

Fairy Tail 491

Chapter 491: Mira's Jealousy (R-18)

About half an hour after entering Bob's office, Alfonzo emerged looking visibly fatigued. Then, after taking a deep breath to calm himself down, Alfonzo shook his head and made his way over to the table where Erza, Mirajane, Sun, and Jenny were seated and chatting while Eve, Hibiki, and Ren served them all sorts of drinks and snacks.

With Erza facing the guild master's office, she was the first to notice Alfonzo's return. And as soon as he was in speaking range, she alerted the others to his return, as well.

"How did everything go, Alfonzo?" Erza asked calmly.

With Erza's question, Mirajane, Sun, and Jenny turned towards Alfonzo. Meanwhile, Alfonzo continued to draw nearer to the table. Then, when he was behind Sun, who was facing away from Bob's office door, he picked her up, sat down in her seat, and sat her on his lap. Then, he wrapped his arms around her waist and rested his chin on her shoulder before replying.

"Yeah, everything went the way I expected it to go." Alfonzo said while smiling wryly.

"Then, why do you look so tired?" Mirajane asked curiously.

"Because, without anyone to restrain him, Master Bob was quite persistent with his poaching attempts.

Immediately, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun nodded in understanding. Without trying to hide it, Bob had been trying to poach Alfonzo and Elicia for years. And now that neither Makarov nor Ur was around, Bob put a lot more effort into it.

Meanwhile, Jenny, who admittedly had a crush on Alfonzo and wanted him to make machines for her, had her eyes light up at the thought of Alfonzo becoming a member of Blue Pegasus. At the same time, Karen, who was also seated at the table by now, looked uncomfortable with Alfonzo being part of Blue Pegasus. Though, she would be happy with having Elicia close by.

"You should just let Elicia switch guilds." Karen said. "We don't need you here."

"It's nice to see you, too, Karen." Alfonzo said dryly. "You must be getting off daily from all Lici's neglect, right?"

In response, Karen scowled at Alfonzo. Though, there was also a faint dusting of pink on her cheeks, proving Alfonzo's words to be correct.

"Shut your mouth!" Karen shouted angrily after Alfonzo smiled smugly at her.

"Oh, why are you getting so upset, Karen?" Sorano, who enjoyed pushing Karen's buttons, asked in a mock tone of confusion. "Weren't you just talking about how much Lici must care about you because she tied you up and threw you in an unoccupied room before the wedding."

Hearing that, Karen's scowl turned towards Sorano at lightning speed. Meanwhile, the other members of Blue Pegasus looked at Karen with disbelieving gazes. Although they knew she had an abnormal fondness for Elicia, they did not know it was to that level.

"Oops... That was supposed to be a secret, wasn't it?" Sorano asked in the most innocent tone she could muster.

"I'm going to kill you!" Karen shouted as she lunged at Sorano from across the table.

Sorano, on the other hand, slipped away from Karen's grasp before dashing away while giggling happily. Meanwhile, Karen, in raging bitch mode, chased her with all her might.

The other members of Blue Pegasus, on the other hand, could only watch with their eyes and mouths wide open.

"Okay, now that we've talked with Master bob, we should head back to the hotel." Alfonzo said while wearing a refreshed smile. "I've got a lot of work to do starting tomorrow."

Erza, Mirajane, and Sun only nodded their heads in response. In the next instant, with Sun still in his arms, Alfonzo stood up and carried her in a princess carry.

"Alfonzo, it's okay if you put me down, you know." Sun said in a slightly embarrassed tone.

"I know." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "But I don't want to."

"If you don't want him to carry you, I'm more than happy to trade places." Mirajane said with a smile.

"Nuh uh." Sun replied while shaking her head. "I was just surprised, that's all."

"Tch!" Mirajane clicked her tongue with envy in her gaze.

Erza also looked at Sun enviously. However, she also thought being carried like that in public was embarrassing, so, she kept her thoughts to herself.

Unfortunately, Mirajane had no intension of letting her be.

"You don't want Alfonzo to carry you, too, Erza?" Mirajane asked with a smile.

Immediately, Erza's cheeks reddened. However, her expression did not change.

"That's not necessary." Erza replied while shaking her head.

"So, it embarrasses you, too, huh?" Mirajane asked while placing her right index finger on her lower lip. "For someone shameless enough to discuss her sex life in public, it's kinda cute that little things like this embarrass you."

"Mira~~~." Erza squealed in embarrassment, her whole face turning red in an instant.

That was enough to make Alfonzo, Mirajane, and Sun laugh. A few moments later, however, Alfonzo stopped laughing. Then, he turned his head in Hibiki's direction.

"Hey, Hibiki, tomorrow, I wanna talk to you about something." Alfonzo said with a smile. "Do you think you could make a little time for me tomorrow afternoon?"

Surprised that Alfonzo singled him out, Hibiki wore a surprised expression. Despite his surprise, however, Hibiki nodded his head.

"Sure." Hibiki replied. "I don't have anything planned for tomorrow. So, I should have time."

"Cool." Alfonzo said with a nod. "Then, I'll come see you after I finish working tomorrow."

With that, Alfonzo, with Sun in his arms, Erza, and Mirajane bid their farewells. Then, they left the Blue Pegasus guild hall and boarded the Escalade before returning to the hotel they booked in the town.

Meanwhile, all the wizards of Blue Pegasus looked at Hibiki curiously. Unfortunately, they were unable to get any answers, especially because Hibiki was also in the dark about what Alfonzo wanted.

About twenty minutes later, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun entered their hotel room in Onibus' most luxurious hotel.

"*Sigh* All the people from Blue Pegasus are nice enough, but that atmosphere is more than I can handle." Mirajane said after putting her luggage down.

"Indeed." Erza added. "Their version of gentlemanly behavior is quite over the top."

"Yeah, that's why they got beat up so bad when they visited for Alfonzo and Lici's wedding." Sun said.

"I'm sure they wouldn't be so bad if they could remember to keep their hands to themselves." Alfonzo said as he flopped down on the extra-large king-sized bed.

"You didn't seem to mind it when Jenny was all over you, though." Mirajane said as she climbed onto the bed before flopping down on Alfonzo's abdomen. "Are you trying to make me jealous? Because if you are, it's working."

Hearing that, Alfonzo could only smile at his white-haired model. Then, he reached up and began combing his fingers through her hair.

"I'll admit, Lici and I were trying to make you jealous when we first started talking about her yesterday." Alfonzo replied. "But that was just to get you to come with me."

IN response, Mirajane crossed her arms, pouted, and looked away. Though, she did not pull away from Alfonzo's hand. Meanwhile, Erza and Sun also climbed onto the bed, taking positions on either side of Alfonzo and Mirajane.

"But I never expected her to act like that when we got here." Alfonzo continued. "But I'll admit, having her pressed up against me did feel nice."

With that, Mirajane's pout deepened. Before she could complain, however, Alfonzo started moving his hand down from her hair, to her cheek, and finally to her shoulder.

==R-18==

"But she in no way compares to you." Alfonzo said with a smile before pulling Mirajane down on top of him.

Mirajane, on the other hand, wanted to protest on the principal. However, when her face was turned towards Alfonzo and her lips were stolen, all her complaints completely disappeared.

Meanwhile, Erza and Sun watched as Alfonzo's kiss with Mirajane became more and more passionate. Then, when Alfonzo pulled down the zipper on the back of Mirajane's dress, Sun decided she was done waiting. So, she crawled down towards Alfonzo's legs and started pulling down his pants.

"Come on, Erza, give me a hand." Sun said while pulling Alfonz's pants down his legs.

Taking another look at Alfonzo and Mirajane, Erza also moved towards Alfonzo's legs and helped Sun take off his pants. Eventually, the two were able to get Alfonzo naked from the waist down.

"Here we go." Sun said as she wrapped her hand around Alfonzo's dick.

A moment later, Alfonzo felt a wet and warm sensation engulfing his dick. At the same time...

"Hmm." Alfonzo moaned into his kiss with Mirajane.

As Mirajane was so engrossed in the kiss, she did not notice Erza and Sun's movements. However, when she heard Alfonzo's moan, she broke the kiss before looking back. And as she did, she saw Sun bobbing her head up and down on Alfonzo's dick. On top of that, Erza was leaning down to lick his balls.

Shaking her head with a smile. Mirajane took advantage of the fact that Alfonzo had lowered her zipper. Then, she slipped it off her shoulders before crawling up Alfonzo's body. And once she was at the perfect height, she lowered her upper body, putting her left nipple on Alfonzo's lips.

Naturally, Alfonzo wasted no time accepting Mirajane's invitation to start sucking. So, with his left hand gripping, rubbing, and massaging her right breast, Alfonzo opened his mouth and sucked Mirajane's rapidly hardening nipple into his mouth before flicking his tongue on its tip.

"Mmm." Mirajane moaned softly as she pulled Alfonzo's head closer.

The four continued like that until Alfonzo eventually could not hold back anymore. As a result, he came in Sun's mouth. However, unlike what she would usually do, Sun did not swallow it. Instead, with her mouth full, Sun stood up on her knees before taking her panties off from under her skirt.

Then, after throwing her panties across the room, Sun straddled Alfonzo's hips while lining up his dick with the entrance of her pussy. At the same time, Erza [Requipped] out of her armor, ending up nude, as she positioned herself behind Sun.

"Mmm~~~." Sun moaned as she impaled herself on Alfonzo's hard dick.

A moment later, Sun started bouncing up and down on Alfonzo. At the same time, she reached forward and patted Mirajane on the ass.

Looking back, Mirajane saw that Sun's mouth was full. Understanding what the younger girl wanted to do, Mirajane pulled away from Alfonzo. Then, she stripped out of her dress and underwear before facing Sun and straddling Alfonzo's face.

"Ahn~~~~!" Mirajane moaned loudly as Alfonzo sucked her clit into his mouth.

Meanwhile, as Mirajane positioned herself over Alfonzo's face, Erza helped Sun take off her shirt and bra. Then, she began fondling the mermaid's breasts. At the same time, Mirajane leaned forward,

grabbed a handful of Sun's hair, and pulled her into an intense kiss where they swapped Alfonzo's cum between them.

"Mmm~~~~~!" Sun moaned into her kiss with Mirajane as she started to shudder.

At the same time, Alfonzo, who felt Sun's shuddering, gripped her by the waist. Then, with everything he had, he started drilling up into her.

"Ahn~~~~~!" Sun screamed as she grabbed onto Mirajane while breaking the kiss.

At the same time, Mirajane also started to shudder. However, instead of losing herself in the pleasure, she leaned forward, gripped Sun's breasts, and started licking her right nipple. Naturally, this caused Sun to react more intensely as her body began to spasm.

Eventually, both Mirajane and Sun's climaxes ended. And while Mirajane flopped backwards and fell off Alfonzo's face, Sun flopped forward ending up lying on top of Alfonzo with a sloppy smile on her face. Meanwhile, Erza sat in seiza while waiting for the next step of tonight's festivities.

Alfonzo, on the other hand, stopped pistonning into Sun long enough to plant his feet on the mattress. Then, he started pounding into her again.

"Ahh~~~~~!" Sun screamed, her overly sensitive post-orgasmic state overstimulating her.

Still, Alfonzo did not stop, or even slow down. Meanwhile, Mirajane, after recovering from her orgasm, looked at Alfonzo and Sun for a moment. Then, she turned her attention towards Erza with a sadistic smile on her face.

A moment later, Mirajane pulled Erza to the side of Alfonzo. Then, after grabbing a fistful of scarlet hair, she forced Erza's face into her crotch.

"Lick." Mirajane ordered, a sense of superiority in her tone.

Over the years, it's been no secret that Mirajane wanted to be superior to Erza. Unfortunately, while they were close to even when they were younger, Mirajane has not won a match against Erza in several years. However, when they are in the bedroom, thanks to Erza's submissive sexual trait, Mirajane has been able to live out her need to dominate her rival.

And ever since the whole Yoruichi debacle, the girls have been more into interacting with each other, as long as Alfonzo is present. So, the scene of Mirajane forcing Erza to eat her out has become quite common in the last year, or so.

Meanwhile, Alfonzo was reaching his limit.

"Come inside me, Alfonzo~~~~!" Sun screamed as she felt Alfonzo twitching inside of her. "Fill me up, Alfonzo! Fill me up!"

"Hmm! Ah!" Alfonzo moaned as he did exactly what Sun wanted.

"Ahh~~~~~!" Sun screamed once again as Alfonzo's cum flowed inside of her.

At the same time, Sun's eyes opened wide and rolled backwards. Then, after convulsing for close to a minute, Sun pecked Alfonzo on the cheek before climbing off of him, rolling to the side opposite Erza and Mirajane, and getting comfortable to watch the show before it was her turn again.

Alfonzo on the other hand, smiled at Sun for a moment. Then, he climbed up to his knees before moving behind Erza. Then, after pulling her up onto her knees. He lined up his dick with her pussy before thrusting balls deep in one go."

"Mmm~~~~~!" Erza moaned into Mirajane's pussy.

Though Erza wanted to arch her back and moan loudly, Mirajane continued pressing her face into her crotch. So, Erza's moan was quite muffled.

Still, that did not stop Alfonzo from ravaging his redhead with a denial fetish. And just as Erza was about to reach her first climax, Alfonzo stopped and pulled out of her. Then, he pulled her away from Mirajane's pussy before moving forward, pushing Mirajane onto her back, pushing her legs back into the mating press, and slamming into her with no delay.

"Ahh~~~~~!" Mirajane, who was on the verge of cumming thanks to Erza's tongue, came immediately thanks to Alfonzo's rough penetration. Then, with her eyes rolled back and her tongue hanging out of her mouth, she held on for dear life as Alfonzo pounded her with everything he had.

"Still think there's a reason to be jealous?" Alfonzo asked while continuing to pound Mirajane.

Mirajane, on the other hand, could not put together a coherent sentence thanks to Alfonzo's pounding. So, she frantically shook her head while moaning like a banshee.

Eventually, Alfonzo reached his limit for the third time that night, filling up Mirajane, who passed out from the intense sex and the eight orgasms. Then, as soon as Alfonzo pulled out of Mirajane, Erza calmly approached and cleaned him up. Then, she turned around and got down on her hands and knees, letting Alfonzo know how she wanted it.

"Hmm... Looks like I fucked Mira so good that you couldn't wait, huh?" Alfonzo said with a smile.

In response, Erza turned her head away with a blush. However, she did shake her ass in Alfonzo's direction as a response to his question.

Smiling at Erza's cute response, Alfonzo once again took up a position behind Erza. Then, like last time, he slammed into her. Unlike last time, however, he did not stop as she was about to cum. Instead, he ramped up the intensity. And he did not stop until he came inside of her.

By then, Sun was once again ready for her turn, and the quartet continued for the next few hours before going to sleep.

Chapter 492: Making a Deal with Hibiki Lates

The next morning, Alfonzo woke up in a familiar situation. With three soft bodies clinging on to him, he could not help but smile. Unfortunately, because of how wild he, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun were last night, he woke up a bit later than usual.

So, he had to quickly free his arms from Erza and Mirajane's grasps. Then, he carefully picked up Sun, who was sleeping on top of him, trying his best not to wake her up. After that, he climbed out of bed before stretching.

"Damn, I just wanna stay in bed." Alfonzo muttered while looking at the three beautiful women sleeping in the bed. "I fucking hate work."

"Mmm... Then come back to bed." Mirajane said without opening her eyes. "Taking one day off won't kill you, will it."

In response, Alfonzo could not help but shake his head.

"Although you're not wrong, I haven't even started the job yet." Alfonzo said as he walked over to his luggage. "You should pitch that idea again after a couple weeks."

"Okay, I will." Mirajane replied as she wrapped her arms around Sun, treating her like a body pillow.

Once again, Alfonzo shook his head. Then, after getting out a change of clothes, he entered the bathroom to get ready for the day.

About an hour later, Alfonzo, driving the Escalade, parked outside the Blue Pegasus guild hall, right next to the trailer with all the materials needed for the job.

After that, without even entering the guild hall, Alfonzo floated the materials along as he circled around the building.

Meanwhile, inside the guild hall, all the Blue Pegasus wizards were just finishing breakfast before starting their training or taking quests. However, some of them were surprised when they saw large metal pieces floating past the windows.

"Well, that's not something you see every day." Sorano muttered from in front of the quest board.
"Unless you live with someone who controls metals, that is."

"Men~~~!" Ichiya said with snot dripping from his nose while watching the parade of metal through the guilds windows. Then, after regaining his senses, Ichiya put on what he considered his most charming smile. "That's the way a man should handle his work."

"Yes, you're right, Ichiya." The Trimens replied.

"Anyway, let us begin our training." Ichiya said while striking the most manly pose he could think of.

"Yes, Ichiya!" Most of the wizards of Blue Pegasus shouted enthusiastically.

With that, the wizards of Blue Pegasus went about their business and the guild hall fell quiet. Meanwhile, Bob watched his wizards go with a smile.

"*Sigh* My wizards are so motivated." Bob said happily. "And when those training chambers are completed, they'll get stronger."

A moment later, Bob started biting his thumbnail with a frustrated expression on his face.

"Now, I just have to think of a way to make that boy and his wife come to my guild." bob muttered to himself. "They're too good looking to be in any guild other than Blue Pegasus."

While Bob made and discarded ideas to poach Alfonzo and Elicia, knowing that Alfonzo's other girls would follow him were he to switch guilds, the rest of the guild trained and took quests. And eventually, the afternoon came, and the training ended.

As the Blue Pegasus wizards cleaned up after their training, Alfonzo entered the guild hall from the back door. Then, he made his way over to the bar to order something for lunch. After placing his order, Alfonzo scanned the guild hall to find a seat. And when he did, he saw Sorano sitting by herself. So, he made his way to her table.

"Yo, what's up?" Alfonzo asked as he approached Sorano's table.

"Oh, not much." Sorano replied after looking towards Alfonzo. "How about you? How's the work coming along?"

"Just the way I thought it would." Alfonzo replied before taking a seat. "Honestly, doing these jobs for Blue Pegasus, Lamia Scale, and Quatro Cerberus are a thousand times easier than building our guild hall. And I had help with that."

"Yeah, makes sense." Sorano replied with a nod. "I mean that tower of yours was huge."

"That's what she said." Alfonzo said casually.

In response, Sorano smiled wryly while shaking her head.

"Lici said something about you feeling physical pain if you don't say stuff like that." Sorano said in an interested tone. "Is that really true?"

"It is." Alfonzo replied. "Lici and Cana forced me to not say something like that once, and my stomach started twisting in knots. It hurt almost as bad as that time I lost my arm."

While she was interested to know how a condition like Alfonzo's was possible, Sorano was instantly more interested in hearing about how Alfonzo lost an arm. Even more so, about how he got it back.

So, Alfonzo told Sorano about Elicia and Erza's first S-Class quest, how he created an Automail arm for himself, about the quest in Resenbool he took to knock the rust off after so much down time, and the metal he found while on that quest.

Meanwhile, as Alfonzo told his story, the wizards from Blue Pegasus filed into the guild hall. And those who were interested, gathered around the table where Alfonzo and Sorano sat to hear Alfonzo's story, the most interested being Jenny, who wanted Alfonzo to build some weaponized Automail for her [Take Over: machina Soul Magic].

When Alfonzo's story ended, Ichiya, the Trimens, and even Karen, were gathered to listen. And the one who reacted the most was Ichiya.

"Men~~~!" Ichiya shouted emotionally while shedding manly tears as he lunged at Alfonzo to wrap him in a hug. "To think you've suffered through so much. Truly, you are a man to be respected."

Unfortunately for Ichiya , Alfonzo was not in the mood to be hugged by such a manly man as himself. So, before he could get closer than an arm's length, Alfonzo's right arm shot out at high speed. Then, his hand clamped down on Ichiya's face.

"I appreciate the sentiment." Alfonzo said while smiling wryly at the sight of Ichiya flailing his arms and legs. "But I'd rather not have you hugging me while your face is covered in snot and tears."

After saying that, Alfonzo handed Ichiya over to the Trimens. Then, he dispelled the metal he coated his palm with, causing the tears and snot that had come in contact with it to fall to the floor.

"There's no need to be shy." Ichiya said while pulling a handkerchief from his suit's pocket. Then, he blew his nose before continuing. "*Honk* In fact, we should sit down for a cup of tea. That way, we could patch up our relationship that got off on the wrong foot."

"Ichiya!" All of Ichiya's followers shouted emotionally at Ichiya's magnanimity.

"Uh... I guess." Alfonzo replied while scratching the back of his head. "But we'll have to do that later. For now, I need to talk to Hibiki."

With that, everyone turned their attention to Hibiki, who wore a confused expression, unsure of what Alfonzo would need to talk about with him. Still, he bowed slightly before gesturing towards an empty table in the corner of the guild hall.

"If you'll follow me, then." Hibiki said in a gentlemanly tone.

Nodding his head, Alfonzo stood from his seat before stepping towards the table Hibiki gestured to.

"Hey, where are Mira and the girls?" Sorano asked curiously. "I thought they'd be here waiting for you to finish your work."

"Oh, they decided to go shopping today." Alfonzo said without turning around. "They'll probably go back to the hotel after that."

"They didn't even invite me." Sorano said in a frustrated tone. "A shopping trip would have been a great way to spend time this afternoon."

Shrugging his shoulders, Alfonzo continued walking. A moment later, he took a seat at the table Hibiki pointed out. Shortly afterwards, Hibiki also took a seat.

"So, what is it you wished to speak about?" Hibiki asked in a curious tone.

"Well, I had a proposal for you." Alfonzo replied with a smile.

Tilting his head in curiosity, Hibiki waited for Alfonzo to continue.

"Actually, I had an idea to make a lot of money." Alfonzo continued as he leaned forward, resting his elbows on the table and supporting his chin with his interlocked fingers. "And it needs [Archive Magic] to make it work. But when it's ready, we would both be rich. Well... you'd end up rich. I, on the other hand, would just be adding numbers to a total I can't be bothered to count at this point."

Hearing Alfonzo brag about his wealth, Hibiki could not help but twitch an eyebrow. However, there are not many people who are against making more money, and Hibiki is no exception. So, he leaned forward and gestured for Alfonzo to continue.

Smiling in response to Hibiki's gesture, Alfonzo created a screen with his [Archive Magic], surprising Hibiki in the process. However, Alfonzo did not let that bother him.

"Well, just like when I created the new magic vehicles, I wanna change the way communications work, too." Alfonzo said while gesturing towards the image on the [Archive Screen]. "Right now, there are only two ways to communicate over long distances. Either by writing letters or by using a communications lacrima."

Nodding in agreement, Hibiki once again gestured for Alfonzo to continue.

"Unfortunately, letters take a long time to reach their destination." Alfonzo said. "And if there's an accident, it won't get there at all. And then there are communications lacrima. As you know, these lacrima only allow you to connect to someone with the paired lacrima."

Once again, Hibiki nodded, signifying that he understood.

"But this is where my idea comes in." Alfonzo said, once again gesturing towards the screen. "With one device, a person could have access to three modes of communication."

"Three?" Hibiki asked in a confused tone. "But you only mentioned two just now."

"That's right." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "Letters, or text, and communications lacrima, or video, as I like to call it."

"And what's the third?" Hibiki asked.

"Audio." Alfonzo replied. "Or simply speech."

Seeing how Hibiki was interested, Alfonzo went on to explain how the device would work. With the use of [Archive Magic], to connect the two devices, sigils that convert ethernano into magic power to power them, and all the other necessary parts to make magical smartphones that he would take care of.

"This sounds like an incredible idea." Hibiki said, his tone filled with genuine praise. "But I don't see why you would need my help with this. I mean, you're quite capable of using [Archive Magic] on your own."

"Although you're not wrong, the first time I ever cast it was a little more than three weeks ago." Alfonzo replied. "You, on the other hand, have been using it for years. And with your experience, we would be able to cut down on the time needed for experimentation."

"I see." Hibiki replied in an understanding tone. "Well, I must say that I'm quite interested."

"Good." Alfonzo replied with a smile.

"And how will profits from this venture be distributed?" Hibiki asked while narrowing his eyes.

With that, a lengthy negotiation started. To make a long story short, Alfonzo and Hibiki both decided to bring their guilds in on this venture as investors. In the end, should Ur and Bob agree, each guild would get eight percent of the profits, Hibiki would receive thirty-five percent of the shares, and Sixth Sense Holdings would receive forty-nine percent of the shares.

As for the reason behind the breakdown, Alfonzo provided the idea and would be creating the hardware and software for the item. Hibiki would be vital in managing the [Archive Magic] network, and the guilds were only included because of Alfonzo and Hibiki's love for their guilds.

"*Sigh* This will revolutionize the way people keep in touch." Hibiki said with a smile. "It will also help people who are in danger ask for help much more quickly, too."

"On top of that, I'm sure dark wizards will end up buying... Uh... stealing them, too." Alfonzo said with a grin. "And they'll definitely use them to discuss their nefarious plans. But with the hot word protocols we'll be adding to the network, we'll be alerted whenever someone talks about doing something they shouldn't."

"Yeah, and that's probably the best part of all this." Hibiki replied with a smile of his own. "*Sigh* Unfortunately, we'll have to let the Magic Council know about this, too."

'Yeah, I guess we will.' Alfonzo thought to himself, having completely forgotten about the magic council. 'Just as long as they don't try to get a piece of the pie, everything will be fine. But still, I guess we can't go all NSA and DHS without talking to the governing bodies on the continent first.'

["On the other hand, you'll be able to do like

Batman did when he needed to find the Joker in Dark Knight."] Bedlam said with a grin.

["Yeah, that was super bad ass!"] Riot shouted excitedly.

'And the biggest breach of privacy ever.' Alfonzo replied while rolling his eyes.

["And?"] Bedlam and Riot asked simultaneously.

Unfortunately, Alfonzo could not say anything in his defense. Because if he could use it to bring down Junko or any of the upcoming threats to the continent, he would do it in a heartbeat.

"Anyway, it will take a few days for me to get the first prototype magic item ready." Alfonzo said. "After that, we can work together to get it to interact with the [Archive Magic]. And if we're lucky, we'll be finished by the time I'm done upgrading your training facilities."

"Yeah, I hope so." Hibiki replied with a nod. Then, he extended his right hand for a handshake. "Here's to a fruitful cooperation."

"Yeah, let's hope everything goes well." Alfonzo replied as he accepted Hibiki's handshake.

After that, the two continued discussing any issues they may have to face with connecting the devices to the [Archive Magic] network until Erza, Mirajane, and Sun arrived at the guild hall to spend time with Alfonzo.

Chapter 493: The Kingdom of Fiore Ripped off Fairy Tail

A few weeks have passed since Alfonzo and Hibiki made their agreement. In the meantime, Fairy Tail was operating as usual. Today, however, they received a couple of visitors in the form of Izumi and Sig Curtis, led by Winry to see Izumi's apprentices.

"It's still hard to believe that those boys got their original bodies back." Izumi Curtis, a tall, fair-skinned woman with mid-back-length black hair worn in box braids and tied into a ponytail and sharp, black eyes wearing a sleeveless, long, white blouse with the top few buttons undone, revealing some cleavage and a Flamel tattoo on her left breast, a pair of ankle-length black pants, and a pair of black sandals, said while she followed Winry towards the Fairy Tail guild hall while holding her husband's hand.

"I know what you mean." Winry, with a smile on her face, replied happily. "I was there when it happened, and sometimes I still think I was dreaming.

"Even so, this is something worth celebrating." Izumi's husband, Sig Curtis, a tall, massively muscular middle-aged man wearing a green t-shirt, blue pants, and simple black boots, said in a deep voice. "On top of that, there could even be a chance for you to regain what you have lost as well, my dear."

Smiling hopefully, Izumi hugged her husband's arm while drawing nearer. Meanwhile, Winry was also smiling. However, her smile was closer to a wry smile than a happy or hopeful one.

"I don't know if that will be as easy as you expect." Winry said, though she did not want to destroy the hopeful atmosphere. "And there are a couple of reasons for that."

"What do you mean?" Izumi asked with her eyebrows furrowed.

"Well, for one, the Philosopher's Stone does not belong to Ed and Al." Winry replied. "It belongs to Alfonzo Marcus, an S-Class wizard of the Fairy Tail."

"You mentioned that before." Izumi replied with a nod. "Still, why would that make everything more difficult?"

"Well, since you are an Alchemist, you do things on the basis of equivalent exchange, right?" Winry asked, though it was more of a statement than a question.

"That's right." Izumi replied. A moment later, Izumi realized what Winry was getting at. "And what could I give that would be of equal value to a Philosopher's Stone...?"

"Exactly." Winry replied solemnly.

"What did the boys have to pay?" Sig asked.

"They had to join Fairy Tail until they retired." Winry replied. "And although there are many loop holes that could be used in that agreement, Ed and Al were determined to carry out the agreement."

"I see." Izumi said while lowering her head in thought. "But I'm only a housewife. I'm not cut out for the job of a guild wizard."

Hearing Izumi call herself "only a housewife," Winry could not help but roll her eyes. She had seen this woman throw Alphonse, while he was still an armor, over her shoulder with little effort, after all.

"Still, I'm sure I could work out something with this Alfonzo Marcus." Izumi replied. "Although I'm not suitable as a wizard, I--- *Cough*"

Splatter!

Before Izumi could finish, she stopped walking and coughed up a mouthful of blood that splattered on the path leading from Magnolia to the Fairy Tail guild hall.

"Kya~~~~!" Winry screamed in panic.

"Honey!" Sig exclaimed as he held Izumi close. Then, with his free hand, he pulled out a bottle of medicine from the bag he was carrying, poured out a couple tablets, and fed them to Izumi. "Take these, they'll help."

Swallowing the pills, Izumi reached into one of her pockets and pulled out a handkerchief. Then, she wiped the blood from her face. Meanwhile, Sig reached into the bag he was carrying for a second time and pulled out a canteen, uncapped it, and handed it to Izumi.

Canteen in hand, Izumi took a few gulps of water before handing it back to Sig.

"Thank you, Dear." Izumi said with love in her eyes.

"Of course." Sig replied as he turned towards his wife. "Anything for you, my love."

With that, a pink aura engulfed the married couple as they slipped into their own world, leaving Winry to look on in envy.

'Ed and I will be like that one day.' Winry muttered to herself. 'Then, we'll make all the onlookers jealous and uncomfortable, too.'

A few moments later, Winry dragged Izumi and Sig out of their self-created world. Then, she continued leading them towards the guild hall. And when they eventually arrived, the Curtis couple could not help but look up in awe.

"It looks even bigger up close." Izumi muttered.

At the same time, Winry could have sworn she heard Alfonzo say, "that's what she said." Something she knew was impossible because she knew he was all the way in Onibus working on Blue Pegasus' guild hall.

"Anyway, let's go inside." Winry said with a smile. "Ed and Al should be inside. They should have just finished going through a rehabilitation session with Miss Porlyusica."

Nodding in response, Izumi and Sig stepped forward. Then, just as Sig reached out to open and hold the door for Izumi, the Curtis couple's eyes widened when the doors slid to either side on their own.

Winry, on the other hand, smiled at Izumi and sig's reactions, as she had a similar reaction the first time she saw such heavy metal doors move on their own, as well.

At the same time, thanks to the guild hall's doors opening, many of Fairy Tail's wizards looked in their direction. Having grown familiar with Winry, most of them went back to what they were doing. Naturally, there were a few exceptions, though.

"Teacher!" A pair of male voices shouted loud enough to be heard over the hustle and bustle of the guild hall.

Looking in the direction of the voices, Winry, Izumi, and Sig saw a pair of golden blond young men standing up from their seats at a table. While the shorter of the two stood up with little difficulty, the taller of the two was using a pair of crutches to do so.

On top of that, the shorter of the two, Edward Elric, was wearing a short-sleeved, white t-shirt, and a black pair of shorts, showing off his arms and legs, which were completely made of flesh and blood.

However, Izumi and Sig's attention was drawn more to the taller of the two, Alphonse Elric, whose face they had not seen since he was a child, due to the [Human Transmutation] accident.

"Edward... Alphonse..." Izumi said emotionally as she slowly started taking steps towards her former apprentices. At the same time, Edward supported his younger brother to approach as well.

Meanwhile, seeing what was going on, the rest of the guild quieted down as they watched the reunion.

Eventually, the two sides met. And when they did, Izumi immediately pulled Edward and Alphonse into a hug before all three were engulfed in a hug by Sig.

"Teacher..." Edward and Alphonse muttered as they both cried quietly.

"Edward, Alphonse, I'm glad you're both safe." Izumi said while tears streamed down her face, as well. Then, she pulled away from the Elric brothers and took a good look at them. "Al, you're so much bigger than the last time I saw you properly. And Ed... even you've grown a little."

Hearing that, Alphonse, who stood at 5'7" smiled. Meanwhile, Edward, who had grown by nearly an inch and stood at 5', smiled wryly.

"Anyway, why don't we have a seat." Sig Suggested. "I'm sure this is not the most comfortable way for Alphonse to carry on a conversation.

Izumi immediately opened her eyes wide before remembering that Alphonse was using crutches when he approached. Then, she nodded her head as she and Edward helped Alphonse back to his seat.

"So, tell us, what happened when you got your bodies back?" Izumi asked once she, Winry, Edward, Alphonse, and Sig were seated.

As asked, Edward and Alphonse worked together to tell the story about their meeting with Ankhseram. After that, they explained the process of their rehab. They also talked about how scary Porlyusica was, as well. And they both shivered when they mentioned Porlyusica's broom.

Then, while they were in the midst of their discussion, the doors once again slid open, revealing Ultear and Meredy, who had just returned from a quest. And to everyone's surprise, Ultear was wearing a serious expression.

"Big news, everyone." Ultear said while holding a newspaper in her hand.

"Really, what's up, Tear?" Cana asked curiously. "Did Fonzie do something again?"

"No, this time it's not about him." Ultear replied as she stepped into the guild hall and headed for the usual table.

Unsurprising to Ultear, however, was the fact that Meredy was frozen in place just inside the doors.

"*Sigh* If you wanna go over there, then go." Ultear said while shaking her head. "Then again, I guess you don't know who you should talk to anymore, huh?"

Immediately, Meredy began to blush. Then, she glared at Ultear with a pout.

"Stop making fun of me, Tear." Meredy whined.

In response, Ultear could not help but laugh. Then, she started patting Meredy on the head.

"And stop treating me like a kid." Meredy said as she slapped Ultear's hand away.

"Okay, okay, I'll stop." Ultear said with a chuckle. "But seriously, you should make a decision. Unless you're trying to start a reverse harem, that is. But something tells me those two won't be okay with sharing a girl."

"Tear~~~~!" Meredy whined loudly as her blush intensified.

As it turned out, as soon as Meredy saw Alphonse's real body, despite the fact that he was basically skin and bones, she, like she had done with Edward, fell in love immediately. Naturally, because of this, she did not know who she should focus on. And Ultear has loved teasing her about it ever since.

"Anyway, you should go introduce yourself." Ultear whispered into Meredy's ear. "If I remember correctly, that woman is Izumi Curtis, Ed and Al's mentor. Basically, the closest thing they have to a parent."

With that, Meredy's expression turned resolute. Then, without another word, she started walking towards the table where the Elrics sat. Meanwhile, Ultear could only shake her head at Meredy's actions. Then, with the newspaper in hand, she continued to the table where her friends sat.

"So, what's the deal, Tear?" Elicia asked curiously. "What kind of news could get you so excited."

"Take a look at this, and you'll understand." Ultear replied as she put the newspaper down on the table.

Picking up the newspaper, Elicia read the headline aloud.

"A New Magical Competition to Crown Fiore's Strongest Guild." Elicia said with her eyes widening.

'I guess that means the Grand Magic Games are right around the corner, huh?' Elicia thought to herself as she read the rest of the article. 'Oh, their gonna start the Miss Fiore Pageant, too, huh?'

["Yeah, and this is all suspiciously similar to the Harvest Festival festivities are guild puts on, isn't it?"] Scylla asked as she read the article through Elicia's eyes.

'I know, right.' Elicia replied. 'I guess our guild was the inspiration behind the king's decision in this time line.'

["Yeah, but it would have happened anyway, now that I think about it."] Scylla said in a contemplative tone. ["I mean, in the canon, Jenny Realight was the reigning Miss Fiore in x791. On top of that, the Grand Magic Games had been going on since at least x789, since Sabretooth dethroned the previous year's champion."]

'That's right. Elicia replied. 'So, at the most, we only sped up the Grand Magic Games, rather than being the reason for them.'

["Right."] Scylla replied with a nod.

"Well, this could be fun." Elicia said as she put the newspaper back down. "And it looks like it will start on July 1 of next year."

"What are you talking about, Lici?" Marin asked curiously as she took the newspaper to read it for herself.

"Yeah, just tell us." Lisanna said with a smile. "Don't keep us in suspense."

"Well, it looks like---" Elicia began to say.

"No way!" Marin exclaimed. "Did the kingdom rip off our Battle of Fairy Tail tournament and make it a kingdom wide event?"

Naturally, Marin's loud exclamation drew the attention of everyone in the main hall. The more curious members of the guild even made their way over to the table to ask what she was talking about.

"Basically." Elicia replied with a shrug.

"And that's why I was so serious when I came in." Ultear said with a nod. "They plan on crowning the strongest guild in Fiore. And I think that crown belongs with us. So, we need to talk to Mom about this."

Hearing that, the guild hall was filled with battle intent. Then, Natsu, the most excitable member of the guild threw his head back and breathed a stream of fire towards the ceiling.

"Oh yeah! I'm all fired up!" Natsu shouted excitedly. "There will be so many people to fight. I can't wait!"

A moment later, however, Natsu choked on his flames after feeling an intense glare land on him. And when he looked towards the glare's source, he almost wet himself in fear.

"Natsu, what have I told you about doing things that could damage the guild hall?" Elicia asked in an ominous tone. "Did you forget how hard Fonzie worked to build this for us?"

"Wait, Lici, I'm sorry." Natsu replied in a fear-filled tone as he took a few steps back. "I promise, I won't let it happen again."

"That's what you said last time." Elicia said as she ejected threads from the hand she stretched towards Natsu.

In response, Natsu engulfed his body in flames. Unfortunately, that had no effect on the threads Elicia was using to immobilize him.

"Why aren't they burning?" Natsu asked in a horrified tone.

Before he could receive an answer to his question, however, Natsu was wrapped up from neck to toe. At the same time, Elicia used another bundle of her threads to open the elevator and threw Natsu in before sending him up to the tenth floor.

"Now, when the elevator gets back, we should go and talk to Ur about this." Elicia said as if nothing happened.

"That ability to add threads of different attributes to your magic almost feels like cheating." Lucy said as she stared blankly at the elevator doors.

Chapter 494: How to Make a Shinobi Mission Request

Around the same time Ultear arrived at the Fairy Tail guild hall with the newspaper, Alfonzo, after finishing his work for the day was sitting in a hot spring pool at Blue Pegasus exclusive hot spring, Pegasus Village. However, instead of just relaxing, which he was, he was also designing the phones that would be used with his and Hibiki's [Archive Magic] telecommunications network.

"Alright, using the sigils I use to give a sense of feel to Automail, I can make a nearly perfect touch screen." Alfonzo muttered to himself while drawing on an [Archive Magic] screen. Then, after sliding the screen design to the left, he began drawing the phone's battery. "And if I use the self-sustaining sigils, I used for Edolas' miniature Anima, they shouldn't need charging... *Sigh* I'm gonna have to put a shit ton of effort into the security, though. Last thing anyone needs is a Dark Guild with a means of collecting power like that."

With that, Alfonzo made a note on the design. Then, he dismissed his [Archive Magic]. After that, he stretched before sinking into the pool and letting the water reach his shoulders.

"*Sigh* In my head, this was a lot easier." Alfonzo muttered as he closed his eyes. "But there really are a lot of working parts. On top of that, we'll have to set up relays for the [Archive Magic] all over Ishgar.
Sigh So much work."

After his words fell, Alfonzo fell silent for a few minutes while contemplating how he would make this project a reality. Eventually, however, he exhaled a sigh before splashing the water in the hot spring on his face.

"Well, we can only take it one step at a time." Alfonzo said. "For now, let's just worry about getting the network working in Fiore."

Nodding at himself, Alfonzo's eyebrow rose after hearing a series of footsteps. A moment later, however, he relaxed once again. His [Magic Power Detection] let him know exactly who it was, after all.

A few moments later, the door to the hot spring pool he rented was forcefully pulled open. Standing in the now open doorway was Sun, who was blushing from exertion and excitement, while holding a copy of the newspaper.

"Alfonzo, big news!" Sun shouted after closing the door. Then, she quickly approached the hot spring.

Before she could get too far, however, Sun stopped. Then, she realized that Alfonzo was in the hot spring.

"What am I doing?" Sun asked herself, which caused Alfonzo to turn his head in her direction.

With that, Sun put the newspaper she was carrying in one of the baskets used to store clothing. Then, she began taking her clothes off. And once she was naked, she picked up the newspaper before walking towards the hot spring.

A moment later, after checking the temperature of the water with her toes, Sun stepped into the water, waded towards Alfonzo, then took a seat in his lap. All while making sure the newspaper did not get wet.

Once Sun was comfortable, she nodded happily to herself. Then, she held the newspaper up so that Alfonzo could read it.

"Big news, Alfonzo." Sun said excitedly. "Fiore is gonna have a tournament for all the wizards in the kingdom!"

As Sun exclaimed, Alfonzo could not help but smile at her excitement. Then he raised an arm out of the water before starting to comb his fingers through HER hair. At the same time, he also started reading the article that Sun was holding up for him.

"Hmm.... the king basically ripped off our Harvest Festival festivities." Alfonzo muttered while reading. "But a nationwide beauty pageant should bring out all the most beautiful girls from around Fiore. And the Grand Magic Games should be fun, too."

Eventually, Alfonzo finished reading. When he did, he wrapped his arms around Sun's waist and pulled her closer himself. Then, he released a sigh.

"What's wrong?" Sun asked curiously while turning her head to look at Alfonzo. "I thought you said it would be fun. So, why are you sighing like that?"

"Because I probably won't be able to participate for the first couple years." Alfonzo replied. "I still have to do that job for the Village Hidden in the Leaves, remember?"

Hearing that, Sun's eyes lit up. Before she could put her thoughts into words, however, the sound of two more sets of footsteps could be heard approaching the hot spring pool from the corridor. A moment later, Mirajane and Erza opened the door to the private room.

"Seriously, Sun." Mirajane said in an exasperated tone. "It's not like he would have missed the news if you had waited for us."

"Indeed." Erza added. "Now, we missed his reaction."

Immediately, Sun's expression turned to an embarrassed one.

"Oops... Sorry." Sun said while lowering her head to hide her blush. "I was just so excited."

"Yeah, I guess I can understand that." Mirajane replied as she started taking off her clothes. "Still, I wish I could have been here to see Alfonzo's face when he found out about it."

"Indeed." Erza added as she [Requipped] out of her clothes. Then, she started walking towards the hot spring. "I'm sure seeing his eyes light up would have been nice."

"*Sigh* That's so convenient." Mirajane muttered as she continued stripping out of her clothes and putting them in one of the free baskets.

Meanwhile, Erza, like Sun had done before, tested the temperature of the water with her toes. Then, she stepped into the pool and took a seat on Alfonzo's right.

"Ah~~~~!" Erza exhaled in comfort as she leaned on Alfonzo. "You were right, Sun. This is truly wonderful."

"I know, right?" Sun replied while puffing out her chest proudly. "Hot springs are the best."

By now, Mirajane had also stepped into the pool. Then, she, too, sat down and leaned on Alfonzo's other side.

"Yeah, they really are." Mirajane said in a relaxed tone.

Alfonzo, on the other hand, was not complaining about the situation he found himself in. However, he could not help but pat himself on the back for renting a private hot spring.

["Yeah, because I'm sure they wouldn't have stopped if you had chosen to take a dip in the men's bath."] Bedlam said while shaking his head.

'Probably not.' Alfonzo replied while mentally shrugging. 'And I can only feel sorry for any guys that were already in there or came later. Because I'm certain they would have dealt with them in the Fairy Tail way. And all before any of them could see their bodies.'

["Oh, there's no doubt about that."] Bedlam said with a smile.

"So, Sun, how did Alfonzo react to the news?" Mirajane asked before leaning over and kissing Alfonzo on the cheek.

"You could have just asked me, you know?" Alfonzo asked in an incredulous tone.

In response, Mirajane smiled before pecking him on the cheek again. And that kiss started a chain reaction, as Sun turned around and pecked him on the lips before Erza pecked him on the other cheek.

Immediately, any protests Alfonzo had, playful or otherwise, disappeared. At the same time, Sun started explaining Alfonzo's reaction to the article, which earned him a pinch on the waist from the Jealous Mirajane. However, he did not mind that. Instead, he thought about what he knew of the Grand Magic Games.

'So, the only thing I know for sure is that Sabertooth, led by its twin Dragon Slayers, won the x790 Grand Magic Games.' Alfonzo thought to himself while the girls chatted happily. 'Other than that, I don't know when it actually started in the canon timeline. On top of that, there's a pretty good chance that with all

these crossover characters, Sabertooth won't win in x790. Still, I would love to see the look on Jienma's face when Sabertooth is dominated. I think I'll stop him from taking Minerva and joining Tartaros, too.'

Like that, the group of four continued enjoying the hot spring until they were ready to leave.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Mermaid Heel Headquarters.

August, x786.

After the news reported on the upcoming Grand Magic Games, All of Fiore was excited, looking forward to the competition between the wizards of the legal guilds. Unfortunately, there was no news reported about the format of the tournament. As a result, Sorcerer Weekly had a lot of articles that interviewed, so called, experts about their speculations.

Meanwhile, Alfonzo continued his work at the Blue Pegasus guild hall. And with only a few weeks left until September, he was nearly finished with his work. ON top of that, Alfonzo and Hibiki were able to get the initial version of the [Archive Magic Network] ready for deployment.

Unfortunately, things were not as easy as Alfonzo expected. Because the range of the magic was limited, it meant he would have to place relays all over the kingdom, and eventually the continent. That, however, could be solved by issuing quests.

But Alfonzo's idea went a step further than just issuing quests to the Legal Guilds in Fiore. And because of that, Tsunade received a letter asking about the process to make mission reports for the Shinobi of the Village Hidden in the Leaves.

"*Sigh* What is that kid up to now?" Tsunade asked while rubbing her temples. Then, she picked up a sake cup from her desk and took a sip before once again reading the letter.

"What do you mean, Lady Tsunade?" Shizune asked curiously.

"Alfonzo must be planning something big if he's asking about what he needs to do to create a mission for the ninjas of the village." Tsunade replied.

"Isn't that a good thing?" Shizune asked in apparent confusion. "If someone of his stature wishes to employ the village, it should bring in quite a bit of revenue, no?"

"You're not wrong, Shizune." Tsunade replied while shaking her head. "But it makes you wonder... He's a member of the strongest guild in the kingdom. So, what would he need help with that his guild can't help him with."

"I think you're looking at this the wrong way, Tsuna." Retsu, who was seated across the desk from Tsunade, said after taking a sip from a cup of tea.

Hearing that, Tsunade shifted her attention from the letter to the former Mermaid Heel guild master.

"How so?" Tsunade asked as she put the letter down on the desk.

"Perhaps it's not that his guild is not strong enough." Retsu replied. "Instead, he probably needs the manpower that your village can provide. There are thousands of shinobi housed in your village, correct?"

With that, the light of realization flashed in Tsunade's beautiful, hazel eyes. Then, she lowered her head, supporting her chin with her right hand, as she thought about Retsu's conjecture.

"You're probably right." Tsunade said after thinking about it for a few moments. "Still, I'm curious, why not just post a quest for all the Legal Guilds in the kingdom instead of using the village."

"If had to guess, it has something to do with the upcoming Grand Magic Games." Retsu said with a gentle smile. "More than likely, after the news came out, the guilds who intend to participate in the event will focus on growing in strength. Especially because the title of strongest guild in Fiore is at stake."

"I see." Tsunade replied while rubbing her chin. "That makes even more sense. Still, I'm curious to know what he's up to."

"Well, then you should ask him." Retsu replied while continuing to smile. "And as it happens, I'm supposed to pick up something from him when he's back in Magnolia. So, why don't you accompany me?"

"*Sigh* I suppose you're right." Tsunade said. "It's not like I could figure out what a kid like him is thinking, anyway. So, when are we leaving? And what do you want to pick up, anyway?"

"I intend to leave on the thirty-first." Retsu replied, her smile widening as she did so. "And as for what I'm picking up, it's not more than an item that I recently gained interest in."

Hearing Retsu's words and tone, as well as seeing the smile on her face, Tsunade had a bad feeling. However, she needed to talk to Alfonzo. Not only about the mission, but also as the liaison for the village about his overhaul of the training grounds.

"Then, I'll be ready to leave on the thirty-first." Tsunade said, though she sounded quite apprehensive. A moment later, she turned to Shizune before continuing. "Shizune, you'll be in charge while Master Retsu and I are away. Make sure those girls train hard. We're aiming to be the champions of the Grand Magic Games, after all."

"Yes, Lady Tsunade." Shizune replied in a resolute tone.

Nodding at her disciple, Tsunade turned her attention back to her paperwork. Though, she did glance at Retsu once more beforehand.

'*Sigh* I'm just glad I survived... If dying several times and being revived can be called surviving... Master Retsu's discipline training.' Tsunade thought to herself as she picked up her pen. 'I have no idea how she can call that torture training. But I guess it worked. I get the feeling any time I'm about to go overboard drinking or gambling Master Retsu's face will pop up in my head. Then, I'll be too scared to go too far.'

Chapter 495: The Work for the Guilds is Finally Complete

Time passed quickly with Alfonzo working on the training chambers for the Blue Pegasus guild hall, as well as working on the [Archive Magic Network] for the telecommunications plan with Hibiki. And just like that, after finishing the installation of the training chambers, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun were ready to return to Magnolia.

Naturally, all the wizards of Blue Pegasus, who had made some friendships with the visiting Fairy Tail wizards, were gathered outside the Blue Pegasus guild hall to say their goodbyes.

"Men~!" Ichiya shouted excitedly as he stood in front of the group of Blue Pegasus wizards. "I don't know when we will see each other next, but we'll definitely be at the Grand Magic Games. And with the power we shall cultivate with the new training chambers, we'll take the title of strongest guild in Fiore away from Fairy Tail."

Excitedly, the wizards of Blue Pegasus cheered at their ace's declaration. Meanwhile, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun only looked at them with challenging smiles.

"Well, I hope you can at least give us a challenge." Alfonzo said provocatively. "It's lonely at the top, after all."

While most of the Blue Pegasus wizards looked at Alfonzo defiantly, the seven who were most likely to be chosen as members of the team, looked at him challengingly.

"At least you'll have a chance for the first couple of years." Alfonzo said in a tone that suggested he was carrying a heavy burden. "I'll be too busy to participate in the first two or three Grand Magic Games, after all. But after that, the Games will belong to Fairy Tail from then on."

"Oh, it will be Fairy Tail's from the start." Mirajane said confidently. "It just won't be as close after you join, Alfonzo."

"Hahahaha!" Alfonzo laughed uproariously after hearing Mirajane's comment. Then, after seeing Erza and Sun nodding along, he laughed even harder. "I guess that's true. The rest of our guys are stupid strong, too."

"That's right, we're strong!" Sun said while flexing her arms.

"Indeed." Erza added. "Fairy Tail will not lose."

"You shouldn't talk like that." Sorano said with a smile. "I'd hate it if you had to eat those words, you know."

"Actually, I think I'd like to see the faces they put on when they have to do exactly that." Karen added while wearing her usual expression.

With that, the members of the two guilds continued to banter. Meanwhile, Jenny looked at Alfonzo with a pout.

"You didn't make anything for me." Jenny said in an aggrieved tone with upturned eyes.

In response, Alfonzo could only smile wryly. Between working on the training chambers, working with Hibiki for their project, and Mirajane doing her best to keep him too exhausted to do anything else, Alfonzo did not have the time or the energy to create anything for Jenny. On top of that, she was trying to use her charms to get him to do it for free, something that would never happen.

In fact, Mirajane would not have even been so pushy if Jenny had offered to pay a reasonable amount for one of Alfonzo's creations. However, she had no intention of letting the young upstart seduce her man into doing anything for free.

"Well, I'll send you a catalog of what I can make for you in the next few weeks." Alfonzo said with a smile.

Hearing that, Jenny's expression brightened up at once. Alfonzo's next words, however, caused her to begin pouting again.

"And once you have the money, I'll be happy to make whatever you want." Alfonzo continued with a smile.

In response, Jenny stomped her foot cutely as she looked away with a pout becoming even more pronounced.

"See, I told you." Sorano said as she pulled Jenny into a hug with one arm. "Alfonzo doesn't play with his money matters. And he never does any work for free, either."

"Hmph!" Jenny snorted, her pride in her appearance taking a bit of damage.

'I'll just have to join his harem.' Jenny thought to herself. 'I bet he doesn't make them pay for stuff. But I don't know how that will work... I mean long distance relationships are hard from what I hear. Then again, I wouldn't know. I've never even been in a regular relationship.'

Seeing the minute changes and the blush creeping up on Jenny's face, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun knew exactly what was going through the girl's head. Then, they all looked at Alfonzo quizzically. None of them could understand how he could attract so many women without even trying.

In response to the stares he was receiving, Alfonzo only smiled in return. He knew what his three fiancées were thinking, and he had no answer to their question, either.

On a side note, one of the things Alfonzo did manage to do while he was not working was create rings for his other girlfriends that were not officially engaged to him. In other words, he created engagement rings for Ultear, Mirajane, Marin, and Lucy. And since Mirajane was there when he completed the rings, he asked her to marry him.

Naturally, Mirajane accepted the proposal. Then, the two of them had a night of passion without Erza and Sun joining in.

"Anyway, I think it's about time we get going." Alfonzo said, deciding that it was time to leave. "At the very latest, we'll see you again at the Grand Magic Games."

"We'll be looking forward to it." Ichiya said while posing in the manliest way he could.

"Oh, and Hibiki." Alfonzo said before turning towards the Escalade. "I'll bring you one of the devices once I've finished working out all the kinks. Then, I'll head to Era to present it in front of the Magic Council."

"Are you sure you don't need me to come with you?" Hibiki asked.

"That would defeat the purpose." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "You have to be in Fiore for the best result."

Naturally, no one knew what Alfonzo and Hibiki were talking about. Even though it had been two months since Alfonzo first made his proposal to Hibiki, neither of them had told anyone what it was that they were planning. So, they could only look on in confusion and curiosity.

"I suppose you're correct." Hibiki replied with a nod. Then, he smiled as he continued. "I'm looking forward to how many waves this new device will rase on Ishgar."

Smiling in response, Alfonzo waved at the Blue Pegasus wizards before turning around and opening the driver's side door of the Escalade. Meanwhile, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun also said their goodbyes. And just as they were getting in the Escalade, as well, Alfonzo shuddered violently.

Looking around for what caused the uncomfortable sensation, Alfonzo eventually saw a pair of black eyes set in a bald head staring at him from a second-floor window while he could see a pair of lips, covered in red lipstick, moving. And when he read those moving lips, Alfonzo looked away hurriedly. Then, once the ladies all had their seat belts on, he pulled off quickly.

At the same time, the wizards of Blue Pegasus made their way back into the guild hall. They were eager to use the training chambers, after all. Meanwhile, Bob, while watching the Escalade move into the distance from a second-floor window muttered the same thing, over and over, to himself.

"Just you wait, Alfonzo Marcus, I will have you and Elicia join my guild one day." Bob said with obsession in his tone.

Luckily, Bob had no intention of doing anything illegal to draw Alfonzo and Elicia over to his guild. Instead, he had a different plan. One involving Jenny.

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

"It's been two months." Irene, sitting in her hotel room and sipping a glass of wine, said to herself while lounging in a reclining chair. "Yet, despite the time that has passed, we've yet to find out where the target went."

Several hours have passed since Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun left Blue Pegasus' guild hall. And Irene was at her wits end trying to figure out where they went. On top of that, neither she nor Brandish had made any progress finding out how Alfonzo's power spiked in his duel with God Serena.

"*Sigh* I guess they are far too on guard against us." Irene said while swirling her wine glass. "Perhaps changing the barrier when we first arrived was a bad idea. They must have a way to detect changes to it. That's the only reason they would be so on guard against us."

While continuing to think about where things went wrong with this assignment, Irene's [Magic Power Detection] picked up four familiar magic power signatures entering its range.

"Oh, they're back." Irene said with a small smile. "I wonder if he intends to cook as a way of celebrating his return. Maybe I should conveniently show up at his house around dinner time."

After thinking that aloud, Irene's smile widened. She had already realized that she was more interested in having Alfonzo as a personal chef than following Zeref's orders at this point. And the two months she was separated from Alfonzo's cooking had only solidified that notion. Unfortunately, she had no plausible way of getting Alfonzo to follow her back to Alakitasia without using force.

"Hmm... Then again, just kidnapping him wouldn't be so bad, would it?" Irene muttered to herself as she brought her glass to her lips once again. "Maybe I'll even bring a few of his girls with us. That way, he would be less likely to complain."

As she thought about Alfonzo's girls, the image of a young woman with hair the same color as her own popped up in Irene's head. Naturally, that was Erza.

"*Sigh* And perhaps I could even make up for the time I lost with her." Irene muttered while her expression showed a bout of melancholy. Then, she placed her free hand on her abdomen as she continued. "I did carry her for almost four hundred years, after all."

For the first time in a long time, Irene contemplated her past. And for the first time ever, she felt regret at abandoning her daughter, Erza Scarlet, twenty-one years ago. Though, she also knew that because of her mental state at the time, it was the best possible decision. Otherwise, she would not have a daughter at the moment.

"*Sigh* Damn these human-like emotions." Irene muttered before finishing the wine in her glass. "I thought I lost them all those years ago when I first turned into a dragon. To think, after seeing my own child, they would begin to resurface."

Little did Irene know, the fact that she was able to taste Alfonzo's cooking was also aiding in returning her humanity.

A few moments later, while Irene was contemplating her changes, the door to the hotel room was opened from the outside. And through the open door, Brandish entered the room.

"Irene, they're coming back." Brandish reported.

"I know, I felt their approach a while ago." Irene said as she poured another glass of wine, no signs of her internal struggles in her expression. "And since they are back, we can continue our mission."

Nodding in response, Brandish closed the door behind her. Then, she entered her bedroom to change clothes. A few moments later, now wearing a comfortable set of pajamas that she commissioned from Elicia, Brandish returned to the living room before flopping down on the couch with a new book that Marin had recommended to her.

Seeing the title of the book, *The Fall of a Princess*, and seeing the picture printed on its cover, a young blond woman with long hair and wearing a euphoric expression, Irene could not help but shake her head.

After the first time Irene showed herself reading *Saint Slippery's Academy for Girls*, Irene teased Brandish about it relentlessly. However, it would appear that she had taken her teasing a bit too far, as Brandish no longer flinches when she reads her erotic novels in front of her.

Irene was only half right, however, as spending all that time around Marin, who was the source of corruption when it comes to erotic novels, Brandish had slowly lost her shame when it comes to being seen reading such material.

"Anyway, Marin and Lucy also confirmed that our target would be back today." Brandish said while opening her book to the page she had stopped on. "And they invited us to have dinner with them tonight."

"Will Alfonzo be cooking?" Irene asked nonchalantly.

"Probably." Brandish replied. "Apparently, all the girls who did not go with him on his trip said they were missing his cooking. So, the chances of him cooking for them is pretty high."

"I see." Irene replied after taking another sip of her whine. "Then, I guess we'll go, too."

Irene smiled brightly as she said that. Though, Brandish did not see such an uncharacteristic smile due to the fact that she was focused on the pages of her book.

Chapter 496: Yachiru Nearly Awakens

On their way back from Onibus, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun were riding towards Magnolia in the Escalade while chatting animatedly. However, when they were only a few miles away from the town, Alfonzo's expression changed, a frown making its way onto his face.

"What's wrong, Alfonzo?" Sun, who was sitting in the passenger seat, asked curiously after seeing Alfonzo's change of expression.

"*Sigh* We're back to being constantly observed, again." Alfonzo replied in a tired tone. "Seriously, I don't know what those two are after, but can't they give it a fucking rest already?"

"You know that's not possible." Mirajane replied, her expression turning solemn as she spoke. "They're here for a reason. And it's probably to help that arrogant guy, Serena, get revenge on you."

"Actually, I'm not so sure about that." Erza said while cupping her chin in her right hand. "I mean, if they were here to get revenge for that man, why haven't they attacked us yet?"

"But that Brandish girl did attack, didn't she?" Sun asked while tilting her head cutely.

"She did." Erza replied with a nod. "But there was a different reason for that."

"Yeah, that was because of a huge misunderstanding." Mirajane added. "But ever since then, she has been trying to apologize to Lucy and be her friend."

Erza nodded at Mirajane's addition to her comment before continuing her original point.

"Besides, Irene is strong enough that she could take on our entire guild alone." Erza said, getting back to the original topic. "Yet, she has not done anything but come over for a meal every now and then."

"Then, why do you think she's here?" Sun asked in a confused tone. "I mean, what other reason could there be for her to be here than getting revenge for that guy?"

"It feels like she's there to see how I tick." Alfonzo replied before Erza could. "I mean, she always asks all sorts of questions that would dig into my personality or secrets."

"Does she?" Sun asked, once again tilting her head in confusion. "But it just seems like she wants to get to know you, to me."

"Well, that's not wrong." Alfonzo replied as he took a hand off the steering wheel to scratch his head. "But the questions she asks would have me tell a lot more to someone I had only known for a month or so if I were to answer them without thinking."

"Hmm?" Sun hummed, clearly not understanding the subtle manipulations Irene had been trying.

"Don't worry about it, Sun." Mirajane said while reaching forward from the back seat to pat Sun's head.

"Um... okay." Sun replied as she narrowed her eyes thanks to the head patting.

"Anyway, we can think about those two and their plans later." Alfonzo said, cutting off this topic of conversation. "Eventually, they'll get impatient and give away their true motives. Or, one of us will be able to get it out of them in the same way they're trying to get information out of us... through casual conversation."

'Actually, I'm pretty sure they wanna know about the boost I get from releasing Riot and Bedlam.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'I mean, without that, I wouldn't have been able to beat that dragon douche. But If I had to guess, he didn't give them all the information because of his pride.'

["Yeah, he was definitely too proud to say that in his report to Zeref."] Bedlam replied.

"Hmph! More like he couldn't be bothered to add such a detail."] Riot said disdainfully. ["He probably didn't want anyone too strong to come after you, wanting revenge for his humiliation."]

'Yeah, I could definitely see that.' Alfonzo replied while nodding internally. 'Either way, I'm still in trouble. I mean, I'm pretty sure Irene will try to kidnap me just because I gave her the sensation of taste back.'

["Honestly, I'm still not even sure how that works, despite the fact that I was paying attention to what you did when you cooked that first meal for her."] Bedlam said, sounding somewhat intrigued.

'What can I say, I'm just that good.' Alfonzo said boastfully.

With that, the two [Armament Spirits] fell silent. A moment later, they were both able to react to Alfonzo's boasting. While Riot only rolled his eyes in contempt, Bedlam's reaction was the total opposite.

["Ahahahahaha! Exactly right!"] Bedlam shouted amongst his laughter. ["That's the kind of confidence I would expect as the one whom I was created from."]

[*Bang!*]

["Shut the fuck up!"] Riot shouted in irritation after hitting Bedlam with a weapon version of himself.
["You're too fucking loud!"]

["Oh, so the rabid chihuahua wants to fight, huh?"] Bedlam said after shaking off the effects of Riot's sneak attack. Then, Bedlam manifested his own weapon form as he continued. ["Come on then, let's go."]

With his [Armament Spirits] ignoring him to engage in battle, Alfonzo could only shake his head while focusing on the road and rejoining the girls' conversation.

At the same time, a pair of beautiful women, whose appearances did not match their ages, had just left Magnolia's train station. And because of their beauty, they caught the attention of many of Magnolia's pedestrians as they walked through the town. And those women, Tsunade and Retsu, were headed straight towards Lake Sciliora to meet with Alfonzo for two different reasons.

"I can't believe we had to wait so long between trains." Tsunade grumbled, upset at the amount of time they spent traveling from Cedar to Magnolia. "We spent more time waiting for our trains than actually riding them."

"*Sigh* I know." Retsu replied, her ever present gentle smile still on her face. "Perhaps you were right, Tsuna, we should invest in a few of the new magic vehicles for the guild. Traveling like this is quite the hassle."

Hearing that, Tsunade's eyes lit up. Unfortunately, her mood plummeted right away after Retsu's following sentence.

"That will be the guild's next investment once you finish paying off your debt to the guild, Tsuna." Retsu said while still smiling.

Because of her horrible skill at gambling, Tsunade lost the money Mermaid Heel had raised to pay for the training chambers last year. And since then, she has been working to pay off the debt that Retsu covered. However, because she had to pay not only the guild, but Retsu, as well, Tsunade was still in debt.

And although a year and a few months was enough to pay back Retsu in full, Tsunade was still working on paying the guild back.

"Anyway, we can think about that later." Retsu said with a smile. "For now, let's just make our way to Alfonzo's mansion. Then, after we finish our business there, we'll pay our respects to Master Milkovich."

"Sure." Tsunade replied with a shrug. "And if we're lucky, we'll even get a free meal out of this, too."

Thinking about the prospect of getting a free meal from Alfonzo, Tsunade could not help but smile brightly. Even Retsu's smile widened at the thought. However, before they could move too far, Retsu stopped her steps as her eyes narrowed dangerously.

"Is something wrong, Master Retsu?" Tsunade asked curiously.

"It would seem someone with a significant amount of power is visiting Magnolia." Retsu said with a dangerous glint in her eyes. "And from what my instincts are telling me, they don't have the best intentions."

"Really?" Tsunade asked in an amazed tone. "For you to say they have a significant amount of power, just how strong are they?"

"So strong that I would have to go all out to have a chance of victory." Retsu said as she licked her lips in anticipation.

Hearing that, Tsunade involuntarily opened her eyes wide. Then, she began to shudder at the overwhelming bloodlust Retsu started releasing.

"Master Retsu..." Tsunade said as she placed a hand on Retsu's shoulder nervously. "Please, you have to calm down. The town wouldn't survive a battle of that magnitude."

While Tsunade nervously, yet frantically, tried to calm Retsu down, many people on the street looked at the pair with fear. At the same time, several of the weaker willed individuals fainted from the pressure. Luckily, someone came along that brought Retsu back to her senses.

Vroom! *Screech!*

"Master Tsunade, Master Unohana." Alfonzo said after pulling up next to the current and former masters of Mermaid Heel. "I wasn't expecting to see you here the day I got back. I guess you're here for the motorcycle, Master Unohana. And you must be here because of my letter, right, Master Tsunade."

While Alfonzo spoke in a friendly manner, when Retsu turned her blood thirsty gaze in his direction, he almost instinctively slammed his foot on the gas pedal.

'Holy shit!' Alfonzo exclaimed internally. 'She's almost completely in Yachiru mode. What the fuck happened? Did she somehow feel Irene's power? Fuck, this could be bad. If those two start fighting, the town could disappear from the map... again.'

Not only Alfonzo shuddered at Retsu's blood lust. Erza, Mirajane, and Sun were also completely on guard after feeling it, as well. As a result, they had begun circulating their magic power just in case they had to defend themselves. Luckily, it never came to that. Hearing Alfonzo mention her motorcycle had snapped Retsu back to the here and now.

"Oh, my apologies." Retsu, after reeling in her blood lust, said in an embarrassed tone. "I have no idea what came over me."

Hearing Retsu's elegant tone and seeing the way she covered her mouth with her kimono sleeve, Tsunade, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun all wanted to roll their eyes. However, the look in Retsu's eyes that said: "If you bring it up, you'll have to deal with me," made them reconsider.

"But yes, you are correct, Alfonzo." Retsu said gently. "I have come to purchase the motorcycle you promised to build for me. I trust it is ready."

"Yup, it sure is." Alfonzo replied as he wiped the cold sweat from his forehead. "It's parked in the garage at my place. If you two would like, we could give you a ride. Though, it might be a little tight in the back seat with four people."

"Although that is not necessary, I appreciate the offer." Retsu said. "Today's weather is lovely. I would like to enjoy it for a bit longer."

"I see." Alfonzo replied. Then, he shifted his attention to Tsunade. "And what about you, Master Tsunade? Would you like a ride."

Although Tsunade wanted to say yes, the smile she received from Retsu caused her to shake her head.

"No thanks, Kid." Tsunade replied, though it was clear she would rather accept the offer. "I'll walk with Master Retsu."

"If you say so." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "Either way, I'm sure the girls will want me to cook tonight. So, you're welcome to join us for dinner. I'll just stop past the guild hall for a few minutes before getting back home and starting to cook."

"Thank you, Alfonzo." Retsu replied in a gentle tone. "We'd be happy to join you."

"Yeah, Thanks, Kid." Tsunade added with a smile. "I've been missing your cooking ever since the last time we were in Magnolia. And the girls back at the guild are gonna be so jealous when they hear what they missed."

"Indeed, they will." Retsu said with a smile. "Especially since you made all of them stay back at the guild to train for the Grand Magic Games."

"Well, if we're gonna win, they have to train." Tsunade said unashamedly while puffing out her massive chest. "I mean, If I could participate, I would be right there with them training. But the paper said guild masters aren't allowed. So, what am I supposed to do about it?"

'I don't know, how about supporting the rest of your guild while they give it all they have?' Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, Sun, and Retsu thought in unison after hearing Tsunade's shameless question.

"Anyway, we'll go on ahead." Alfonzo said with a smile. "See you at the house."

Meanwhile, as Alfonzo pulled away, Irene, who was at the hotel, waiting for the time to head to Alfonzo's mansion to arrive, wore an intrigued expression on her face. Brandish, on the other hand, was looking in the direction where Alfonzo and the girls had just met up with Tsunade and Retsu with caution.

"What was that?" Brandish asked in a solemn tone. "How does one person give off that much blood lust?"

"I don't know." Irene replied while she shook her head with an intrigued smile on her lips. "I haven't felt blood lust like that in a very long time."

'Not since the Dragon King Festival.' Irene thought, finishing her sentence in her head.

"Either way, it looks like they are an acquaintance of our target." Irene said. "Perhaps, we may meet whoever it may be during tonight's dinner."

Brandish narrowed her eyes in response. If possible, she would not want to meet someone with blood lust so potent. The sheer amount of blood a person like that must have spilled in their life time is horrifying to think about.

Irene, on the other hand, was looking forward to seeing who could produce bloodlust like that. It had been a long time since she felt someone other than Zeref was able to threaten her life. And what she found even more intriguing was the fact that the magic power she could feel from this person was so weak in comparison to her own.

Chapter 497: Alfonzo's Pettiness

"Fairy Tail! We're back!" Alfonzo shouted as soon as he, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun walked through the guild hall's doors.

In the next instant, a blur of pink and Baby blue slammed into Alfonzo's chest before wrapping its arms and legs around his neck and torso. A moment later, Alfonzo was pulled into a passionate kiss, his tongue entangling with his assailant.

"I swear, this happens every time." Mirajane said with a smile. "Lici never seems to remember anyone that went with Alfonzo when she first sees him after a trip."

"Indeed." Erza replied with a smile of her own. "I've experienced this before. The last time was during that quest in Rosemary Village, I believe."

"It's just cause Lici loves Alfonzo so much, ya see?" Sun said happily, having missed the loving atmosphere in the guild.

"Alfonzo! Fight me!" Natsu shouted from the table where the group of friends usually sat.

"*Sigh* And this never changes, either." Mirajane said in an exasperated tone.

And just as Mirajane expected, Natsu, while propelling himself towards the group of new arrivals with his flames acting as propulsion, came flying towards the group at high speed. Unlike all the other times, however, Natsu did not immediately attack. Instead, he landed in front of Alfonzo awkwardly.

"Hmm... This is unusual." Erza said while rubbing her chin with her gauntleted left hand. "Natsu did not just attack without worrying about those surrounding Alfonzo."

"Yeah, it's really weird." Sun said while tilting her head cutely. "I wonder what happened? Did he get sick?"

"No! Of course not!" Natsu shouted indignantly. "I've never been sick a day in my life!"

In the next instant, Natsu's expression turned bashful as he started scratching the back of his head.

"It's just now I know how bad it is to interrupt a couple while they're kissing." Natsu said with a slight blush on his face. "I wouldn't like it if someone interrupted me and Lisanna, you know."

Hearing that, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun opened their eyes wide in surprise. Even Alfonzo, who had been lost in his kiss with Ellicia, opened his eyes as he broke the kiss, causing Ellicia to pout at the interruption.

A moment later, Alfonzo, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun turned their surprised gazes towards the table where their friends sat. More specifically, towards Lisanna, who was smiling happily with a slight blush on her face.

"Lisanna, is it true?" Mirajane asked in a dumbfounded tone.

Nodding happily, Lisanna confirmed everyone's speculations.

"Yeah, Natsu and I are a couple now." Lisanna said happily. "We started going out at the beginning of last month. And Natsu was so cute when he took me out on our first date."

"Lisanna, don't say that." Natsu said bashfully.

A moment later, when the gazes of the new comers returned to him, Natsu turned away in an attempt to hide his blush. Though, his attempt was futile. Then, to add to Natsu's embarrassment, Happy flew over before landing on his shoulder.

"That's right!" Happy exclaimed energetically. "Natsu loves~~~~ her!"

"Happy~~~~!" Natsu whined embarrassedly.

"Holy shit..." Alfonzo muttered in a disbelieving tone.

"I know what you mean, Fonzie." Elicia said with a smile. "I was just as surprised the first time I saw Lisanna and Natsu holding hands while they walked through the town."

While Alfonzo, Erza, and Sun were still frozen due to the news of Natsu and Lisanna starting a relationship, Mirajane had rushed over to her younger sister. And when she heard Elicia talk about the two holding hands, she put on a stern expression.

"Lisanna, I thought I taught you better than that." Mirajane said in a tone filled with mock anger.
"Holding hands in public... So lewd. I didn't raise you to be such an exhibitionist!"

At first, Lisanna wore an expression filled with apprehension when she saw her older sister's stern expression. However, when she heard her following words, Lisanna's apprehensive expression turned into a deadpan immediately.

Seeing her sister's change in expression, Mirajane's stern expression melted away at once. Then, she pulled Lisanna into a tight hug with a loving smile on her face.

"Congratulations, Lisanna." Mirajane said happily. "You finally took the step towards getting your own happiness."

Hearing her sister's words, Lisanna's deadpan morphed into her usual cheerful expression. Then, she returned Mirajane's hug happily.

"Thanks, Big Sis." Lisanna said cheerfully. "And it's all because of your advice. I was the one who asked Natsu out."

"Yeah, Lisanna asked him like a real man!" Elfman shouted, clearly proud of his younger sister's initiative.

In the next instant, however, Elfman shrunk back thanks to the intense glares he received from Mirajane and Lisanna.

During this conversation, Alfonzo, Elicia, Erza, Natsu, Happy, and Sun had made their way over to the table, as well. While Natsu took a seat next to Lisanna, and Elicia took the seat she vacated when she launched herself at Alfonzo, Alfonzo, Erza, and Sun remained standing.

"Anyway, I'm gonna go talk to Ur." Alfonzo muttered discontentedly. "I gotta give the guild their damn cut."

"At least this is the last time, though, right." Gray asked. "By the way, welcome back, you guys."

"Thank you, Gray." Erza replied to Gray's welcome. "And it's good to be back home. We'll have to take a quest to celebrate our return."

"Um... About that." Gray said while scratching the back of his head. "I'm okay with that. But only if Juvia can come with us."

Once again, the new comers opened their eyes wide in surprise. Then, they all noticed Juvia, who was leaning against Gray with a contented smile on her face.

"Seriously?" Sun asked, her eyes spinning with comprehension.

"Well, I guess you took my advice, huh?" Alfonzo asked while looking at Juvia.

"Yes, Juvia is thankful for the advice, Alfonzo." Juvia said while smiling happily. "And seeing an example of how Juvia used to act helped a lot, too."

Knowing that Juvia was talking about her encounter with Lyon, Alfonzo's smile widened.

Around that time, Edward, supporting his brother and followed by Winry, Izumi, and Sig also approached the table. However, before Edward and Alphonse could greet the returning wizards, a strange atmosphere developed between Alfonzo and Sig as they made eye contact.

Naturally, everyone in the vicinity noticed the atmosphere, causing them all to cast confused gazes at the two muscular men.

Meanwhile, Alfonzo and Sig, who maintained eye contact since the moment their eyes met, were calmly assessing the other. Despite the difference in their builds, with Alfonzo's build resembling that of an athlete, and Sig's resembling that of a bodybuilder, the two were having similar thoughts about the other.

"Such a powerful body." Sig said, admiration audible in his tone. "And such compact muscles. You've clearly worked hard."

"I could say the same about you." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "Such powerful musculature. And despite your bulk, I can tell you haven't sacrificed agility in the slightest. I'm pretty fucking impressed."

Then, both men extended their right hands simultaneously before gripping the other's hand in a firm handshake, a sign of their respect for the other's physical training.

'I wasn't expecting that.' Elicia thought to herself while her gaze shifted between Alfonzo and Sig. 'Maybe if Fonzie was big and bulky like Major Armstrong, I would have seen it coming. But Fonzie's physique is lean like a basketball player. I'm kinda disappointed Fonzie didn't take off his shirt to show off his muscles, though.'

["Easy there, old man."] Scylla said while rolling her eyes as Elicia licked her lips at the thought of Alfonzo's muscular body. ["Fonzie isn't a weirdo that takes off his clothes at every opportunity. The guild already has one too many of those, as it is."]

'Yeah, I admit Gray is more than enough for one guild.' Elicia replied while rolling her eyes. 'But you should wipe the drool on the left side of your mouth before you start calling me a pervert, Scylla.'

Immediately, Scylla's eyes opened wide from inside Elicia's inner world. Then, she quickly used the back of her left hand to wipe away the drool that Elicia mentioned before looking away with a blush.

["What drool, I don't see any. "] Scylla said bashfully, gaining another eye roll from Elicia.

"Uh... Anyway, let me introduce you, Alfonzo." Edward said awkwardly before gesturing to Sig and Izumi in turn. "The one you're shaking hands with is Sig Curtis. And this is his wife, also mine and Al's teacher, Izumi Curtis."

With Edward's introduction, Alfonzo finally broke his handshake with Sig. Then, after the men nodded to each other, Alfonzo turned his attention to Izumi and once again extended his hand.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Miss Izumi." Alfonzo said with a polite smile. "You must be quite the martial artist if what I've seen from Ed and Al are any indication."

"Oh my, a young man with manners." Izumi replied with a smile. Then, she looked at Edward while maintaining that smile. "You could probably learn a thing or two from him, Ed."

"Hmph!" You wouldn't say that if you ever saw how much he likes to mess with people." Edward muttered.

"Oh, come on, Ed." Winry said with a smile. "You're just salty because you lost that bet last year."

"Shut up, Winry." Edward said in a panicked tone.

"What bet would that be?" Izumi asked, with interest sparkling in her eyes.

"It's nothing to worry about." Edward said frantically. "Anyway, I thought I heard you say something about giving the guild their cut from your job, right, Alfonzo? You really shouldn't keep Master Ur waiting."

Hearing his brother's frantic tone, Alphonse couldn't help but chuckle. Alfonzo, on the other hand, slumped his shoulders in annoyance.

"Thanks for reminding me, Ed." Alfonzo grumbled. "You just completely took the wind out of my sails."

Hearing that, everyone turned their attention to Alfonzo's dejected expression, almost feeling bad for him. Meanwhile, Edward breathed a quiet sigh of relief that everyone's attention was no longer on his lost bet.

"But Ed's right." Alfonzo said, shaking off his annoyance for the moment. "I'll go talk to Ur and give her the guild's cut. After that, I'm heading home. Girls, you should get ready to leave, too. I'll be cooking once we get back and we're gonna have guests."

In response, Elicia, Erza, Mirajane, and Sun nodded before they started getting ready to go back to the mansion.

On a side note, Cana, Ultear, Marin, and Lucy were already back at the mansion. Since they knew Alfonzo would be coming back today, they decided to wait for him at home. On top of that, Marin and Lucy had invited Brandish and Irene to have dinner with them. So, they wanted to be there in case they showed up before Alfonzo got home.

"I guess the rest of you should head over to my place, too." Alfonzo said to the rest of the people surrounding the usual table. "We can celebrate Natsu and Lisanna, and Gray and Juvia getting together. Plus, we can welcome Miss Izumi and Mr. Sig, as well."

Immediately, Laki, Levy, Jet, Droy, Gray, Elfman, Lisanna, Natsu, Happy, Juvia, Gajeel, and Panther Lily cheered excitedly. Meanwhile, the other wizards of the guild looked at those who were cheering with envy.

And while the others were cheering, Alfonzo smiled before walking towards the elevator. Then, just after hitting the call button, he turned around and looked at Elicia.

"Oh, and Lici, you should show that one picture to Miss Izumi and Mr. Sig." Alfonzo said with a sadistic smile. "I'm sure they'd love to see Ed during his time of self-discovery."

Hearing that, Elicia's eyes lit up. She loved nothing more than showing off her creations. Edward, on the other hand, paled rapidly. Especially since he knew exactly what picture Alfonzo was talking about. Meanwhile, Erza, Mirajane, Sun, and Winry did their best to stifle their laughter, as they were also present when the picture in question was taken.

Around the same time the elevator doors opened, Elicia nodded vigorously. Then, she started leading everyone towards the guild hall's doors.

"Oh, and Al." Alfonzo said as he stepped into the elevator. "If you don't mind waiting, you can ride back with me. I know it must be a struggle to get around on those crutches."

"Thanks, I think I'll take you up on that offer, Alfonzo." Alphonse replied with a nod and a grateful smile.

"Then, I'll wait here with Al." Edward said nervously.

"No, I think you should come with us, Ed." Izumi said with a friendly smile as her hand clamped down on Edward's shoulder, a sign that she would not be taking no for an answer.

At the same time, the Elevator doors closed, and Edward caught sight of Alfonzo's malicious smile.

'Hmph! That will teach you to bring up things I'd rather not think about.' Alfonzo thought to himself as the elevator started to ascend.

A few moments later, Alfonzo arrived on the top floor, where he found Ur, Gildarts, Wendy, and Carla, with the latter two reporting on a quest they just completed. Then, after talking with the quartet for a few minutes, during which, Alfonzo handed over the guild's cut from his last job, he invited all four of them to have dinner at his place along with all the others. An offer the four wasted no time accepting.

Chapter 498: Averting a Crisis

While Alfonzo was chatting with Gildarts, Ur, Wendy, and Carla, Elicia led the others towards the mansion on the lake. As they walked, they chatted harmoniously. At the same time, they were all looking forward to the meal that Alfonzo would prepare.

"I've heard a lot about this Alfonzo's cooking ever since I first came to visit you, Ed." Izumi said curiously. "But it's hard to believe someone could be so talented in cooking. Especially when you consider his reputation in other fields."

"I know what you mean, Teacher." Edward replied. "In fact, I thought the same thing at first. But when I tasted the food, I could not argue with everyone's assessment in the slightest."

"Besides, you'd better not let Alfonzo hear you doubting his skills, Mrs. Curtis." Winry said while smiling wryly.

"What do you mean?" Izumi asked in a curious tone.

Not only Izumi, but Sig also looked at Winry with curiosity.

"Well, Colonel Mustang and Lt. Hawkeye did it when they came to see Ed and Al get their bodies back." Winry said, her wry smile widening. "And well, Alfonzo went all out with his cooking that day."

"Huh? That doesn't make sense, though." Izumi said in a confused tone. "Why would he put extra effort into it if they were doubting him to his face."

"To get them hooked." Edward replied with a shrug.

Hearing that, Izumi and Sig understood immediately. Then, they wore sympathetic expressions.

"I see." Izumi said with a nod. "If he's as good as you say, those two will probably never be able to enjoy other food for the rest of their lives."

"Yeah, I think that's what he was going for." Edward replied. "And if they ever come back, he'll probably never cook for them again."

"Rather vindictive." Sig said in his deep voice.

"Yeah." Winry replied. "Alfonzo's a really nice guy, but he doesn't take too kindly to people doubting his skill in the kitchen."

"And the worst thing is that he knows how good a cook he is." Elicia said while cutting into the conversation. "So, he threatens to withhold meals all the time as punishment."

"Does he starve you when he's angry?" Izumi asked with furrowed eyebrows.

"No, it's not like that." Mirajane replied with a smile. "But when we do something to make him mad, he refuses to cook for us. But he doesn't stop us from finding food somewhere else..."

"That's right, and he'll cook for the rest of the house while we watch them eat it." Erza added.

"It's cruel and unusual." Elicia said in a tone filled with lament.

Hearing that, Izumi could not help but look at Elicia with a deadpan. Had she been one of her apprentices, she would have been beaten up for making her think the worst.

Like that, the rest of the walk went on harmoniously. Until the group reached the bridge leading across the lake.

"Uh oh... This could be bad." Elicia muttered as she and the entire group came to a stop.

IN front of the group, Tsunade, Retsu, Irene, and Brandish were standing across from each other. And while Tsunade and Brandish were trying to get their companions to calm down, more Tsunade than Brandish, Retsu and Irene were leaking potent amounts of battle intent while looking each other in the eyes.

While Irene stood casually, her posture seemingly relaxed, it was clear to see that she was ready to fight based on the fact that she had materialized her staff. Retsu, on the other hand, was smiling like a feral beast with her hand on her Zanpakuto's hilt while her magic power spiked to the sky.

"Come on, Master Retsu." Tsunade said in a terrified tone. "Do you really want to do this in front of the Kid's house?"

"Believe me, Tsuna, I'd rather not." Retsu replied as she took a step towards Irene. "But This woman is not human. On top of that, my instincts are telling me she has ill intent."

"Now, that's just rude." Irene replied in a leisurely tone. "Despite knowing nothing about me, you claim I'm here with ill intent. On top of that, to say that I'm not human. You must have grown up with little in the way of manners."

"Oh, come now." Retsu replied while maintaining her smile. "We're both old enough to not pretend. It would be better if you just revealed your true identity. Otherwise, I'll have to force it out of you."

"So barbaric." Irene replied while shaking her head. "From what I can tell, you're just using this as an excuse to fight someone with all your power. *Sigh* so hypocritical."

"Though that may be true." Retsu replied as she took another step forward. "It does not change anything about what I said prior. And as I have become quite fond of those living in this mansion, I won't allow you to hurt any of them."

"And I have no intention of harming anyone here." Irene replied. "So, you can back down now, right?"

"Though that seems to be true." Retsu said while analyzing Irene's words, expressions, and body language. "You still have no good intentions."

"*Sigh* I guess it doesn't matter what I say." Irene said in a feigned tone of sadness. "You won't believe me, anyway. I guess I'll have to just stop you from bothering me the good old fashioned way."

As she spoke the last sentence, Irene began flaring her own magic power. And the sheer amount of magic power she possessed made the surroundings begin to shake. Even the defensive barrier around the mansion at the center of the lake activated and became visible to the onlookers.

In fact, the amount of magic power Irene was outputting was so great that Tsunade and Brandish were both forced away. Retsu, on the other hand, widened her smile as she gripped the hilt of her Zanpakuto even tighter. Then, she took a third step forward. At the same time, she drew Minazuki from its sheath. Then, while holding the blade across her body, Retsu brought her free, left hand up to the blade.

"[Ban---]." Retsu began to chant as she placed her palm against the edge of Minazuki's blade.

"This is bad." Elicia, Tsunade, and Brandish muttered at the same time. "This is really, REALLY, bad."

Just before Retsu could finish her chant and draw her own blood with her blade, the Escalade, with Alfonzo, Gildarts, Ur, Wendy, Carla, and Alphonse inside, floated down from the sky and landed between the two women. Then, the driver's side window rolled down before Alfonzo poked his head out.

"As sick as it would be to see women of your caliber fight, can you do it somewhere else?" Alfonzo asked in an annoyed tone. "Although I'm not strong enough to make you pay for it if you damage my house, I promise with every fiber of my being that I will never fucking cook for either of you again if you do."

Instead of drawing back their magic power immediately because of Alfonzo's threat, Retsu and Irene exchanged glances. Then, they both looked at Alfonzo before returning their gazes to each other. In actuality, Retsu and Irene were weighing their options. First, like Irene said, Retsu really did want the opportunity to fight someone with all her strength. Second, Irene was annoyed and angry that Retsu was getting in the way of her mission. And third, they were debating if taking out their aggression right here and right now was worth not getting to taste Alfonzo's cooking ever again.

Eventually, Irene was the first to pull back her magic power. Realizing that if she were to fight Retsu, she would have to go all out. Meaning, she would have to take on her dragon form. On top of that, if she were to hurt this woman, who was clearly friendly with her target, his wariness of her would increase, making it harder to get his secrets or make him follow her back to Alakasia peacefully.

Seeing Irene pull back her magic power, Retsu did the same a few moments later. Like Irene, Retsu had also weighed her options. In the end, the decisive factors were that if she fought here, not only would she not get to eat Alfonzo's cooking ever again, but she might also damage the motorcycle Alfonzo built for her. And that would be a travesty. Especially since she had yet to ride it.

"Good." Alfonzo said with a nod after both women had withdrawn their magic power. "Now, let's go inside. We've got a lot to celebrate today. Two new couples, Ed and Al's teacher and her husband coming to visit, and most importantly, the end of the work I had to do for the guilds."

With cold sweat still dripping down their backs, Tsunade, Brandish, and everyone who just arrived from the guild smiled at Alfonzo's declaration. Then, as Alfonzo turned the escalade towards the bridge leading to his mansion, the others gathered together and started walking across the bridge as well. And while Alfonzo drove the Escalade into the underground garage, the rest made their way to the front door.

By the time the larger group were inside, Cana, Ultear, Marin, Meredy, who was visiting Ultear, and Lucy were in the kitchen with Alfonzo, Gildarts, Ur, Wendy, Carla, and Alphonse, who was sitting at the kitchen table, discussing what just happened outside.

"*Sigh* It's a good thing you could just levitate the entire vehicle with your magic, Kid." Gildarts said as he wiped some cold sweat off his forehead. "Otherwise, we wouldn't have made it here in time for you to stop them from destroying a big part of Magnolia."

"Hmph!" Ur snorted at Gildarts. "Just a big part of the town? Hell, when they were done, there wouldn't have been anything left."

"Yeah, but how did things come to that?" Marin asked curiously. "I mean, I've spent about a week around Master Unohana. And she's so nice and gentle. What could have set her off like that?"

"Well, why don't you ask her?" Alfonzo asked as he looked towards the entrance to the kitchen. "So, Master Unohana, inquiring minds wanna know. What made you so ready to fight with Irene? I mean, this is the second time you were ready to lose it today. Is there any bad blood between you I should know about?"

At that moment, the rest of the people in the kitchen also turned their heads in the direction where the others entered from. And when they did, they saw Retsu smiling at Alfonzo. Though, her smile still seemed gentle, it put pressure on everyone present. Despite that, Alfonzo continued to stare Retsu in the eyes.

"*Sigh* Fine." Retsu said, pouting adorably as she stopped with the gentle smile. "I'll talk to you about it later."

"Sure, why not." Alfonzo replied with a shrug as he tied an apron around his waist. Then, he turned towards Mirajane as he continued. "Mira, come in here and help me. Things will go much faster with another set of hands."

"Okay." Mirajane replied with a pleasant smile.

While Mirajane hurried into the kitchen to help Alfonzo, all those aware of the horror of Mirajane's cooking were thoroughly flabbergasted when Alfonzo asked for her help. Everyone except for Erza, that is.

"I can help, too, Alfonzo." Erza said as she stepped forward with her eyes sparkling in anticipation. "You taught me how to cook while we were in Onibus, too."

"Not a chance in hell." Alfonzo replied without even turning around. "Although the sight of water in a pot being set ablaze is something I never grow tired of seeing, that won't help in this situation."

During the two month trip to Onibus, Alfonzo spent very little time at the Blue Pegasus guild hall, outside of doing the work he had been commissioned to do. And that was mainly because Mirajane wanted to keep him away from Jenny due to her jealousy.

So, other than having sex... a lot... Alfonzo spent some time teaching Erza, Mirajane, and Sun how to cook. And while Sun picked it up rather quickly and would have been the best choice to help him. Since Winry was here, Alfonzo decided to let her have her fun.

Naturally, that left only Mirajane and Erza. However, just as Alfonzo said, Erza has absolutely no talent for cooking. Mirajane, on the other hand, had improved considerably. To the point that she was on the same level as Lisanna the last time she helped Alfonzo cook.

In response to Alfonzo's blunt denial, Erza's eyes opened wide. Then, she stared at him with puppy dog eyes, the best way to make him change his mind in situations like these. Unfortunately for her, Alfonzo had gotten used to the girls' tactics over the years. So, he never even turned in Erza's direction after his denial.

"Alfonzo, are you sure?" Elfman, with cold sweat dripping down his forehead, asked apprehensively.

While Mirajane shot a glare at her younger brother, Alfonzo smiled reassuringly.

"Don't worry, Elfman." Alfonzo said with a smile. "I've spent a lot of time over the last two months helping Mira improve. And unless she relapses to her old habits, you'll never have to go through any of her demonic taste tests again."

"I hope you're right." Elfman replied, still sounding a bit skeptical. "Even a real man isn't built to handle that on a regular basis."

"Just wait, Elfman!" Mirajane shouted, feeling challenged by her brother's mistrust. "I'll show you! I'll cook something that will knock your socks off. Then, you'll be begging me to cook for you all the time. But I won't. Instead, I'll leave you hanging with--- Mmph!"

While Mirajane was working herself into a frenzy over Elfman's distrust, Alfonzo decided that he would change her focus by kissing her, quite deeply, at that. Then, after a few moments, Alfonzo separated

from her. Meanwhile, Mirajane, dazed from the intense kiss, tried to reconnect her lips with Alfonzo's with her eyes closed.

"Alright, Mira, it's time to get to work." Alfonzo said with a smile as he patted Mirajane on the butt while he moved to the sink to wash his hands.

"Huh...? Wha...? Oh... Okay." Mirajane said absent-mindedly as she regained her senses.

"I can help, too." Lisanna said excitedly.

"Not this time, Lisanna." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "I know you wanna get better, but this celebration is partially for you. So, I can't let you help."

"Oh, yeah, that's right." Lisanna said with a smile as she hugged Natsu's arm happily.

Like that, Alfonzo, with Mirajane's help, made enough Chicken Parmesan, salad, and garlic bread for everyone in the mansion to have several servings. Meanwhile, the rest of the group went to the living room to chat and have a good time. Though, Retsu and Ireen made sure to keep a certain distance between them.

Chapter 499: Practice Makes Perfect

The next day, Alfonzo woke up in his bed. Unsurprisingly, however, he was not alone. Instead, Elicia was lying in bed with him. And she had her arms wrapped around his torso with a content smile on her face.

"I can't believe it." Alfonzo muttered as he began combing his fingers through Elicia's hair, causing her to smile even brighter as she tightened her hug. "She actually did it."

["Yeah, I wasn't expecting her to ask for that for another year, at the very least."] Bedlam added.

["She's been waiting for decades for this."] Riot said disdainfully. ["I don't know why you two are having such a hard time believing it."]

"*Sigh* I know you're right, Riot." Alfonzo replied. "I just didn't see it coming."

====Flashback====

September 1, x786.

After the celebration meal was finished, Alfonzo invited all the guests to spend some time relaxing at his mansion. And he made sure to open up all the entertainment facilities to facilitate this relaxation.

While the guys, Alfonzo, Jet, Droy, Gray, Natsu, Elfman, Gajeel, and Edward went to the basketball court to play a game of four on four, Alphonse, Juvia, and Irene came along to watch the game. Elicia, on the other hand, had another viewing of her and Alfonzo's wedding for those who had not seen it yet.

Meanwhile, a group of the other ladies, Cana, Laki, Levy, Erza, Mirajane, Lisanna, Lucy, Tsunade, and Brandish spent their time at the grotto swimming and sunbathing.

Retsu, on the other hand, wanted to take her new motorcycle, which was painted black and white, for a spin. And Ultear, who also had a motorcycle built for herself decided to go with her. Even Winry, who Alfonzo built a motorcycle for, as well, decided to go with them, too. All three women also had additional passengers, with Lucy riding with Retsu, Marin riding with Ultear, and Sun riding with Winry. Like that, the six women spent the rest of the afternoon and part of the evening just joyriding between Magnolia and Hargeon.

The other guests, namely Gildarts, Ur, Wendy, and Carla returned to Ur's mansion shortly after the meal ended. Wendy and Carla had just got back from a quest and were exhausted, after all. Gildarts and Ur, on the other hand, just wanted to spend some alone time together.

Then, when everyone was ready to go to sleep, everyone, other than the residents of the mansion returned to their own places. At the same time, all the ladies living in the mansion, except for Elicia, decided they would go to bed early, and without spending the night with Alfonzo because they had all decided to take quests the next day.

With the other seven ladies having something to do the next day, Elicia made her way to Alfonzo's bedroom with a smile on her face. However, unlike her usual cheerful smile, this one had hints of nervousness mixed in as well.

Knock! *Knock!*

"Hey, Fonzie, are you still awake?" Elicia asked, her nervousness seeping into her tone, as well.

"Yeah, I just got out the shower." Alfonzo replied from the other side of his door. "The doors open, come on in, Lici."

Accepting Alfonzo's invitation, Elicia gripped the doorknob. Then, after taking a deep breath, she twisted it before pushing the door open.

When she entered the room, Elicia saw Alfonzo sitting on his bed while wearing a pair of white shorts and drying his hair. So, she quickly moved to the bed, as well. Then, she climbed onto it and positioned herself behind Alfonzo before taking the towel and helping him dry his hair.

"Thanks, Lici." Alfonzo said with a smile.

"Don't mention it." Elicia replied.

"So, what's up?" Alfonzo asked skeptically. "You sounded kinda nervous when you knocked on the door. Do I need to withhold any meals for what you're about to tell me?"

Rolling her eyes, Elicia started drying Alfonzo's hair more vigorously. Though, his little joke did help dispel some of her nerves.

"No, of course not." Elicia replied in a huff. "I'm not always doing bad things, you know."

"Yeah, I know." Alfonzo replied with a smile. "But I thought that would help break the ice."

Once again rolling her eyes, Elicia decided to just focus on drying Alfonzo's hair.

About ten minutes later, Alfonzo's hair was as dry as it was going to be with just using a towel to dry it. So, he took the towel for Elicia as he turned to make eye contact with her.

Elicia, on the other hand, now that there was nothing to divert her mind onto, felt herself getting more nervous. However, she decided she would put an end to that before her nerves could get too out of control.

"So, Lici, what's up?" Alfonzo asked casually.

"I wanna have a baby!" Elicia said, blurting out her thoughts without giving herself too much time to over think it.

["You know, that was the first time I ever felt that speaking without thinking was a good idea."] Scylla replied.

'Not now, Scylla.' Elicia replied internally.

Naturally, Alfonzo was taken aback by Elicia's exclamation. However, he was not against it... not in the slightest. Instead, he had been waiting for Elicia to bring it up. Especially since he had already told her that he would wait until she was ready.

As a matter of fact, the only reason Elicia did not ask for a baby on their wedding night was simple. She knew he would be spending most of x786 away from home. Although she also knew he would be spending the majority of x787 away from home, as well, she decided she would accompany him for the entire duration, if it was allowed.

"Are you sure?" Alfonzo asked, knowing that he would be away from home a lot for the next few years due to the job at the Village Hidden in the Leaves.

"Yes." Elicia nodded resolutely. "I've wanted this for a long time. But I knew it wasn't the right time yet. But this feels right. So, I'm ready."

"AS long as you're sure." Alfonzo said as he wrapped his arms around his wife. And even if I have to, I'll drag out the job in the Village Hidden in the Leaves to stay with you for as long as I can."

"Well, if they won't let anyone come with you, that's a good plan." Elicia replied as she, too, wrapped her arms around her husband. "But if they allow it, I'll be with you the whole time. And with Marin's dad as the CEO of Sixth Sense Holdings, I won't have to worry about the Taylor Shop. The only thing I'll have to worry about is making the designs for each season."

"Speaking of Marin's dad..." Alfonzo muttered. "How is Lucy's dad?"

"Oh, him?" Elicia said with obvious distaste in her tone. "He's just as arrogant as ever. But he's still alive."

"That's good to hear, but why do you sound like that?" Alfonzo asked curiously.

"It's because of what happened when Lucy and I saw him." Elicia replied.

Elicia then went on to tell Alfonzo about the quest she and Lucy took in Acalypa back in February. While they were in the town, they decided to go visit Jude Heartfilia, to see if he was able to pick himself up after everything that happened back in x784.

However, when they arrived at where Jude should have been working, they arrived just in time to see a Dark Guild attacking the merchant guild, Love & Lucky. Naturally, the two young women stopped the attack and captured the dark wizards. However, when they went to check on Jude, they found him working as a low-level employee of the guild. And when they went to speak to him, he once again demanded that Lucy give him the money to restart his business.

"So, Lucy, angered by her father's attitude, cut all ties with him right then and there." Elicia said, concluding her story.

Hearing that, Alfonzo was surprised. In the canon, Jude had regretted the way he treated Lucy. And before he was killed in that raid, he had left a letter for her to tell her how sorry he was. In this timeline, however, he held onto his resentment. On the bright side, however, he was still alive.

"That sucks." Alfonzo muttered, not knowing what else to say.

"And the worst part is that he still blames me for losing is company." Elicia said angrily. "He says it's my fault because I wouldn't sell the Taylor Shop to him."

Instead of replying verbally, Alfonzo pulled Elicia into a kiss. Then, he started combing his fingers through her hair as he broke the kiss.

"Let's not think about something so negative." Alfonzo said with a smile. "Instead, let's start working. We've got some effort to put in if we're gonna have this baby, right?"

With that, Alfonzo rolled over, pinning Elicia under him with his eyes filled with love. Then, they spent the next few hours practicing how to make a baby, without the anti-pregnancy sigil, this time. And if they were lucky, their practice would bear fruit.

==Flashback End==

"*Sigh* Never expected to hear that story before it happened, though." Alfonzo muttered as he continued to comb his fingers through Elicia's hair. "The worst part is that I was thinking about hiring him if he got his shit together."

["Well, it is what it is."] Bedlam replied with a shrug. ["Since he hasn't truly lost everything in this timeline, I guess Jude never felt it necessary to change."]

"*Sigh* I guess you're right." Alfonzo said as he shook his head.

["Fuck that guy!"] Riot shouted angrily. ["We should take a trip to Acalypha and kick his ass. How dare he blame Lici for all his problems!"

Smiling wryly at his more hot tempered [Armament Spirit], Alfonzo gently separated himself from Elicia. Then, he leaned down to whisper into her ear.

"Hey, Lici, I'm gonna get up and make breakfast." Alfonzo said in a loving tone. "And after breakfast, I'm gonna train at the guild. I wanna see how much everyone has improved while I was gone for the last couple of months. So, got any requests?"

"Pancakes with strawberries and whipped cream." Elicia replied groggily without opening her eyes.

"I saw that coming." Alfonzo said with a smile. "Anyway, are you gonna come and take a shower with me or will you do it after breakfast?"

"After..." Elicia replied as she drifted back to sleep.

Shrugging his shoulders, Alfonzo kissed Elicia on the cheek. Then, he climbed out of bed and started getting ready for the day. Meanwhile, Elicia smiled sweetly without opening her eyes as she rubbed her stomach.

About an hour and a half later, Alfonzo and the girls entered the guild hall. And when they did, there was a brawl going on, which did not surprise any of them. However, the brawl abruptly came to a stop when Natsu noticed Alfonzo enter the building.

"Alfonzo! Fight mee!" Natsu shouted as he jumped away from Macao, who he had been throwing a punch at a moment ago.

"Damn it, feeding him didn't make him forget." Alfonzo muttered.

Naturally, as the eight ladies were so close, they heard his muttering. Because of that, they all looked at him with incredulous expressions.

"Are you telling me that you did all that cooking for that celebration party just so that you wouldn't have to fight Natsu?" Cana asked in a disbelieving tone.

"Yeah." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "I mean, he never has anything new to show me. So, fighting him almost daily for the last nine years has gotten old, you know?"

"Yeah, I know what you mean." Sun replied with a nod. "Fighting Natsu is only fun if you haven't fought him in a while."

"Yeah, but it's been two months for Fonzie." Marin pointed out. "It can't be that bad, right?"

"Unless he has something new to show me, it will be the same." Alfonzo replied with a shrug.

Meanwhile, as Alfonzo chatted with the ladies, Natsu finally reached him. However, like the day before, he did not attack Alfonzo without waiting for a response. Instead, his eyes were shining brightly. On top of that, he was wearing his [Soul Armament], which had changed in appearance since the last time Alfonzo saw it.

Seeing the new look of Natsu's gauntlets, Alfonzo smiled brightly.

"Sure." Alfonzo said, finally replying to Natsu's challenge.

Chapter 500: The Truth About the Dragon Parents

Instead of immediately getting to their morning training, Alfonzo took Natsu up to the tenth floor where they would be able to have their spar without holding back too much. Meanwhile, everyone else in the guild hall decided to make their way up to the tenth floor, as well. That way, they could watch the spar that made Alfonzo smile.

Luckily, Irene and Brandish never entered the guild hall in fear of being trapped by some unknown security system. So, they would not be witnesses to the use of [Soul Armaments].

"Alright, Natsu, show me what you got." Alfonzo said with a smile.

"Of course." Natsu said as he took his fighting stance.

Contrary to Alfonzo's expectations, Natsu, instead of partially releasing his [Soul Armament], charged forward with flames blazing around his gauntlets. Then, once he was in range, he condensed all the flames onto his right fist.

"[Fire Dragon's Iron Fist]!" Natsu shouted as he threw a right straight.

'He still hasn't gotten over the habit of shouting his spell names.' Alfonzo thought to himself as he quickly drew Bedlam from the strap on his lower back.

Clang~~~~~!

Although Alfonzo was able to deflect Natsu's [Fire Dragon's Iron Fist], the distance the punch was deflected was much less than he expected, causing Natsu's fist to just miss the side of his head. On top of that, Natsu was already throwing a second punch.

"[Fire Dragon's Iron Fist Barrage!" Natsu shouted.

With that, Natsu threw a barrage of [Fire Dragon's Iron Fists] using both hands. And despite the fact that he was splitting his flames between both hands, neither seemed weaker than the others. So, Alfonzo was forced to block, dodge, and parry all the incoming punches.

"Well, learning your [Soul Armament's] name has definitely made you stronger, Natsu." Alfonzo said as he parried another incoming punch. In the next instant, he ducked under a follow up punch as he jammed the long ends of his tonfa into Natsu's abdomen. "But this isn't what I wanted to see when I accepted your challenge."

Bang!

In the next instant, Natsu was sent flying back to the other side of the sparring ring. ON top of that, his body was bent at the point of impact as he coughed up a mouthful of saliva.

"Wow! Even though he is losing, Natsu got a lot stronger." Wendy said with her eyes wide open in surprise.

"Yeah, and he hasn't even released his [Soul Armament]." Gajeel, with his arms crossed in front of his chest, said from beside Wendy. "It's too bad he beat me to it. Otherwise, I would be the one fighting with Alfonzo right now."

As Gajeel spoke, he glanced over his right shoulder at the hilt of a large single-edged sword that resembled the buster sword from Final Fantasy VII. At the same time, Wendy nodded her head while reaching back and patting the folded metallic wings on her back.

Meanwhile, As Natsu was sent flying, Alfonzo overheard Gajeel and Wendy's conversation, causing him to glance in their direction.

'So, Gajeel and Wendy have learned their [soul Armaments'] names, too.' Alfonzo thought to himself before returning his focus to Natsu, who had finally regained stability before landing on his feet. 'I'm really looking forward to when they release them.'

"So, are you going to show me everything, Natsu?" Alfonzo asked with a smile. "Or is this gonna be another one-sided ass kicking like usual?"

"Oh, things will be different this time around, Alfonzo." Natsu said with a grin as he spread his feet apart and positioned his fists on either side of his waist. "This time, I'm gonna kick your butt. Then, I'll challenge Ur and Gildarts before I'm the strongest in the guild."

"Hey, Tear." Marin said quietly into Ultear's ear after hearing Natsu's declaration. "He does know that Fonzie is stronger than your mom, right? I mean, even without his [Soul Armament]."

"Probably not." Ultear replied while shaking her head. "He can't use [Magic Power Detection], remember?"

"Oh yeah, now that you mention it." Marin said in a contemplative tone. "He's not smart or patient enough to use it."

"That's right." Ultear replied with a nod. "But now that Mom has a [Soul Armament] of her own, it will only be a matter of time before Mom can put up a fight against Alfonzo again."

Marin nodded in response. Before she could comment any further, however, both she and Ultear snapped their heads in Natsu's direction when they felt his magic power spike to its limit.

"[Burn everything before you, Igneel]." Natsu shouted as the gauntlets on his hands began to glow in a fiery light.

'So, it's just as I expected.' Alfonzo thought as he dropped into his tonfa fighting stance while drawing Riot from his strap. 'The dragon residing in his body became his [Armament Spirit]. But I wonder what will happen when all the anti-bodies for [Dragonization] have been created. I'll need to talk to Master Unohana about a way to talk with other [Armament Spirits], if that's even possible.'

["Spending time with other Armament Spirits] would be nice."] Bedlam said with a grin. ["Especially with the girls. We might be able to have a little fun together."]

["You're such a horn dog."] Riot said disdainfully.

["Try saying that again when you wipe that blush off your face."] Bedlam shot back. ["I bet you can't wait to have a bit of alone time with Scylla, Mister Super Simp."]

Though Riot did not respond, Alfonzo could hear the sound of his teeth grinding against each other.

Meanwhile, the glow surrounding Natsu's gauntlets extended up his arms, now covering his forearms. Then, when the light subsided, it revealed a pair of gauntlets covering Natsu's hands, forearms, and elbows. On top of that, the new gauntlets were covered in dark red scales, like those of a dragon. Plus, Natsu was also sporting scale like patterns on his forehead, as well.

'Oh, the release pushed him into [Dragon Force], too.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'Wasn't expecting that.'

Seeing Natsu's unsealed [Soul Armament], the members of the guild who were watching the spar looked on in amazement and envy. While some of the wizards who received their [Soul Armament Embryos] last year when the S-Class Exam participants were named, none had been able to unseal their [Soul Armaments] yet.

"Wait, did Natsu call his [Armament Spirit], Igneel?" Lisanna, who paid the most attention to Natsu, asked in a shocked tone. "Isn't that the name of the dragon who raised him?"

Hearing that, the entire guild went into an uproar at the implication. Then, they looked at Gajeel and Wendy, wondering if they were in a similar situation.

"We can talk about that later." Elicia said, getting everyone's attention. "For now, let's watch the spar. They're getting started again."

That was enough to pull everyone's attention back to the ongoing spar. And just as they all looked back to the sparring ring, Natsu was taking a deep breath as he formed his hands into a trumpet in front of his mouth.

"[Fire Dragon King's Roar]." Natsu chanted before blowing a stream of fire between his hands.

In the next instant, the stream of fire, which was more vibrant in color, as well as at a much higher temperature, than Natsu's usual flames, blazed towards Alfonzo. In response, Alfonzo created a slab of metal that absorbs heat in front of him.

Despite the properties of the metal, however, Alfonzo could see the metal begin to distort as it started to glow from the heat. And because of his connection to the metal, Alfonzo knew it would not last much longer. So, he dodged to the side.

"[Fire Dragon King's Destruction Fist]!" Natsu shouted just as Alfonzo cleared the metal slab.

In the next instant, Natsu, with his right fist extended, burst through the superheated portion of the metal slab Alfonzo created. Unfortunately, with his inability to use [Magic Power Detection], he did not know exactly where Alfonzo had dodged to. Though, thanks to his instincts, he knew that Alfonzo had dodged his attack.

Bang!

Before Natsu could recover from his attack, he was once again struck in the abdomen, this time by Riot, while his feet were simultaneously swept out from beneath him. As a result, Natsu's back slammed into the floor with a lot of force.

"Gah!" Natsu grunted as the wind was knocked out of him.

A moment later, the spar came to an end when Alfonzo jabbed Riot's long end at Natsu's throat, stopping just before making contact.

"You lose, Natsu." Alfonzo said with a smile.

Taking several deep breaths, Natsu looked up at Alfonzo with a pout once his breathing was under control.

"You didn't even have to release your [Soul Armaments]." Natsu said, clearly upset that he still couldn't push Alfonzo to his limits. "It's not fair."

Putting away his [Soul Armaments], Alfonzo offered Natsu a hand, which Natsu quickly accepted before he pulled him to his feet. At the same time, Natsu dispelled Igneel's release.

"Don't be upset, Natsu." Alfonzo said while patting Natsu on his shoulder. "I didn't have to release Riot and Bedlam because I know how you fight. When you learn more about Igneel's release state, I'm sure the fight will be more interesting."

"I guess." Natsu replied while shaking his head. "Igneel said the same thing just now."

"Speaking of Igneel..." Alfonzo said with a curious expression on his face. "Isn't that the name of the dragon that raised you? Is it possible that...?"

Hearing that, Natsu's pout disappeared immediately. Then, his eyes lit up with excitement.

"Yeah, it's the Igneel I've been searching for." Natsu replied with an excited smile. "I knew he would never abandon me. Instead, he's been living inside my body. To help me with... Uh... Dragon invasion?"

["It's [Dragonization], Natsu."] Igneel corrected from Natsu's inner world.

On a side note, Natsu's inner world was a serene forest. At the center of which was an active volcano where Igneel chose to reside.

As for Igneel, he was a gigantic western dragon. Most of his body was covered in dark red scales, with the exception being his under belly, which was beige in color. He also had four legs, a pair of bat-like wings, a triangular head with a pair of horns on the top of his head and a third on his snout, a pair of large, round eyes with yellow sclera and round black pupils, as well as rows of black spikes that reached from the back of his head, down the center of his back, to the tip of his long tail.

"Uh... I mean [Dragonization]." Natsu said, correcting himself with Igneel's prompt. "He said something about Dragon Slayers turning into dragons if they use their magic too much. So, to stop that, he knocked me out before hiding inside my body to stop that from happening."

Hearing that, the guild was astonished. Then, after getting over their shock, they all turned their attention towards Gajeel and Wendy. And the looks in their eyes all asked the same question, "what about you two?"

While Wendy got nervous from having so many pairs of eyes focused on her, Gajeel snorted in annoyance.

"Metalicana said the same thing." Gajeel said grumpily. Though, it was also clear to see that he was happy to have his dragon parent back. "I'm still gonna kick his ass for not telling me about it beforehand, though."

"M-Me, too." Wendy said quietly with a happy smile on her face. "Grandeey was helping me, too. I don't wanna beat up, though."

'I wonder what Gajeel would think if he knew he would really have to kick Metalicana's ass if he wanted to completely unseal him.' Alfonzo wondered while smiling to himself.

"Anyway, now that the spar's over, let's get to training." Alfonzo said loudly, bringing everyone back to their senses after the reveal about the dragon parents. "And as a reward for the three Dragon Slayers unsealing their [Soul Armaments], I'll cook this afternoon. And I'll only charge my usual rates. You won't even have to use your points."

"Yeah~~~~~!" Everyone cheered excitedly at the thought of having Alfonzo's cooking without having to use their points.

After that, everyone filed out of the large training room on the tenth floor before heading towards the elevators and stairs to reach their preferred training rooms. Meanwhile, Alfonzo and Elicia, the last to leave the training room, strode towards the elevator arm in arm.

"So, do you think the same thing happened with Laxus?" Elicia asked curiously. "I mean, he doesn't have a [Dragon Seed]. On top of that, his [Dragon Slayer Magic] came from a lacrima."

"I don't' know." Alfonzo replied casually. "But he definitely didn't keep his promise to me."

As Alfonzo spoke the second sentence, his expression changed into a blood thirsty smile.

"So, I guess I'm gonna have to kick his ass again to get the answer out of him." Alfonzo continued in a tone that suggested he was looking forward to the fight. "And I'm definitely gonna force him to use his release before the fight ends."

Hearing that, Elicia could only shake her head. Though, she felt no sympathy for Laxus, as reporting about his [Armament Spirit] was part of the terms of the bet when he received his [Soul Armament Embryo].

"Anyway, there might be a chance to give Irene her humanity back if I were to ever give her a [Soul Armament Embryo]." Alfonzo said after switching his expression back to a casual one, once again. "But I'd need to be able to talk to the dragons in Natsu, Wendy, and Gajeel's [Soul Armaments] to see if that were plausible."

"You'd have to find a way to keep Irene from taking it back to Alvarez, too." Elicia pointed out.

"Something tells me that if I could give her back her humanity, I wouldn't have to worry about that." Alfonzo replied. "I mean, the only reason she even ended up working for Zeref was because he gave her a human form, remember? So, if I could make her human again, I think she would jump ship pretty fast."

"Maybe..." Elicia replied. "Still, there's always a chance something could go wrong, you know."

"I know." Alfonzo replied with a nod. "And I'll definitely be careful. I definitely don't wanna strengthen our enemies. And I'm under no illusion that Zeref wouldn't be able to reverse engineer a [Soul Armament] if he was allowed to study one."

Nodding in response, Elicia continued to chat with Alfonzo and the two made their way towards their preferred training room.