

[Adam POV]

X771

It had been six months since Ivan Dreyar had been ex-communicated from the guild, and things had improved for the most part. Laxus no longer questioned whether or not his father had deserved his ex-communication, however, he still harbored some semblance of resentment toward me.

He had accepted his father deserved his punishment, yet, in his eyes, without me, his father would still be here.

It was an illogical conclusion for his feelings about the situation, but one I could hardly blame Laxus for having. He had all the right to hate me, to blame me, not because I deserved it, but because he was a kid.

Other than that.

I had gained a... rather interesting moniker. One that was oddly accurate, if you knew about my powers.

I had been dubbed by Sorcerer's magazine as Fairy Tail's Grim Reaper.

It was honestly... impressive how fitting that title was, not because I killed a lot of people, or anything because I didn't. But because of my powers.

It was so fitting in fact, that I had been musing over the possibility of someone in Sorcerer's magazine having some kind of magic that allowed them to give such accurate titles.

On that note, I had also been awarded in that same magazine the title of Fiore's most wanted bachelor, winning in the cute category... whatever that was. Something I found rather disturbing considering the fact I was only ten years old.

I suppose that was what the 'cute' category entailed, but still. Now that I had appeared in that wretched magazine, I had been forced to avoid large groups of women, because they would treat me like a fucking teddy bear.

Sure, at first it had been fun and all. But after a while, it became fucking annoying!

Most of the groups would always have someone who had a daughter, and well you can imagine the rest. They would try to shove the idea of going on playdates with their little princesses down my throat, and or say how cute it would be if I gave them roses.

It had to come to the point where more than once I had been forced to use Shunpo to get inside the train if I ever wanted to travel on time.

In hindsight though, if this little curse remained in place until my adulthood I would have a lot of fun.

Beyond my newly acquired popularity, not much had changed in my day-to-day life.

I kept on training daily, whether I was taking a job or not. In fact, the only thing that was really different now was that now I was trying to find where the Tower of Heaven was by tracking their attacks.

It was a difficult task.

They shared too many similarities with other criminal groups in their way of attacking others, meaning most of their moves could be mistaken for the moves of other criminal groups like raiders, bandits, or other slavers in general.

In short, knowing what truly was a clue for their whereabouts or not, was really hard.

But I would find them, maybe not today, maybe not this year, but I would and when I did, I would bring down their house of cards without mercy.

"Brat!"

I was jolted out of my long reverie by Gildarts' booming voice, like a clap of thunder, noticing just now that he was behind me, his arms crossed.

"What's the matter, dad?" I replied, making emphasis on the last word.

Gildarts fixed his gaze on me, and his right eye twitched before he sighed. "The Master is about to make an announcement. He wants everyone present in the hall now."

An announcement? I wonder about what?

I nodded and quickly stepped into the hall, Gildarts close behind me. As we rounded a corner, Makarov came into view. He stood on the second-story balcony of the guild, as people began to swarm the room.

My gaze swept around the room, taking in the thrum of energy in the air. People huddled in small clusters, chattering animatedly and pointing at the Master.

I could almost palpate the anticipation in the air.

"Gildarts do you have any ide-" I began, but stopped when I saw the empty spot where Gildarts had been standing a few moments ago. Meaning he was gone.

Well, that's just rude.

For a few moments, I continued watching the people around me gossiping in hushed voices, trying to figure out what was going on. Before I turned my attention above, where Makarov was standing.

Taking a deep breath, the Old Master lifted his hand and brought it to his mouth, letting out a loud cough that silenced the crowd.

"In accordance with the Fairy Tail's time-honored tradition. I will now announce this year's participants for the S class wizard promotion trial!"

The moment those words left Makarov's mouth, a deafening roar echoed through the room, as people jumped up and down, hugging each other with tears of joy and anticipation in their eyes.

I had forgotten they did these trails once a year.

It now made total sense why everyone was so excited, and why everyone had been taking more missions these last few weeks.

"The test this year will take place on..." Makarov continued, smiling briefly as he paused for effect, his hands clasped

behind his back as everyone leaned in anticipation. "Tenrou Island! Our guild's sacred ground!"

Wait, they don't always take place on Tenrou Island? I honestly assumed that was the case.

Makarov's voice rose as he continued, "The strength you possess inside of you, the quality of your heart and character! These are the criteria I used for the selection - and based on them, I have chosen three participants for this year's exam!" The crowd roared in anticipation, their faces lit up with excitement.

"Wakaba Mine!"

Seeing he wasn't an S-class mage when I saw the anime, I think it's safe to assume he failed the trial.

"Macao Conbolt!"

I guess seeing as Wakaba qualified, Macao was sure to qualify as well. I might not talk to them, at all, but I didn't need to talk to them to feel their magic power, and they were pretty much even in that regard.

"And Adam!"

I see, that explains why Gildarts wanted me to hear this announcement. I have to admit though, I didn't expect the old

man to pick me for the trials any time soon, not because I lacked the power to be an S-Class Wizard, but because of my age.

I could hear the excited crowd now talking about me, and how it was only natural I had qualified seeing I was Gildarts' brat.

I had to fight the urge to chuckle at that.

"Although three wizards have been selected," Makarov announced, boomed, his voice reverberating off the stone walls of the hall. "Only one will emerge victorious!" A palpable energy surged through the crowd. "The trial will begin in one week!" He raised his fist into the air. "So you better prepare!"

S-Class?

I like the sound of that.

After the announcement for the S-Class trial was done, the details of the same were given, or at least the details we were allowed to know, which wasn't much.

Though based on the information I had been given, I had quickly concluded that this test was very much an edited copy

of the one I had seen in the anime, with a few alterations here and there, but at its core the same.

I was allowed to pick a partner, anyone that wasn't an S-Class wizard already, or that was participating for that matter.

Meaning that I could pick anyone but Gildarts, Makarov, Macao, and Wakaba. As long as they agreed, of course.

I wasn't sure who to pick, and seeing I didn't really know anybody, well things were hard. I mean, sure, picking a partner wasn't something you had to do, it was more of an optional thing, one you could opt out of if you wish to.

That being said, I didn't want to give the impression I didn't care to invite anyone, or that I was overconfident or something.

I sighed and felt the weight of my Zanpakuto on my waist, its hilt vibrating with barely contained energy. Its message was clear, she was declaring together we were more than enough.

I smiled and gently patted the sheath of my Zanpakuto, feeling the power within it slowly dissipate. "I know, no need to get so worked up."

Zanryuzuki wasn't a jealous spirit, what she was, was proud. And the mere indication I needed something more than her to face any challenges ahead made her quite jumpy.

Pushing those thoughts aside, I began focusing on finding a partner, one that I could work with without much difficulty.

If only things like this could be easier.

As I pondered on this, I felt a tap on my shoulder and heard a quiet but firm voice say, "Excuse me." I turned and saw a teenage girl, around fourteen to fifteen years old.

She quietly nodded her head, her green hair dancing in the wind, as she said, "T-then if you w-want... can I be your partner for the S-class trial..."

I might be jumping the gun by even considering this girl I had never seen before to be my partner. But, I find the fact she offered interesting and very welcoming.

I flashed her a wide smile. "I don't see why not. But I think it would be best if we knew each other's names, don't you agree?"

The girl's cheeks flushed crimson and she tucked a lock of hair behind her ear. Her hands shook as she nervously extended them in an awkward introduction. "I-I'm sorry," she stammered, her voice trembling. "My name is Lilia Morel, a pleasure to meet you."

After a short and very timid introduction to her part, I got to know my partner for the trials. And the reasons why she wanted to come to the trails with me.

Lilia, according to what I had gathered, had joined the guild three months ago. Her shy personality and general dislike for attention had allowed her to fly off the radar for the most part, which explained why I hadn't been aware of her till now.

Granted, I didn't socialize much with the guild, but... I still knew the names of everyone in the guild, as well as their faces.

I guess the fact that I had been taking a lot of missions these last few months without so much of a stop was to blame for me not having noticed her.

Anyway.

The reason why she had offered to be my partner was simple, it was because she wanted to get out of her shell a bit. The thing was, she was afraid of taking any jobs that sounded even remotely dangerous, and she saw this test as an opportunity to take a step out of her comfort zone without risking her life.

To be completely honest, I could understand why she wanted to come after hearing her reasoning, seeing as no one would actually hurt her beyond a few bruises.

So, seeing no problem in letting her use this trial as an opportunity to better herself, I accepted her proposition.

That being said, I wasn't going to allow her to fuck up my chances in the trial. So, instead of training with her, I began training her.

Nothing too complicated though, just basic stuff.

I mean, I knew there was no chance in hell I would have her combat ready by the end of the week, be that as it may, I had more than enough time to give her a few pointers in the right direction.

"Good," I nodded, as Lilia hit the training dummy I had set for her, using her Telekinesis to hurl a few explosive marbles at it before hitting the dummy with a wooden staff I had procured for her.

Lilia wiped the sweat from her brow and dropped the wooden staff to the ground. Then, looking at me she shuffled her feet across the grass, before mustering up the courage to ask, "D-do you think you will pass the trial?"

That was a good question.

If my passing grade depended on beating Gildarts, then my chances were a hard zero. I was strong, I knew that, but I had yet to reach the heights of power that man had.

He was a monster, in a good way. Yet, a monster nonetheless.

That being said, I doubted that was the case.

I mean... if defeating Gildarts was a requirement to get the title, then Fairy Tail would've never acquired more S-Class Wizards. There was no way Erza, Laxus, Mirajane, or Mystogan had managed to defeat Gildarts when they took the trials.

"I think there's a decent chance, yes," I nodded.