

Fairy Tail 271

Chapter 271: The Lacrima Fragment

After walking for about forty-five minutes, Alfonzo, Elicia, Natsu, Happy, Lucy, Wendy, and Carla finally reached Gajeel's location. Unlike when Alfonzo first scanned the city for him, however, Gajeel was no longer at the Edolas Gajeel's house. Instead, he was standing amongst a crowd of people gathered at the city's central plaza.

When they arrived at the plaza, Alfonzo had to physically hold Natsu back. And the reason was simple, the piece of the large lacrima that had been broken off the previous night had been transported into the center of the plaza.

"Natsu, I know you're pissed." Alfonzo said while he held Natsu in a full nelson and raised him off the ground. "Hell, I'm pissed off, too. But I need you to calm the fuck down."

"Grr... But that lacrima could be someone from Fairy Tail!" Natsu growled. "And you want me to be calm?"

"Just for now." Alfonzo replied. "As soon as we meet up with Gajeel, I'll come up with a plan to save them. Just chill the fuck out for now."

Meanwhile, Happy, Lucy, Wendy, and Carla were looking around cautiously, afraid they might be discovered. Elicia on the other hand, was much more relaxed. Since she was still connected to everyone by one of her threads, her [Hiding in Plain Sight] spell's effect was still active.

"Fonzie, if he won't calm down, just knock him out." Elicia said calmly while trying to get Gajeel's attention with her threads. "If his magic power output raises too much higher, he'll break my concealment."

"You heard her, Natsu." Alfonzo said. "You can either calm down or sleep through this next part. It's up to you."

Hearing that, Natsu, though unwilling, calmed himself. At the same time, Gajeel had noticed Elicia's threads and was following them back to their source. When he arrived, however, he was not alone.

"Oh, what's wrong, Salamander?" Gajeel asked with one of Elicia's threads wrapped around his right wrist. "Were you about to do something stupid again?"

"Shut up, Gajeel." Natsu growled. Though, his eyes never left the large piece of the lacrima in the center of the plaza.

"Seriously, Gajeel, now's not the time." Alfonzo said sternly.

"Tch! Fine." Gajeel replied. "Anyway, have you seen Mystogan yet? Ugh... Actually, before you start, could you make it so that guy could see us?"

With that, Gajeel pointed to his Edolas counterpart, who followed him most of the way over to the rest of the group. But when he was engulfed by Elicia's magic, the Edolas Gajeel was left confused by his disappearance.

"Oh, that's your counterpart, isn't it?" Lucy asked curiously.

"Yeah, he's a good guy." Gajeel replied. "And he's on our side."

"How can you be so sure?" Carla asked with her arms crossed.

Glancing at Carla from the corner of his eye, Gajeel snorted in jealousy before he continued.

"My instincts. They're telling me that I can trust him." Gajeel said with a smirk. "And I always trust my instincts."

Although she wanted to snort at Gajeel's explanation, as the partner of a Dragon Slayer, Carla knew how absurd a Dragon Slayer's instincts could be. So, instead of snorting, she simply turned her head away.

"Well, if Gajeel thinks..." Elicia replied with a smile.

"Don't call me that!" Gajeel shouted in protest.

".. we can trust him, then that's good enough for me." Elicia continued, ignoring Gajeel's protest.

In the next moment, another one of Elicia's threads wrapped around the Edolas Gajeel's wrist. As soon as it did, The Edolas Gajeel's confusion grew when he saw eight people suddenly appear in the crowd. But after seeing Gajeel, he calmed down. Though, he was still wary when he approached the group.

After getting closer and recognizing the faces of the other seven people, the Edolas Gajeel's eyebrows rose in shock, especially after seeing Alfonzo and Elicia. Though he was able to quickly calm himself once again.

"I guess these are the people from your world, huh?" The Edolas Gajeel asked his counterpart. Then, he turned his attention back to the other seven Earth Land Fairy Tail wizards and bowed his head politely as he continued. "It's a pleasure to meet you. You can call me Gajeel. Though, that will probably get rather confusing sooner rather than later."

"It's okay." Elicia said with a wave of her hand. "We can just call him Gajee. And we'll call you Gajeel."

"Damn it, woman, I told you not to call me that!" Gajeel shouted in protest once again.

"Alright, Lici, that's enough." Alfonzo said, finally releasing Natsu from his full nelson. "We'll just call our Gajeel, Black Steel."

While Elicia pouted at the fact that Alfonzo ended her fun, Gajeel nodded in satisfaction. Meanwhile, the Edolas Gajeel observed the interaction between the eight other worlders in front of him.

"So, are you the guild master of the Earth Land Fairy Tail like the Alfonzo of our world?" The Edolas Gajeel asked in curiosity after noticing that everyone seemed to be deferring to Alfonzo.

"Hell nah." Alfonzo replied while shaking his head. "If I were the guild master, everyone would end up hating me."

"Really?" Wendy asked curiously. "But I think you would make a good guild master."

"Because I wouldn't tolerate all the collateral damage like Gramps does." Alfonzo replied while glancing at Natsu and Gajeel. "And my punishment would be a lot worse than just not getting to eat my cooking at the guild hall."

"What kind of punishments would you give, then?" Happy asked curiously.

"Well, for example..." Alfonzo replied while staring off into the distance with a contemplative expression on his face. A moment later, he glanced at Natsu and Gajeel with a sinister smile on his face. "For certain members of the guild, if the collateral damage went over a certain threshold, they would spend five minutes on a merry-go-round from hell. And the time would increase depending on how much damage they actually caused."

Immediately, Natsu, Gajeel, and even Wendy began to shudder in terror.

"Oh, and if I found out that they were using the [Troia] spell to get through the punishment, both the caster and the one who it was used on would get an even worse punishment." Alfonzo added with a friendly smile.

'He's a demon!' Natsu, Gajeel, and Wendy thought at the same time.

"Well, as interesting as that sounds." The Edolas Gajeel said. Then, while pointing at the large lacrima fragment in the center of the plaza, he continued. "WE should probably do something about that."

Hearing that, all the Earth Land wizards wore serious expressions as they nodded in agreement.

"From what Gajeel said, that should be one part of your hometown, right?" The Edolas Gajeel asked.

"That's right." Alfonzo replied. "But we have no idea who or what it could be."

"More importantly, how do we turn whoever or whatever it is back to normal?" Lucy asked curiously with a hint of worry in her tone.

"Actually, I have an idea about that." Elicia replied with a smile.

Those words drew everyone's attention. Though Alfonzo already knew what Elicia would suggest based on having the same meta knowledge.

"From what we know, the only kind of magic the Anima didn't work on was [Dragon Slayer Magic], right?" Elicia asked. Then, after receiving nods of agreement, she continued. "So, I'm betting that if we hit the lacrima with a strong enough [Dragon Slayer] spell, it should reverse the effect of the Anima."

Hearing Elicia's explanation, the other Fairy Tail wizards nodded in understanding. Though the Edolas Gajeel wore a skeptical expression.

"Although that sounds logical, what if it doesn't work?" The Edolas Gajeel asked in a concerned tone.
"You could end up destroying the lacrima."

Once again, Natsu, Happy, Lucy, Gajeel, Wendy, and Carla's expressions changed. At the same time, Alfonzo and Elicia smiled at the Edolas Gajeel with appreciation.

Although they knew that everyone agreed with Elicia's plan because they trusted her, or at least that's what they hoped. They were glad to see someone who used their brain and could think about a problem from a different angle. On top of that, the concern the Edolas Gajeel showed won him a few brownie points in their books.

"*Sigh* If only our Gajeel could use his brain like this, we'd have a lot less problems back on Earth Land." Alfonzo said with a regretful expression.

"What did you say?" Gajeel asked with a twitching eyebrow. "Are you calling me stupid?"

"You shouldn't get mad if he's telling the truth." Natsu said with a laugh.

"What was that?" Gajeel asked, glaring at Natsu. "You wanna fight, Salamander?"

"Any time." Natsu replied with a battle hungry grin. "Bring it on, Metal Head."

With that, Natsu and Gajeel glared at each other, ready to start throwing punches at any moment.

*Bang! *Bang!*

"Knock it off, you two." Alfonzo said after bringing down a fist on each of the rambunctious Dragon Slayers' heads. "We've got more important things to deal with than a pissing contest between you two morons."

Now, instead of glaring at each other, Natsu and Gajeel were ready to fight with Alfonzo. Though, their glares looked a lot less threatening while they were holding the tops of their heads.

"Anyway, I've considered your concerns, Gajeel." Elicia said, ignoring the three young men beside her. "But have you ever seen anyone destroy a lacrima like that? Sure, a lacrima can be shattered with enough physical force, but I've never seen one get destroyed by a magic spell."

Taking a moment to ponder Elicia's words, the Edolas Gajeel eventually nodded in agreement.

"Then what is your plan?" The Edolas Gajeel asked. "Because as soon as you turn whatever is in that Lacrima back to normal, this place will be flooded by Royal Army soldiers."

With that, the nine rebels huddled together and discussed how they would deal with the situation after they freed whoever or whatever came out of that lacrima shard. At the same time, Elicia released a large number of her threads, using [Thread Detection], to find a possible escape route and a place they could hide after everything was over.

A short while later, just as they were finished discussing their plans, a tall, slim, elderly man with long white hair that reached past his shoulders and a long beard and mustache that reached the upper part of his chest wearing mostly brown attire with a white Mitre like headgear that displayed the Edolas Kingdom's emblem on its front appeared on the Royal Castle's balcony that overlooked the plaza.

"King Faust is going to hold a speech?" The Edolas Gajeel asked while looking up at the elderly man, King Faust.

"Then, I guess that means we don't have much time." Alfonzo said after seeing the king. "Everyone, let's hurry and get to our positions. We'll start while everyone's excitement is at its peak."

While the Earth land wizards nodded in understanding, they scattered to their designated positions. Meanwhile, the Edolas Gajeel sighed in relief.

"At least we won't have to worry about Captain Knightwalker." The Edolas Gajeel muttered as he moved to his position.

Little did the Edolas Gajeel know the reason that the Earth Land wizards were able to make it to the Royal Capital so quickly was by hitching a ride on Erza Knightwalker's air ship from the town of Louen.

"People of Edolas!" Faust shouted from his balcony. "I know the times have been trying since the amount of ambient magic power in our atmosphere started to lessen. But as you can see, the brilliant minds of the Royal Family have found a way to bring new magic power to our great kingdom! Please, feast your eyes on the lacrima in the plaza. And this is only a small fragment of the much larger lacrima we were able to bring to our great kingdom!"

Hearing the king's declaration, the people of the Royal Capital were in an uproar, cheering happily for the greatness of their king and the royal family. Unfortunately, even though they had no idea how the king managed to get his hands on a lacrima of such size and quality, they would not care even if they knew that he had taken it from another world by converting its landscape, towns, and people into the source of magical power.

As King Faust continued to speak to his citizens, the atmosphere in the plaza continued to heat up. Meanwhile, Alfonzo, Elicia, and the other Fairy Tail wizards were getting in position to free their people who were trapped in the lacrima fragment. At the same time, the Edolas Gajeel was making his way out of the crowd in order to secure the escape route.

"Alright, Gajeel." Elicia said from the front of the crowd where she and Gajeel were concealed with her magic. "Now's the time. Everyone is in position."

"Good." Gajeel said with a smirk before taking a deep breath. "[Iron Dragon's Roar]."

In the next instant, Elicia and Gajeel appeared in front of the crowd, Elicia's [Hiding in Plain Sight] spell having dispelled thanks to the high amount of Magic power Gajeel released. At the same time, Gajeel

spewed a whirling, metallic twister from his mouth that sped towards the lacrima in the middle of the plaza.

While the citizens in the plaza were stunned into silence after seeing someone attack the lacrima, the king's eyes opened wide while his mustache bristled thanks to his anger.

"What is the meaning of this?" Faust roared. "Someone! Stop those rebels. I want their heads!"

A moment later, Gajeel's attack struck the lacrima. Instead of shattering like the onlookers expected, however, it was absorbed into the lacrima. Then, once the spell could no longer be seen, the lacrima began to glow brightly. So brightly, in fact, that no one present could help covering their eyes.

Even the soldiers following the king's command to deal with the intruders were forced to stop momentarily.

Eventually, when the bright light died down, the lacrima was nowhere to be seen. Instead, there were two young women, one with long scarlet red hair and one with long blonde hair that transitioned into pink at its ends, sitting at a small, square table with identical novels in their hands looking dumbfoundedly at their surroundings. And by looking at their expressions, it would be easy to tell that they had no idea where they were or how they got there.