

Fairy Tail 93

Chapter 93: Gildarts' Departure

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

February 28, x781.

A few hours passed since Alonzo proposed to Elicia and Cana. In that time, the trio took a relaxing bath together. Then, Alfonzo gave Cana a massage to get her legs working properly after the activities from the night before.

After all that was finished, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Cana got dressed and made their way to the guild hall. Naturally, they piled into the Escalade for this rather short trip. Although Cana could walk again, she was in no shape to make the trip on foot.

By now the morning training session for the younger members of the guild was over and those who were not on quests were sitting at their usual table.

"I guess they're not coming today, huh?" Mirajane asked with a pout on her face. "I swear, how did Alfonzo and Elicia become S-Class before me when they're such slackers."

"Why can't you be more honest with your feelings, Mira?" Lisanna asked with a smile.

"What are you talking about, Lisanna?" Mirajane asked with a frown.

"It's obvious to everyone at the table that you're missing Alfonzo." Bisca replied.

"Who would miss that guy?" Mirajane asked in a slightly panicked tone. "Don't say stupid stuff."

In response, almost everyone else at the table, Namely, Laki, Ultear, Lisanna, and Bisca, shook their heads at Mirajane's denial. Meanwhile, the last, and newest, person to join the table, Marin, looked at Mirajane in surprise.

"Wait, you like Alfonzo, too?" Marin asked.

"Yeah, both she and Ultear have major crushes on him." Lisanna replied casually.

"Well, I knew about Ultear, but I didn't expect Mirajane too." Marin said in a surprised tone.

"How does everyone know about that?" Ultear asked with a flush on her cheeks.

"Well, maybe if you hid it better." Laki added from the side. "They wouldn't."

"Ugh... Do you think he knows too?" Ultear asked.

"Probably." Bisca replied. "He's pretty perceptive, ya know."

"Yeah, unlike Alzack." Mirajane cut in. "Considering how much he likes you; I'm surprised he can't tell that you like him too."

Immediately, Bisca blushed. However, she had no idea how to respond.

"But then again, you're too shy to tell him how you feel, too." Mirajane continued. "So, I guess you're even ."

Bang!

In response to Mirajane's last statement, Bisca let her head fall forward and slam into the table.

"Can we not talk about this anymore, please." Bisca muttered.

"Don't pay Big Sis any mind, Bisca." Lisanna said, patting Bisca on the back. "She's only picking on you because she's too shy to tell Alfonzo how she feels, too."

"I already said I don't---" Mira began to say while raising her voice.

Mirajane's words were cut off, however, when Alfonzo, flanked by Elicia and Cana, opened the guild hall's front door.

"Oh, why don't you finish that sentence, Mirajane?" Ultear asked with a playful smirk on her face. "You should shout it out like you were about to, too."

"Shut up, frozen witch!" Mirajane snapped back.

"What was that, Demon Girl?" Ultear replied with her eyes narrowing. "It sounds like you wanna get slapped."

"Ha! I dare you to try." Mirajane replied.

Meanwhile, the rest of the girls at the table just looked on with neutral expressions. Even Marin, who had only been a member of the guild for a month, was used to the random brawls that would break out from time to time.

"Hey, Lisanna." Bisca said while watching Mirajane and Ultear butt heads.

"Yeah, what's up?" Lisanna asked.

"Do you remember when Ultear used to say that Fairy Tail was a bad influence on Ur and Gray?" Bisca continued with another question.

"Yup." Lisanna replied with a nod.

"Doesn't she get into more fights than either of them lately?" Bisca asked.

"She sure does." Lisanna replied with another nod.

"Hey, look at Cana." Marin cut in, drawing all the girls, even Ultear and Mirajane's, attention. "Isn't she walking kinda funny?"

Immediately, all the girls gazes fell on Cana. And when they did, they could see that Cana was indeed limping.

"Do you think they did it last night after everyone went home?" Marin asked, the... cultured... part of her brain going into overdrive.

Immediately after hearing Marin's question, Ultear and Mirajane narrowed their eyes. Although they were just arguing a moment ago, they made eye contact. Then, in a brief moment, they decided that they would question Cana and get all the answers they were looking for.

"By the way, why isn't Erza with them?" Marin asked another question.

"She's probably slacking off, too." Mirajane interjected. "I should have made S-Class before her, too."

"Actually, she took a quest and left earlier today." Ultear replied. "I saw her grab an A-Class quest while everyone was still having breakfast."

"Hmph!" Mirajane snorted. "I knew she was slacking off, only an A-Class quest, pathetic."

Deciding to ignore Mirajane's unreasonable resentment toward Erza, the other girls decided to watch the show that was starting by the bar.

A few minutes ago, before Alfonzo, Elicia, and Cana entered the guild hall, Gildarts was sitting at the bar while speaking to Makarov, Ur, and Ren.

"So, is Seto alright?" Gildarts asked after not seeing Gozaburo this morning.

"He's fine." Ren replied. "Nothing a few days of bed rest won't fix."

"What did you do to him?" Ur asked curiously.

"Oh, at first I just wanted to have a little talk with him." Ren replied. "But he started making excuses for his behavior, ya see."

Makarov, Gildarts, and Ur nodded in understanding.

"And every time he did, I punched him... hard." Ren continued. "And when that didn't work, I used [Howling Voice]."

"Seriously?" Makarov asked in disbelief. "But that was a spell strong enough to disperse an explosion."

"Well, he's pretty sturdy." Ren replied. "Anyway, he's got more than a few broken bones right now. I already set the bones and put them in casts, so he'll be fine after a while."

'I gotta remember to never piss her off.' Makarov, Gildarts, and Ur thought at the same time.

"Then, I guess that's why Sun isn't here either, huh?" Ur asked. "She's probably staying home to look after her father."

"Well... sort of." Ren replied with an awkward smile.

"What do you mean?" Gildarts asked.

"It's true she wants to stay home to watch over Gozaburo." Ren said with a little chuckle. "But it's not to make sure he's okay. She was pretty pissed off that he ruined Cana's birthday party, ya see."

"Oh..." Ur said in understanding.

"And well... She plans on giving him a piece of her mind when he wakes up." Ren said, concluding her explanation.

"*Sigh* I heard about what happened last night from Gildarts." Makarov said. "And to be honest, he went totally overboard."

"Haha!" Gildarts laughed happily. "I knew that girl had a good heart from the moment I saw her."

At that moment, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Cana entered the guild hall, causing everyone to turn their heads toward them.

While Gildarts eyebrow twitched upon seeing Cana hugging Alfonzo's arm as they walked, he started seeing red when he saw the way Cana was walking. Meanwhile, Ur and Ren, who also knew what Cana's limp meant exchanged glances. Makarov, on the other hand, could only sigh in exasperation. Knowing Gildarts, there would be a scene of carnage in the next few minutes.

"Cana... Oh, my Cana..." Gildarts muttered in a tone filled with despair.

A moment later, Gildarts stood from his seat at the bar. Then, in staggering steps, he approached the newly arrived trio.

At the same time, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Cana noticed Gildarts approach. While Alfonzo and Elicia wore wry smiles and Alfonzo readied himself to be attacked, Cana wore an annoyed expression.

Last night, if you excluded the way the party ended, had been the best night of her life. And Cana did not want to deal with her father's antics at the moment.

"Cana, you're limping." Gildarts said after approaching the trio. "Please tell me you hurt yourself and it's not what I think it is."

"*Sigh* Dad, it's exactly what you think it is." Cana said in an exasperated tone.

Instead of replying to Cana's statement, Gildarts' glare landed on Alfonzo, who was smiling wryly at the situation. To everyone's surprise, however, Gildarts did not threaten Alfonzo... immediately.

"You're not playing with her, right?" Gildarts asked in a low, intense tone.

"Of course not." Alfonzo replied after turning his wry smile into a solemn expression. "I made a promise that I would do everything in my power to make her and all my girls the happiest I can."

When Alfonzo mentioned his other girls, Gildarts clenched his fist while his magic power flared slightly. A moment later, however, he took a deep breath and calmed down. Then, he took a step closer to Alfonzo. With Alfonzo also being 6'2" (1.88 m) tall, their noses almost touched as they held eye contact.

"You'd better." Gildarts replied. "If I ever find out that you made my little girl cry or betrayed her trust, I'll hunt you down to the depths of hell if I have to."

"If I ever do, you won't have to." Alfonzo replied solemnly. "I'll come to you to receive punishment myself."

After Alfonzo's statement, a few tense seconds of silence passed. Then, Gildarts took a step back and gave him an approving nod.

"I'll hold you to that." Gildarts said.

"Geez, Dad, you're too protective." Cana replied with a smile on her face. Then, she raised her left hand and put her hand in front of Gildarts' face. "Besides, you don't have to worry about that. Look."

Immediately, Gildarts eyes landed on the intricately crafted mithril ring on Cana's left ring finger. And when he saw the "A" and "C" made of diamonds that surrounded the uncommon teal diamond in the middle, he knew what that ring represented immediately.

"C-C-Congratulations, Sweetie." Gildarts squeezed out with great effort while wearing a smile that made it look like he would cry any moment. "When's the wedding?"

"OH, we don't know yet." Cana replied with a smile. "We both think we're too young to get married yet. So, we'll put it off until we're ready."

"I... see..." Gildarts replied, a strange glint flashing through his eyes.

A moment later, without another word, Gildarts turned around. Then, he staggered toward the stairs that led to the second floor. After climbing the stairs and spending a few minutes on the second floor, Gildarts staggered back down the stairs.

"What's wrong with Dad?" Cana asked curiously. "The way his eyes shined before he went up to the second floor was weird."

"Well, I'm sure the news of your engagement hit him pretty hard." Elicia said with a smile. "But I'm surprised that he didn't try to attack Fonzie after realizing that you weren't a little girl anymore."

"Now that you mention it, me too." Cana added.

"Well, you shouldn't be." Alfonzo said as he watched Gildarts' every move. "He's doting and overprotective, sure. But he's never gotten in the way of you finding your own happiness, right, Cana?"

Stopping to think about what Alfonzo had to say, Cana's smile widened as she, too, watched her father.

"Right." Cana said with a brilliant smile on her face.

Meanwhile, Gildarts finally made his way down the stairs and to the bar.

"*Bang!*

Then, he slammed what appeared to be a quest sheet onto the bar top, right in front of Makarov.

With a skeptical gaze, Makarov first glanced at Gildarts, only to see his bloodshot eyes staring back. Then, he picked up the quest sheet and could not help but exclaim aloud.

"You want to take a 100-years quest?" Makarov shouted.

"Yeah." Gildarts replied in a hoarse voice. "I've completed every other level of quest without ever failing. I think it's time to take it to the next level."

'Plus, this should give me some time to accept reality.' Gildarts thought to himself, still in disbelief that his little girl had grown up.

"*Sigh* If I say no, you'll just continue to pester me about this, won't you?" Makarov asked in an exasperated tone.

"I will." Gildarts replied.

"*Sigh* Fine... I'll approve it." Makarov said, pulling his official stamp out of a pocket.

Bang!

Then, Makarov forcefully stamped the quest sheet before handing it back to Gildarts.

"You'd better come back alive." Makarov said in a stern tone as Gildarts accepted the quest sheet from his hands. "It is better to fail the quest and run than to lose your life... Remember that."

"Understood." Gildarts said before turning away from the bar and walking toward the guild hall's front doors.

Meanwhile, everyone in the guild had heard Makarov's exclamation about the 100-Years Quest, and were in a state of awe as they watched Gildarts leave. However, before he truly left, he stopped next to Alfonzo, Elicia, and Cana.

"Cana, I don't know when I'll be back." Gildarts said. "But I hope you can wait until I'm back to get married. I really want the opportunity to walk you down the aisle."

Then, without waiting for a response, Gildarts started walking again and left the guild hall, not to be seen again for the next three and a half years, at least.