

Fairy Tail 99

Chapter 99: Sun's Long-Lasting Regret

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Resenbool.

September, x781.

At the same time Alfonzo fired the mass of Techno Organic Metal into space, All of Resenbool and its surroundings could hear the sonic boom that was generated. On top of that, upon looking outside in the direction the sound came from, they could see an orange streak connecting the ground with the sky.

A few moments later, they all realized that it was coming from the vicinity of the black iron mine.

After seeing the streak, it did not take long for the more curious townsfolk to start approaching the mine. Included in this group were Pinako, Winry, and Den.

"Grandma, that did come from the mine, right?" Winry asked in a worried tone.

"It looked like it." Pinako replied, worry also evident in her expression.

"Then, we need to hurry." Winry said, growing even more worried. "Sun and Alfonzo might be in danger."

"I know." Pinako murmured as she increased the pace at which she walked.

About an hour later, the townsfolk reached the mine. And when they did, they saw a rather serene sight.

In the grass outside of the mine was Sun, relaxedly sitting on the ground while still looking up at the sky and mumbling to herself with an excited expression on her face. Next to her, or more precisely, laying with his head on her lap was Alfonzo, who appeared to be asleep.

While most of the approaching people were surprised to see such a peaceful scene, Pinako, Winry, and Den simultaneously breathed a sigh of relief at seeing the duo unharmed. At first, their worries spiked when they saw Alfonzo laying down with his eyes closed. But after seeing Sun's excited expression, they put those worries to rest. There is no way that Sun would look the way she did if Alfonzo were truly in harm's way.

"Sun, Alfonzo, is everything alright?" Winry shouted as she, Pinako, and Den led the group of people toward the Fairy Tail wizards. "What was that sound? Why is Alfonzo laying there like that? I mean, he didn't even react when I called out to you."

Looking back toward the sound of the voice, Sun's eyes lit up when she saw Pinako, Winry, and Den.

"Winry? Granny Pinako? Oh, Den is here, too!" Sun shouted excitedly as she raised her hand that was not playing with Alfonzo's hair and began waving it excitedly. "Alfonzo is fine, he's just out of magic power. As for that sound..."

After trailing off, Sun looked at Alfonzo with admiration.

"It was the coolest thing ever!" Sun exclaimed once again as she looked back toward the approaching group of Resenbool residents.

Having heard the loud sonic boom and seen the streak of orange that connected the ground and the sky, most of the people present could understand why Sun would say that. However, they were much more interested in knowing what caused it, rather than what she thought about it.

"Indeed, it was quite impressive." Pinako replied on behalf of the crowd. "But what caused it?"

Once again, Sun looked down at Alfonzo with admiration in her gaze. Then, she started explaining the duo's entire trip into the mines. How they could not find anything for the first four hours of their search. How she slightly injured her hand on a jagged part of the mine's walls. How the Techno Organic Metal surged out of the wall toward her injury. How she repelled the incoming metal. How Alfonzo took control of all the metal with his magic. And finally, how Alfonzo fired all of it into space after they left the mine.

Naturally, most of the people listening to the story were completely dumbfounded by what they heard. Pinako and Winry, on the other hand, felt as if they were on an emotional rollercoaster the whole time Sun recounted her experience.

Eventually, after coming out of her daze, Winry rushed forward and embraced Sun.

"I'm just glad you're alright." Winry said with tears forming in the corners of her eyes.

"Yeah, I'm fine." Sun replied with a smile. "I told you we were strong. Besides, like I said, Alfonzo is an S-Class wizard. Even though he didn't look like he did anything, I know he protected me from that metal stuff. In fact, my gut is telling me that he could have taken control of all the metal that was attacking me immediately if I was truly in danger. Now that I think about it... That's exactly what he did."

About that, Sun was correct. At first, Alfonzo, when exerting his will on the living metal, was taking it slowly. Considering that he also had to drag all the metal out of the mine and find a way to dispose of it, he wanted to conserve as much magic power as he could. However, as soon as Sun stumbled after her breathing was interrupted, Alfonzo flared his magic power, putting all the nearby Techno Organic Metal under his control immediately, resulting in his magic power consumption skyrocketing.

"Does that mean that we don't have to worry about the disease anymore?" A woman, whose husband works as a miner, asked with hope.

"I think so..." Sun replied while tilting her head cutely. "But I would wait until Alfonzo wakes up for a more definite answer."

Hearing the initial, if not unsure confirmation, everyone in the crowd who was related to the miners breathed a sigh of relief. Pinako, Winry, and Den, on the other hand, let their gazes fall on Alfonzo.

"How much longer do you think Alfonzo will be asleep?" Winry asked as she watched Den approach the unconscious Alfonzo and gently lick his face.

"Um... I dunno." Sun replied, tilting her head to the other side. "A few hours... Maybe? Alfonzo has a lot~ of magic power. So, magic power exhaustion hit him much harder than the average wizard."

"Then, we should get him back to the house and let him rest more comfortably." Pinako suggested.

In response, Sun nodded her head. A moment later, however, she wore a conflicted expression.

"What's wrong, Sun?" Winry asked, gaining a worry expression once again. "Is it dangerous to move him right now?"

Shaking her head gently, Sun looked in the direction of the Vanquish.

"No, it should be fine to move him." Sun replied. "But I'm sure he wouldn't want to leave his car... Uh... Magic vehicle here, ya see."

Looking in the same direction as Sun, most of the gathered crowd could understand why Alfonzo would not want to leave such an expensive-looking magic vehicle out by the mines. Winry, on the other hand, had her eyes light up after a sudden thought.

"You don't have to worry about Alfonzo's magic vehicle, Sun." Winry said with an excited smile.

"What do you mean?" Sun asked.

"Well, since it has one of the new lacrima powered engines, I'll drive it back to the house." Winry said as if there were no better idea in the world.

"Uh... I don't know about that." Sun Said skeptically. "Have you even driven before?"

"Don't worry about that, Sun." Winry said, waving away Sun's concerns dismissively. "When it comes to technology, I'm a genius, you know."

After some more back and forth, Sun eventually agreed to let Winry drive the Vanquish. Although she knew Alfonzo would not be happy about someone else driving his car, as not even Elicia had driven it, she allowed it because it would get Alfonzo back to the house faster than if they walked.

However, she decided that she would ride with them, curled up in the very small back seat, a decision she would regret for decades to come.

After agreeing to Winry's proposal, Sun first searched Alfonzo's pockets to find the ignition key. Then, after finding it, she used it to unlock the doors. After that, she sat Alfonzo down in the passenger seat and closed the passenger side door.

Then, Sun walked around the car, pulled Alfonzo's seat forward, and climbed into the back seat. After that, Winry repositioned the driver's seat so that she could reach the pedals and steering wheel more comfortably.

"Let's see, from left to right should be the clutch, break, and accelerator." Winry muttered as she quickly familiarized herself with the Vanquish's controls. "That means this lever should be the gear shifter,

right? And you naturally steer with this. It's not too different from the tractor I helped repair a while ago."

"Tractor?" Sun asked, growing more skeptical as time went by.

"Yeah, I saw a lot of these mechanisms when I was asked to fix one a year, or so, ago." Winry replied as she put the key into the ignition and turned it.

"Vroom!*

"How curious." Winry muttered as she heard the sound of the engine starting. "It's run by lacrima, right? Then why does it sound like a normal engine? Does it still use combustion to turn the engine over? I definitely have to ask Alfonzo about this when he wakes up."

Hearing Winry's excited ramblings, Sun grew even more concerned. It seemed like a problem to her that Winry was more interested in how the car worked than getting them back to the Rockbell residence safely.

"Well, that's a question for later." Winry said, placing her hands on the steering wheel. While looking at the instrument panel and gaining a basic idea of what she had to do. "Alright! let's go!"

A moment later, Winry smoothly shifted the Vanquish into gear and slowly pulled off, making Sun think that she had been worrying too much. Then, as soon as there was no possibility that she would hit any of the gathered people, Winry smiled excitedly and stepped down on the accelerator with force.

"Alright! Let's see what this baby can do!" Winry shouted excitedly, causing Sun's face to pale instantly. "Grandma~~! I'll see you back at the house~~~~!"

And for the next twenty-two minutes, Winry did everything she could think of with Alfonzo's Vanquish, speeding through the town's streets, drifting around corners, testing the acceleration and deceleration, etc. Surprisingly, she managed to do all that without getting into an accident. Though, there were several close calls.

In the end, they arrived safely outside the Rockbell residence. Then, Winry and Sun climbed out of the car. While Winry stretched with a refreshed expression on her face, Sun was down on her hands and knees spreading the remains of her breakfast all over the ground.

"*Sigh* that was fun." Winry said with a smile on her face. "Maybe I should get one for myself."

Hearing that, Sun started shuddering in pure terror.

"You'd better..." A weak voice said from the Vanquish's passenger seat. "Because if you try to touch my baby again, you'll need your own services..."

"Alfonzo!" Sun shouted as she tried to stand up.

Unfortunately, Sun was still a bit too queasy to stand. Luckily, she did manage to get away from her puddle of vomit before she fell back to her knees.

"Hahaha... Hey, Alfonzo, how are you feeling?" Winry asked with a dry chuckle while avoiding eye contact with Alfonzo who was currently glaring at her. "How long have you been awake?"

"Around the time you started doing donuts at that intersection." Alfonzo replied dryly.

"Wow! You woke up a long time ago." Winry said with a little admiration in her tone. "Sun thought you would be sleep for a few more hours."

"And she would have been right." Alfonzo replied without changing his expression. "But you changed that with your driving."

""Don't praise me, you're making me blush." Winry said with her face slightly red.

"Oh, I sure as shit wasn't praising you." Alfonzo said, his tone unamused. "By the way, what made you think that driving like that with a magic power exhaustion victim in the passenger seat was a good idea?"

"Well, you wouldn't have let me put it through its paces, let alone drive it, if you were in better condition." Winry muttered.

"You're damn right I wouldn't have!" Alfonzo shouted. "And you showed me exactly why that would have been a good decision."

Instead of replying, Winry looked away, clasped her hands behind her back, and started whistling a tune with an innocent expression on her face.

"*Sigh* Whatever, I'm too tired to care right now." Alfonzo said, not even trying to get out of the Vanquish. "It's kind of embarrassing to ask this, but could you help me out, Sun."

"Ugh... Can I go brush my teeth first?" Sun asked with a bashful expression on her face.

"Sure, it's not like I'm going anywhere." Alfonzo replied.

Sun then stood up shakily. After getting her footing together, she slowly walked toward the house while glaring at Winry, who pretended she did not notice the glare. Then, after a few minutes, Sun returned to the Vanquish and supported Alfonzo into the house.

"Hold on, don't take me straight to the guest room." Alfonzo said while leaning on Sun for support.

"Where do you wanna go?" Sun asked curiously. "Are you hungry?"

"No, not really." Alfonzo replied. "But we need to go see Winry."

Nodding her head, Sun helped Alfonzo to Winry's workshop. When they arrived, Winry was just about to start filling some of the Automail orders she had received in the last few days.

"Huh?" Winry exclaimed as she stopped her preparations when she heard Alfonzo and Sun's footsteps. "What's up, you two?" I thought that you two would get some rest for the rest of the day."

Instead of answering Winry's question, Alfonzo raised his left hand with the palm facing up as he stared Winry in the eyes.

"Hand it over." Alfonzo said calmly.

"Hand what over?" Winry asked while avoiding eye contact.

Rolling his eyes in response, Alfonzo used up almost all the magic power he was able to recover to take the Vanquish's key out of the pocket of Winry's jumpsuit. Unfortunately, he did not have enough to bring the key to his hand.

Jingle!

After the sound of the key hitting the floor could be heard, silence fell in the workshop. The silence did not last long, however, as Winry was the first to break it.

"Oh, wow, how did that get there?" Winry asked, feigning ignorance.

"*Sigh* Sun, let's just get the key and go." Alfonzo said, too tired to retort.

"Yeah..." Sun replied, walking with Alfonzo to pick up the key before helping him up to the guest room.

Meanwhile, Winry simply watched Alfonzo and Sun as they slowly moved to pick up the key and leave the room. Then, once they were no longer in her field of view, Winry started scratching her cheek.

"In hindsight, I might have gone a little overboard." Winry said before shrugging it off. Then, in a cheerful tone, she continued. "Oh well, what's done is done. Time to get to work."