

Fairy Tail 151

Chapter 151: The Plan is Simple... Let's Go Shopping!

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Crocus.

August, x784.

"We're back!" Elicia shouted happily upon entering the hotel room she rented with Marin and Lucy.

"Welcome back." Lucy replied while turning her head towards Elicia's voice as she sat in front of a mirror.

As they walked deeper into the room, Elicia and Marin saw Lucy sitting in front of a mirror with a cloth fastened around her neck and draped over her body. Standing behind her was an orange-skinned man with a pair of scissors in his right hand.

"Please don't move, Baby." The orange-skinned man, Cancer, said while trimming Lucy's hair. "I almost cut off too much."

"oh, sorry, Cancer." Lucy said, turning her head back in the direction of the mirror. Then, without looking at the new arrivals, she spoke once again. "So, how did everything go with the client?"

"*Sigh* The client didn't have much in the way of information about the case." Marin said as she flopped down on her bed.

"Yeah, but we're not giving up." Elicia added. "We still have a chance."

"What do you mean?" Lucy asked with a confused expression. "If he didn't have any information, what are you going to do."

"Well, since we're all beautiful girls." Elicia said with a smile, gaining a smile from Lucy as well. "There's only one thing we can do."

Since Elicia had not explained her plan on the way back to the hotel, Marin and Lucy both focused on Elicia's next words with rapt attention.

"We're going shopping!" Elicia exclaimed excitedly.

Two hours later, Elicia, Marin, and Lucy, after having lunch in the hotel's dining room, were standing outside of a shoe store in the middle of Crocus' business district.

"*Sigh* I always wanted to come here." Elicia said while looking at the shop sign that read: "Valorous Feets" with an excited gaze. "Although I can make shoes, too, I specialize in clothing."

"I've seen your closet... closets before, Lici." Marin said with a smile. "For someone with so many pairs of shoes, I'm surprised you don't have any shoes from this store."

"Closets?" Lucy asked curiously.

"Yeah, there are three walk-in closets in Alfonzo and Lici's bedroom, two and a half of them are filled with Lici's stuff. And one of them is dedicated just to her shoe collection."

"Seriously?" Lucy asked in wonder. "Even I only had two walk-ins back at home. And only half of one of them was filled with shoes."

Though Lucy had been keeping her identity as the daughter of the Heartfilia Kanzen's owner, Jude Heartfilia, a secret, there were three people in the guild who knew it. Namely, Elicia, who had met her before she ran away, Alfonzo, Elicia's fiancé, and Marin, whose father is an employee of her father's company. So, she did not feel the need to hide it when she was around the three of them.

"Actually, I made most of those shoes myself." Elicia replied sheepishly. "I really wanna venture into the shoe industry as well, but it feels like something is missing every time I make a pair of shoes."

"Is that why you don't usually sell matching shoes with your outfits?" Marin asked.

"Yeah..." Elicia replied while scratching her cheek with her right index finger. "If I sell something, I want it to be the best. And not to brag, but my clothes are better than most of what you can find on Ishgar."

Although Elicia was not a particularly proud person, she was proud of her work. And after traveling Fiore and seeing many clothing shops, she realized that her clothing was a cut above the rest in terms of quality.

"Anyway... Let's go inside and take a look." Elicia said, smiling brightly as she pushed the door to the shoes store open.

Three hours later, Elicia, Marin, and Lucy walked out of the store, each with several bags filled with shoe boxes in their hands.

"Ahh... I feel refreshed." Elicia said. "Nothing helps get rid of the feelings an unpleasant meeting brings than a good round of shopping."

"Yeah, and when you make such a big screw up like tying up a Darkness-level pervert during that meeting, you really need a good shopping spree to free your mind." Marin said with a chuckle.

"Ugh... Did you have to bring that up again?" Elicia groaned.

"Call it payback for bringing up that night." Marin countered.

"Fine, you win this round." Elicia replied through gritted teeth.

"Wait, did you tie up Darkness this morning?" Lucy asked, assuming they had run into Darkness on their trip to see the client.

In response, Elicia groaned once again while Marin started giggling in delight. Then, Marin told Lucy what happened on their way back from the client's house while they walked to the next store.

Naturally, Lucy laughed at the story. However, when her laughter died down, she looked at Elicia with pity.

"Lici, what were you thinking?" Lucy asked, still giggling from time to time as she imagined the scene.

"I only wanted to get away from her as fast as possible." Elicia muttered. "I mean, we had a job to do. And wasting time with her wasn't helping."

Before Lucy could respond, both her and Marin snapped their heads in the direction of their next destination's front door.

Standing just outside the clothing store was the same decent looking man who led them to their table the night before at the Feeding Bowl. At the same time, the decent-looking man coughed up a mouthful of blood.

"That's the guy from the restaurant, right?" Lucy asked with hearts in her eyes. "I didn't notice it last night, but he's, like, super handsome."

"I know, right?" Marin added with a blush on her face. "Why didn't I notice it last night."

"We should go and see if he wants to hang out with us." Lucy said excitedly.

"Totally!" Marin replied with a smile.

Meanwhile, after seeing the man and the way he coughed up blood, Elicia knew exactly what was going on so, with a frown, she dropped the bags filled with shoe boxes in her hands.

'That's gotta be the guy responsible for the missing girls.' Elicia thought to herself. 'And he's definitely using [Charm Magic] right now. He even caught Marin and Lucy in his spell.'

Thud!

Smack! x 2

While Elicia was having that thought, the sound of the shopping bags hitting the ground rang out. Then, with her hands free, Elicia slapped both girls on their butts.

"Of course you didn't notice how handsome he was last night." Elicia said. "He's not really all that handsome to begin with."

Immediately, Marin and Lucy's excited expressions changed as the sound of shattering glass rang out. Then, they exchanged confused glances before realizing that they had been hit with [Charm Magic]. After that, they both glared at the man who was wiping the blood from his lips.

"You [charmed] me?" Lucy asked with wrath burning in her eyes. "I'll make you pay for that."

"Yeah, I've already got my eyes on someone." Marin grumbled. "To think you made me forget about him for even a few seconds... Unforgivable."

Seeing the looks in the three girls' eyes, the man realized instantly that his spell had been broken. Or rather, the spell on two of them had been broken while the third was never affected by the spell in the first place.

"Shit!" The man shouted as he turned and ran away.

Immediately after seeing the man run, Marin and Lucy dropped their own bags and started to run after him. However, before she could get too far, Lucy felt a hand on her shoulder.

"Huh? Elicia?" Lucy asked with a mixture of confusion and anger. "Why are you stopping me?"

"I wanted to keep you from participating in this quest at first." Elicia said with a serious tone. "but now, I think we can write it off as self-defense. And even more importantly, we need someone to watch over our bags. Can you summon Virgo to take care of them?"

Looking back at all the bags on the ground, Lucy sighed in frustration. Then, she reached into the pouch on her waist and pulled out a key.

"[Open, Gate of the Maiden, Virgo]." Lucy chanted.

In the next instant, Virgo, dressed in her usual maid attire appeared while bowing her head respectfully.

"Princess, is it time for punishment?" Virgo asked with anticipation in her tone.

"No, we need you to take care of our bags." Lucy replied while pointing at the shopping bags scattered on the ground..

"Understood, Princess." Virgo replied respectfully as she moved to pick up the bags.

"Good, let's go!" Elicia shouted as she sprinted after Marin.

"Right." Lucy replied as she too ran after Marin. "Take the bags to..."

As she ran, Lucy instructed Virgo to take their bags to the hotel and go back to the Celestial Spirit world when she was done. After that, she tossed her copy of the key backwards, which Virgo easily caught and started picking up the bags with a smile.

Meanwhile, Marin was following the man who used the [Charm Magic] on herself, Elicia, and Lucy. However, instead of running through the streets like before, Marin had [Transformed into a middle-aged woman along the way. And when the man saw that Marin was no longer chasing him, he slowed down significantly. However, he still walked rather quickly towards his destination.

"Damn it!" The man grumbled angrily. "None of them looked that strong. How did my spell backfire on me like that? It was definitely that brown-skinned woman. But how?"

While muttering to himself angrily at his failed attempt to capture more women, the man reached a normal looking two story house in the residential district. Looking around to make sure that he had not been followed, the man breathed a sigh of relief after he didn't see anyone. Then, he knocked on the front door in a certain pattern.

Watching the whole series of events, Marin was trying to figure out a way to notify the others of her location. However, when she saw the person that opened the door, her mouth dropped open in shock.

"Isn't that Mr. Hamilton's daughter?" Marin asked in a whisper as the man walked past the beautiful girl with disinterest. "Isn't he gathering all those women to sell them or something? Why is she in that house? Maybe he's selling them from there?"

While Marin's confusion was growing by the second, the girl, despite being ignored, closed the door with a happy smile on her face.

"Or maybe he gathered them for himself." Marin continued whispering to herself. "I mean, it wouldn't be weird if a man wanted a bunch of pretty girls for himself, right?"

Marin, so lost in her thoughts, did not even notice when Elicia and Lucy approached her. Then, she nearly jumped out of her shoes when she heard a voice from behind.

"Marin, that's you, right?" Elicia asked.

"Yeah, it's me." Marin replied while dropping her [Transformation] and patting herself on the chest.
"Geez, you scared the crap outta me."

"Sorry." Elicia replied with a sheepish smile. "But when you use your [Transformation Magic], none of your magic power leaks. So, I was a bit unsure if it was you or not."

"Seriously, I would have walked right past you if Lici didn't stop me." Lucy added.

"Haha... Sorry. I was just surprised by what I saw." Marin replied with a sheepish smile.

"Does that mean you found that guy's hideout?" Elicia asked, her expression turning serious.

"Yeah." Marin nodded in response.

"That's great." Lucy said with a smile. "but why were you so surprised?"

"Well, I saw the client's daughter answer the door." Marin replied. "And she seemed happy."

"That's probably because of the [Charm Magic]." Lucy said with a scowl. "What a scumbag."

"What about the other missing girls?" Elicia asked. "did he already sell them away?"

"Uh... No, I didn't see them." Marin replied with a slight blush. "I was so surprised to see the client's daughter answering the door like the guy wasn't afraid someone would recognize her that I... Uh... Kinda froze up."

"I guess that makes sense." Elicia replied with a nod. "It really is weird that she's allowed to answer the door."

"Yeah, that's a quick way to get reported to the knights if anyone recognizes her." Lucy added.

"Exactly." Marin nodded. "That's what I thought, too."

While Marin and Lucy continued talking, mostly insulting the guy who [Charmed] them, Elicia spread her [Magic Power Detection]. Although she rarely uses it, Alfonzo had taught her how to do it a long time ago. And in a situation like this, where she needed to detect the difference in magic power signatures, it was much more useful than her own spell, [Thread Detection].

"There are twenty-three people inside the house." Elicia muttered while staring at the unassuming house. "Most of them are in the basement. Four of them have magic power reserves comparable to the average B-Class wizard, while one is at the peak of B-Class. The rest seem to be civilians."

"I'm guessing the civilians are the girls." Marin said while also staring at the house.

"So, what's the plan?" Lucy asked.

"We'll do it like this..." Elicia said.

For the next few minutes, Elicia explained her plan while reaching her threads to the Escalade parked at the hotel and retrieve something from its center console.