quest." Ur replied with a shrug. Then, she took a seat at the bar as she continued. "But then again, stealing a blizzardvern egg is no ordinary S-Class quest."

"Seriously?" Lisanna asked in surprise. "You stole a blizzardvern egg?"

"Stealing the egg was no big deal." Ur replied. "Fighting the blizzardvern was no problem, either. The real issue was getting it to stop chasing me. I mean, I didn't wanna kill it. I did steal its egg, after all."

"Then, what did you do?" Lisanna asked, excitement glimmering in her eyes.

"Well, the first thing I did was find a bunch of its droppings." Ur said casually.

Naturally, this confused and disgusted Lisanna slightly.

"After that, I got a bunch of those herbs they like to eat and lured it away from its nest." Ur continued, unbothered by Lisanna's expression. "After that, while it was going to get the herbs, I ran into its nest, wiped the egg down with its droppings to mask its scent, and got the hell outta there."

"Does that mean..." Lisanna started, finding Ur's method a bit incredulous. "... You carried an egg covered in poop back to the client?"

"Hehehe!" Ur immediately started giggling at Lisanna's question. "No, not all the way back. I cleaned it off after I got off Mt. Hakobe. Even if the client wanted the egg, I doubt they wanted anything covered in blizzardvern feces."

"That was quite the impressive plan." Makarov said in an approving tone. "To think no one had come up with anything like that in the past ten years."

"Well, I picked up a few tricks in my time on that mountain in Ispan." Ur replied with a smile. "Still, it's amazing how bad blizzardvern shit smells even in that kind of cold."

That comment drew a laugh from everyone who heard it. And with that, the newly returned members of Fairy Tail chatted, drank, and had their usual fun in the guild hall.

After another hour of partying, the doors to the guild hall were opened once again. This time, Lucy was the one who walked in. With her head lowered and her steps unsteady, it was clear that she was afraid of something.

Behind Lucy were three more people and a blue cat. Namely, Gray, Mirajane, Natsu, and Happy. However, Gray, Natsu, and Happy were obviously not entering the guild hall willingly. That was made quite obvious by the fact that Mirajane was holding Gray and Natsu by an earlobe each while a rope was tied around Happy's tail with the other end wrapped around Mirajane's slender right wrist.

"Master, I'm back." Mirajane said in a cheerful tone with her usual pleasant smile gracing her lips. "And I've brought back the rule breakers, too."

"Good job, Mirajane." Makarov replied with a malicious smile on his face while he glared at the four rule breakers. "Did they give you any trouble?"

"Not really." Mirajane replied as she dragged the three toward the bar with Lucy following closely behind her. "I did have to drag them to the guild from the train station, though."

Hearing that, Makarov's gaze sharpened. Glaring at the four rule breakers in silence made the four of them start to drip cold sweat. It got even worse when the rest of the guild fell silent as well, looking forward to the suffering they would receive.

"Well, before I get to punishing you, why did you do it?" Makarov asked. "Not that your reason will save you from your punishment. Still, I'm curious."

At that moment, Mirajane released Gray and Natsu's ears. Then, she stepped back and released Happy as well, allowing them to face Makarov unobstructed.

After a few moments of awkward silence, Natsu was the first to speak.

"I wanted to prove Laxus wrong." Natsu grumbled. "We're not weak. We just haven't been promoted to S-Class yet."

"Aye!" Happy chimed in.

Instead of responding, Makarov turned his attention to Gray.

"And you?" Makarov asked.

"Originally, I went to bring Natsu and the other two back." Gray replied. "But then Natsu tricked me and knocked me out. The next thing I knew, I was in Lupinus Town. Then, Natsu convinced me to help him defeat the Inferno Bear. *Sigh* I really don't have any excuse."

"Well, at least you're honest." Makarov replied without changing his expression. Then, he looked at the last of the four offenders. "I'm actually the most surprised by you, Lucy. Why would you go along with these fools?"

"Because... Part of the reward was a clue to where I could find another Golden Gate Key." Lucy replied with her head lowered. "I know what I did was wrong, but having those keys is the... well... key... to my growth as a wizard."

"I see." Makarov replied with a nod. "I can understand where you're coming from. But you still broke the rules of the guild."

"I know." Lucy replied, lowering her head even further. "And for what it's worth, I'm sorry."

"Well, now that I know your reasons, it's time to hand out your punishments." Makarov said in a sadistic tone.

"Just a moment, Master Makarov." Ur said, interrupting Makarov.

"What is it, Ur?" Makarov asked. "Keep in mind, even if Gray is your student, I won't be lenient."

"And I wouldn't ask you to." Ur replied while waving dismissively. "Gray deserves punishment for his actions."

At first, when Gray heard Ur cut in, his eyes lit up. Even when Makarov said he would not show leniency, he had hope that Ur would speak on his behalf. However, when she denied Makarov's assumption, he turned from hopeful to fearful instantly.

"In fact, I'd like you to allow me to conduct Gray's punishment." Ur said with a devious smile. "Recently, I came across a rather pissed off blizzardvern. I think it would be a good training partner for my disobedient disciple."

"Hmm... Permission granted." Makarov replied after a bit of consideration. Then, he turned his attention to the other three. "As for the rest of you... Natsu, you will be punished with... 'That'."

"'That'?" Natsu shouted in a horrified tone. "Gramps, you don't have to be so cruel, do you?"

"You think that's cruel?" Makarov asked, instantly growing into a giant and looking down on Natsu with his magic power flaring. "Not only did you break the guild rules and put your own life in danger because of it, but you convinced one and, all but, forced another one to accompany you in this foolishness."

The look in Natsu's eyes suggested that he understood that he was in the wrong for breaking the rules. However, he did not think that what he had done was bad enough to be punished with "that."

Noticing the look in Natsu's eyes, Makarov calmed down and shrank back to his normal size. Then, he looked at Natsu with a disappointed gaze.

"Natsu, I thought you of all people would have known better." Makarov said while shaking his head in disappointment. "You were there two years ago."

Hearing that, Natsu froze.

"You have seen what can happen when those who aren't ready for an S-Class quest go on one."
Makarov continued. "I know you are strong. I do not doubt yours or Gray's strength in the slightest. But your minds... Your minds are not strong enough."

At that point, Natsu lowered his head and continued listening to Makarov's lecture.

"You were so easily provoked into taking an action that could have put you in danger." Makarov said.
"On top of that, you dragged Happy and Lucy who are not ready for that kind of quest along with you."

"*Sigh* You're right, Gramps. I'm sorry." Natsu said after the entire guild hall fell silent for a few seconds. Then, he raised his head with desperation in his eyes as he pleaded. "I know I was wrong, Gramps! I promise to never do it again. So, please, don't punish me with 'That'."

'They've mentioned "That" so many times!' Lucy shouted internally. 'Why do those three look so scared when it's brought up? Seriously, Would someone tell me what "That" is?'

"Sorry, Natsu, that's not negotiable." Makarov replied emotionlessly. "Now, Elfman, Alzack, Jet, Droy, Macao, and Wakaba, grab Natsu and take him up to my office. I'll carry out his punishment there."

Immediately, the six wizards Makarov called out rushed forward and grabbed Natsu.

"NO! Guys, don't do this! Please!" Natsu shouted and begged as he was dragged up to the third floor.
"Please, you know what kind of horrors await me if he does 'That'! How could you all be so cruel?
No~~~~~!"

"Natsu, I would say this is gonna hurt me more than it hurts you." Macao said in a gloating tone as his voice faded up the stairs. "But Even I don't lie that blatantly."

Once again, the guild hall fell silent as Natsu's pleas echoed throughout the guild hall.

"Now, Happy." Makarov continued dishing out punishments without changing his expression.

"*Gulp* Yes, Master?" Happy replied nervously.

"For the next two months, you are prohibited from eating any fish." Makarov said.

Happy did not even protest Makarov's decision. Instead, he fainted on the spot.

Makarov then turned his attention to Lucy.

"And lastly, Lucy..." Makarov said.

Lucy, seeing the lack of expression on Makarov's face began to shudder. Since she had chosen to accompany Natsu willingly, she thought she might be subject to the same punishment as Natsu, even though she had no idea what it was.

'Wait, I haven't even been in Fairy Tail for two months.' Lucy thought to herself, scaring herself even more in the process. 'What if he kicks me out?'

Not giving Lucy the chance to scare herself any further, Makarov announced her punishment.

"You are prohibited from taking quests for the next month." Makarov said, still not changing his expression. "On top of that, you will be expected to work in the guild hall as a member of the wait and custodial staffs. Don't worry, you will receive wages for the time you work."

"Huh?" Lucy replied dumbly.

'That's it?' Lucy asked internally. 'I had almost convinced myself that I would be kicked out of the guild. *Sigh* What a relief.'

At that moment, however, Makarov's expression changed to something much more... perverted.

"And while you work, you'll have to wear this." Makarov said as he pulled an outfit from out of nowhere.

In Makarov's hand was a very skimpy black and white maid outfit. Although she couldn't be sure from just seeing it in Makarov's hands, she was pretty sure that a lot of her breasts would be visible. So too would her abdomen and the top of her butt.

Smack!

"I don't think so, you perverted old geezer." Ur said as she smacked Makarov in the back of his head. Then, she looked at the dumbfounded Lucy and continued. "You don't have to pay attention to the last part."

"Uh, okay." Lucy replied absent mindedly.

"Geez... Can't an old man have some fun and enjoy the last few years of his life?" Makarov grumbled as he rubbed the back of his head. "Anyway, now that the punishments are over, let's get to the rewards."

Naturally, everyone other than Mirajane was confused when they heard Makarov's last words. However, Makarov continued without minding that.

"Lisanna, go and call your brother down here." Makarov ordered.

Unsure of what Makarov was getting at, Lisanna quickly ran up to the third floor. A few minutes later, she returned with Elfman.

When the two younger Strauss siblings returned, Makarov turned his attention to Mirajane.

"Now, Mirajane." Makarov said in a solemn tone. "In response to your stellar performance on this task, not to mention the great amount of growth you've shown over the last two years, I, Makarov Dreyar, Third master of the Fairy Tail wizarding guild, return to you your rank of an S-Class wizard, along with all the rights and privileges it affords you."

Immediately after Makarov's announcement, Mirajane's eyes filled with tears as she covered her mouth with both hands. At the same time, Elfman and Lisanna opened their eyes wide in surprise. Then, responding faster than Mirajane, they both dashed to her and pulled her into a group hug while the rest of the guild began cheering happily.