

Fairy Tail 181

Chapter 181: To the Tower of Heaven

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Akane Beach.

September, x784.

After a short time, the three groups of Fairy Tail wizards reconvened by the giant roulette wheel where Ultear fought Wally and the girl with cat-like features. The reason for that was simple, actually, Ultear was the only one who left one of her opponents conscious, making her harder to move without taking certain precautions.

After regrouping, Alfonzo created magic sealing cuffs for the four attackers. Then, Ultear dispelled her [Rose Restraints]. After that, the Fairy Tail wizards began discussing the incident.

"It's kinda weird that for the two groups of two, they only sent one opponent." Elicia said as she looked over the four attacking wizards. "But for the only one of us that was alone, they sent two."

"Does that mean they think Ultear is the strongest of us?" Cana asked, a bit of discontent in her tone.

"I doubt it." Alfonzo replied. "Most likely, they couldn't tell who was together like we can. But we could just ask them about it, instead of guessing wildly."

In response, Elicia, Cana, and Ultear all nodded in acknowledgement. Meanwhile, Erza was staring at the familiar faces of the attackers.

"Shô... Simon... Wally... Millianna..." Erza muttered with sadness in her tone. "Why are you here? Millianna, please tell me."

Millianna, the cat-like girl had been glaring at Alfonzo, Elicia, Cana, and Ultear with blatant hostility ever since the group came together. Although she was also glaring at Erza, it was obvious that she did not hold much hostility in her gaze. However, when she heard Erza's question, she focused all her attention on her.

"Jellal told us to bring you back." Millianna replied.

"Jellal did? But why?" Erza asked in a confused tone as she thought back to the last time she saw Jellal.

Before Erza came to Fiore, she was one of the slaves that had been abducted to build the Tower of Heaven. During her time spent there, she was subjected to an inhuman amount of torture, even losing her right eye in the process.

Throughout those hardships, however, she had a group of five friends and a kind old man that kept her from completely falling into despair. Four of those friends were currently laying on the floor in front of her as prisoners while the fifth was the aforementioned Jellal.

In fact, Jellal was the reason for Erza's escape from the tower. At first, she wanted to save Jellal, who had been taken away by the wardens of the construction project. And for that reason, she led the forced slaves in a rebellion.

In that rebellion, Simon, the tall man with the eye patch, was struck in the face by a magic projectile, resulting in him losing an eye and his lower jaw being seriously damaged. On top of that, the kind old man and the reason why Erza joined Fairy Tail, former Fairy Tail wizard, Rob, lost his life protecting her. As a result, she awakened her two magics, [Requip: The Knight] and [Sword Magic].

In the end, however, the rebellion was successful. And after ridding the tower of the cultists, Erza made her way up to the top floor of the tower, only to find a changed Jellal.

Jellal had become exactly what Erza fought to rescue him from, a Zeref cultist. He even asked her to help him complete the tower. And when she refused, he drove her away from the tower with the threat that he would kill all of her friends if she ever came back or told anyone about it.

What made things even worse, Jellal had awakened the ability to use magic as well, making him much more powerful than the Erza of the past.

Deep in thought about her past with Jellal, Erza was pulled back to the present when she heard Millianna's reply to her question.

"I don't know, meow." Millianna replied. "You left us such a long time ago, Erzie-Werzie. Maybe he missed you."

"I can't believe that." Erza said while shaking her head. "It feels like he's up to something."

"Um... Who is this Jellal you're talking about?" Ultear asked curiously. "And where did he want you to take Erza?"

"That's none of your business, meow." Millianna replied fiercely.

"*Sigh* I guess it's about time I told you everything." Erza said, resolution flashing past her eyes.

"No, Erzie-Werzie, you can't tell them." Millianna shouted, reacting explosively. "You already betrayed us once, will you do it again?"

Hearing that, Erza sighed before putting on a guilty smile as she knelt next to Millianna. Then, she started stroking the cat-like girl's head as she started speaking.

"*Sigh* I do feel as if I betrayed the four of you, too, Millianna." Erza said in a gentle tone. "But not for the same reasons as you think I did. I think it's time for you to know the truth, as well."

In response, Millianna only blinked her eyes with confusion written all over her face. Still, that did not stop Erza from telling her story about the Tower of Heaven.

By the end of the story, Both Alfonzo and Elicia had their heads lowered, trying to suppress the anger they felt for this tower. Because of it, they had lost their parents, after all. Meanwhile, Ultear looked on with a sorrow filled expression while Cana, though not as much as Alfonzo and Elicia, was angered. But the one with the most explosive reaction was Millianna.

"No! That's impossible!" Millianna shouted. "There's no way Jellal would do something like that, meow!"

"*Sigh* I didn't expect you to believe me after all these years, but I swear what I said is true." Erza replied in a sad tone. "Believe me, I would have never left any of you behind if I could help it."

To that, Millianna had no idea what to think. For years, she had been told that Erza betrayed them and left them behind when she escaped. But now she's hearing that Erza was forced to do so by one of the people she trusted the most in the world.

On one hand, it made her happy to hear that Erza did not actually abandon them. But on the other hand, she found it hard to believe that Erza was telling the truth about what happened that day, resulting in a heavy silence falling over the group. That silence did not persist for long, however.

"So, that's what happened." Simon, who had woken up during Erza's story, said, somewhat alleviating the heavy atmosphere. "I suspected that to be the case for some time, now."

"Simon? Are you serious?" Millianna asked in a disbelieving tone.

"I am." Simon replied. "Jellal has changed ever since that day. On top of that, the Erza I know would have never abandoned us the way Jellal said she did."

Once again, Millianna fell silent. She also agreed with Simon's thoughts on the matter. The Erza she knew would never abandon her friends. She even started a rebellion against the cultists to save Jellal back then. So, why did she leave like that? That was a question she had been asking herself for years.

"There's a simple way to find out, Doll." Wally, who had also woken up, said. "We just go back and ask Jellal, see?"

"Indeed." Simon said, nodding in agreement.

"And what makes you think we'll just let you go?" Cana asked with her arms crossed under her chest. "As far as the law goes, you four are dark wizards, Zeref cultists."

Cana's declaration brought the three's attention to her.

"You attacked us in the middle of a crowded casino." Cana continued. "You don't just walk away Scott-free for that."

"And they won't." Erza said, standing from her kneeling position next to Millianna.

As she stood, Erza [Requipped] out of her evening gown and into her [Heart Kruez Armor].

"Because I will be accompanying them back to the tower." Erza said resolutely. "I need to know why Jellal changed as well. But more importantly, that tower cannot be allowed to exist."

"Erza, are you serious?" Cana asked incredulously. "You're going to go with them? The people who were sent here to kidnap you? Are you trying to make their jobs easy, or something?"

"Cana, I know you're worried about me, but I have to go." Erza replied. "I have questions that I need answers to."

"You're right, I am worried." Cana said. Then, she continued in an exasperated tone while placing the back of her left hand on her forehead. "I'm worried for your intelligence. I mean, seriously... What kind of Stockholm Syndrome shit is this? You weren't even captured."

Like that, the two continued to argue with Cana trying to explain to Erza why going with them was a bad idea and Erza trying to... Well... simply repeating that she needed to go and that she had questions that needed to be answered.

Meanwhile, Ultear could only sigh at the act Cana and Erza were putting on. Then, she turned to Alfonzo and Elicia after realizing that they had been quiet for a while.

"Alfonzo, Elicia, are you o---" Ultear started to ask until she saw Alfonzo and Elicia's expressions. "Uh... are you two... alright?"

At that moment, Ultear's shaky tone drew the attention of the five, with Shô still unconscious thanks to Alfonzo's rather heavy handed retaliation. And what they saw made all of them recoil a bit.

Currently, Alfonzo and Elicia were smiling widely with equal parts glee and malice in their smiles, creating quite the jarring contrast.

"Seriously, are you two alright?" Cana asked. "Those smiles are kinda scary."

"Yeah, we're great." Elicia replied. "Better than great, in fact."

"Oh... Okay... That's good." Cana replied. "But why are you two smiling like that."

"Yeah, you look like you're really happy." Ultear added. "Happily, about to inflict violence on someone."

"Ultear, you're so perceptive." Alfonzo said, his smile widening. "That's exactly what these smiles mean."

"But why?" Erza asked. "Did my story anger the two of you so much?"

"That's part of it." Elicia replied. "But not all of it."

"What do you mean?" Cana asked, not following.

Meanwhile, Simon, Wally, and Millianna all felt a chill run up their spines after seeing those unhinged smiles.

"We told you that our parents were killed by dark wizards, right?" Alfonzo asked.

"yeah, that's right." Cana replied.

"And we mentioned that those dark wizards were Zeref cultists, too, right?" Elicia asked.

"Yeah, I rememb---" Ultear began to reply before connecting the dots.

"Looks like Ultear figured it out." Elicia said with a happy smile.

A moment later, everyone else involved in the conversation also figured out what Alfonzo and Elicia were getting at.

"Those Zeref cultists abducted everyone in our village and killed our parents in the name of building the Tower of Heaven." Alfonzo said, revealing the reason for their smiles. "And now, we have a ticket straight to that mother fucking tower. It's too bad that all the cultists died during the rebellion, though."

"What makes you think we would take you to the tower?" Wally asked, slightly intimidated by Alfonzo's aura at the moment.

"And what made you think we were making a request?" Elicia asked coldly. "And even if you don't, we can always accompany Erza on her trip there, right?"

As she asked her question, Elicia smiled in Erza's direction. However, the smile was telling Erza something very important.

'Refusal is not an option.' Erza thought to herself after seeing Elicia's smile. 'Not that I would have refused, anyway. That tower needs to be destroyed. And Alfonzo's destructive power should be more than enough to do so.'

Seeing Erza nod in acknowledgement, Elicia turned back to Wally with a smug smile.

"See, we don't need your help." Elicia said, irritating Wally to know end.

"I guess we should go get changed out of these dresses." Ultear said while shaking her head with a wry smile on her face. "*Sigh* This was supposed to be a vacation. Instead, we're going off to fight dark wizards. We might as well have stayed in Magnolia."

"Don't say that, Ultear." Cana said with a smile while resting her arm on Ultear's shoulder. Then, she drew near to Ultear's ear and whispered. "If we're quick about this, we could be back here by tomorrow night. Then, we'd be able to have a little fun in that great big bed in our room."

"*Sigh* I'm kind of ashamed of myself for getting tempted so easily." Ultear replied with a smile. "Alright, let's get going."

"I saw that coming." Elicia said with a giggle after watching Cana and Ultear's interaction. "Anyway, we should get changed, too, Fonzie."

"Yeah, let's go." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "We need to rent a ship, too. I don't wanna deplete my magic power on the way there."

Like that, the Fairy Tail wizards dragged the captured wizards from the Tower of Heaven along with them to their suite. Then, they locked the four of them in a bathroom while they changed clothes. After that, they went to inform the authorities of what happened and what they were about to do. Finally, after being provided a boat free of charge, they set sail to the unnamed island off the coast of the Kingdom of Caelum just before midnight.