

Fairy Tail 40

Chapter 40: Strawberry Shortcake

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

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A few minutes later, Alfonzo and Elicia appeared between the still open doors of the guild hall and began walking toward Makarov, who was sitting in his usual spot atop the bar. While Alfonzo remained calm, Elicia could not help stealing a few glances at Erza, who had gone back to contemplating her situation and future.

Eventually, the duo reached the bar and Alfonzo took off his backpack, beginning to rummage through it. Meanwhile, Makarov watched with a smile on his face. He had already anticipated that Alfonzo and Elicia would have no issue completing the quest they took, so he was just waiting for confirmation.

"Here you go, Gramps." Alfonzo said, finally pulling out the completion letter from Reno Fox. "We completed our first B-Class quest with flying colors."

With his smile growing wider, Makarov accepted the letter. Then, without hesitation, he began reading it. As he read, his smile widened ever so slightly, considering that it was already quite wide. Eventually, when he got to the end of the mayor of Lupinus' letter, tears began flowing from his eyes.

"Not only did you complete the quest, but you also finished off the cause for the howling, a lycin." Makarov said emotionally. "And through all that, you didn't cause any property damage. You kids truly are amazing."

While Elicia smiled happily at the praise, Alfonzo looked at Makarov with a weirded-out gaze.

"*Cough* Anyway, good job." Makarov said after noticing Alfonzo's gaze. "Actually, I wanted to ask you two a favor, as well."

Hearing that, both Alfonzo and Elicia tilted their heads, having a good idea what this favor was.

"First, Elicia, can you make some clothes for our new member?" Makarov asked, focusing on Elicia. "Since you just got back, you don't have to---"

"Sure!" Elicia said energetically. "Where are they? Is it a boy or a girl? Oh, are they a kid like us or an adult like Aunt Ur?"

"Who the hell did you just call an aunt?" Ur shouted from across the guild hall.

Shaking his head with a smile on his face, Makarov pointed to the corner where Erza was seated.

"She's over there." Makarov said. "She's been through a lot. So, she could use a few sets of clothing."

"Okay, I'll take care of it~." Elicia said with her eyes sparkling before dashing off towards Erza.

Shaking his head once again, while Alfonzo did the same, Makarov eventually settled his gaze on Alfonzo.

"Alfonzo, my boy." Makarov said with a smile. "Can you make something for Erza to eat? I'm sure a taste of your cooking will make her feel welcome."

"Sure." Alfonzo said while shrugging his shoulders. "I'm always down to see someone's face after the first time they eat my food."

Chuckling good naturedly, Makarov watched as Alfonzo walked towards the guild's showers.

"Just let me get cleaned up, then I'll take care of it." Alfonzo said, waving his hand as he walked away. A moment later, he began rubbing his thumb and index finger together as he continued. "But this will cost you extra, I'm exhausted from the job, and I'm not on shift right now."

Shaking his head for the third time, Makarov could not help but smile wryly.

"That boy always gets the most he can out of any situation." Makarov said to himself, hoping there would be a little extra left over after Erza's meal was prepared.

An hour and a half later, Alfonzo walked out of the kitchen with a large platter floating behind him. After looking around the guild hall, he found Elicia animatedly chatting with Erza about what kind of clothes she would like.

Naturally, Elicia was doing all the chatting while Erza, who had not spent much time on fashion, simply listened. However, Alfonzo could see the spark of interest in her eyes.

'Well, I guess she still likes to dress up.' Alfonzo thought to himself as he began walking toward the table.

"Are you two hungry?" Alfonzo asked, letting the platter land on the table.

When Elicia and Erza looked in his direction, they saw Alfonzo picking up one of the three plates with two pieces of salmon sandwiching what appeared to be some kind of crabmeat filling. On top of that was a brown sauce that smelled sweet. On the side were scalloped potatoes and green beans. They were also curious to know what was under the cover in the center of the platter.

"Hi, it's nice to meet you, I'm Alfonzo Marcus. What's your name?" Alfonzo asked as he continued to distribute the plates.

While Elicia began to drool immediately after seeing the food, Erza looked on with curiosity. And if the way her nose was twitching was any indication, there was a bit of anticipation mixed in, as well.

"I'm Erza Scarlet." Erza said, introducing herself. "The pleasure is mine."

Once all three plates were on the table, Alfonzo took a seat next to Elicia. Then, he gestured for everyone to start eating. Following Alfonzo's instructions, Elicia cut a piece of the stuffed salmon and put it in her mouth with vigor. Then, she smiled happily and chewed her mouthful of food.

Meanwhile, Erza also cut a piece of the salmon, putting it in her mouth like Elicia. However, unlike Elicia, her eyes widened to a comical degree. Then, she closed her eyes and moaned sensually.

Seeing Erza's reaction, Alfonzo nodded his head in satisfaction. Then, like the other two, he began eating. Halfway through the meal, Elicia, after swallowing a fork full of green beans, pointed at the covered dish that was still on the platter.

"Fonzie, what's that?" Elicia asked, having a good guess what was under the cover.

"That's dessert." Alfonzo said, smiling triumphantly.

While Erza was not curious to know what they were having for dessert, since that was something she never got to have while working on the Tower of Heaven, Elicia was certain she knew what the dessert was after seeing Alfonzo's expression.

'I didn't think he would pull out the big guns on day one.' Elicia said to herself with a smile. 'She's gonna end up following him around like a lost puppy after today, if that's what I think it is.'

A few minutes later, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Erza finished their meal. While Erza rubbed her stomach with a content smile on her face, Elicia stared at Alfonzo, screaming at him with her eyes to serve the dessert.

Smiling in response to Elicia's intense stare, Alfonzo stood up, drawing Erza's attention. Then, he reached for the covered dish.

"Are you two ready for dessert?" Alfonzo asked.

Nodding excitedly, Elicia began bouncing in her seat while Erza stared at Alfonzo's hands, that were holding the cover. Then, when Alfonzo lifted the cover, Erza went into a daze.

"For dessert, strawberry shortcake." Alfonzo said with a smile.

Continuing to stare at the cake in a daze, Erza looked as if she had been enlightened by the truth of the world. Meanwhile, Alfonzo and Elicia watched her with amused smiles on their faces.

Eventually, Alfonzo materialized a knife with his magic and sliced the cake, causing Erza's stare to grow in intensity. Then, when he placed the slice of cake on one of the empty dessert plates, Erza's eye followed the slice with laser focus. Placing a dessert spoon on the plate, Alfonzo finally set the plate in front of Erza.

Alfonzo then repeated the process two more times, All the while, Erza stared at her slice as if it would run away if she took her eyes off it. Then, when all three of them had a slice of cake, he gestured toward the plates.

"Alright, let's dig in." Alfonzo said with a smile.

While Alfonzo and Elicia did not move, Erza picked up the dessert spoon immediately. Then, very carefully, she scooped up a piece of the cake and slowly brought it to her lips. Then, after a moment, she finally opened her mouth and put the cake inside.

Immediately, Erza's expression melted while her eye closed. As she chewed the cake, her lips formed a smile. Eventually, when she swallowed what was in her mouth, she opened her eye, and it sparkled like a star. Then, while tilting her head back and forth, she continued to eat the cake happily.

"OMG that was so cute." Elicia said quietly.

"Yeah, much cuter than it had any right to be." Alfonzo said in agreement.

After making their comments, Alfonzo and Elicia also began eating their own cake. A few minutes later, Erza finished her cake. Staring at the empty plate as if she just lost her greatest treasure, Alfonzo could not help but chuckle.

"We have more, you know." Alfonzo said.

Hearing that, Erza's eye lit up once again. Then, she stared at the cake in the middle of the platter. Considering that the cake was rather large, the three slices that were eaten was only a quarter of the cake. Realizing that, Erza smiled happily.

"You can have one more." Alfonzo said, cutting another piece of the strawberry short cake. "But I have to leave some for my other friends and Gramps."

Nodding absent mindedly, Erza received the plate from Alfonzo. Then, she began eating happily. Meanwhile, Alfonzo continued to cut up the cake.

'Shit, not enough. there were only eight slices left.' Alfonzo thought to himself as he counted the remaining pieces of cake. 'Oh well, looks like Gramps is shit outta luck this time. And since Alzack doesn't really care for sweets, everyone else gets a piece.'

As that thought passed through Alfonzo's head, Makarov felt about of sadness come over him.

'I don't know what's wrong, but I feel like I missed out on something amazing.' Makarov thought to himself.

Alfonzo then stood up, the platter floating behind him, and gave a slice of strawberry shortcake to Cana, Laki, Levy, Jet, Droy, Ur, Gray, and Ultear. Then, after a bit of small talk and a promise that he would train with them in the morning, Alfonzo returned to the table where Elicia and Erza sat.

When he arrived, Erza was smiling in contentment with her eye closed. Meanwhile, Elicia was smiling smugly, as if she was the one who had baked the cake.

"So, how was the food?" Alfonzo asked. "Did you like it?"

"Indeed, it was incredible." Erza said, her eyes shining. "And the strawberry shortcake was truly delightful. Please allow me to thank you for the wonderful meal."

"Don't mention it." Alfonzo said with a smile.

Smiling in return, Erza then remembered the message she was asked to deliver.

"The matron of an orphanage in Hargeon asked me to deliver a message to the two of you." Erza said, gathering her thoughts.

Immediately after hearing Erza's words, Alfonzo and Elicia knew exactly who she was talking about.

"Oh? What did the matron say?" Elicia asked curiously.

"She wanted me to tell you to come visit some time." Erza said. "She said that the staff miss you and want to see you again. Especially you, Alfonzo. They miss their little helper in the kitchen."

While Elicia could not help but laugh at that last part, Alfonzo could only smile wryly.

"Although I know better, why does it sound like they only want me to come help them cook for the kids again?" Alfonzo asked.

Hearing that, both Elicia and Erza giggled.

'Yup, just like I thought.' Elicia thought to herself as she watched Erza giggle. 'She's gonna be like a little puppy with Alfonzo. Well, I can't blame her, that shortcake was so yummy.'

Although Alfonzo was not trying to attract Erza, in a romantic sense, he did want to make her feel at home more quickly. If he remembered correctly, Erza did not really open up to the other members of the guild until Natsu showed up and continuously challenged her to fights.

For the rest of the evening, Alfonzo and Elicia continued to chat with Erza. Eventually, Cana, Laki, and Alzack joined them. Then, when it started getting late, Elicia, Cana, and Laki led Erza to Fairy Hills, with Elicia and Erza falling asleep almost immediately after their heads hit the pillow.

Meanwhile, back in the male dorm, Alfonzo laid in his bed, too excited to fall asleep. He had finally gotten his hands on some rechargeable lacrima, and he could not wait to show them to Nell.

"Just wait." Alfonzo muttered with excitement in his eyes. "Soon, I'll have the best ride in Fiore."