

Fairy Tail 227

Chapter 227: The Imposter

A few moments passed after Wendy and Carla entered the mansion. During that time, everyone watched them curiously. There was one person, or rather... cat, who watched them with much more intensity than the rest.

"She's beautiful..." Happy said while staring at Carla intently.

"You love~~~~ her." Ultear said in a teasing tone.

To Ultear's surprise, however, Happy did not even react. His attention was simply too taken with Carla.

At that moment, Carla, feeling the stare, turned her eyes in Happy's direction. When she met eyes with him, however, she only turned her nose up and looked away, immediately.

Naturally, Happy was taken aback when he saw Carla's reaction. Yet, he could not get her out of his mind. So, he turned to Ultear.

"Ultear, what should I do?" happy asked. "She doesn't seem to like me."

"Well, if you're just gonna stare like a creep, of course she wouldn't like you." Ultear replied with a wry smile.

"Then, what should I do?" Happy asked nervously.

"Try talking to her." Ultear replied. "Introduce yourself, find out what she likes. Things like that."

"But I'm scared." Happy said, occasionally stealing glances at Carla as he spoke.

Meanwhile, the rest of the team came back to their senses.

"Well, now that everyone is here, why don't we discuss our plans." Ichiya said, standing from his seat.
"Right after I make a trip to the gentlemen's room."

Then, before anyone could react, Ichiya quickly walked out of the room.

Meanwhile, with all the attention returning to her, Wendy, wearing a simple green dress that exposed her shoulders and the Cait Shelter guild stamp on her right shoulder, let her eyes scan the room nervously while her waist length, dark blue hair cascaded down her back.

Eventually, Wendy met eyes with Natsu, who was walking toward her while sniffing the air.

"Why do you smell so familiar?" Natsu asked when he was close.

"Natsu Dragneel..." Wendy drawled, recognizing Natsu. "I've wanted to meet you for a long time."

"Me?" Natsu asked. Then, with a goofy smile on his face, he continued. "You a fan, or something? Hahahaha! I'm pretty awesome, so it's only natural."

"Um... NO? Well, sort of?" Wendy replied in confusion. "But I wanted to know if you know anything about what happened to the dragons seven years ago."

"Huh?" Natsu exclaimed, his laughter stopping immediately. Then, he narrowed his eyes as he scrutinized Wendy more carefully.

"Like you, I'm a Dragon Slayer, too." Wendy said, getting more nervous as time went by. "A Sky Dragon Slayer."

That statement shocked not only Natsu, but all those present.

"Well, damn." Gray said, breaking the silence in the room. "That makes four that we know of now. I wonder how many of these Dragon Slayers are still running around?"

With Gray's question, everyone started discussing the same thing in smaller groups.

Meanwhile, Natsu finally came out of his surprised state. Though, his expression was rather downcast.

"I don't know." Natsu said, replying to Wendy's question. "Seven years ago, on July 7, x777, I just found myself alone in a forest. I have no idea where Igneel went."

"*Sigh* Same here." Wendy said. "I couldn't find Grandeeney anywhere."

With that, the two Dragon Slayers fell silent.

At the same time, Happy gathered his courage. Then, he slowly approached Carla.

"Hi, I'm Happy." Happy said nervously. "It's nice to meet you. I've never met another talking cat before."

"Hmph!" Carla snorted disdainfully before turning her head away.

Though he wanted to cry over being ignored, Happy decided to press on.

"Um... Maybe after all this business with the Oración Seis is over, we could get to know each other over some fish." Happy said while fidgeting nervously.

"Would you just leave me alone?" Carla said, finally speaking. Though she did not look in Happy's direction. "Besides, I hate fish."

With that, Happy felt as if he had been pierced by an arrow. Then, dejectedly, he turned around and walked away with his head hanging low.

"Hey, you didn't have to be so mean about it." Natsu said, before walking away and going to try and cheer up Happy.

"He's right, you know." Wendy said. "He was only trying to be nice."

"Hmph!" Carla snorted. "I don't need any one other than you, Wendy."

Before the conversation could continue, Ichiya, looking refreshed, reentered the room.

"Now that everyone is here, let's get started." Ichiya said with a smile that sparkled for an instant.

"Sure." Ur replied, narrowing her eyes at Ichiya. "But who are you?"

With that question, the rest of the wizards in the room looked at Ur in confusion.

"It looks like the old witch is getting senile." Karen muttered as she looked at Ur strangely.

Immediately, everyone around her distanced themselves from Karen, who did not seem to notice. A moment later, a hand made of ice grew from the floor behind her before punching her on the top of the head and sending her smashing into the floor.

Seeing that, most of the people in the room had cold sweat flowing down their backs.

"I believe Ur is on to something." Jura said, looking at Ichiya skeptically after Ur's question, as well. "Something about Ichiya feels... off."

Considering how serious Ur and Jura were, Ultear took it upon herself to use [Magic Power Detection]. When she did, she wore a surprised expression immediately after scanning the mansion and its surroundings.

"There's another magic power signature, identical to Ichiya's, unmoving in the bathroom." Ultear said.

"Huh?" Lyon exclaimed in confusion. "How do you know that?"

Not only Lyon, but all the wizards not a part of Fairy Tail looked at Ultear skeptically. Before any more questions could be asked, however, Natsu also spoke up.

"Plus, this one smells... less sweet." Natsu said while sniffing the air. "It's much better than before."

"Does that mean this really is an imposter?" Sorano asked curiously. Then, she looked towards the Trimens and continued. "Ren, go and see if Ichiya is alright."

"Fine... But I'm doing this for Ichiya, not because you told me to." Ren said, sounding like a tsundere as he sprinted out of the room towards the nearest bathroom.

"If this isn't the real Ichiya, that means he's an enemy, right?" Karen said, picking herself up from the ground. Then, after throwing a glare at Ur, she continued. "He's probably from the Oración Seis. But the question is, how did he know we were here? It was supposed to be a secret, right?"

With that, Karen glared at Sorano with hostility.

"Maybe we have a spy among us." Karen continued.

"Oh, please." Sorano said, rolling her eyes at the accusation. "Their leader, Brain, helped fund the Tower of Heaven, where I was a slave for years. Then, after seeing my talent in magic, he took me away from there where he put me through torture that he called training so he could use me as a weapon. Why in the hell do you think that I'd start helping him again once I was free from that?"

"Oh, so you're the one I was meant to replace." The fake Ichiya said, finally turning his attention to Sorano. "Brain thought you were dead, you know. He would probably find it rather interesting to know you were still alive."

Continuing to look around the room, the fake Ichiya eventually put on disappointed expression.

"Too bad he's not here." The fake Ichiya said in a downcast tone. "I would have loved to see that brown skin covered in his own blood. Oh, it would have made him so much sexier than he already is."

"Who are you talking about?" Ultear asked, having a bad feeling about what the imposter said.

"Who else?" the imposter Ichiya asked with an unhinged smile on his face. "Alfonzo Marcus. Mmm~, what a man."

Frowning at the imposter's words, Ultear opened her mouth to ask another question. Before she could, however, the imposter's expression change to one of frustration.

"*Sigh* Either way, I told that old man this wouldn't work." The Ichiya imposter said in a resigned tone. Then, he smiled deviously as he pulled out a bottle of perfume from his suit pocket. "Oh well, time to get out of here. [Perfume Magic: Fleet-Foot Perfume]."

In the next instant, the Ichiya imposter uncapped the bottle before taking a whiff of the perfume inside. Then, at high speed, he sprinted past everyone in the room and ran through the mansion's front door.

"Hey, where do you think you're going?" Natsu shouted, quickly chasing after the imposter.

"Wait for me, Natsu!" Happy shouted as he conjured his wings with is [Aera Magic] before flying after Natsu.

"Damn it, Natsu! Don't run off on your own!" Gray shouted as he stood up and followed after Natsu.
"Master, I'll go and make sure nothing happens to him."

"Tear, let's go! We're going with them." Ur ordered.

"You don't have to tell me twice." Ultear said, sprinting after her mother. "I need some answers. And I need to make whoever that imposter is understand that targeting my man isn't a good idea."

With that, Jura, Lyon, Sherry, Wendy, and Carla followed after the wizards from Fairy Tail. Meanwhile, the wizards from Blue Pegasus stayed behind.

While Ren was checking on Ichiya's condition, Hibiki and Eve were looking between Karen and Sorano, who were still glaring at each other, with worried expressions.

"Now, ladies..." Hibiki said nervously.

"We don't have time for this." Sorano said, shaking her head. "We're here to take down the Oración Seis, not to fight among ourselves."

"That's debatable." Karen replied with some bite to her tone. "Theer's no guarantee that you're not one of them. In fact, I would bet on it."

"I don't have time for your nonsense, either." Sorano shot back. "I signed a pretty stringent magical contract before Master Bob allowed me into the guild. And that's only because you were so against it. You already know that if I were to ever betray the guild, my magic power would destroy me from the inside out."

"Hmph!" Karen snorted. "As if a dark wizard like you wouldn't have a way to get around a magical contract like that."

At that moment, Ren, supporting Ichiya, who had a fairly large gash across his torso, entered the room.

"Ichiya!" Hibiki and Ren shouted as they approached their mentor.

"Well, it's good he's still alive." Sorano said in a somewhat relieved tone. Then, she looked back towards Karen. "Like I said, I don't have time for your nonsense. I'm going to help our allies."

Then, before Karen could retort, Sorano walked away and left the mansion.

"Karen, you need to let the grudge from the past go." Ichiya said in a solemn tone as he separated from Ren unsteadily. "Though you may have been enemies in the past, you are comrades now. Men."

"And what the hell would you know about it?" Karen snarled.

"Master Ichiya is right." Hibiki said. "Karen, you can't tell us that you haven't seen how hard Sorano has tried to show that she's changed."

"It's probably all an act." Karen replied.

In response, Hibiki could only sigh.

"Anyway, do you know who it was who attacked you?" Karen asked, clearly not wanting to talk about Sorano any longer. "I mean, they came in here looking just like you. And I doubt that you have an identical twin. Or at least, I pray that you don't."

"Indeed." Ichiya replied with a smile and a nod. "Two such ruggedly handsome men would be a little too much for the world to handle."

Karen could only roll her eyes in response.

"I did, however, get a look at my assailant." Ichiya said, finally replying to Karen's question. "She was a pretty girl with fair skin and yellow, slitted eyes. Like those of a cat. Her mouth was rather wide, also resembling a cat's, somewhat. And her hair was ash-blonde and styled into two messy buns with side bangs that framed her face."

"And she uses some kind of [Transformation Magic]."

Karen grumbled. "But unlike all the [Transformation Magic] I've ever seen, she can use the magic of the person she changed into, as well."

Hearing that, Ichiya's eyes widened.

"Is that why a bottle of each of my perfumes was missing?" Ichiya asked, in a surprised tone. "Still, I think I have an idea about that."

Once again, all the wizards in the room focused on Ichiya's following words.

"Before she transformed into such a dashing man such as me."

Ichiya said.

"Just get to the point."

Karen interrupted impatiently.

"Yes, you're right, Karen."

Ichiya said with a nod of his head. "We don't have the time to delve into my manly charms at the moment. Men~! Anyway, as I was saying, before she transformed, she sneak attacked me and put this cut on my chest. Then, before I lost consciousness, I saw her drinking the blood that spilled from the wound."

Meanwhile, Hibiki, using his [Archive Magic], was surrounded by flat-magical projections with data scrolling cross them that he was reading through at high speed.

"Based on everything I know about her magic, she's using [Vampiric Change Magic]." Hibiki said, reading through the information on one of his magical screens. "After drinking someone's blood, the user would be able to take on the owner's appearance and voice while being able to use their magic, as well. And the amount of blood they drink determines how long the transformation would last."

"We need to let the others know." Ichiya said in a solemn tone. "Hibiki, you can still connect to them with your [Telepathy Magic], correct?"

"Yes, Master Ichiya." Hibiki replied with a bow of his head.

"Good." Ichiya said with a nod. "Then, let us follow them. Eve, Ren, you stay here. Unfortunately, you are not officially part of this quest. So, I can't bring you with us."

"We understand, Master Ichiya." Eve and Ren replied in unison.

"Good." Ichiya said with a smile. "Now, let us go. And Hibiki, contact the others along the way. Men~!"

With his final order given, Ichiya rushed out of the mansion with Karen and Hibiki following behind him.