

## Fairy Tail 221

Chapter 221: Back to Normalcy

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

October, x784.

Around two weeks have passed since the Battle of Fairy Tail Tournament and the Fantasia Parade happened. In those two weeks, not much of note took place. Most of the members of the guild went back to their normal schedules, taking quests, tending to their businesses, for those who owned one, or just spending time in the guild hall drinking, chatting, and starting fights.

About a week after the Tournament, Alfonzo's body had healed to the point he could resume all normal activities. And as soon as it did, he dove into an intense training regimen, to make up for lost time. He also continued his studies in the library. Though, what he was studying was a mystery to everyone other than Elicia.

After another week, today, Laxus was also cleared to return to his normal activities. Not before he was harshly reprimanded by Porlyusica, though.

"Damn... She's given me the same lecture more than ten times." Laxus said to himself while sitting at the guild's bar. "I'm not so dumb that I didn't get it after the first time."

"Don't get upset, my boy." Makarov, sitting on top of the bar in front of Laxus, said with a smile.  
"Although she's quite harsh, Porlyusica only acts like that because she cares."

"If she cared so much, she wouldn't beat me over the head with that damn broom just after clearing me for duty." Laxus grumbled before taking a bite of his breakfast. "Damn, I never wanna get that hurt again. I miss the taste of real food. I mean, seriously, Gramps. How the hell was I forced to eat hospital food while I was in the guild's infirmary."

"Oh." Makarov said with an amused smile on his face. "That was under my orders. Just a little punishment for not letting me know what you were planning with that tournament ahead of time. Do you know how much money the guild lost out on because it was a surprise?"

"Greedy old man." Laxus grumbled while chewing his food.

"What you should be concerned about, though, is Alfonzo." Makarov said, his smile widening. "Because of your idea, he ended up 'working for free,' as he would put it."

"Like I care." Laxus replied after washing down his food with a gulp of water. "If he's got a problem with me, he can come see me about it any time."

At the same time that Laxus made his statement, the elevator doors opened with Alfonzo, Elicia, Cana, Erza, and Mirajane walking through them. And even over all the noise in the guild, Alfonzo managed to hear him.

"Oh, did you do something I need to come see you for, Laxus?" Alfonzo asked as he approached the bar with an eyebrow raised.

"Hmph!" Laxus snorted but he did not reply.

"Oh, Alfonzo." Makarov said with a gleeful smile. "We were just talking about all the lost money making opportunities from the tournament."

"Oh, that, huh?" Alfonzo replied, splitting up with the girls as they went to take showers and get cleaned up after their training session under high gravity. "Well, you don't have to worry about that."

"What do you mean?" Makarov asked, a disbelieving expression on his face.

"Although I'm not happy that I wasn't paid for the show, I still made a lot of money." Alfonzo said with a smile. "Sixth Sense Catering was a huge success at the tournament, after all."

"Wait, that was your company?" Laxus asked in disbelief. "but how? When did you have the time to cook all the food they were selling?"

"Oh, that's simple, I made a magic item that would do the cooking." Alfonzo replied casually as he took a seat next to Laxus. "After that, it was just a matter of finding people to add ingredients to the magic items and serve the completed products."

Hearing that, both Makarov and Laxus could only look at Alfonzo with shock and disbelief in their eyes.

"Damn, Nell didn't do this kid justice when she called him a genius." Makarov grumbled to himself. "He's way past the level of a genius. Nothing short of a monster, I'd say."

"Anyway, now that you're free to move around, Laxus, what do you plan to do?" Alfonzo asked, not wanting to brag about his business ventures any further.

"I'll spend some time training before I start taking quests again." Laxus replied with a shrug. "I might even take you up on your offer to train with the rest of you a few days a week."

"Cool." Alfonzo said with a nod. "Whenever you're free, just come on by. We usually use the rooms on the sixth floor."

"Oh, that reminds me." Makarov said, cutting into the conversation. "I've already told the rest of the S-Class wizards, but don't take any S-Class quests for the next three or so weeks. The king of Fiore has asked several guilds to work together to complete a few high profile requests. Though, I don't have the details just yet."

"Not that I planned to for a while, but is it really necessary to hold all the S-Classes back?" Laxus asked, curious about these joint requests.

"Strictly speaking... No." Makarov replied with a gentle shake of his head. Then, he took a swig from his mug of ale before continuing. "But I'd like to have as many S-Classes available as possible. That way we'll be able to assign the right person for the right job, so to speak."

"Understandable." Laxus replied with a nod before taking another bite of his food.

'Damn, the suspense is killing me.' Alfonzo muttered internally. 'I'm almost certain that one of the requests is to deal with the Oración Seis. But I have no idea what the other one could be about.'

With that, Alfonzo, Makarov, and Laxus continued to chat and speculate on what the two requests could be about. Eventually, more of the guild's young wizards came down from the training rooms to either take showers or get lunch before taking their showers.

"Oh, you're out of the infirmary." Natsu, who just came down the stairs, shouted as soon as he saw Laxus sitting at the bar with Alfonzo and Makarov. "Great! Now that you're out, Laxus, fight me!"

With that, Natsu propelled himself through the air at Laxus using his flames that he ejected from his feet. Approaching at high speed, Natsu reeled his right fist, wreathed in flames, back. Before he could throw his punch, however, Laxus turned into a bolt of lightning, vanished from his seat, reappeared next to Natsu, and punched him in the top of his head.

\*Bang!\*

Laxus' punch was enough to slam Natsu face first into the floor. As a result, Natsu lay there with his limbs spread while his body twitched in pain.

"Nice punch..." Natsu mumbled. "Why don't we call this one a draw... We'll have a rematch again later."

"Hmph!" Laxus snorted as he rematerialized on his bar stool and continued to eat his meal as if nothing happened."

Around the same time, Elicia and the other girls left the showers. Making their way over to Alfonzo, they walked past Natsu and gave his twitching body curious looks.

"What did he do this time?" Elicia asked as she snuggled up to Alfonzo after his arm wrapped around her waist.

"Same ol' dumb shit." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "Came down the stairs, saw Laxus, challenged him to a fight, attacked without getting a reply, and got one shotted."

"He did the same thing when you were cleared for duty, too." Cana said, wrapping her arms around Alfonzo's neck from behind.

"\*Sigh\* He'll never learn." Erza added, picking Natsu up from the floor. "It seems we need to train his discipline."

"There's no sense in beating a dead horse, Erza." Mirajane said with a smile that she covered with her right hand. "Just take him to Lisanna, I'm sure she'll get him to calm down."

As if she was waiting for her name to be called, Lisanna, along with Elfman, Juvia, and to everyone's surprise, Bickslow, Fried, and Evergreen, exited the elevator.

"Laxus, you finally got out!" Bickslow, Fried, and Evergreen shouted as they ran from the elevator over to the bar.

"Yeah, and I ain't goin' back." Laxus replied with a solemn expression on his face.

"Why does it sound like he just got outta prison?" Alfonzo asked with a wry smile on his face.

"I was just thinking the same thing." Elicia said with a smile as she climbed up into Alfonzo's lap before stealing a kiss.

Seeing that the space next Alfonzo, opposite Laxus, was now free, Mirajane casually walked over and wrapped Alfonzo's arm around her waist with a smile on her face.

Meanwhile, Lisanna, Elfman, and Juvia made their way over from the elevator at a much more leisurely pace.

"\*Sigh\* What did Natsu do this time?" Lisanna asked after noticing that Natsu was unconscious and being held up by the back of his collar by Erza.

"Exactly what you are expecting he did." Erza replied, holding Natsu out to Lisanna.

"\*Sigh\* He got knocked out when he challenged Alfonzo last week, too." Lisanna said as she took Natsu from Erza. "At least challenge them in the proper place, would you? Then, they probably wouldn't knock you out like that."

"Ha! Natsu challenged stronger foes, just like a real man." Elfman blurted out loudly.

"Anyway, what do you girls plan to do with the rest of your day?" Alfonzo asked, his question aimed at Elicia, Cana, Erza, and Mirajane.

"I'm gonna go with Marin on an A-Class magic beast subjugation quest." Elicia said excitedly. "She wanted to test her new ideas on live targets."

"I'm taking a quest with Elfman and Lisanna." Mirajane said. Then, she looked at her siblings with a smile. "Have you two decided on the quest, yet?"

"We've narrowed it down to two." Lisanna replied. "But we can't figure out which one to take."

"Yeah, why don't you help us decide, Big Sis?" Elfman said.

"Sure." Mirajane said with a smile. Then, she pecked Alfonzo on the cheek before separating from him. "I'll see you guys later."

"Have fun~~~!" Elicia said energetically as she waved her hands at the Strauss siblings.

"What about you, Cana?" Alfonzo asked, tilting his head back and resting the back of his head on Cana's chest.

"I'm gonna try and formulate some new spells." Cana said. "I need some close combat spells."

"Perhaps I could assist." Erza said, placing a hand on Cana's shoulder. "Though I may not use [Card Magic], I think I could help you in terms of close combat."

"I guess that will work." Cana replied, placing her right index finger on her chin as she considered. "If nothing else, you could tell me just how practical the spell would be. And considering just how skilled you are with a variety of weapons, You could give me pointers there, too."

"Indeed." Erza replied. A moment later, she clenched her fist and pounded it against her chest plate.  
"Leave it to me. I will do my best to assist you."

"Alright, then let's had home." Cana said, releasing Alfonzo from her hug. "I'll bounce some ideas off of you while I think up the proper card combinations to actualize the spells."

"Wonderful." Erza said with a smile. "Maybe we could stop and get a snack on the way home, too."

Giving Alfonzo a quick kiss on the cheek, Cana started walking towards the guild's entrance. Meanwhile, Erza approached Alfonzo, intending to give him a little goodbye kiss as well.

"You don't have to go buy anything," Alfonzo said with a wry smile. "I made a strawberry shortcake for you last night."

Freezing in place for a moment, Erza blushed at being seen through so easily. After her brief pause, however, she quickened her approach before placing her hands on Alfonzo's cheeks and pulling him into a deep kiss.

"Come on, Erza." Cana said with an eye roll. "I know you're happy, but we've got spells to create."

Breaking the kiss at Cana's call, Erza quickly pecked Alfonzo on the lips one more time before she skipped away. Clearly, she was happy that there was a strawberry shortcake waiting for her at home.

"Ultear is too good for a playboy like you." Juvia, who had been silent ever since she arrived by the bar with Lisanna and the others, said in a disdainful tone.

"She probably is." Alfonzo replied with a shrug. "But that's for her to decide, not you."

In response, Juvia could only stomp her foot in frustration as she looked away. Even though she still doesn't like Alfonzo very much... rather at all... she can admit that he makes Ultear happy. Even if she does so begrudgingly.

"Speaking of Ultear, I guess she already left for Isvan with Ur, Gray, and Meredy, huh?" Elicia said, tilting her head cutely.

"Huh?" Juvia exclaimed in panic. "They left? Why didn't Juvia know about this?"

"Probably because they didn't want you stalking them the whole time." Alfonzo muttered.

Juvia only glared at Alfonzo in response. Then, she stomped her foot one more time and started walking towards the guild's entrance. However, she was stopped not too long after she started walking.

"Hey, Juvia, since Ur and the others aren't here, why don't you come on this quest with us?" Lisanna asked from the quest board. "In fact, I think we should team up more often. I think your [Water Magic] and my [Take Over: Animal Soul] could really complement each other if we worked on it."

"Huh?" Juvia exclaimed in confusion. Then, she looked back at Lisanna before looking at the front entrance once again. "But.. I... Ur... Gray... Ultear..."

"Seriously, leave my girlfriend out of your stalking." Alfonzo said with a grin.

Once again, Juvia glared at Alfonzo.

"Come on, Juvia." Lisanna said, making puppy dog eyes. "It's not like they're not coming back. Besides, I really wanna get to know you better."

Seeing the look in Lisanna's eyes, Juvia felt her resistance crumble quickly. Then, she averted her eyes and nodded her head, agreeing to Lisanna's request before she walked over to the quest board and joined the Strauss siblings.

Meanwhile, Alfonzo, Elicia, Makarov, Laxus, Bickslow, Fried, and Evergreen watched there exchange.

"Lisanna is living proof that cute is justice." Elicia said in a surprisingly serious tone.

"Not that I disagree, but that was unfair." Alfonzo said. "I don't know many people who could refuse a request after seeing eyes like those."

"Mhmm!" Makarov, Laxus, Bickslow, Fried, and Evergreen all hummed while nodding in agreement.

A moment later, Elicia noticed Marin making her way into the main hall from the showers.

"Oh, Marin's here." Elicia said, sliding off Alfonzo's lap. "So, I'd better get going, too."

After giving Alfonzo a goodbye kiss like the other girls, Elicia jogged over to Marin and started chatting animatedly.

"Well, I guess I'll head on down to the library." Alfonzo said, standing from the stool he was sitting on.  
"After taking a shower, that is. Oh, and Gramps."

"What can I do for you?" Makarov replied.

"When Sun gets back from her quest, let me know." Alfonzo replied. "She's been gone for about a week. I miss her."

With that, Alfonzo made his way to the showers. Then, after a nice, long shower, he went down to the library to continue his research.