

Fairy Tail 39

Chapter 39: Erza Scarlet

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

May 11, x776.

In Fairy Tail's guild hall, most of the Fairy Tail wizards were eating their breakfasts, though their moods seemed to be a little worse than usual. Although they were all eating and chatting like usual, the fervor with which they ate was... diminished.

"Master, can I make a suggestion?" Wakaba asked Makarov, who was sitting in his usual spot on the bar top.

"*Hiccup* What is it, Wakaba?" Makarov asked in reply with an alcohol induced blush on his face.

"I suggest that we stop Alfonzo from taking quests that will keep him away from the guild for more than a day." Wakaba said in a righteous tone.

"I agree." Macao said in a serious tone.

"Agreed!" The rest of the guild echoed with fervor.

Looking around at all his children, Makarov was happy to see that they all could agree on something... for once. However, he was thoroughly confused as to why they wanted to stop Alfonzo from taking quests like that. Maybe, had he been sober, he would have understood what they were thinking right away. Since he was not, however, he simply tilted his head in confusion.

"Why would I do that? *Hiccup*" Makarov asked, confusion evident in his tone.

"Master, how can you not understand?" Macao asked, sounding rather upset. "What that boy has done is down-right criminal!"

Almost everyone present in the guild nodded in agreement with Macao's statement with determined expressions on their faces.

"Brat, you're gonna have to be more straightforward with me." Makarov said, taking a swig from his mug.

"He... He... He got us addicted to his food!" Macao said, tears streaming down his face in a comical manner. "And then he just up and leaves to take a quest. How heartless could he be?"

While most of the guild's wizards nodded in agreement, Wakaba hugged Macao as emotional support. Meanwhile, Makarov stared at the group with a blank expression on his face. While he was also missing Alfonzo's cooking, he would never stop one of his children from growing for such a reason. Or... that was what he thought until he looked at the plate of barely touched breakfast that was sitting next to him on the bar.

'Maybe I should put a restriction on Alfonzo's quests.' Makarov thought to himself with a surprisingly serious expression on his face.

A moment later, Makarov realized what he was thinking. Then, he shook his head to get that stupid thought out of his mind.

"Are you brats stupid?" Makarov asked, raising his voice so he could be heard throughout the guild hall. "For the sake of satisfying your stomachs, you would cripple the boy's growth? For goodness' sake, it's only been three days!"

After hearing Makarov's reprimand, everyone who called for Alfonzo's quests to be restricted lowered their heads with guilt in their eyes, Makarov, on the other hand, was thinking something totally different.

'I should ask Alfonzo if he can make something to preserve food.' Makarov thought while stroking his mustache and looking at all the Fairy Tail wizards with a disappointed expression. 'Then, I can order some extra dishes for emergencies like this one.'

Meanwhile, Alfonzo and Elicia's group of friends looked on with dumbfounded expressions.

"Did they really just ask Master Makarov to restrict Alfonzo's quests to those he could complete in a day?" Levy asked in a daze.

"That's what it sounds like." Ultear replied.

"Just so that he can make breakfast for them?" Levy continued.

"Yup." Cana replied.

Bang!

Before Levy could ask anymore questions in her dumbfounded state, the guild's front doors were slammed open. After hearing the noise of the doors slamming against the walls of the guild hall, everyone, without exception, looked in that direction.

When they did, they saw a girl, about ten or eleven years old with long scarlet-red hair and an eye patch over her right eye, standing in the doorway.

Ignoring the surprised stares from the Fairy Tail wizards, Erza scanned the room with her eye. Then, when her sight landed on Makarov, she began walking forward with steady steps. A few moments later, when she was standing in front of the bar, she looked up at Makarov, who returned her gaze.

"Based on the sign above the door, this is Fairy Tail, correct?" The girl asked, maintaining eye contact with Makarov.

"That's right, Little Lady." Makarov replied. "What can I do for you?"

"And am I correct to assume that you are the guild master, Master Makarov?" The girl asked, once again.

"I am." Makarov replied calmly.

"That's good." The girl said with a nod. "Then, I would like to join Fairy Tail."

Hearing that, Makarov remained silent for a moment as he tried to sense the young girl in front of him's magic power. Surprised by the amount that he could feel, Makarov was more than willing to accept her into the guild. However, he could tell there was more to this girl than meets the eye. On top of that, he was concerned by the patch covering her right eye.

"I don't mind accepting you into the guild, but why did you choose Fairy Tail.?" Makarov asked.

"Because Uncle Rob told me that if I came here, I would be able to have a family." The girl said, surprising Makarov greatly.

When Makarov heard the name, "Rob," His eyes widened in shock. At the same time, the image of one of his old teammates, a tall, muscular man with grey hair that pointed upward and long brown eyebrows that did the opposite, appeared in his mind.

"So, Rob sent you here, huh?" Makarov said, wearing a nostalgic smile on his face. "If he sent you here, then you must be a good kid. By the way, what is your name?"

"I'm Erza, Erza Scarlet." The girl, Erza, said, introducing herself.

"Well then, Erza." Makarov said, wearing a grandfatherly smile. "It's nice to meet you. And welcome to the family."

With that, the guild hall, that had remained silent ever since Erza opened the doors, burst into loud, excited cheers. Like they always did whenever a new member joined the guild, they began to party on the spot. Meanwhile, Makarov continued his conversation with Erza.

"So, how is Rob?" Makarov asked, picking up his mug to take another swig.

"He's..." Erza said, unable to finish her sentence as she lowered her head and clenched her fists.

Noticing Erza's reaction to his question, Makarov froze, his mug stopping just in front of his lips. Then, his magic power flared, putting pressure on everyone in the guild hall, with the weaker members of the guild having trouble breathing.

A moment later, Makarov regained control of his emotions. Then, he looked at Erza with sorrow in his eyes.

"Come, Child." Makarov said, placing his mug back on the bar before hopping down to the floor. "We'll continue this conversation in my office."

Makarov then began walking toward the stairs next to the bar, closely followed by Erza. Meanwhile, everyone in the guild hall simply watched them go in silence.

Eventually, after walking up two flights of stairs, Makarov and Erza reached Makarov's office on the third floor. Then, after entering and taking their seats, Makarov asked the question he most wanted an answer to.

"Please, can you tell me what happened to Rob?" Makarov asked in a grim tone. "And tell me what happened to you, and your eye."

Placing her fingers on her eye patch, Erza once again lowered her head. Then, after a few moments, she took a deep breath and raised her head while placing her hands on her lap.

"I used to live in a village called Rosemary Village." Erza said beginning her story. "But the village was destroyed by Zeref cultists, and the villagers were taken to...'

At that point, Erza's words came to a halt as she remembered something.

'If you tell anyone about where we are, you'll never see your friends alive again.'" A blue haired boy with a tattoo under his eye, on the left side of his face said as Erza escaped from the island where she had been enslaved.

"Child, are you alright?" Makarov asked after Erza had stopped talking for a moment.

"I'm fine." Erza said, shaking the thought away. "We were taken away and forced to build something for the cultists."

"The Tower of Heaven..." Makarov said with anger.

Surprised that Makarov knew that name, Erza looked at him with surprise in her eye. Meanwhile, after seeing Erza's expression, Makarov could only shake his head.

"Those damned Zeref cultists have already killed three of our former members." Makarov said. "In fact, you are not the only child who has come to us after their lives were ruined by those bastards. The only difference is, they were not abducted with the rest of their village."

Hearing that, Erza's eye opened wide. She would have never imagined that anyone could escape from the cultists that attacked her village.

"In fact, they should return later on today." Makarov continued with a smile. "I'm sure you'll get along just fine with Alfonzo and Elicia. They're both good kids."

Those names made Erza remember the promise she made to the Matron of the orphanage in Hargeon, Rebecca Landon.

"Their full names wouldn't be Alfonzo Marcus and Elicia Taylor, would they?" Erza asked.

"That's right, but how do you know that?" Makarov asked curiously. "Have you met them before?"

"No." Erza replied after shaking her head. "But I met the matron of an orphanage who asked me to relay a message."

"I see." Makarov said with an understanding nod. "Well, you'll get a chance to meet them soon. In the meantime, why don't you tell me the rest of your story?"

Nodding in response, Erza continued her story, telling Makarov about how she and all the other captured villagers were forced to do hard labor, barely receiving enough to eat or drink. And what they did get was more often than not rotten.

ON top of that, they were beaten quite often. Beaten for disobedience. Beaten for mistakes. Beaten when the cultists were in a bad mood. Beaten for any and all reasons.

She then got to how she lost her eye. Apparently, Erza and a group of children tried to escape their captors. However, they were discovered. Even though Erza was just following the one who came up with the plan, she was pegged as the ringleader of the escape attempt and had her eye removed as punishment.

Eventually, one of her friends was taken, sentenced to death for insubordination. Then, Erza, tired of having everything taken away from her, decided to lead a rebellion to get her friend back and escape. In the conflict, Rob was killed, protecting Erza. Then, in response to Rob's death, Erza awakened her magic power and a type of spatial magic called [Requip: The Knight].

Then, after a long, hard-fought battle, she arrive where her friend was being held... Only to find his captors dead. On top of that, he was acting quite differently. He had asked her to help him complete the tower. And when she refused, he attacked her and forced her off the island, using her friends' lives to make sure she never came back.

"After that, I used a small boat and arrived on the coast of Fiore." Erza said, bringing her story to an end. "Then, I traveled to Hargeon before making my way here."

Taking a few deep breaths to calm down, Makarov eventually put on a sympathetic expression.

"You've been through a lot, Child." Makarov said. "Let's get you a good meal before we do anything else. Then, I'll take you to see Porlyusica, Fairy Tail's healer, to see if she can do anything about your eye."

Nodding in response, Erza stood up after Makarov and followed him out of the office and back to the first floor.

Several hours later, in the rowdy atmosphere of the guild hall, Erza sat at a table, alone. Although the other children in the guild, minus Laxus' group and Nab, tried to get to know her, she did not wish to do the same. So, they simply left her alone for the time being.

"So, I can get an artificial eye." Erza muttered to herself. "That's better than nothing."

Looking up from her contemplations, Erza just happened to see the moment when the door opened. Although the door had been opened many times throughout the course of the day, she noticed that there were two kids around her age standing in the doorway this time.

Meanwhile, the two kids, Alfonzo and Elicia looked around the guild hall after being gone for three days with smiles on their faces.

"Hey everyone!" Alfonzo shouted. "We're back!"

While Alfonzo greeted the guild, Elicia's eyes were glued to a table in the corner of the guild hall. Seeing the scarlet-red hair that was sitting at that table, her eyes began to light up more and more as time passed. Eventually, she grabbed Alfonzo by the arm and dragged him out of the guild hall, surprising everyone that had been looking at them.

"Lici, what's wrong?" Alfonzo asked after Elicia dragged him away from the door.

"She's here!" Elicia screamed in a hushed tone.

"Huh?" Alfonzo exclaimed curiously. "Who's here?"

"She is!" Elicia screamed again.

"You're gonna have to give me more than that, Lici." Alfonzo said with a wry smile.

"Come on, Fonzie, you know who I'm talking about!" Elicia said, frustrated that Alfonzo could not read her mind as she was having trouble putting her words in order.

Seeing how excited Elicia was, Alfonzo knew he would not be getting a straight answer from her any time soon. So, he began thinking back to everything he remembered about the Fairy Tail timeline he read in his past life.

'Let's see, it's x776.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'From what I remember, only two things of note happened this year. First, Sherria Blendy was born. But since that didn't have much to do with Fairy Tail, that's probably not what she's talking about. The only other thing that happened was...'

Immediately after getting to that point, Alfonzo's eyes opened wide. Then, he looked at Elicia.

"Erza's here." Alfonzo said in a quiet, excited tone.