

## Fairy Tail 53

Chapter 53: The Annual Guild Master's Meeting

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Clover.

June, x778.

"\*Sigh\* Having so many troublesome children sure is a lot of work." Makarov said in a feigned tone of exhaustion.

"Oh, don't give us that, Maki." A bald, heavy-set, cross-dressing man replied. "We've all heard about the up-and-coming children in your guild. I've even heard that some of them are quite the lookers. Mmm."

The cross-dressing man, Bob, who wore red lipstick, blush on his cheeks, a purple spaghetti strapped top, a gold and fuchsia hoop necklace, and pink and purple striped shorts was the guild master of one of Fiore's most reputable guilds, Blue Pegasus. Although, their reputation as one of the stronger guilds in the kingdom was without doubt, they were better known for their attractive guild members that acted more like hosts in a host club than actual wizards.

"Although I'm sure Makarov is bragging on the low, I bet getting all those letters asking for compensation really is a headache." A man wearing a black hat and sunglasses said.

The man in sunglasses, Goldmine, was a slim man appearing to be in his fifties or sixties with straight brown hair reaching his shoulders and wearing a black t-shirt and pants. Also, he was the guild master of another well-known guild in the kingdom, Quatro Cerberus.

Not only were the two men chatting with Makarov guild masters of their own guilds, but they were also former members of Fairy Tail, as well as Makarov's old teammates.

"Still, no one wants to hear him brag about his talented youngsters." An old woman with a walking stick added. "And if anyone is going to brag about their children, it should be me. I received a few rather talented youngsters myself. I even have a Wizard Saint Candidate in my guild."

The old woman, Ooba Babasama, looked like any other old woman you could find in Fiore. She had wrinkles on her face, long grey hair that she styled in a massive bun with three layers, and bony hands. She wore a collared cloak with a polka dot design, a dark vest underneath the cloak, and studded bracelets on each arm. She was also the guild master of another one of the strongest guilds in Fiore, Lamia Scale.

"You mean Jura, right?" Makarov asked. "He's sure grown up. I remember when he was just a kid. To think he's a candidate for Wizard Saint already. We sure are getting old, aren't we?"

The Ten Wizard Saints are the publicly recognized ten most powerful wizards in Ishgar. With the four strongest of the Wizards Saints gaining the title, the Four Gods of Ishgar.

"Speak for yourself, Maki." Bob said with a wink. "I'm still fabulous."

"Yeah, I'm too manly to let age get to me." Goldmine said with a grin.

"Didn't anyone ever teach you not to talk about a woman's age?" Ooba said with a scowl. "Did you want to spin it for me that badly?"

"Fine, fine, whatever, I'm sorry." Makarov said, holding up his hands in a disarming manner.

Like that, Makarov continued to chat with his old friends and fellow guild masters in a large hall with a lot of tables where similarly ranked wizards chatted with those they knew. This was the annual guild master's meeting that was held in Clover.

The purpose for this meeting, aside from letting the guild masters mingle and form bonds with other guild masters, was for the guild masters to discuss any issues or concerns they were having so they could be presented before the Magic Council, the organization in charge of policing the wizards in Ishgar.

"Anyway, how are Bianca and Orlando's kids doing?" Bob asked with interest glinting in his eyes. "You really should bring them over to meet my guild. Their parents were so good looking. I know they would get along with my children."

"Uh... We'll see." Makarov said, imagining how his two favorite young wizards would react to the atmosphere in Blue Pegasus.

"Speaking of those kids." Goldmine said. "Is it true the boy was the one who invented the new magic power engines?"

"Yup!" Makarov said, puffing his chest out in pride. "He's a real genius when it comes to magic item crafting."

"I'm sure he is." Goldmine replied with a nod. "But that's not what I was asking about."

"Then, what did you want to know?" Makarov asked with curiosity before taking a swig from a mug of ale.

"Why does your magic vehicle look so much different than the ones you can buy on the market?"

"Oh?" Makarov exclaimed, puffing up even more. "That's simple. Alfonzo made it for me himself."

With that, Makarov reached into his cloak, an article that signified him as one of the continent's Ten Wizard Saints and retrieved a photo lacrima. Then, he showed the other three a picture of the three vehicles Alfonzo designed himself.

"Ooh! That one is gorgeous!" Bob exclaimed, pointing at Alfonzo's Vanquish in the picture.

With Bob's loud exclamation, a lot of the attending guild masters were curious. At first, only those familiar with Bob came over to see what had him so excited. Then, the guild masters acquainted with the other three made their way over to see what the fuss was about, as well. Eventually, all the guild masters who were even remotely affiliated with Makarov, Bob, Goldmine, and Ooba came over to join the fun.

Naturally, this bothered the rest of the guild masters, who were not on the best terms with Makarov, Bob, Goldmine, and Ooba. However, only one man was bold enough to make his discontent apparent.

This man, Jose Porla, the guild master of the only guild in Fiore that could compete with Fairy Tail for the title of strongest, Phantom Lord, dressed in an attire that looked to be the cross between a sorcerer's robe and a jester's outfit with a Wizard Saint's cloak over top of his clothes was tall and slim with a long face, dark red, straight hair that reached his shoulders, a mustache, slightly pointed ears, prominent eyelashes, and dark lips.

"What good is there in being a genius in magic item crafting?" Jose asked as he made his way toward the table where Makarov sat. "With out the power to protect what he creates, he is useless. In the end, he will die just like his mother, Bianca, did before him. It's clear that neither she nor that boy Orlando were anything special, seeing as they are dead"

Immediately, the hall fell silent. Even the other wizards who were not on the best of terms with Fairy Tail thought Jose's remark was overboard. However, they were unwilling, not to mention, unable, to say anything against Jose.

Although Jose's power and prestige as one of the Ten Wizard Saints was more than enough to make the weaker guild master's remain silent, the furious surge of magic power originating from Makarov was another reason.

"To think you have fallen so low, Jose." Makarov said with suppressed anger in his tone. "Even if you don't care for me, to insult my children is unforgiveable."

"Then maybe you shouldn't heap such undeserved praise on that group of troublemakers in your guild." Jose said, completely unbothered by Makarov's magic power. "Besides, they have nothing on the five youths I've been raising. When they're matured, there will no longer be any room for debates. Phantom Lord will be the strongest guild in Fiore."

"I care little for your desire to be the strongest, Jose." Makarov said, his anger becoming more apparent as time passed. "But you will take back the verbal attacks you launched at my children."

"Will I?" Jose asked with a smirk while he raised an eyebrow. "And what if I don't?"

With the provocation, Makarov's magic power spiked even higher while his face distorted in rage.

"Maki, you have to calm down." Bob said, placing a hand on Makarov's shoulder.

"Yeah, it's obvious he's just trying to rile you up." Goldmine said, placing a hand on Makarov's other shoulder.

Like Bob and Goldmine said, Jose was trying to provoke Makarov into starting a fight. As all the guild master's present knew, this meeting hall was considered neutral ground. So, even if there were grievances between two guilds or guild masters, they were expected not to act upon it in a physical way.

With a bit of rationality returning to his eyes, Makarov took a deep breath to calm himself down. Meanwhile, Jose could only click his tongue in annoyance. If he could have provoked Makarov into a fight, not only would he have had the justification to heavily injure the man who annoyed him so much over the years, but he would have had a good reason to get Makarov kicked out of his seat as one of the Ten Wizard Saints.

"Hmph!" Jose snorted as he spun on his heels and started walking away. "Like always, you fairies are nothing but cowards."

Makarov almost lost control of his temper once again. However, feeling the hands of his former teammates on his shoulders kept him just rational enough to not attack.

"To think, the sixth strongest wizard in the kingdom has to resort to such petty tricks." Makarov said disdainfully. "I guess that's why you and your guild have always been number two, just behind Fairy Tail."

Considering that Makarov was the fifth ranked of the Ten Wizard Saints Makarov's comment hit Jose right where it hurt.

In response, Jose stopped in his tracks. Then, his magic power flared, much like Makarov's had before. With slow, deliberate movements, Jose turned around to face the man he hated most in the world. And with wrath blazing in his eyes, he spoke in a chilling tone.

"One day, the flies of Fairy Tail will be crushed." Jose said as he leaked a dark magic power. "And when they are, I will laugh as I dance on the ashes of your guild hall."

Until that moment, Jose Porla did not actually hate Fairy Tail all that much. In fact, the only reason he antagonized Makarov at all was that he was tired of hearing the short old man brag about his children every year. So, after having a few drinks, he let his annoyance out. And considering that Makarov had also been drinking, the conflict escalated to its current state.

For the next few moments, Makarov and Jose glared at each other without a word. In fact, the entire meeting hall was silent. Just when the atmosphere reached its peak, Jose turned around sharply and fluttered his cloak. Then, he walked away, leaving the meeting hall in the process.

Meanwhile, Makarov glared at Jose until he left the meeting hall. Then, with a huff, he picked up his mug and downed the rest of its contents while the other guild masters returned to their tables.

"What the hell is wrong with that guy?" Makarov asked angrily. "We've never had any conflict with his guild. So, why is he starting shit here?"

"Calm down, Maki." Bob said, patting Makarov's shoulder. "You're not young anymore. You have to watch your blood pressure."

"That's right, you might even throw out your back." Goldmine said with a chuckle.

"Yes, fights are meant for the young." Ooba said with a nod. "Old men like you are way past your prime."

The words of his friends caused Makarov to deadpan. Just a moment ago, they all ganged up on him when he said they were getting old. But now, they're all ganging up on him to call him old. What kind of twist was this.

"You three are such hypocrites." Makarov said, pointing a finger at his three old friends. "Where do you get off calling me old after denying being old yourselves?"

Bob, Goldmine, and Ooba glanced at each other, communicating with their eyes for a few moments. Then, they all nodded in unison. After that, they all looked at Makarov again.

"Because you admitted to being old." X 3.

Hearing his friends speak in unison to justify their hypocrisy, Makarov wanted to flip the table he was sitting at. However, doing so would result in a request for compensation. Something he received enough of on a daily basis. So, instead of damaging anything in the meeting hall, he did, what he considered to be, the next best thing.

"Someone, get me another drink!" Makarov shouted loud enough to drown out the rest of the conversations in the meeting room.