

Fairy Tail 202

Chapter 202: Miss Fairy Tail and Laxus' Announcement

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

October 15, x784.

A few minutes after all the ballots were collected, the pageant staff managed to tally all the votes. Luckily, this was just an internal Fairy Tail competition. Otherwise, counting the votes would have taken much longer.

Still, as soon as the votes were counted, they wrote the name of the girl with the most votes onto one of the cards Warren had been reading from for the pageant, placed in an envelope, and handed it to him.

As soon as Warren had the card with the winner's name on it in hand, he picked up his microphone and made his way on to the stage.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the time has come." Warren said as he walked across the stage, stopping in its center. "All the participants have shown us just how beautiful they are, the votes have been cast and counted, and now it's time to announce the first ever Miss Fairy Tail."

With Warren's announcement, the crowd burst into a round of applause.

"But before we get into that, everyone, help me welcome all the contestants back onto the stage."
Warren continued.

With that, the applause intensified as the fourteen contestants entered the stage. As they did, they all lined up behind Warren. Then, they each struck a pose that they thought was the most charming. Meanwhile, Warren discreetly made his way to the side of the stage so that he did not stand out.

"Sun~~~~~!" Gozaburo shouted from among the cheering crowd. "Daddy voted for you~~~~~!"

With Gozaburo's shout, Elfman decided he could not be outdone.

"Lisanna~~~~~!" Elfman shouted. "Big brother voted for you~~~~~! Now, win this thing like a real man~~~~~!"

With those two loud shouts, Lisanna and Sun's faces reddened in embarrassment. Meanwhile, the other participants, except for Evergreen, smiled at them with amusement. Evergreen, on the other hand, looked at them disdainfully, thinking that there was no way she would lose even if she lost those two votes.

"Now that all the participants are here." Warren said, seeing the signs that Lisanna and Sun were moments away from attacking their overenthusiastic family members. "In my hands, I hold the name of the winner. So, the question I have for everyone is... Are you ready?"

"Yeah~~~~~!" The crowd shouted excitedly.

"Then..." Warren said, holding the envelope up and starting to open it slowly.

At the same time, the lights in the guild hall turned off. Then, spotlights fell on the stage. Now, the only thing visible in the entire guild hall were the fourteen contestants, Sun, Cana, Lisanna, Juvia, Ultear, Marin, Lucy, Laki, Erza, Evergreen, Bisca, Ren, Ur, and Elicia.

"The winner and first Miss Fairy Tail is..." Warren continued, doing his best to build suspense.

At that moment, all the spotlights turned off, leaving the guild hall in total darkness for a moment.

"Ultear Milkovich!" Warren shouted loudly.

As Warren's shout sounded, A spotlight fell on the shocked Ultear.

"What?" Evergreen's voice sounded from the darkness. "This is impossible! How could I lose?"

"Show some class." Ur's voice was the next to sound in the darkness.

Bang!

"Yes, Ma'am." Evergreen could be heard replying in a tearful tone. Then, she lowered her voice to a whisper. "Violent old hag."

Unfortunately, everyone in the guild hall at the moment was a bonified superhuman thanks to the magic power coursing through their bodies. So, most of them heard Evergreen's whisper. Naturally, that included Ur.

"What did you say?" Ur asked angrily.

"Kya~~~~~! I'm sorry. I'm sorry!" Evergreen screamed in terror.

A moment later, the sound of high heels walking towards the backstage could be heard accompanied by the sound of something... or someone struggling as it was dragged along.

Meanwhile, everyone else in the guild hall prayed for Evergreen's well-being as Warren wiped cold sweat from his forehead before he continued.

"Anyway, Ultear, as the winner of the Miss Fairy Tail pageant, please step forward." Warren said, breaking the awkward atmosphere.

As instructed, Ultear stepped forward. Though, she was still amazed that she somehow managed to win, her facial expression had returned to normal.

As soon as Ultear separated from the rest of the contestants, who were all clapping for her victory, Three members of the pageant staff approached her. The first carried a silver tiara while the other two carried a large sash with the words "Miss Fairy Tail, x784" stitched onto it.

First, the sash was draped over Ultear's right shoulder, hanging diagonally, with the other side resting on her left hip. Then, the tiara was placed atop her head.

With that, Ultear had officially been crowned the first ever Miss Fairy Tail and the crowd went wild.

"Congratulations, Ultear." Warren said, making his way to the center of the stage where Ultear stood. "As the winner of the Miss Fairy Tail Pageant, would you like to say a few words to the audience?"

After asking the question, Warren extended the microphone to Ultear, who took it with an unsure expression on her face.

"Um... I really don't know what to say. Ultear said after a few false starts. "I went into this pageant not really expecting to win. I mean, there are so many pretty girls in our guild. Still, I won, somehow. So, I wanna thank everyone who voted for me. I have to thank Elicia, too. Without her, I would not have looked so great today. Lastly, I wanna thank my mother, Ur. Without her great genes, I wouldn't have been pretty enough to win, either."

"Damn right!" Ur's voice sounded from backstage. "And don't you forget it!"

That exchange received a chuckle from almost everyone in the hall.

"Anyway, thank you all once again." Ultear continued after the chuckles died down. "I'm honored to be the guild's first Miss Fairy Tail."

Then, Ultear bowed her head slightly in gratitude before handing the microphone back to Warren.

"And that brings the program to an end." Warren said once the microphone was back in his hand. "Now, everyone should look forward to tonight's Fantasia Parade. Until then, the rest of the day---"

Before Warren could finish, a bolt of yellow lightning appeared on the stage next to him. A moment later, the bolt of lightning revealed itself to be Laxus.

'So he really did end up interrupting the pageant... well, sort of.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'But still, I wonder what he's up to? This doesn't seem nearly as hostile as I was expecting it to be.'

Upon Laxus appearing on stage, everyone tensed. However, Laxus took no action other than holding his right hand, palm up, towards Warren.

Warren, understanding that Laxus had something to say, handed him the microphone with skepticism in his gaze.

Mic in hand, Laxus did not start speaking immediately. Instead, he gazed over the crowd. Eventually making eye contact with Alfonzo before continuing to Makarov.

However, his gaze did not linger on Makarov for long, either. Instead, he made sure to look at everyone in the audience before turning around and doing the same to the girls on stage. Even Ur and Evergreen, who came out as soon as Warren had been interrupted.

"For as long as I can remember, the only thing I've ever wanted was to make the guild strong. The strongest." Laxus began as he turned towards the audience once again. "And to do so, I thought that removing all the elements I deemed weak was the way to do it."

Surprisingly, no one spoke up to interrupt. Instead, they all stared at Laxus with solemn expressions.

"Eventually, I was made to see how wrong I was about that, thanks to a new kid who didn't seem to care what I thought." Laxus continued, glancing at Alfonzo. "Even if it took years for him to knock some sense into me."

A few of the guild members who have been with the guild long enough to remember the first time Alfonzo and Laxus fought could not help but chuckle at the memory. Still, no one interrupted Laxus impromptu speech.

"I still want the guild to be strong." Laxus said, letting his gaze pass over everyone in the audience. "So, after hearing about this pageant, and having a talk with the kid from back then, I came up with an idea to test the strength of our members and motivate them to continue improving."

That last statement caused those in the guild hall to focus even more.

"Just outside the town, Fried and I set up a battleground for a tournament." Laxus said. "This tournament will be a team tournament. For teams of four, specifically."

"You chose that number because of your own team, didn't you?" Alfonzo asked, the first to interrupt since Laxus started speaking.

"And so what if I did?" Laxus barked back with a slight frown. "I'm the organizer of this tournament, so what's wrong with getting a little advantage for myself?"

"Or maybe you made it four on four because you knew you had no chance of winning a one on one tournament with me here." Alfonzo said with a grin.

"What did you say?" Laxus growled. "Are you asking for a fight?"

"Huh? I thought that's what you were doing." Alfonzo replied with mock confusion in his tone. "I mean, that's why you organized this little tournament, right?"

With that, the veins on Laxus neck and forehead bulged. Still, he managed to calm himself down a few moments later.

"I'll deal with you later, during the tournament, Alfonzo." Laxus said threateningly. Then, he turned his attention back to the entire crowd. "Anyway, the reason the tournament is four on four is simple. Although individual strength is important, so is team work and strategy."

Originally, some of the people in the crowd giggled at the exchange between Alfonzo and Laxus. However, as soon as Laxus got back on topic, the serious atmosphere in the guild hall returned.

"And those things, along with individual strength will be tested during the tournament." Laxus continued. "In each round, the matches will consist of two one on one fights and a two on two fight. With the winner of the round being the one to grasp two victories first."

To that, the atmosphere in the guild hall started to change. It was heating up. As members of Fairy Tail, everyone.. Well, almost everyone had grown to enjoy fighting in some capacity. And a tournament like this one, where they could use all their skills, was something they looked forward to.

Though fights between guild mates happened several times a day on a daily basis in the guild hall, those brawls restricted the use of magic. Otherwise, Makarov would interfere and no one wanted that. But now, even though it was not a free for all, they could all use their magic without the fear of destroying the guild hall.

"And to make sure that things don't go too far," Laxus continued as the atmosphere got more lively, "I ask that Gramps be the referee for the tournament."

Meanwhile, Makarov, who was completely surprised by his grandson's change in attitude was stunned into silence. Then, when Laxus asked him to be the referee for the tournament, instead of answering immediately, he looked towards Alfonzo.

"How did you...?" Makarov asked, not sure how to form his question.

"Like Momma used to say, 'nothing gets someone to act right better than a good ol' fashioned ass kicking'." Alfonzo said with a proud smile on his face. "In Laxus case, though. It took a few more than expected. But I guess if it doesn't work the first time, you just have to keep hitting them until they get their shit together."

Hearing that, Laxus eyebrow started to twitch uncontrollably. Still, he managed to keep it together and not lash out.

"Well, Gramps, will you be the ref?" Laxus asked, doing his very best to keep his anger from bursting out.

"Uh.. Yeah... Sure..." Makarov stuttered out, still overwhelmed by his grandson's change. But as an experienced wizard, he managed to get himself together eventually. "I'd be happy to oversee such a constructive event for the guild."

"If you can call a fight between guild mates constructive." Alfonzo murmured, which was ignored by everyone in the vicinity.

"Good." Laxus said while nodding in satisfaction. "Then, allow me to announce the tournament, The Battle of Fairy Tail. The tournament will begin in one hour. Until then, choose your teammates wisely and make all the necessary preparations. Fried will let everyone know where to gather."

With that, Laxus turned into a bolt of lightning before flashing away. A moment later, the microphone fell to the stage.

Bam! *Screech!*

The amplified sound of the microphone striking the stage and the feedback that followed finally ignited the atmosphere in the hall.

"Aww Yeah! I'm all fired up!" Natsu shouted as he was engulfed in flames while standing up from his seat.

"This is perfect." Gajeel, who had been laying across several seats in the back row sat up. "I'll finally be able to get some payback on those four. But first, I gotta find a team to join."

Just like that, the wizards of Fairy Tail began to bustle about, forming teams and getting the information from Fried.

Meanwhile, Elicia, still in her bikini, approached Alfonzo with a smile before clinging onto his left arm.

"So, who are we gonna add to our team?" Elicia asked.

"That's a good question." Alfonzo replied with a battle hungry smile. "But no matter who we decide on, this is gonna be fun."