

Fairy Tail 55

Chapter 55: S-Class Promotion Exam; Part 1

Earth Land, Ishgar, Tenrou Island.

December, x779.

Around fifteen months passed after Happy's egg hatched. In those months, there were a few events that happened. The first thing was that Macao and his wife, Enno, welcomed their first child, a boy they named Romeo into the world. This took place a little over a month after Happy was born. And the second was Laxus reaching the status of an S-Class wizard.

While Romeo's birth brought a wave of happiness and good will over the entire guild for the first six months or so, Laxus' promotion did the exact opposite. Laxus' already rampant nature was turned up to eleven when he thought himself the strongest in the younger generation.

Naturally, after Laxus made the S-Class, the first thing he did was challenge Alfonzo. Thinking that he was now superior to the younger boy, Laxus, at seventeen years old and standing at a height of 6'3" (1.9 m) tall, literally looked down on the shorter Alfonzo, who stood at 5'6" (1.68 m) tall.

Unfortunately for Laxus, nothing changed in terms of the outcome of the fight. Laxus was beaten black and blue. Then, after cuffing him to the ground with restraints made from a metal that absorbs lightning, Alfonzo left him in the middle of the guild's training field without even looking back as Laxus shouted and cursed at him.

Today, the S-Class Promotion Exam would take place once again. And there were only a handful of wizards who qualified. The first was Alfonzo. Considering that he had started to pull away from Elicia in terms of power after Gildarts' intensified training sessions, that was no surprise. Though, Elicia was also qualified. So were Macao, Wakaba, Bickslow, Fried, Evergreen, and a less well known member of the guild by the name of Mest Gryder.

Mest was a young man with a lean build, short black hair, bright turquoise eyes, and three scars on the left side of his face. He used a rare type of spatial magic, [teleportation Magic], that made him quite capable in his career as a wizard. Although he was not considered the strongest of all the wizards taking part in the exam, he would not be easy to defeat if battle was one of the criteria for this Exam.

Meanwhile, the eight members of Fairy Tail qualified to take part in the exam were standing together on a ship owned by the guild. Standing next to them was Makarov. And as the ship sailed, they slowly approached an island with a colossal tree at its center.

"Listen up, Children, that is Tenrou Island." Makarov said, jumping up on the ship's railing. "That is the birth place of our guild, as well as our holy land."

Naturally, this drew gazes filled with awe from the examinees, bringing a smile of pride to Makarov's face.

"Anyone bearing the Fairy Tail guild mark will gain a boost in their magic power as soon as they set foot on the island." Makarov explained.

While Makarov continued to give facts about Fairy Tail and Tenrou Island to the eight examinees, Alfonzo and Elicia, who already knew everything he was talking about, were watching the island like a couple of love-struck fools. The Tenrou Island Arc of the Fairy Tail anime and manga was one of the most exciting parts of the story, after all.

Eventually, the ship reached the island and dropped anchor. Then, Makarov, followed by the examinees, disembarked and made their way toward the center of the island. Upon landing on the island, the first thing everyone noticed was just how hot it was. Though it was hot on the open seas, the island was even worse.

"Why is it so hot?" Elicia asked while fanning herself with her right hand. "Ugh... I'm already sweating. It feels so gross."

"It's because of the high ethernano density." Makarov replied. "It's amplifying the environment. So, the water is fresher, the vegetation is bigger, and the sunshine is hotter."

"Ugh... I hate ethernano." Elicia wined. Then, she looked toward Alfonzo with puppy eyes. "Fonzie, make me a piece of metal that stays cold."

Thinking about Elicia's request for a few moments, Alfonzo eventually shrugged his shoulders. Then, a thin, rectangular piece of metal appeared in front of Elicia before gravity pulled it toward the ground.

Quickly catching the small piece of metal, Elicia was happily surprised when she saw it. A moment later, she used her [Thread Magic] to produce a number of threads that she weaved together with the piece of metal into a headband. Swiftly tying her headband around her head, the piece of cold metal was positioned right over her forehead.

"Ahh... Much better." Elicia said in a comfortable tone. "Fonzie, you're the best. But can you inscribe a Fairy Tail guild mark on it?"

"I know." Alfonzo replied with a smile as he used his [Metal Magic] to make the Fairy Tail guild mark appear in the center of the metal strip on Elicia's headband. "I'd do anything for you, Lici."

While Alfonzo and Elicia had entered their own world, the rest of the group looked at the couple, who officially started dating shortly after their fourteenth birthday, with varying facial expressions.

Bickslow, who had yet to give up on his crush, glared at Alfonzo with so much hostility that everyone was surprised Alfonzo could ignore it at all. Meanwhile, Fried, Evergreen, and Mest looked at them with annoyance and envy since they were both single.

Meanwhile, Makarov, Macao, and Wakaba looked at them with expressions that scream: "It's good to be young."

Eventually, the group reached a small clearing surrounded by tall trees. And from their position, they could all see eight colored platforms that towered above the trees set an equal distance from one another. Each 1,000 feet (914.4 m) from the center of the clearing.

"I'm sure you've all seen those platforms, correct?" Makarov asked when the group stopped in the middle of the clearing. "The space between those platforms is the area where your exam, a battle royale, will take place."

Immediately after hearing Makarov's explanation, Bickslow, Fried, and Evergreen glared at Alfonzo and Elicia, not even seeing the other three as threats. On top of that, they had been ordered by Laxus to stop Alfonzo from getting promoted if at all possible.

"Say, Macao, does it feel like their ignoring us?" Wakaba asked while scratching his head.

"Yeah, that's how it looks to me." Macao replied. "These kids have gotten a little big for their britches, I think."

Meanwhile, all seven participants completely forgot about Mest, as he very rarely interacted with any of them. Of course, this left him feeling a little left out. However, he clenched his fists with passion burning in his eyes.

'I'll pass this exam.' Mest said to himself. 'And when I do, I'll be able to help everyone in the guild even more.'

Even though Mest generally worked alone and was not well-acquainted with anyone in the guild, everything he did was for his family, Fairy Tail. And even if he did not get the promotion this time around, he would be nothing but pleased, as it meant that Fairy Tail would grow in strength and prestige.

'Well, this is not what I was expecting.' Alfonzo thought as he felt the glares from the Thunder God Tribe. 'I was expecting something a bit more... I don't know... related to completing quests. But then again, fighting other wizards happens a lot more than I thought during quests, too. Well, whatever, I don't plan on losing today.'

Meanwhile, Elicia's thoughts were a bit more frantic, and it showed on her face.

'No, no, no, no, no!' Elicia shouted internally. 'This means I have to fight Fonzie, right? No, I don't like this! Even though it's not a fight to the death, it's a real fight. How am I supposed to fight against Fonzie?'

I don't ever wanna hurt him. But... IF I give up without trying Fonzie will be disappointed in me. Ooh... What do I do?'

Able to understand what was going through Elicia's mind, Alfonzo smiled warmly. Then, he began combing his fingers through Elicia's hair.

"Calm down, Lici." Alfonzo said in the most soothing voice he could. "If we have to fight each other, just think of it as a spar. We've done that a lot, right? The only difference is we'll be going all out."

At first, Elicia relaxed quite a bit when Alfonzo likened the test to a spar. However, when he mentioned that they would be going all out, she grew even more tense.

Seeing that his words had the opposite effect of what he intended, Alfonzo could only smile wryly.

'*Sigh* I guess I'll have to bring out the big guns.' Alfonzo thought to himself as he smile grew more sinister.

"Lici." Alfonzo said in a stern tone.

Naturally, when she heard Alfonzo's tone, Elicia focused all her attention on him.

"IF at any point I feel you aren't giving it your all during this exam..." Alfonzo said sternly, tailing off for dramatic effect.

"*Gulp* What will happen?" Elicia asked nervously.

"I won't cook for you for a whole week." Alfonzo replied in a deadly serious tone.

Hearing that, Elicia's eyes opened wide. Then she began shaking her head frantically.

"No, no, no!" Elicia said while shaking her head. "That's not fair, you can't do that!"

"I can and I will." Alfonzo said in the same stern tone. "We made a promise that we would both do our best to make S-Class, right? Well, if you break that promise, then why should I cook for you?"

While Elicia began tearing up at the thought of not having Alfonzo's food for a week, her expression, somehow, became more resolute as time went by. She's already been denied her Fonzie's food three times over her past and present lives, and she will not allow it to happen ever again.

"*Cough* *Cough* Can I continue? Or do the two of you need some more time." Makarov asked with his eyebrows twitching.

With that, Alfonzo and Elicia looked around. When they noticed seven pairs of eyes staring or glaring at them, Elicia quickly ducked behind Alfonzo to hide her embarrassment. Meanwhile, Alfonzo smiled bashfully while scratching the side of his head.

"Nah, I think we're good." Alfonzo replied to Makarov's rhetorical question. "You can go on with your explanation."

"I wasn't asking for your permission, Brat!" Makarov shouted, a vein bulging on his forehead. "Now shut up and let me finish!"

Alfonzo fell silent after Makarov's outburst. Meanwhile, after another glance at Alfonzo and Elicia, the rest of the group focused their attention on Makarov once again.

"Now, where was I?" Makarov asked rhetorically. "That's right."

Makarov then reached into his cloak. When he pulled his hand out once again, he was holding eight identical sticks, from what the A-Class wizards who accompanied him could see.

"Each of you will draw one of these sticks." Makarov said, holding out the sticks for everyone to see. "Each one has a color painted on the end in my hand. That will designate which of the platforms you will start on. Now, come and draw."

Following Makarov's instructions, the eight A-Class wizards drew their sticks and found out from which platform they would start their exam from.

"One last thing." Makarov said after everyone was ready to head over to their platform. "Gildarts, Ur, and Laxus will be roaming around the exam area. And if they see you, they will attack. So, you have been warned."

With that, everyone split up and started making their way toward the platforms.

"Man, Bickslow's really got it out for me this time, huh?" Alfonzo asked himself as he walked through the forest. "Something tells me that he's got a way to communicate with the rest of the Thunder God Tribe. I wouldn't be surprised if I get attacked by all three of them and Laxus at the same time."

Contrary to what one would think, Alfonzo was not intimidated by the thought of fighting three A-Class wizards and an S-Class wizard in the slightest. Instead, he was looking forward to the challenge.