

Fairy Tail 289

Chapter 289: Making Things Harder for Mest

While the S-Class Candidates were picking their partners for the exam, the S-Class wizards and Makarov gathered together in Makarov's office after they left the stage.

"*Sigh* I feel like I'm getting old every time this time comes around." Makarov said as he flopped down in his chair. "Still, I'm happy that the wizards in our guild are so talented."

"Yeah, I don't think there are any other guilds in Fiore that consistently have eight S-Class candidates every year." Gildarts replied with a smile while scoping out Makarov's private alcohol collection.

"I know." Ur added with a smile. "Even if many of them are repeat examinees, we still had three new participants this year. And that doesn't include the one who wasn't eligible because of misconduct earlier in the year."

"Natsu, huh?" Gildarts said, sounding a bit disappointed. "I feel like he would have been the favorite if he had been able to participate, too."

"Are you saying he shouldn't have been disqualified this year?" Alfonzo asked with his eyes narrowed slightly. "Then, that would have been unfair to Mira, who was demoted for more than two years for her fu... *Cough* mistake."

When Alfonzo began to swear, he was forced to change his words when he felt the gazes of his girlfriends start to get dangerous.

"I know you're right, but still, I would have liked to see how much he has improved since I left." Gildarts said in a slightly downcast tone.

"I'm sure you'll get to see him participate next year." Makarov said consolingly.

"Besides, you should be worrying about Cana, not Natsu." Elicia said in a reprimanding tone.

"Huh? What's wrong with my baby girl?" Gildarts asked, his expression turning serious in an instant.

Not only Gildarts' expression changed after hearing Elicia's words, but everyone else who heard them showed a change in expression as well.

"Honestly, I'm not a hundred percent sure." Elicia said, her expression showing a bit of uncertainty.
"But... she looked too... desperate after hearing her name called as one of the participants."

"I noticed that, too." Alfonzo said with a nod. "It makes me afraid that she might push herself too hard during the exam or even do something stupid."

Hearing that, Gildarts' expression changed from serious to panicked.

"Really?" What should we do?" Gildarts asked, his voice trembling in uncertainty.

"Calm down, Gildarts." Ur said while rubbing his shoulder soothingly. "You're her father. Maybe should just talk to her. If you're not too forceful, and show concern for her, maybe she'll tell you about what's bothering her."

After hearing Ur's tone and seeing the caring expression on her mother's face, Ultear couldn't help but raise an eyebrow. Then, she let her sight shift between Ur and Gildarts repeatedly while a smile started to make its way onto her face.

Meanwhile, Gildarts, after hearing Ur's advice straightened his back immediately. Then, his expression turned resolute.

"That's right, I'm her father!" Gildarts roared righteously. "If there's something bothering her, I need to be there for her."

In the next instant, Gildarts turned around and was about to run towards the elevator.

Meanwhile, after seeing Gildarts overreacting, Ur sighed in exasperation before she made her casting posture.

"[Ice-Make: Hammer]." Ur chanted.

Bang!

A moment later, a large hammer made of ice materialized over Gildarts' head, before it swung down and slammed him into the floor.

It's a good thing that Alfonzo lined every surface of the new guild hall with anti-magic sigils, otherwise, considering how hard Ur hit him, Gildarts dropping all the way down to the basement because of his [Crash Magic] would not have been outside the realm of possibility.

At the same time, the fact that Ur's spell was able to hit Gildarts despite the passive amount of magic power that surrounded him was a testament to how strong she had gotten over the years, as well.

"If you go running in like that, she's only gonna shy away, you moron." Ur said in an exasperated tone.
"You have to calm down."

"*Cough* Anyway, we should keep an eye on her." Makarov said. "All though desperation can push someone to reach their full potential, it can also be dangerous if they experience too much."

"Yes." All the S-Class wizards replied simultaneously.

"Besides the matter with Cana, I actually have something else I wanna bring to everyone's attention." Alfonzo said solemnly while staring at Makarov.

"What's wrong, my boy?" Makarov asked, curious what could make Alfonzo make an expression like that.

"Gramps, that Mest guy, who the hell is he?" Alfonzo asked without mincing words.

Hearing Alfonzo's question, everyone other than Elicia looked at him weirdly.

"Alfonzo, are you serious?" Ultear asked with slight confusion in her tone. "You know Mest. He was Mystogan's disciple. He almost beat me to become an S-Class wizard last year, remember?"

"Yeah, I remember that, too." Erza added.

"Have you been working too hard again, Alfonzo" Mirajane asked, concern evident in her tone.

Although they did not say anything, Gildarts and Ur looked at Alfonzo strangely as well.

"*Sigh* Yeah, that's what my memories are telling me, too." Alfonzo said before making brief eye contact with Elicia. Then, after getting a slight nod in return, he continued. "But... my [Magic Power Detection] is telling me a different story."

Hearing that, all those who looked at Alfonzo strangely, froze. Because they were in the guild hall, none of them had spread their [Magic Power Detection], thinking it was unnecessary. Alfonzo, on the other hand, had spread his because he expected Mest to be there, and he wanted to see if his memories had really been altered.

On a side note, Alfonzo had also forgotten his meeting with Mest's other identity, Doranbolt, as well.

"So, why do my memories tell me that I know him, but I don't recognize the mother fucker's magic power signature at all?" Alfonzo asked in a solemn tone. "On top of that, I was one of the few people in the guild who actually knew Mystogan pretty well. And I know for a fact that he never had a disciple. Hell, he was only twenty."

Just then, everyone remembered just how secretive Mystogan usually was. So, the fact that he had a disciple was hard to believe. At the same time, however, none of them really knew him well enough to dispute their memories.

"But what makes it even weirder." Alfonzo said before he turned his attention to Gildarts. "Why the hell does Gildarts seem to know that Mest was Mystogan's disciple?"

"Huh?" Everyone exclaimed in unison.

"Of course he knows." Mirajane added, sounding even more confused than before. "He's been a member of the guild for a long time."

"But Mystogan hasn't." Elicia said, cutting into the conversation. "Mystogan only joined the guild in x782. But Gildarts left to take the 100 Years quest in x781, remember?"

"Besides, when he came back, Mystogan hadn't come to the guild even once before the whole Edolas incident." Alfonzo added. "So, Gildarts shouldn't have even met him."

With that, everyone opened their eyes wide as they shifted their gazes between Gildarts and Alfonzo. Then, after a few seconds, everyone's sights landed on Makarov hoping he could clear up their doubts.

"*Sigh* Usually I'd be happy to have such an excellent child in my guild." Makarov said with a wry smile. "But when they're too excellent, sometimes it can make things difficult."

"So, you did know there was something fishy with the kid, huh?" Gildarts asked as he narrowed his eyes.

"I did." Makarov replied calmly. "And although I can't tell you the details for now, believe me when I say, Mest is not an enemy."

"So, you're just allowing someone to infiltrate our guild's holy ground?" Gildarts asked, a frown making its way on to his face."

"Like I said, please just trust me for now." Makarov said. "But I can tell you this, Tenrou Island won't reject him."

Although they were unsatisfied, most of the people in the room decided to drop the matter. Unfortunately for Makarov, Alfonzo and Elicia had a metaphorical bone to pick with Mest.

"Well, I don't know if he's really a threat or not." Alfonzo said. "but right now, if I had to guess, from what my [Magic Power Detection] is telling me, he's asking Wendy to be his partner for the S-Class exam."

Hearing that, the temperature in the room began to drop. And the epicenter of the temperature change was Ur, the one who invited Wendy and Carla to join the guild.

"Seriously?" Elicia exclaimed in mock surprise. "But Wendy is a twelve year old, B-Class wizard at best. Just how much does he expect her to help him in the exam. *Gasp* Do you think he has a thing for little girls?"

With Elicia's question, the temperature started dropping even faster.

"Old man, if that guy does anything to Wendy, I'd suggest you start investing in winter clothing." Ur said in a threatening tone.

Just like what happened with Meredy, Ur had taken it upon herself to take care of Wendy's well-being. Despite deciding to move into the apartment Marin vacated after she moved in with Alfonzo, Wendy never ended up doing so. And the reason is simple, she ended up living with Ur and Meredy.

The only reason she spent a couple of nights at Fairy Hills was because after Gray and Ultear moved out, Ur changed one of the bedrooms of her three bedroom house into a study. But after she brought Wendy and Carla back with her from the Oración Seis quest, she changed it back to a bedroom as quickly as possible, before inviting Wendy to move in with her.

So, like Meredy, Ur treats both Wendy and Carla as her adopted daughters.

"Like I said, you don't have to worry." Makarov said calmly. Though, no one missed the bead of sweat that slid down his forehead. "I guarantee Mest won't do anything to harm Wendy."

"For your sake, I hope he doesn't." Ur replied. "Anyway, I need to go home and have a chat with Wendy about trusting unfamiliar men. I swear, he better not have said anything weird to her."

With that, Ur turned and made her way to the elevator.

Meanwhile, everyone else exchanged glances, feeling a little sorry for Mest, whoever he might be.

At the same time, when Alfonzo and Elicia made eye contact, they could tell that they were both thinking the same thing.

'Although we can't just beat you up, there's nothing wrong with making your life miserable.' Alfonzo and Elicia thought simultaneously. 'Hmph! Serves you right for making Brandish stab August in the canon.'

Earth land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Hargeon.

December 15, x784.

After the S-Class candidates were announced and all the candidates chose their partners, the next week flew by quickly. And now, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Makarov were waiting at the port for all sixteen exam participants to arrive.

"So, did Gildarts ever get to talk to Cana about what was bothering her?" Elicia asked curiously.

"I don't think so." Makarov replied. "If his expression before you all left to set up the island for the exam was any indication."

"*Sigh* She wouldn't tell me anything, either." Elicia said sadly. Then, she looked at Alfonzo. "Did she tell you anything?"

"Nope." Alfonzo said with a frown. Then, he sighed in exasperation. "but Lucy did. And let me tell you, the reason is really stupid. But at the same time, I can understand her feelings."

"Huh?" Elicia asked in a confused tone while blinking her eyes rapidly. "What do you mean?"

Not only Elicia, but Makarov was also interested in the reason for Cana's desperation.

Glancing at Makarov, Alfonzo shook his head before whispering the reason into Elicia's ear.

As it turns out, Cana was feeling inferior to Alfonzo's other girls. Although she had been in the guild longer than any of them, other than Elicia, she was the only one who had not made S-Class. Marin and Sun were not included because of the short amount of time they spent in the guild. However, when Sun became an S-Class Candidate, her inferiority complex got even worse.

So, she decided that if she did not get promoted this year, she would break up with Alfonzo and leave the guild because she didn't feel worthy to be with him.

While Makarov was a little annoyed that Alfonzo kept the reason for Cana's desperation a secret, Elicia looked at Alfonzo with a blank gaze for a while after hearing everything that he heard from Lucy. Then, without thinking, she blurted out her thoughts.

"That stupid girl needs a spanking!" Elicia said loud enough for the other people on the docks to hear her.

"*Sigh* Although you're not wrong." Alfonzo said as he started combing his fingers through Elicia's hair .
"I don't think you need to announce it to the town, Lici."

Hearing that, Elicia blinked a few times in confusion. Then, she cautiously looked around her surroundings. And when she saw all the strange gazes she was receiving for her outburst, she could not help but bury her head in Alfonzo's chest to hide her embarrassment.

"*Cough* Anyway, we can talk about that later." Makarov said, trying to hide the smile that was creeping onto his face. "They're starting to arrive, and it's almost time to go."

Hearing that, Alfonzo looked towards the road that connected the port with the rest of Hargeon. There he saw most of the examinees and their partners rushing towards the dock where his ship, Sixth Sense, was moored. Meanwhile, Elicia got herself together as quickly as she could before the first of the examinees arrived.

A few minutes later, all sixteen participants had arrived in front of the trio.

"Good, you're all here." Makarov said while letting his gaze sweep across the participants.

When his gaze fell on Mest and Wendy, however, it lingered a bit longer.

'Ur must have really put that boy through the ringer.' Makarov thought to himself. 'Not only is he standing at least three feet away from Wendy, but he's shivering unnaturally, While Wendy looks at him apologetically. Ur, just what did you do to that boy? You haven't even been on the mainland for the past three days.'

"Anyway, why don't we board the ship." Makarov said. "I'll explain all the details about this year's exam when we get closer to Tenrou Island."

Receiving nods of understanding from everyone present, the group boarded the ship before Alfonzo started the engine. A few minutes later, the ship could no longer be seen from the port. And with that, Fairy Tail's x784 S-Class Promotion Exam was just around the corner.