

FAIRY TAIL: METAL AND THREADS

Chapter 16: Alfonzo's Afternoon

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

July, x773

Walking away from the Fairy Tail guild hall, Alfonzo thought to himself about what would likely happen between Elicia and Evergreen.

"Maybe I should show up late for my lesson with Master Goldstein." Alfonzo said to himself while walking toward the male dormitory. "I've only heard of Lici fighting once. Though she seems to have forgotten the fight completely."

Back in their previous life, though Alfonzo had many girlfriends before his accident, he and Elicia were still quite close. Naturally, this made quite a few of his ex-girlfriends uncomfortable. In most cases, nothing came of it.

However, Alfonzo had one ex-girlfriend who felt threatened by Elicia's presence in Alfonzo's life.

So, going behind Alfonzo's back, she and a group of her friends confronted Elicia. They threatened Elicia, saying that if they ever saw her around Alfonzo again, they would put her in the hospital. And in the end, their threat came true.

However, from what Alfonzo heard about the fight from one of his friends at the time. A boy who he cut ties with after the incident since he did not try to intervene until the fight was over, Elicia fought like a totally different person. Usually, Elicia was bubbly and lively. However, when she fought, she fought in a very calculated way.

Even though she had no technique to speak of, Elicia fought as if she had an overhead view of the place where she was fighting. Alfonzo guessed it had something to do with the years of gymnastic training she had gone through. Elicia's spatial awareness was quite developed. If she had not been exhausted from fighting five girls, she probably would have won with no more than a few bruises.

Unfortunately, during a lapse in concentration due to fatigue, one of the girls was able to hit Elicia in the back of the head, knocking her unconscious.

Eventually, when she came to, she had no recollection of the fight and had to spend a day in the hospital due to the concussion she received.

While remembering the past, Alfonzo had made it back to his dorm room and showered. Drying his hair, he came to the end of what he remembered about the incident back in his past life.

"Lici's body is much stronger than it was back then." Alfonzo said to himself. "And with all the physical training combined with her magic power, she should have pretty good stamina. Even still, I can't help but worry about her."

Shaking his head, Alfonzo looked into his closet and picked out some clothes to wear.

"No, I have to believe in her." Alfonzo said. "If she has the same instincts and spatial awareness as she did back then, she should be more than a match for Evergreen."

Pulling out a white, short sleeved, button-down shirt, a black vest, black pants, and black and royal blue shoes that looked a lot like a pair of AirForce1's, Alfonzo quickly got himself dressed. Then, to complete the ensemble, he tied a royal blue sash around his waist.

"Damn, no matter what kind of clothes they are, Lici kills it." Alfonzo muttered to himself while looking himself over in the mirror. Then, he pulled on his afro hair, and began combing it back into a bushy ponytail. "Now, I just need to do something about my hair. I wonder if Lici can do something with her magic..."

A few minutes and a few snapped rubberbands later, Alfonzo got his hair into a ponytail. Then, after one more check in the mirror, he nodded in satisfaction. Picking up the box that Makarov gave him, he put it in his pocket and left the dorm, locking the door on the way out.

About twenty minutes later, Alfonzo was standing in front of Master Goldstein's shop, .45 Caliber Art Warks, with five minutes to spare. Pushing the door open, he saw an old woman, probably in her late sixties, with fair skin, brown hair that was starting grey, and green eyes wearing a set of work overalls and a pair of red frame oval shaped glasses sitting in the store front smoking a cigarette.

"Master Goldstein, good afternoon.' Alfonzo said politely with a bow.

"Well at least your punctual, you're never late." Nell said, flicking the ash off her cigarette. "IF only you were half as talented in metal working and magic engineering."

'I wonder what she would say if she knew Gramps told me what she really thought of me.' Alfonzo thought while smiling internally. 'This tsundere grandma is kinda cute now that I know how she really feels.'

Standing from her seat, Nell began walking toward the back of her shop.

"Anyway, flip the sign on the door and come back to the work shop." nell said without turning around. "Makarov gave you my package, right?"

"Yeah, I have it." Alfonzo said, flipping the sign on the door from "Open" to "Closed."

"Good, then hurry up." Nell ordered. "I don't have all day."

With that, Alfonzo followed Nell into her workshop. Then, for the next few hours, Nell pounded as many metal working and magic engineering techniques as she could into Alfonzo's head. Every time she taught him, she

was blown away by how quickly he picked up anything that had to do with metal. Naturally, she would never tell him that, though.

Nell even showed Alfonzo the metal she commissioned Makarov to obtain for her.

"Pay attention, Boy." Nell said, taking the metal out of the box she received from Alfonzo. "This is flame ore. It's used to give magic items a flame property."

'I could have figured that out by the name.' Alfonzo thought, trying his best not to roll his eyes.

"In most cases, to give a magic item an elemental property, you'd have to carve sigils into it." Nell said, continuing her explanation. "But rare ores like this one allow you to skip the process of carving sigils for elemental conversion. Instead, you only have to carve the sigils that specify what you want the item to do."

'Okay, that's kinda cool.' Alfonzo thought. 'It would make the work a lot less time consuming, too.'

After that, Nell handed the piece of flame ore to Alfonzo. She already knew that he could use his magic power to probe metals and remember their structure, adding to the number of metals he could produce with his magic.

From then on, Nell spent the rest of her time with Alfonzo teaching him the best ways to forge using flame ore. Finally, around the time the sun went down, she ended her lesson.

"That's all for today, Boy." Nell said, lighting a cigarette and taking a drag.
"Now, get lost."

Bowing his head, Alfonzo followed the order and walked toward the workshop's exit. Then, when he reached the door, he turned around.

"I'll see you next week, master Goldstein." Alfonzo said politely.

After bidding Nell goodbye, Alfonzo left for the Fairy Tail guild hall.

"*Sigh* If I had that boy's magic, I wouldn't just be the best gunsmith on the continent." Nell said, exhaling a puff of smoke. "Either way, I can see that boy surpassing me in the next two or three years. But he won't be a simple gunsmith. I wonder what he will create in the years to come."

Returning to the guild, Alfonzo was not all that surprised when he could not see Elicia, Cana, Laki, or Laxus and his friends.

'So, the fight did happen.' Alfonzo thought. 'I wonder what the outcome was.'

Walking up to the bar, Alfonzo sat down next to Makarov, who was sitting on top of the bar. Drinking as usual.

"Hey, Gramps, I'm back." Alfonzo said as he climbed up into the bar stool. "Anything interesting happen while I was gone."

"Welcome back, Alfonzo." Makarov said, taking a swig of his beer. "Elicia and Evergreen had a fight this afternoon. Other than that, just the usual."

"So, a couple fist fights then, huh?" Alfonzo said, nodding his head in understanding. "Are the girls, okay? And who won?"

"They're both fine, no major injuries." Makarov replied. "Evergreen has a bruise on her face and a swollen cheek. While Elicia has a few minor burns and bruises. Her right hand is pretty swollen, too."

After hearing Makarov's description of Elicia and Evergreen's conditions, Alfonzo ordered something for dinner. Then, he turned his attention back to Makarov.

"So, who won?" Alfonzo asked once again.

"Elicia did." Makarov replied. "They were both quite impressive in the usage of their magic. But in the end, Elicia outwitted Evergreen."

Makarov then went ahead and explained the flow of the fight with Alfonzo nodding along in understanding. When Makarov got to the part where Elicia knocked Evergreen out with one punch, he was both surprised and proud. But when Makarov said that Elicia fell out and whined about how much her hand hurt, Alfonzo could not help but laugh.

Bang!

Before Alfonzo could comment on the fight, the front doors of the guild hall swung open and slammed into the outer walls of the building. Looking back, Alfonzo saw Cana standing there, panicked and annoyed.

"Is Alfonzo back?" Cana asked loudly.

Scanning the hall, she saw Alfonzo at the bar. Not waiting to hear a response to her question, she rushed over to the bar and grabbed Alfonzo by the clothes.

"Please, cook something!" Cana shouted desperately.

Both Alfonzo and Makarov were utterly confused by Cana's behavior. Cana's next words, however, cleared up their confusion.

"Elicia has not stopped whining since she punched Evergreen." Cana said in a desperate tone. "She keeps complaining about how much her hand hurts. And she said that the only thing that could make it better is if you cooked dinner for her."

Shaking his head, Alfonzo smiled wryly. At that moment, Alfonzo's meal was brought out and placed on the bar in front of him. Picking up his fork and knife, Alfonzo started digging into the food.

"I'll cook something for her after I eat." Alfonzo said, swallowing a mouthful of roast beef. "I'll cook something for you, too. Think of it as a reward for putting up with Elicia's tantrum."

"Ha, do you think I would have put up with it if I wasn't getting something out of it, too." Cana said, wearing an expression that screamed: "All according to plan."

Once again, Alfonzo shook his head as he continued to eat. Meanwhile, Makarov could only look on blankly.

'Is Alfonzo conquering the girls in the guild one meal at a time?' Makarov thought to himself. 'Should I learn how to cook, too?'

Stroking his mustache, Makarov was lost in his thoughts. Neither Alfonzo nor Cana paid attention to him, though.

Eventually, Alfonzo finished his meal. After wiping his mouth with a napkin, he stood from his seat at the bar.

"Hey, Gramps, I'm gonna borrow the kitchen for a minute." Alfonzo said. "I'd cook it at home, but the dorms are further apart than the guild is from the dorms. I don't want the food to get cold while I take it to Lici."

"Sure." Makarov said absent mindedly. "Just make sure you pay for the ingredients you use."

"I know, Gramps." Alfonzo said, waving as he walked into the kitchen.

About twenty minutes later, Alfonzo walked out of the kitchen with two bags with bacon cheeseburgers and fries inside.

"Here." Alfonzo said, handing Cana the two bags of food. "Take these with you. I'd take Lici's food myself, but it's past the time that a boy should be showing up at Fairy Hills."

Nodding with a much more determined expression than he expected, Cana stood up and took the bags. Then, she started walking toward the door.

"Don't worry, Alfonzo." Cana said in a serious tone. "I'll make sure the food gets to Lici before it gets cold. If the food is cold when I get back, I'll never hear the end of it."

Chuckling at Cana's resolve, Alfonzo knew exactly what she meant. Although Elicia is usually very friendly and bubbly. Basically, just a breath of fresh air, when it comes to her food... More specifically, her Fonzie's food, she can be quite demanding.