

Fairy Tail 196

Chapter 196: New Guild Mates

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

October, x784.

A little more than a week had passed since the events pertaining to the Tower of Heaven were concluded. In that time, one thing of significance occurred.

After it came to light that there were two spies on the Council that convinced the rest of the Council to fire Ishgar's greatest strategic weapon on an island within its own borders, without warning the people, no less, there was outrage across the continent.

The people were in fear. They were afraid that the Etherion would be fired on a populated city the next time the Council decided to fire it inside its own borders.

Although that was bad, what was more concerning was the fact that information leaked at all. As such a proud organization, there was no way that the Magic Council would willingly divulge information that so clearly highlighted their incompetence.

Which only made it clear that someone wanted this news to get out. Someone who wanted the people of Ishgar to be panicked and afraid. Because of this, the Magic Council had to do something to quell the people's unrest.

In the end, the Magic Council decided to disband. According to the final official statement from the Magic Council, the reason behind this decision was that they failed to make a safe decision while under pressure and felt that they were no longer fit to govern the continent's magical community.

However, anyone who had been dealing with the Magic Council for long enough knew better than to believe the official reason. If one were to ask the older, more experienced wizards on the continent, they would agree that the members of the Magic Council decided to disband because they did not want to take any more heat than they already had for the Etherion.

Disbanding now, before they had to explain how the spies manage to infiltrate the Council, then reinstating the Council after the rumors died down would be their best bet. Or, at least, that's what the older wizards believed, for the most part.

"Now we can't hold them accountable for firing the Etherion on an island where they knew we were present." Alfonzo said, putting down the newspaper he was reading about the Magic Council's disbanding on the kitchen table.

"That's politics for you." Elicia replied with a shrug while she sketched a new design from nearby.

"Yeah, I know." Alfonzo replied. "It just would have been nice to give them a taste of what they deserved."

"Well, at least that Crawford Seam will probably never be eligible to get a seat on the Council ever again." Elicia said, putting down her pencil and inspecting her sketch. Then, after giving it a satisfied nod, she looked at Alfonzo who was taking a sip from a glass of juice and continued. "Anyway, enough about politics, what are your plans for today? Going back to the library to study?"

"Yeah." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "Gotta be ready for the next Promotion Exam. You know... Just so we don't lose any time."

"Right." Elicia said with a nod. "It's only two months away, after all."

"Anyway, what are you getting into today?" Alfonzo asked, standing from his seat with the plates that used to have his breakfast in his hands.

"After training, I'm going with Marin to see the play that Erza, Lucy, and the rest of Team Natsu are performing."

"So, they really did end up taking that quest, huh?" Alfonzo muttered with a wry smile as he picked up Elicia's empty dishes as well.

"Yup, and it should be pretty fun to watch." Elicia replied with a smile. "Even if it's not very good. I'm actually surprised that the theatre where the play is being performed is still standing. I mean, they've been doing the show twice a day for a week."

"It probably won't be standing much longer, though." Alfonzo muttered as he walked away from the table. "And I can only say a prayer for the town Cana is doing her quest in, too."

"Yeah." Elicia replied with a nod.

With that, Alfonzo and Elicia finished cleaning up. After that, they both left the house and made their way to the guild hall. When they arrived, the first thing they saw was Ultear, who left the house early, scolding her team.

In this case, the term team was not referring to the group of wizards she usually did quests with. Instead, it referred to the group she was in charge of that was responsible for preparing the guild for the Fantasia Parade.

"I guess Juvia finally joined the guild." Alfonzo said as he looked over the members of Ultear's team. "I wish she'd stop looking at Ultear like that, though."

As Alfonzo said, Juvia was standing amongst the group of Fairy Tail wizards who volunteered to make the Fantasia Parade a success this year. On top of that, Alfonzo's guess that Juvia joined the guild was completely solidified when he saw the blue Fairy Tail emblem on her left thigh that was visible thanks to the high slitted dress she wore.

As if she felt his gaze, Juvia quickly turned her head in Alfonzo's direction. Then, after following the direction of his eyes, she glared... hard. It was clear to anyone who was looking at her that she was not pleased with the fact that Alfonzo was looking at her legs.

"Keep your filthy eyes to yourself." Juvia mouthed, not wanting to interrupt Ultear's speech.

In response, Alfonzo simply shook his head with a wry smile on his face. Then, he made his way to the elevator with Elicia.

"Looks like she thought you were checking her out." Elicia said with a giggle.

"You noticed that, huh?" Alfonzo replied, scratching the back of his head as he spoke. "She probably thinks I'm gonna try and win her over, using Ultear to do so."

"Yeah, she doesn't exactly have the best opinion of you." Elicia said with a smile. "She definitely sees you as a playboy."

"And whose fault do you think that is?" Alfonzo asked, turning to Elicia with a blank look on his face.

"I dunno." Elicia said in the most innocent tone she could muster. However, since she was wearing a mischievous smile, it was not very convincing.

"Anyway, I can worry about getting her to, at the very least, stop hating me later on." Alfonzo said with a shrug after rolling his eyes at Elicia's antics. "For now, let's get some training in. After that, I gotta hit the library."

"Sir! Yes, Sir!" Elicia said, saluting playfully as she did.

With that, the pair continued to chat until they reached the elevator. However, just before they pressed the button to call the elevator to the ground floor, Elicia turned her head in a certain direction.

Following Elicia's gaze, Gajeel Redfox, the Iron Dragon Slayer, was standing in front of Levy, Jet, and Droy, who were seated at a table and finishing up their breakfast. Another thing to take note of was the fact that Gajeel was sporting a black Fairy Tail emblem on his left arm, just below the shoulder.

"When did Gramps even have time to find Gajeel?" Elicia asked curiously. "And where did he even find him? Or did he stay in Magnolia after Phantom Lord was disbanded?"

"Who knows." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "But he's part of the guild now. And although his personality can be a bit prickly, his loyalty should be 'iron-clad' from day one."

Hearing that bad pun, Elicia looked away from Gajeel and stared at Alfonzo blankly.

"I know it wasn't great, but it wasn't that bad." Alfonzo said.

"Mhmm." Elicia replied, returning her attention back to Gajeel and Team Shadow Gear.

Although Alfonzo and Elicia could not hear the conversation between the two parties, they had an idea of what they were talking about. And when Jet and Droy stood up with anger on their faces, they confirmed their guesses.

A moment later, Jet and Droy, with Levy Trying to stop them, walked towards the guild hall's doors with Gajeel following them.

"You wanna follow them?" Elicia asked curiously.

"Sure." Alfonzo replied. "But will you have time to train before you leave with Marin?"

"Don't worry about it?" Elicia replied while waving off Alfonzo's question. "I'll just intensify my training tomorrow to make up for it."

"Uh huh..." Alfonzo replied.

Like that, Alfonzo and Elicia turned away from the elevator and made their way out of the guild, following after the group of four. This naturally drew the attention of those who saw them leave right after entering, but in the end, they did not bother to look into what was going on.

Not long later, Alfonzo and Elicia, after following Levy, Jet, Droy, and Gajeel, reached the park to the east of the town. And when they did, they saw Gajeel standing opposite the members of Team Shadow Gear. And based on the expressions Jet and Droy were wearing, it was clear that they were only a moment or two away from starting a conflict.

"Come on, you two, just let it go." Levy said, trying her best to dissuade her team mates from starting a fight. "He's a member of the guild now. There's no need to fight."

"And what if we don't accept that?" Jet asked, not taking his eyes off Gajeel.

"Yeah, why should someone who did so much damage to our guild be allowed to join so easily?" Droy added.

"Besides, for all we know, he could just be biding his time to take revenge for Phantom Lord." Jet continued.

"As a former member of Phantom Lord, the guild who attack your guild unprovoked, I get it. You don't trust me." Gajeel said, unbothered by the hostility he was receiving. "And to be honest, I don't really care."

"What did you say?" Jet growled in return.

"But having someone in my guild always throwing death glares at me is pretty annoying." Gajeel continued, not even registering the interruption. "So why don't you two tell me what I have to do to get you to drop this?"

Hearing that, Jet and Droy were taken aback. Even Levy, who was hoping to deescalate the situation was surprised by Gajeel's attitude. Still, Jet and Droy recovered quickly enough.

"Why don't you let us pay you back for that sneak attack?" Droy asked, flaring his magic power as he spoke.

"Fine, as long as you get over it." Gajeel replied with a shrug. Then, he spread his arms, showing that he was not going to defend himself. "Hit me as much as you want. But once you're satisfied, Don't' bring this up again."

Once again, Team Shadow Gear were surprised. But just like last time, Jet and Droy acted swiftly.

A moment later, Jet appeared next to Gajeel and threw a right straight into his jaw. Then, he appeared on Gajeel's other side and instant after the first punch landed and kicked him in the abdomen.

Meanwhile, Droy threw a handful of plant seeds on to the ground that quickly grew into vines with fist shaped ends.

"[Plant Magic: Knuckle Plant]." Droy chanted.

The vines grew quickly in Gajeel's direction. And just as Jet landed his twelfth attack, the vines arrived and Jet distanced himself from Gajeel. A moment later, the several [Knuckle Plants] began to pummel Gajeel.

After punching him repeatedly, Gajeel was eventually knocked into the air by the last punch from the [Knuckle Plants]. Then, just as he was able to right himself in mid-air, Jet appeared above him and slammed a kick into his chest, sending him flying backward while falling to the ground.

Eventually, Gajeel reached the ground, landing on his feet and supporting himself with his right hand as he slid backward to burn off the momentum.

"Not bad." Gajeel replied with a solemn expression on his face before spitting out a little blood. "So, are we done yet, or do you two need to keep going?"

"Why don't you let me get in a few hits?" A voice unfamiliar to Gajeel sounded out from right behind him.

'Someone snuck up on me?' Gajeel thought to himself as he quickly spun around.

Just as he turned around to see a tall, blond man with a lightning bolt shaped scar on the right side of his face, Gajeel also noticed a lightning-clad fist flying at his face.

Immediately after noticing the lightning, Gajeel's hands transformed into [Iron Clubs] before he extended them straight down, penetrating the ground.

In the next instant, Gajeel felt a heavy impact on his face. However, he was barely effected by the lightning that coated the fist. Still, he was thrown backward with considerable force due to the physical strength behind the punch.

"Lexus?" Levy exclaimed a moment later. "What are you doing here?"

"I'm here to show this Phantom Lord trash his place." Lexus, the new arrival, replied. "You see, I actually agree with your little boyfriends. I don't accept this punk in the guild. So, I'm gonna send him away."

"Ha!" Gajeel barked out a short laugh before once again spitting out some blood. "And why the hell should I give a damn about someone who wouldn't even come to help their guild when they were under attack? You should get the hell outta here, blondie. Your opinion doesn't matter."

"What was that?" Laxus roared angrily as he lit up with bolts of lightning.

In the next instant, Laxus was once again standing in front of Gajeel with his fist reeled back. And based on the look Gajeel could see in his eyes, Laxus was intending to, at the very least, cripple the Dragon Slayer.

Smack!

"You know, I actually agree with Gajeel on this one." Another male voice said after stopping Laxus punch just before it could hit Gajeel.