

Virtual Flames

by MizzyPlatinum

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Summary: *COMPLETE* A blossoming internet (Tumblr) friendship soon develops into something more. Nalu. A U. Slice of life. *COMPLETE*

1. Chapter 1

****Disclaimer:** I do not own Fairy Tail or Rave Master, that would be lovely Hiro Mashima. I also do not own Tumblr or Skype, or anything except for the plot O.o**

A blossoming internet friendship develops into something more** **.****

******I would like to clarify that _Virtual Flames_ is a _parody_ fic! So please be kind because of course things are going to be exaggerated and over the top in it! YOU'VE BEEN WARNED!******

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Lucy wasn't sure how this all happened exactly. She had been _Tumblr_ for almost a year now. She used it mainly to post her fanfics that she wrote for her favorite anime and manga, _Fairy Tail_.

Fairy Tail has a low-key, small fan base, so Lucy wasn't surprised, but was rather pleased to find that the URL _CelestialMage_ had not taken. She had titled her blog _Open the Gate_ and created a theme of a starry-gate-looking background. Her pointer was a golden Aquarius key and when one would click on a link on her blog, it looked as though a gate were opening. Though Lucy was an amateur at HTML and all that complicated design stuff, she was very proud of her work.

Lucy's bio read:

Hii! My name is Lucy. 17. Cancer. Gryffindor. Fairy Tail Mage. Completely obsessed with Fairy Tail. Writes mediocre fanfiction. Please enjoy my blog!

Her links included some of her crappy anime and manga edits, some doodles, and, of course, her fanfics.

To top off her blog, she had an icon of Elie, the Celestial Mage and one of the two protagonists of _Fairy Tail_ that she adored. It was a decent coloring and edit that Lucy did herself, however, it didn't hold a candle to other people's edits in the fandom that she looked up to.

Lucy checked her activity tag, which was something she did often. Her latest story, a oneshot of Haru accidentally skinning Elie on date, got almost 200 likes and reblogs. She was thrilled that she nearly screamed aloud considering she normally would only get at most a 100 notes, since again, the fandom was so small.

She clicked on the reblogs to read the nice comments people wrote in her tags, and of course, Lucy found herself smiling like an idiot because these people were just too sweet and encouraging, ranging from: _I'M SCREAMING,_ to _AMAZING WRITING LIKE ALWAYS!_

Afterwards, Lucy checked out her favorite tag, which of course was _Fairy Tail_. It was one of those tags that wasn't overloaded with new posts. Thus, any post someone tagged was seen by everyone in the fandom.

Lucy could see her story was still one of the most recent posts, but something else caught her eye; A manga edit—a cool looking edit, in fact. She didn't even have to check who the poster was. Only one person was capable of making such glorious edits and colorings...

DragonSlayer.

His name was Natsu, or at least that's what it says on his blog, but it's the internet so who knows if someone is lying...He had a phenomenal coloring and edit of _Haru_, the other protagonist to _Fairy Tail._

The panel that Lucy was currently looking at was one of Haru using his fire roar. Such a simple panel, but with Natsu's edit, it was extraordinary. The flames almost looked realistic. It made her wonder how much time he spent on them, because it was truly astounding. And let alone the detailed work he did on Haru...It was just perfect.

Lucy clicked the heart button to like it and went to reblog it. In the tags she wrote: _THIS IS PERFECT, amazing edit as always, Fairy Tail, Haru Glory_. And against her will, she found herself clicking Natsu's blog—like she always does.

His blog put hers to shame. For starters, his blog's title was _FIRE DRAGON'S ROAR_ and the way he had it designed was that a dragon was breathing the words in a fiery form from its mouth all across the top of the blog. The rest of the blog had flames in miscellaneous parts of his page, making texts look as though they were either melting or being burned to a crisp.

His _about_ section was written with blue flames engulfing it and the text looked as though it were melting as well. _Yo! I'm Natsu. 17 years old. Part dragon, part pyromaniac, part dragonslayer._

She found it amusing. She found _him_ amusing. All his posts were either funny or astounding and she wondered what it would be like to be friends with a natural comedian.

She hovered her mouse over the _follow_ button, but then she quickly closed out of his page. Lucy couldn't really explain why she wouldn't follow Natsu. Maybe it was because she knew his blog was very popular. A popular blog like his would never follow back a blog like hers. And for some reason, the thought embarrassed her.

It wasn't like Lucy's blog was _that_ unpopular. It was the complete opposite actually. Lucy's blog grew in its popularity over the last few months. She had somehow accumulated 750 followers. Mainly people who liked her stories or

contributions to the fandom, others just random anime blogs, because Lucy tended to post a lot of other anime and manga stuff.

If he wanted to follow me, he would have already, she thought. They both equally post around the same amount of stuff in the _Fairy Tail_ tag and Natsu occasionally _liked_ her theories and analysis stuff, but he never followed her so she took that as a sign for her to never follow him either.

But so badly did Lucy want to follow him ... His posts were always entertaining. It was funny at first, she thought of him to be annoying and obnoxious. He would comment rude and obscene things on certain people's posts. One user in particular, _IceMakeMagic_, had written a beautiful analysis on the character _Musica_, and Natsu had commented on it, _NO ONE CARES, ICE DICK._ But now Lucy understood why Natsu did that, because _IceMakeMagic_ wrote rude comments on Natsu's posts as well. So it was a love-hate relationship between the two.

Maybe one day I'll follow him...

Lucy saw a notification in the corner; _SolidScriptMage_ tagged her in something. She eagerly clicked to see what. It was a beautifully drawn illustration of Haru and Elie on a date, Haru was stuffing his face and Elie was sweat-drooping—exactly what had happened in Lucy's story.

"_CelestialMage_ wrote such an amazing story that I felt inspired to draw something! Hope ya like it, Lucy!"_

She squealed and quickly reblogged, typing on the post, "AHHH THANK YOU SO MUCH LEVY! THIS IS LITERALLY PERFECT!" And in the tags, Lucy typed, _I'M SCREAMING! OMG! THANK YOU!_

Levy was one of Lucy's first friends on _Tumblr_. It all started when Lucy had posted her first story on the site and Levy was the first person to give her feedback, telling her how amazing it was and asking if she could draw fan art for it. Lucy was madly blushing as she frantically typed, _"Of course!"_ Ever since then, Levy has been drawing stuff for every fanfic Lucy has posted.

They always messaged each other about the new episode of _Fairy Tail_ or about the new manga chapter. They even talked about other animes and mangas, such as _Sailor Moon_ since the new anime was on.

Lucy saw an inbox notification; from _SolidScriptMage_. "Lucy! I'm glad you liked my drawing! And OMG did you watch last week's _Sailor Moon Crystal_?"

She grinned to herself, always thrilled to talk to her internet friend. "I did! OMG! Queen Beryl is finally dead yay! Though I'm a bit disappointed that Sailor Moon killed her because in the manga Venus was supposed to :o."

"I WAS JUST ABOUT TO SAY THAT! I'M SO PISSED ABOUT THAT!" Levy answered back.

Lucy chuckled. "Ehh well I can't complain much because I'm just happy there's a new anime!"

"True true! :D. So did you see that post some annoying blogger made that bashed Haru?"

"No!" Lucy replied, feeling very appalled. How could anyone bash Haru? He was literally perfect. Or maybe she was just a tad bit biased considering he is her one and only anime crush...

"Look in the tag!"

"Alright," she sent back, gnawing on her lip. She really didn't want to see it. She hated seeing character hate or ship wars. It was stuff that tore fandoms to shreds, but her curiosity outweighed her concern. She revisited the tag and sure enough there was long rant about how awful Haru is.

Lucy skimmed it quickly. _How irksome._ It basically said that Haru was overpowered and how the manga is stupid

and that Haru is a classic shounen hero so people should stop trying to push romantic relationships. And then it went back to him being overpowered.

That pissed Lucy off. Haru was not overpowered. Well, maybe a little, but what about the other characters who are portrayed stronger than him and what about all those times Haru needed his friends to help him out?

As though Haru's flames ran through Lucy's veins, she cracked her knuckles and dug out her _Fairy Tail_ manga collection. _Time to prove this jerk wrong._

It had to be the longest post she had ever made, by far longer than any of her fanfics. She went into great detail proving that Haru was, in fact, not overpowered. She started with the _Phantom Lord_ arc, about how Haru got his butt kicked and if it weren't for Elie getting him fire, he would never have beaten the Iron Dragon Slayer. She went into the _Tower of Heaven_ arc. Haru wouldn't have won if it weren't for him eating the Etheiron. Then the _Battle of Fairy Tail_, where Haru wouldn't have won without Let's help. _Oracion Seis_ arc, Haru wouldn't have won without the help of Sieg Hart giving him the power up he needed. And let's not forget _Tenrou Island_. That was complete teamwork. Haru would have been a goner without his nakama.

She was very proud of her argument and made sure she backed everything up with manga caps. She even did a mini counterargument on romance, with little examples using her OTP, Haru x Elie. For instance, when Haru dug out a tree and sailed it down the river outside Elie's apartment because he felt bad that she was too sick to see the tree in person. How could that be perceived as anything _but_ romantic?

Or the bedroom eyes they gave each other in _Tenrou_. Lucy giggled at that one, but also added the more serious scene—the part where Haru was trapped under the rocks and had to watch Elie suffer. Anyone could see how deeply they care for one another.

With a bit of uneasiness and after rereading her post for the umpteenth time, Lucy typed in the _tag_ section _Fairy Tail_ and clicked _post_.

She bit her lip and waited a few minutes.

No notes.

She quickly closed her laptop. _Maybe I shouldn't have..._

Then she pulled out her phone and quickly tapped to the _Tumblr_ app. Against her better judgment, she checked the _activity_ section and what she saw made her phone slip from her sweaty grasp as a gasp escaped her lips.

**DragonSlayer** _liked your post: Haru is NOT overpowered._

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post: Haru is NOT overpowered._

With shaky hands, Lucy clicked to see what Natsu had written in the tags. _HAH! TO ALL YOU HARU HATERS!_ _was what it read.

A smile began to spread across her cheeks and a swell of warmth engulfed her chest and then she opened up laptop again and suddenly hundreds of notifications appeared—all of them reblogging from _DragonSlayer._

"Oh my God," she breathed with pure disbelief. She had to be past 200 notes by now! She never had a post go viral like this. It was insanity watching all of this happen in the span of mere seconds.

But something caught her attention—something so inconspicuous that Lucy had almost missed it in the mass flood of _reblogs_ and _likes_.

**DragonSlayer** _started following_ _**CelestialMage**_.

No way.

With frantically shaking fingers, she clicked over to her follower count.

751.

"NO WAY!"

* * *

Hiii everyone!

Here's a little guide to my Fairy Tail-Rave Master name switching:

Natsu = Haru

Lucy = Elie

Gray = Musica

Gajeel = Let

Erza = Julia

Jellal = Sieg Hart

I'll probably be adding more later on...

Sooo what did you all think!? Should I continue?!

And thanks for reading!

2. Chapter 2

AHH THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH! I'm so glad you all seem interested in this story!

I hope this chapter isn't disappointing!

And thank you all so much for your feedback and subscriptions and favorites!

* * *

XOXOX

"NO FREAKING WAY!" Lucy clasped her hands against her mouth, trying suppress her squeals because the last thing she needed was her father barging in, trying to figure out why his daughter is screaming in her room...all by herself...at midnight...

This couldn't be real, could it? It had to be a dream, yes a dream, of course.

Because if this were real, then that would mean Natsu was following her.

And if he was following her, he must have checked out her blog...

Which would mean Natsu would have seen that stupid text post she made about an hour ago...

"My only skill: Walking into walls." And in the tags she wrote _owww, why does this always happen to me?, shush Lucy_.

The _shush Lucy_ , was her tag she used for her personal posts in case people wanted to blacklist them and also so s he can keep track of them.

"GAHH!" she cried. "I CAN'T LET HIM SEE THAT!" She went to delete it, but it was too late...

****Dragonslayer**** _liked your post._

"Kill me now," she bashed her head against her keyboard repeatedly.

What should I do now? Lucy wondered. She clicked on Natsu's blog and once again, found herself staring at the _follow_ button. _Should I?_

She put both hands to her cheek and shook her head profusely, "NOO, I CAN'T! IT'S TOO SOON!"

If she followed back right away, that would make her look like she's desperate, right? But if she continues to blog and doesn't follow back, then it might look like she doesn't want to follow him back...

She was overthinking...

That left only one option.

Lucy turned her laptop off and chucked her phone somewhere far away.

She crawled into bed and reached over to turn her lamp off.

She was going to sleep.

****XOXOX****

Lucy awoke an hour before her alarm went off. She was rather anxious as she searched around her room for her phone, which happened to be lying next to her on her fluffy pink bed.

She hurriedly opened up the _Tumblr_ app and clicked the little lightening symbol that represented her _activity_ log. She scrolled the page down to make it refresh.

Then the app crash.

Lucy groaned as she reopened the app.

She repeated the same steps and let out a gasp. To her surprise, she saw hundreds upon hundreds of likes and reblogs for her Haru argument.

"Was this all thanks to Natsu?" she whispered aloud.

And even more surprising, Lucy had gained over a 100 new followers, not that her follower count really mattered to her...

She quickly typed in the search bar, _Dragonslayer_. Natsu's blog immediately popped up. She tapped on it and saw that he had, again, reblogged her post. This time he tagged:

Greatest post ever.

Lucy smiled from her blinding giddiness; she felt high on life.

Gazing at the _Follow_ button, she thought, _It's either now or never, Lucy!_

Taking a deep breath, she tapped the _Follow_ button on the top right of the screen.

The _Follow_ button almost instantly changed to _Unfollow._

She did it.

She finally followed Natsu.

She dropped her phone on her bed. Her hands were pretty clammy and were shaking like crazy, which always occurs when she is nervous.

She finally let out a shuddering breath she had been holding and threw herself onto her rumpled bed.

"I have to be dreaming," she wistfully sighed into her _Fairy Tail_ emblem pillow.

****XOXOX****

"Why are you so cheerful today, Lucy?" one of her school friends asked during lunch.

"No reason," she smiled. She had been smiling all day actually, which creeped her friends out just a bit since Lucy hardly ever smiles.

She couldn't explain to them that her _Tumblr_ crush had followed her and that he loved her post. Hell, Lucy couldn't talk about _Tumblr_ to them in general. It was a taboo. If you talk about _Tumblr_ aloud, you're looked down upon, or at least that's how it was viewed at her school...

Plus, her friends wouldn't understand the idea of making friends with strangers online. For instance, whenever Lucy mentions Levy, she makes sure she doesn't reveal that she _never actually met_ Levy...

Lucy was glad though that her friends at school didn't use _Tumblr_. _Tumblr_ was her sanctuary. A place where she could truly be herself, which was that anime-loving, fanfic-writing girl that she always kept inside.

If there was one thing her school friends hated more than anything. It was anime. Lucy's one true love; Her guilty pleasure.

She often bailed on her friends on Friday nights just so she could watch the new episode of _Fairy Tail_, which she would watch with Levy via _Skype_ chat.

That was the only time Lucy used _Skype_. It kind of freaked her out because she wasn't sure how much information _Skype_ gave out to whomever was in her contact list... So she decided to only give out her _Skype_ to people she genuinely trusted, which, at the moment, was only Levy.

Lunch and real life in general were pretty boring for Lucy. Her friends were _always_ gossiping about who's dating whom and who did what with whom.

And quite frankly, Lucy couldn't care less.

She pulled out her phone and quickly went to _Tumblr_.

She hadn't reblogged anything all day, thus far. She was nervous nervous that she would reblog something stupid that would cause Natsu to unfollow her.

She scrolled through her dashboard and wondered, _Was Natsu only following me for Fairy Tail_? If that was the case, maybe she should stick to posting only _Fairy Tail_ for now...

But that would upset her other followers who like her _Pokemon_ posts or other stuff...

Gahhh! This is stupid! Lucy inwardly groaned. She shouldn't change her blog to please one follower or any followers for that matter. It's _her_ blog. She can post whatever the hell she wants.

And yet Lucy found herself checking out Natsu's blog to see what _he_ reblogs.

She saw many different things besides _Fairy Tail_, though _Fairy Tail_ was the majority of the blog, just like hers. He reblogged _Pokemon_, both the anime and the manga and even the games. He particularly reblogged fire types and dragon types.

She snorted at that.

Her friends all shot her curious looks, but Lucy ignored them.

He also posted other animes such as _Blue Exorcist_, which Lucy happened to love, _Full Metal Alchemist_, Tokyo Ghoul, _and_ _Death Note._ She was sure she would discover more anime and mangas, but that was all she took in at the moment.

Natsu also reblogged video games in general, mainly _Nintendo_ games and a lot of fighting games too.

She grinned because she too liked that stuff too.

What was I worrying about? She went back to her dash and reblogged like she normally would, but frequently checked her follower count to make sure she didn't lose a certain someone... She was obsessing, wasn't she?

With a heavy sigh, something broke her out of her thoughts.

"Oh my God," one of her friends said. "I saw some underclassman girl drawing those weird anime things during class."

"Eww!" Another cringed. "Seriously? I will never understand people who like that stuff."

"Me either. So bizarre." the other one responded. "Right, Lucy?"

Lucy blinked, completely off guard by the abrupt question. "Ummm..." But she was saved from a response as the bell rang.

She quickly wrote a text post, "Nothing I love more than when my friends bash anime..." And tagged, _shush Lucy_.

A few minutes later she saw a bunch of likes and also a comment from _SolidScriptMage_, "*Hugs* Sorry, Lucy. Wish I could do something to help :/."

Lucy smiled, feeling all warm and fuzzy thanks to her lovely internet friend. She didn't let her real life friends harsh words bother her.

They were always like this.

And once they even went on a rant bashing _fanfic writers_.

Such ignorant minds, Lucy thought. This was another reason why she loved _Tumblr_. She got to meet people who weren't superficial and who actually understand her.

She refreshed her activity screen one last time before leaving the cafeteria for class.

She let out a small gasp.

"What?" A friend asked, with more curiosity than concern.

"No-nothing," Lucy said shakily, gaping at her phone.

****Dragonslayer**** _liked your post._

****XOXOX****

Lucy quickly logged onto to _Tumblr_ the second she got home from school. She saw her inbox had a notification. With a bit of hesitation, she clicked on it.

It was an anon, "When you get this, reply with 5 things that make you happy and send this to your 5 favorite blogs!"

She grinned to herself and answered: "Ahh thank you, Anon! Okay here we go:

1\. Fairy Tail

2\. Haru x Elie

3\. Writing fanfics

4\. Reading

5\. Stargazing

Thanks again! ^_^" and in her tag she wrote, _looking at amazing edits would be my 6__th___. _

She quickly sent one to Levy and then she sent one to her other blogs that she occasionally talked to. One was _RequipMageTitania_. The girl who ran the blog was named Erza. Her blog was pretty cool. Its title, "It is I who is always being protected," a quote by _Fairy Tail_ character, Julia, was engraved on a sword across the top of her blog. Erza's _about section_ was engraved on a silver armored chest, which read, _Erza, 17, likes Fairy Tail_ _and strawberry shortcake._

Erza was one of Lucy's _Tumblr_ crushes and was her writing senpai. Lucy never really talked to her besides complimenting Erza's stories. Erza posted amazing fanfics, though they tended to be very smutty. Lucy was too shy to really start up a conversation. She noticed that Erza would often cut into _Dragonslayer_ and _IceMakeMagic_'s fights in the _Fairy Tail_ tag, which oddly enough reminded Lucy of _Fairy Tail_, with how Julia would break up Haru and Musica's fights...

Lucy was also friends with three more blogs, who also happened to be in the _Fairy Tail_ fandom. One was _SatanSoul_, despite the URL, which was based off of a _Fairy Tail_ character, the girl who ran the blog was a total sweetheart. Her name was Mira.

Then there was Cana. Her URL was _CarddMagee_. She always makes amusing text posts about her life. Usually they involve her sexual escapades and she tended to make a lot of text posts while she's drunk, which was very often.

And then there was Wendy. She was a younger blogger, 14 years old. Though Lucy was hesitant to follow back someone so young, she was glad she did. Wendy was an amazing artist, like Levy, except even better, in Lucy's opinion. And Wendy was always drawing Haru x Elie fan art to Lucy's liking. Her URL was _SkyMagicDragon_ and her theme was decorated with clouds.

And that made five. That was Lucy's main group. They were always tagging each other in stuff and it made her feel happy and a part of something. She considered these people to be her real friends, compared to her friends in real life. And the best part was that they all loved _Fairy Tail_.

Even though Lucy already sent the message to 5 people, she kind of wanted to send one to Natsu, hoping it would get them talking or maybe they would start tagging each other...

But she shook her head, _I shouldn't_.

Some users get bothered by those chain messages... Maybe he was one of those users...

****XOXOX****

Lucy had logged off for a few hours to do mundane stuff such as eating dinner and doing her homework. Once she was done, she went back on.

She saw that Levy had answered her ask. Lucy chuckled as she read the response, "Thanks, Lucy!"

1\. Fairy Tail

2\. Reading Lucy's fanfics!

3\. Fairy Tail

4\. Fairy Tail

5\. Fairy Tail

6\. Did I mention I LOVE FAIRY TAIL? Thanks again, Lucy!"

Lucy clicked the _heart_ that was on the bottom of the post and then she went back to her dashboard and realized that it was dead. _How boring_. She scrolled through posts to see if there was anything she might have missed, while she kept refreshing in another tab, hoping to see an interesting post.

The deadness of her dash always occurred around 9 PM or whenever she was online late, she began to realize.

"Why is my dash always so dead at this time?" she posted. As usual, she tagged _shush Lucy_.

A few seconds later, a reply notification appeared. She blinked with surprise, for she hadn't been expecting anyone to reply.

Lucy clicked to see who had replied.

Her eyes bugged out.

**Dragonslayer** said: Same sighhh_.

"Oh my God," she muttered in disbelief. "He talked to me..."

What should she reply?

Should she even reply?

Probably not, she decided. It wasn't much of a conversation starter... Lucy would only reply a "Sorry :/." But that seemed stupid... _AHHH_, she tugged at her blonde hair, _why am I acting like this?!_ _It's just some stranger on the internet! Get a hold of yourself, Lucy!_

She refreshed her dash again and saw that Natsu made a text post, "So boreddd. Can someone recommend a scene or something for me to edit?"

Lucy's heart sped up, her hands shook with nervous energy. Ignoring everything she had just said to herself, she thought about all the times she had wanted to ask him to color a scene for her, but she would always chicken out, even _with_ the Anon option...

Now was her chance.

She clicked the speech bubble to open the reply box and typed, "Ooh how about an edit of original Team Haru?! :3." She loved anything that involved the original team, which included Haru, Elie, and Happy.

She noticed a reply by _DragonSlayer_, "Yosh! I could do that :D. Gimme a few minutes."

With trembling fingers, she replied, "Alrighty ^_^."

Was this really happening?

Did they actually talk to each other?

Lucy sat there. Her heart was pounding a mile a minute. She was starting to sweat because her room suddenly felt 100 degrees hotter, because her dad _must_ have turned the thermostat up because that's the only _logical_ thing for him to do during _spring_.

She jumped up from her desk chair and paced around her room.

She never felt so anxious before... All this because of some stranger?

Lucy quickly took a seat and went to the _activity_ log. There was nothing yet...

Soon, a few minutes turned in a few hours, thus, she decided to read some Haru x Elie fanfiction to pass the time, though she would frequently refresh her _activity_ page to see if she were tagged in anything yet.

Then finally she saw it.

**DragonSlayer** mentioned you in a post, "CelestialMage requested an Original Team Haru..."_

Lucy eagerly clicked on it.

Her jaw dropped as she stared in awe.

It was _magnificent._

It was a bunch of different panels of the trio. One of them laughing, one of them crying, another of them looking shocked, one with their backs turned, another one with goofy faces, one with Elie looking scary-angry at them while the coward in fear.

They were all colored with such fine details, it put all other editors to shame. The eyes, for instance, looked solid color at a slight distance, but careful observation showed that they were beautifully multicolored and really captured the emotions of the characters.

He put little fancy quotes from the series with each panel, such as, "It's always more fun when we're together."

The backgrounds were lovely as well and helped convey the emotion each scene held. Like the one of the three of them crying, that scene had a dark purplely-blue background with dusting of stars that somehow looked like tears and the one of them laughing had a nice sunny and grassy background.

Captioned below the amazing edits was, " _CelestialMage_ requested an Original Team Haru edit." And he tagged it as, _Sorry this took so long, hope you like it!, thanks for request, Fairy Tail, Original Team Haru._

"This is literally amazing," she replied. "Thank you so much! :)."

Her cheeks were in pain from smiling so much. When was the last time someone _actually_ made her smile?

Natsu, shocking Lucy even further, replied, "Glad you liked it! Have any other requests?"

She pondered for a few minutes, but then there was a knock on her door and then it opened. She sighed, _what was the point of knocking if you're just going to walk in anyway?_

"Lucy," her father said, "you're still up?"

"I'm going to bed now," she smiled sweetly.

"It's a school night, you know."

"Yess," she groaned, "I know, Dad."

"Good," he said. "Well goodnight."

"Night," she called back.

She waited until she heard the door shut, before she turned back to her laptop. Biting her lip with regret, she wrote, "Sorry, I can't think of any right now. I have to go to sleep :/."

Natsu replied almost instantly, leaving Lucy to wonder how that was possible... "Aww c'mon. Just give me one last request and I'll have it ready for you in the morning :D."

So pushy, she awed with her heart hammering, "Okay, how abouttttt the scene where Haru promises to protect Elie's future?!"

"Perfect!" he said. "Night, Lucy."

Lucy sucked in a breath.

He typed her name.

He knows her name?

Well it's listed on her blog, but still...that means he checked for it! Or maybe he remembered it from when he followed her yesterday...Or technically this morning since it was midnight when he followed her...

But that didn't matter.

She couldn't wait for morning to arrive.

Natsu knows my name.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Eep they Natsu and Lucy talked!****

****I hope you all liked this chapter! Ahh I'm so nervous posting this!****

****Hope it didn't suck :o****

****Thanks for reading! Please let me know what you thought about this chapter!****

3. Chapter 3

****Wahh thank you all so much for the nice reviews and for subscribing and favoriting! You're all super sweet! Thank you :D****

****XOXOX****

* * *

Just like the day before, Lucy had woken up before her alarm thanks to the excitement and anticipation of what was awaiting her.

She pulled herself out of bed and raced off to shower and get ready for the school day.

As much as Lucy wanted to check her _Tumblr_, she didn't. It was kind of like when a new chapter of _Fairy Tail_ is released. She would get up and get ready for school, instead of reading it right away, so that she could be fully awake and conscious to read it.

But in this case, she wanted to see the thing Natsu had made for her without tired eyes.

After about a half hour, dressed in school uniform, she was finally ready to look.

She anxiously raced to her laptop, turning it on while tapping her finger nails against her desk in unconscious manner.

"C'mon, c'mon, c'mon already!" she yelled at it.

The laptop loaded and she quickly opened up her browser, waiting a couple of more seconds for that to finally load.

And at last, she made it to [_Tumblr_](#). She clicked her [_activity_](#) page and to both, her horror and amazement, she saw nothing but likes and reblogs of her Haru post.

She tried to scroll through it to find where Natsu tagged her, but alas, it was like an endless sea of notes.

Lucy quickly went to her own tag, [_CelestialMage_](#) to see if anything would pop up in there.

She inhaled sharply.

This boy was... Words couldn't describe. Or could they? She didn't know, considering she was a mediocre writer after all...

Natsu had edited two panels.

The first was the scene of Haru shouting at Future Rogue, "[_Nobody is going to steal Elie's future from her!_](#)" And it looked incredible. He graphically made the flames life-like. They consumed Haru in a smoldering passion. Natsu even made the trail of flames that hit Future Rogue, look deadly. A flame to kill. And written in the fiery smoke, was the scene's text.

The second scene he edited was the next panel that read, "[_I promise you that!_](#)" where Haru had tears dripping down one half of his face, while the other half was consumed with enraged flames. Natsu was able to make the tears fall from Haru's eyes and he had set up a wonderful fiery aura around Haru.

[_How does he do it?_](#) she wondered not for the first time.

She pulled out her manga copy and noticed that Haru's body wasn't on fire in those panels, but she didn't care. Natsu's edits were perfect.

He captioned the photo, "For [_Lucy_](#)." Lucy's name was a link that directed straight to her blog. He tagged it, [_Haru Glory, Fairy Tail, CelestialMage_](#)

There was something about him using her name instead of her URL made her insides flutter.

Lucy glanced at the notes, already close to 2,000. How that was even possible considering how small the fandom was?

With her daze fading, she quickly liked it and reblogged it, tagging a simple [_thank you_](#).

She right clicked and saved the two images, wanting to keep them forever.

****XOXOX****

Lucy spent all day wondering if she could consider Natsu her friend after yesterday... Lucy always considered people she talked to at least once as friends, so why did this feel different? Why did she feel so shy?

She heavily sighed as she refreshed her activity. She saw that [_SolidScriptMage_](#) had inboxed her.

Lucy quickly opened the message, "You asked [_DragonSlayer_](#) to do an edit?"

She blushed and replied, "Umm kind of [_ ^ _ ^](#)."

"What do you mean by 'kind of'?" Levy replied moments later.

"He asked for requests so I gave him one. It wasn't like I went out of my way to ask him to color those scenes for me."

"Oh hehe very interesting."

"What's interesting?" her eyes narrowed with bemusement. Was she missing something?

"Well _Dragonslayer_ never links people's names. He usually just links their blogs."

Lucy swallowed. Was Levy telling the truth? Did Natsu really never link names? It wasn't something she ever paid attention to..."Really? Haven't noticed."

"I guess it's not a big deal," Levy replied a few refreshes later. "I only noticed because I've requested tons of stuff from him before and yet he's never linked _Levy_, always _SolidScriptMage_."

"Ohh really?" Lucy wrote back. "That's odd." Her stomach clenched.

"Yupp," Levy responded.

Lucy didn't reply back.

****XOXOX****

After dinner, Lucy went on her laptop.

She saw that _DragonSlayer_ had made a long post:

_ ****Shiny Pokemon Giveaway**** _

_ I recently reached 5000 followers so I would like to do a giveaway. _

_ I will be giving away a (bold nature) _ ****Shiny Klefki**** _

_ Rules as followed: _

_ You must be following me. _

_ Likes and reblogs give you a total of 2 entries _

_ Must be willing to give me your friend code _

_ Contest ends in 48 hours _

_ You have to reply within 24 hours otherwise I pick a new winner _

_ ****GOOD LUCK!**** _

Natsu also included a picture of his Shiny Klefki's stats.

Lucy was nearly drooling. She hastily liked and reblogged the giveaway.

A shiny Klefki was her dream Pokemon. She had spent hours upon hours trying to breed one, but failed miserably. She had also tried the chain method, but alas, failed at that too.

Lucy an awful shiny hunter...

It wasn't that Klefki was her favorite Pokemon, in fact it was far from it, but Klefki reminded her of the gate keys in _Fairy Tail._ The shiny Klefki was gold instead of silver, specifically reminding Lucy of Elie's zodiac gate keys in particular.

She needed to win the contest.

SolidScriptMage reblogged and liked the giveaway also, tagging it as: _Reblogging this for you, Lucy!_

Lucy smiled. Levy truly was a great friend.

If only they were friends in real life...Sshe glumly exhaled and refreshed her dash. A small smile crept on her face.

IceMakeMagic had reblogged Natsu's post and added, "Tch, hard to believe 5000 people would want to follow a flaming idiot..."

Natsu replied, "Pshhh you're just jealous that I have more followers than you."

"Don't get so big headed, Flame Brains. You only have 10 more than me. Hell, I was winning last week."

Natsu wrote back, "And now you're losing. Sucks, Ice Princess."

"Shut it, Ash Head."

"Oi!, you shut it, Stripper." Lucy burst out laughing at the _stripper_ insult. She had been following _IceMakeMagic_ , Gray, for a while now and he was known for posting shirtless selfies and what was even more amusing was that Musica, Gray's favorite character, was known for randomly taking off his clothes. Lucy often wondered if Gray did that to be like Musica or if it was all coincidental...

"BOTH OF YOU SHUT IT!" _RequipMageTitania_ interrupted.

"Yes, ma'am!" Both replied back.

Lucy was in tears from laughter from that; it was like reading a scene from the manga.

An inbox notification appeared, interrupting her laughter.

"Sorry to bother you, but could you write a Haru x Elie fic about them sharing their first kiss :3"

Lucy grinned to herself. How could she resist? She spent the rest of the night typing away.

She made it a dramatic first kiss. It was after an intense battle. Elie and Haru had _finally_ performed a unison raid, defeating the final boss. Afterwards, the two turn towards one another, panting heavily, intensely staring into each other's eyes...and then they kiss.

The story reached about 5,000 words and after proof reading it for the millionth time, Lucy posted it in the ask.

After a few minutes, she saw that her story already had three notes. She clicked on it with curiosity.

**DragonSlayer** _liked your post._

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post._

**DragonSlayer** said: a little too mushy for my taste, but besides that, this was awesome!_

Her heart thumped widely in her chest.

He read it AND he liked it... It was almost too much for her to handle.

Somehow mustering up the courage of a mouse, she replied, " _**DragonSlayer**_ thanks ^_^. "

Natsu liked her reply, which implied a 'you're welcome.'

She wondered if her blog would blow up again thanks to Natsu reblogging her story...

****XOXOX****

48 hours later, it was finally Friday after school. Lucy desperately awaited for Natsu to say the contest ended.

And finally at 10 p.m., he did, "Contest is officially over. The winner has been notified."

Lucy frowned with disappointment. No new messages in her inbox.

I didn't win? Her heart sank deep into her chest as though someone tied a weight to it.

But suddenly a notification appeared on her inbox. She frantically clicked on it; that weight on her chest seemed to have vanished.

But the weight returned, ten times heavier than before. It wasn't from Natsu, instead, it was an anon.

"Your story sucks and so does your writing in general."

Lucy sweat dropped and said out loud, "My first anon hate...awesome..."

She wasn't going to let this bother her.

Nope, not at all, but despite her thoughts, she found herself slumping in her seat with a frown on her face.

How does one even handle anon hate?

She decided the best thing to do was to not argue with the anon, so she replied, "Sorry, anon ^_^. "

Man, did her chest feel heavy and her lips seemed to keep drooping downwards... She logged off, figuring now would be a great time to disconnect from the internet.

She got ready for bed; brushing her teeth, washing her face, and changed into her pink sleep shorts and red tank top

Out of habit, she checked her _Tumblr_ app and refreshed her _activity_ feed for one last time.

Her eyes were the size of bowling balls.

**DragonSlayer** reblogged your post_ and added..._

Lucy clicked on it and gasped.

"SHUT UP, YOU DAMN COWARD! LUCY IS BY FAR THE BEST WRITER ON THIS SITE! SO WHY DON'T

YOU TRY SAYING THAT OFF ANON?!"

A tear trickled down her cheek and fell past her ever-growing smile No one had ever stood up for her before... "Thank you, Natsu." she messaged him through an _ask._

He didn't reply, but Lucy already knew he wouldn't.

****XOXOX****

"LUCY!" Levy inboxed her. "YOU WEREN'T ON _SKYPE_ LAST NIGHT! DID YOU FORGET IT WAS _FAIRY TAIL_ FRIDAY?"

"OMG I TOTALLY FORGOT ABOUT IT, LEVY!"

Lucy couldn't believe she forgot about _Fairy Tail Friday._ Besides Monday's, it was the only other day of the week she looked forward to. It was all that damn Anon's fault. She had been in such a hurry to get off the internet after her hate...And also, she had been distracted by Natsu, not that she would ever admit that.

After watching the new episode, Lucy read Levy's new message, "HOW COULD YOU FORGET!?"

She didn't want to bring up the anon hate or Natsu, so she ignored Levy's question. "JUST WATCHED IT! OMG, Levy, it was amazing! The episode was almost exactly like the manga chapter!"

She refreshed and Levy's reply appeared, "Ahh I thought so too!"

"Can't believe we have to wait another week for the next episode!"

She refreshed again, "At least the manga chapter comes out on Monday!"

"Yeah!" Lucy grinned, going back to her dashboard.

And scrolled down looking for stuff to reblog when a post by Natsu caught her eye.

"Since the winner didn't respond, I have chosen another person."

"Ehh?" She blinked. She never understood the people who reblogged a contest and didn't claim their prize.

A new inbox notification appeared.

No way...

With a racing heart, _Please don't be Levy,_ Lucy clicked on it.

"Congrats, Lucy!"

A scream, worthy for a horror movie, ripped out from her throat.

Suddenly footsteps boomed throughout her hallway and her bedroom door barged open.

"WHAT'S WRONG?!" her father looked around her room, gripping a metal baseball bat tightly in his pudgy hands.

"DAD!" she cried. "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

"I heard you screaming!" he explained, looking panicked as he peered around her room with a scrutinizing gaze.

"No I wasn't," she lied.

"But I could have sworn..." He eyed her suspiciously.

"You must have been dreaming," Lucy said quickly, hoping he would believe her terrible reasoning.

Her father scratched his head, "I guess... Well, g'night, Lucy."

"G'night, dad," she watched him exit her room.

She quickly searched for her DS to find out her friend code.

And then replied to Natsu, "OMG ARE YOU SERIOUS?!"

"YES! Now hurry up and gimme your friend code before 24 hours are up." He also included his code in the message .

She rolled her eyes at the message, but a swell of elated joy burned in her chest. "Here you go," she gave him her code.

Lucy didn't have anything great to trade him so she decided to give him one of her feebas', hoping it would be okay.

The trade was completed and Lucy stared in awe at her new shiny Klefki. It was perfect and it truly resembled Elie's key ring...And the fact that Natsu gave it to her...She hugged her DS to her bosom.

She changed her mind, Klefki was officially her favorite Pokemon.

And for the second night in a row, Lucy messaged Natsu, "Thank you, Natsu."

And this time he replied.

"Anytime, Lucy."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****AHH THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR READING!****

****Did you like this chapter?!****

4. Chapter 4

*****Hides* I'm supposed to be studying but instead I wrote a new chapter? Whoops :D****

****YOU ALL MAKE ME SO HAPPY! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BEING KIND!****

****Please enjoy this chapter!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Lucy's Sunday was pretty uneventful. She woke up with no new messages on her _Tumblr_, but she did notice that her follower count was now up to 910. Normally if Lucy gained a new follower, she would check out his or hers blog to see if she wanted to follow back, and she usually did, but at this point, she couldn't. It was too overwhelming. She figured she had Natsu to thank for this new experience.

Speaking of Natsu, she began to wonder if last night really happened. Had Lucy really won Natsu's shiny Klefki?

She pulled out her Nintendo 3DS and quickly opened up her game. She checked her Pokemon team, and sure enough, a shiny Klefki was placed nicely in the first spot of her line up.

Lucy squealed as she opened her Pokemon Amie, a part of the game where players can pet, feed, and play with their Pokemon. It was by far her favorite feature.

She petted her Klefki and fed it, finding it very amusing to pet and feed a key, but it was a cute Pokemon nonetheless and she was obsessed.

She had to take a picture of it and post it on her blog.

"LOOK AT THIS CUTIE!" she captioned the photo. Then she tagged it as, _I can't believe I actually won a contest, thanks again Natsu, looks like Elie's keys, eep I'm so happy._

A few minutes later, she saw that her post got a couple of _likes_ from followers she had never talked to before and also one from Levy.

Levy had also commented, "OMG congrats, Lucy! I'm so happy for you :D."

Lucy replied, "_SolidScriptMage_, Thanks, Levy!"

Another _like_ appeared that caught her eye.

**DragonSlayer** liked your post_ and also he commented, "Hehe don't thank me, thank yourself."

Lucy's face twisted with perplexity as she replied, "_DragonSlayer_, huh O.o ?"

She impatiently awaited for Natsu to explain himself, but instead of _Natsu_ replying, she saw _IceMakeMagic_ had instead _,_ "I wouldn't pay much attention to him. It's just Lava Brains being his usual idiotic self."

Lucy snorted.

Then she saw that Natsu had replied, "You're my 5000th follower :D, and _IceMakeMagic_" he tagged, "YOU WANNA GO, ICE PRINCESS?"

She sucked in a breath. Seriously? She was the _5000_th_ follower? _Almost like fate_, she squealed and slapped her hands against her cheeks as she shook her head back and forth, aggressively, "Gahh what am I thinking?!"

Just then, Lucy got an inbox notification, "You and _DragonSlayer_ are on first name basis?!" It was from _SatanSoul_.

Lucy slightly blushed, "Looks that way ^_^".

"OMG! THAT'S SO CUTE!" Mira sent back.

"Not really!" she blushed harder, "I mean me and you call each other by our first names most of the time! Is that cut

e as well?"

Lucy refreshed to see Mira's reply, "I think so :) but it's a lot cuter that you and Natsu do it."

"*Sweats* still don't see how's that's cute."

"Well it's sort of like this: Elie is your icon and Haru is his and that's my OTP of OTPs so watching you two interact just gives me feels!"

"WE BARELY INTERACT AND WE'VE ONLY JUST STARTED FOLLOWING EACH OTHER!" her face burned a nice shade of scarlet.

Mira didn't reply and Lucy heavily sighed. Mira was known for being a crazy, hardcore shipper. She had shipped Lucy and Levy at one point, but there was no way she was shipping Lucy with Natsu, right? _If he ever found out..._ "How embarrassing," she cried onto her keyboard.

Then Mira replied, "Hehe calm down, Lucy! I'm still rooting for you and Levy :D ohhh but you and _IceMakeMagic_ could be cute too! Ahh so many possibilities!"

"STOP SHIPPING REAL PEOPLE! IT'S WEIRD!" Lucy typed back, pounding each key.

"Lucy!" Her dad called. "Time to eat!"

"Coming," she happily logged off, not wanting to continue with the painful conversation she and Mira were having.

****XOXOX****

Just like last week, Lucy woke before her alarm, but not for the same reasons. It was because of _Fairy Tail_ Monday. Every Monday a new _Fairy Tail_ chapter is released. Usually the chapter was already out by the time Lucy's alarm went off, but since she woke up early, it wasn't out yet, not that she minded. She liked to shower and get dressed for school before she read the new chapter. Which is exactly what she did.

After Lucy was all dressed, she made herself a bowl of oatmeal for breakfast. She sat back down on her laptop to check for the chapter, and sure enough, it was out.

She read through the chapters slowly and carefully, admiring each panel. It was the end of the Grand Magic Games/Eclipse arc so she didn't want to miss anything important.

Tears spilled from eyes as she reached the second to last page. The scene was so sweet and heartwarming that chills ran up and down her spine. It was Haru leading Elie back to the guild and onward to their next adventure in some pseudo-alternate time line.

And then Lucy nearly died when she reached the last page.

Haru and Elie were hugging...well really Elie was hugging Haru from behind, but still, Lucy could have died of happiness.

OTP moments were what gave her life.

She quickly saved the picture and opened it up in an editor so that she could clean up the scan.

She sharpened the details of it and began to expertly cut the photo away from the background. She stared at her finished work, making sure everything was perfect, but to her annoyance, she noticed a slight clip on Haru's leg. "Damn it! I messed up!" She looked at her clock, noticing she only had ten minutes before she had to leave. "I don't have time

e to fix it!" A pout decorated her face.

She begrudgingly uploaded it to _Tumblr_ and wrote the caption that had accompanied the manga panel, "You don't need a reason to cry...All you need is to feel the warmth that dwells in your chest."

"LEVY! THE NEW CHAPTER! I'M DYING!" she messaged her _Fairy Tail_ buddy with the little free time she had before school.

"ME TOO, LUCY! HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO GO TO SCHOOL LIKE THIS? I'M COMPLETE FAIRY TAIL T RASH!"

"I DON'T KNOW! I'M IN THE SAME BOAT!"

"AHH GOOD LUCK!"

"YOU TOO!" she logged off and grabbed her bag and phone. She refreshed her _activity_ on the mobile app _._ The _likes_ and reblogs flooded in as they always did when Lucy posted her occasional manga edits. Typically, she would wake up too late to post an edit because someone else would beat her to it, so she was glad that she was able to upload it quickly even with the tiny mistake on Haru's leg.

****XOXOX****

At school, she scrolled through her dashboard reblogging every version of the many different edits of the same manga caps. All of which were the two Haru x Elie moments.

She was in OTP Heaven.

What a glorious day... She sighed, as she desperately searched for one edit in particular, _Natsu's_. She began to wonder if he even made one yet so she decided to go search his blog.

And sure enough, his edit was there, astounding as always.

It was the picture of Haru and Elie hugging. Natsu had placed them on a grassy field, with a brightly shining night sky. He actually had shooting stars streaking the sky. And the speech bubbles of Haru and Elie talking floated up and down, above Haru and Elie. He also made bits of the grass sway, as if wind were blowing on it.

It was perfect. One could really sense the deep underlying emotion in the scene. It looked romantic, which made Lucy think back to the "_too mushy for my taste_" comment he left on her story...Maybe Natsu's a hopeless romantic like herself.

She eyed his detailed work on Haru and Elie. The picture was a very compact, so Lucy was very impressed he was able to color it so well.

As her eyes studied Haru, she saw that Haru's leg had a slight indent, indicating Natsu screwed up on his editing.

Lucy nearly laughed out loud, but she was forced to stifle it because she was in class. _So_ Mr. Perfect does make mistakes!_ she internally cheered. And then she stared longer at the mistake. _Hah, that's odd. The mistake is in the same place where I messed up..._ Her eyes went wide as a gasp escaped her lips, _THAT JERK!_

"Is something wrong, Ms. Heartfilia?" Her teacher asked, making her way over to Lucy.

"No, nothing," she nervously answered, slightly flustered as she tried to hide her phone. "Just banged my knee is all."

"Be more careful," her teacher said before going back to the lesson.

Lucy rushed back to her phone and clicked Natsu's fan mail message box. Fueled with fury, she wrote, "YOU STOLE MY EDIT, YOU JERK!"

She anxiously kept refreshing, hoping to see Natsu's response, which was only a twenty minute wait, "Pshh like I would do that."

"Don't bother denying it because I know for a fact you stole it!"

"Damn how did you figure it out? Was it that mistake you made? I knew I shoulda' fixed it!"

"That's not the point!" she flushed at the mention of her mistake.

"Then what is the point?"

"YOU CAN'T JUST USE SOMEONE'S EDITS WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION!" she savagely typed. She was so frustrated, she wanted to scream. Maybe _IceMakeMagic_ was right about this guy being an idiot...

"I guess you make a good point. It's just that your edits are the best and deleting the background from a manga cap is one of the most annoying parts and I wanted to get straight to the coloring portion before I went to school."

He thinks my edits are the best? Lucy's heart hammered. As her anger fled, she wrote, "Fine, I'll let it slide this time since the edit was amazing. But next time ask first and I also want credit!"

"Fair enough. I probably should mention that this isn't the first time I've stolen your manga edits..."

"WHAT?"

"Sorry :D."

Lucy couldn't help but feel that he wasn't the least bit sorry. "I think it's time you went back down to 4,999 followers -_-."

"Oi! You're mean!"

"And you're a thief! Hmph!" Despite what Lucy was typing, she was beyond flattered that someone so talented had been using _her_ _edits_ for his colorings and graphics.

Lucy froze, as a thought suddenly hit her; Natsu hadn't been following her for any of her previous edits she has posted. That means Natsu has noticed her work for a while now. A strange, yet thrilling sensation shot throughout her body.

"I said I was sorry, sheesh. And besides, you don't do edits often so there's only a few that I stole from you. The rest I do myself."

"Gee that makes everything better. *SARCASM*" If Lucy were to be honest with herself, she was just trying to prolong talking to Natsu. She didn't care anymore that he stole her crappy edits. She was just happy they were actually conversing.

"I'll make it up to you," he replied.

She tilted her head to the side, "How so?"

"I don't know yet, but I'll figure something out," he replied.

"I'm holding you to that," she teased.

Natsu didn't answer.

Well that was short lived, she exhaled, disappointed that the conversation was over.

But he's going to make it up to me... her stomach fluttered.

That means he will be in touch with her again...

A small smile crept upon her lips as she returned her attention back to class.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Ahh was this chapter okay? Sorry it's a bit on the short side. I have a final tomorrow, but I really wanted to write and post a new chapter, so I did!****

****Thank you all so much for the reviews and follows and favorites!****

****Hope you enjoyed this chapter :D****

5. Chapter 5

****AHH YOU ALL MAKE ME SO HAPPY!****

****As a present, please enjoy my quick update!****

****And also this is me celebrating the end of the semester!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Lucy was miserable the following school day. She felt like she was going to burst into tears at any moment. She stayed quiet in class and even at lunch, she just laid her head down on the table, gazing at a particular page that was opened on her phone.

"What's wrong, Lucy?" One of her friends asked.

"Nothing," Lucy sniffled.

Her friends exchanged looks, but decided not to press on.

Lucy wanted to click _Get Tickets_ so badly, but she couldn't because she had no one to go with. Well she could buy just one ticket, but no, she shook her head, that would be pathetic and she would be in way over her head in a situation like that. She had never been to one before, so she would need a buddy.

But how could she not go? It was all everyone was talking about. Well everyone on _Tumblr_..._

It was all over her dash. People posting about how they bought their tickets, how excited they are, how annoyed that the day they wanted was sold out. _They shouldn't complain since they get to go_, Lucy thought bitterly.

Forever, it has been her dream to go to one. To _Comic Con_.

"Why can't I go?" she cried into her hands.

Her friends all paused, "Go where?"

"Nowhere," she moaned.

And again, her friends didn't push any further.

Lucy saw Natsu post, "YOSH! GUESS WHO'S GOING TO SATURDAY'S CON!?"

"Not me," she bitterly replied aloud as the bell rang.

She refreshed her dash and saw that _IceMakeMagic_ reblogged Natsu's text post and added, "Are you kidding me? I'm going to be in the same room as you, Fire Freak?"

"_IceMakeMagic_, DAMN IT! CHANGE DAYS, ICE FREAK!"

Gray bickered back, "No way! I got my tickets before you! So that means _you_ have to change days!"

"Pshhh like hell I'm changing days."

Instead of replying to Natsu's post, Gray made his own text post, "Comic Con has officially been ruined for me."

Normally Lucy would have laughed, but she couldn't even muster a snort.

Her hands clenched around her phone, her heart was pounding—but not in a good way. It was that heart wrenching, agonizing pain that nearly tore her a part, otherwise known as _jealously_.

She wanted to go home.

She knew she was being petty, but she was upset.

Another year not going to Comic Con...Every year she tells herself she will find someone to go with and every year she lets herself down.

"Dad," She called her father from the nurse's office. "I'm not feeling well. Could you come pick me up?" One of the most annoying and tedious things her school does was require the parents to sign their kids out of school with a _valid excuse_. Cutting was always an option, but wasn't brave enough to so she had to fake sick. Luckily the school nurse always sends students home no matter what excuse they come up with.

****XOXOX****

"Mourning in self-pity," Lucy posted on her _Tumblr_ when she finally got home. She wrote in her tags, _another year of not going to Comic Con. I'm so jealous of everyone._

"Weren't able to get tickets either?" Levy commented.

Lucy replied, "_SolidScriptMage_, not exactly. Just don't have anyone to go with :/."

"*Hugs* well at least you have someone to be upset with!" Levy wrote back.

A smile broke onto Lucy's sullen face. Levy really was the best.

She refreshed her dash and saw that _RequipMageTitania_ posted a picture of herself wearing an armor top and a blue skirt with knee-high boots, looking exactly like the requip mage in _Fairy Tail_. She captioned the photo, "Finally completed my Julia cosplay for Comic Con."

Lucy immediately liked the photo. It was truly amazing. Erza looked almost like the real life version of Julia. She commented, "OMG you look exactly like her and you're so pretty!" And then she reblogged the photo and tagged, _amazing cosplay, pretty friends._

She saw that _DragonSlayer_ reblogged _RequipMageTitania_'s post and commented on it, "Is that real armor?"

Lucy nearly sputtered at the fact that she did not notice the way the armor shined from the lighting in Erza's photo. _Was it real_? There was no way Erza could have possibly acquired real armor...

"Yes it is," Erza commented back.

"Whooaaa," Lucy awed, "That's dedication."

That was another thing Lucy wanted to do, _cosplay_. Oh how badly she wanted to dress up as Elie...and it wouldn't be hard for her to do so. She and Elie already dressed similarly, short skirts and tight tops and they both had voluptuous assets.

Sighhh, Lucy pouted, she didn't want to use the word, but she felt that there was no word that accurately described how she was feeling. _Depressed_. She threw herself onto her bed and cried into her pillow, "I'm so depressed!"

"Lucy?" Her father called from outside her door. "Do you need anything before I go back to work?"

Lucy sat up, _I need Comic Con tickets_ and someone to go with_, "No, I'm okay!" she called back.

"Alright," he shouted through the door. "I'll see you later then."

"Bye, Daddy!"

Lucy got off her bed and went back to her laptop. She saw she had a new message.

"Are you taking requests today?!" an anon asked.

Lucy frowned. There was no way she could write anything in her current state of mind...And if she did write anything, it would be filled with angst.

"Sorry, Anon. I'm too depressed to write anything :/."

"You know what cures depression? Getting laid ;)," _CarddMagee_ commented on the ask.

Lucy's face heated up, "_CarddMagee_, YOU SAY THAT'S THE CURE FOR EVERYTHING!"

Cana replied, "Well it is ;)."

Lucy groaned. she was pretty shy about relationship stuff. She never had a boyfriend before or even had her first kiss and that was purely her choice. She has been asked out multiple times, but Lucy always denied her admirers. She wanted someone she connected with, not some guy who thought she was hot and decided to ask her out...

And most importantly, Lucy wanted friendship. She never understood how her friends are able to jump into a new relationship with some guy they just met. It didn't sit right with her. A boyfriend should be a best friend, not a stranger

Lucy noticed her reply to the anon gained more notes. She clicked to see what that was about.

**IceMakeMagic** liked this._

**SolidScriptMage** liked this._

**DragonSlayer** said: Why are you depressed?_

Lucy glumly typed, "_DragonSlayer,_ Because I can't go to Comic Con."

Natsu liked her reply to show that he saw it.

Lucy stared at her clock on her laptop. _1:30_. She sighed heavily. Maybe she shouldn't have gone home early. What was she supposed to do now? What could possibly cheer herself up?

"Nisekoi!" she squealed. She had recently started watching the anime called _Nisekoi_ and it never failed to make her laugh. It was a romantic comedy, harem kind of show. Lucy never thought she would be one to enjoy a harem, thinking the genre would be annoying and frustrating, but to her surprise, she found it amusing.

Lucy snuggled into her bed and let the cuteness of the show temporarily distract her from her misery.

XOXOX

Sometime during Lucy's _Nisekoi_ marathon, she must have fallen asleep because when she awoke, it was nearly ten at night. She looked around her room in a daze. She noticed on her dresser was a bowl.

She got up to investigate. It soup, chicken noodle to be exact. There was a note next to it.

Made you some soup, but I didn't want to wake you.

Hope you feel better.

Love,

Dad

Lucy smiled as she took a tiny spoonful. She wasn't very hungry and the soup was cold so with a heavy sigh, she carried it off to her kitchen sink.

She ran back to her room and went on her laptop to check her dashboard.

All the Comic Con posts hit her like a brick. It was so painful, she had to log off.

Just as she was about to, she saw that _DragonSlayer_ had replied to an anonymous ask.

The ask said, "Why haven't you been on all day? Hope everything's okay! You're my favorite blogger!"

Natsu replied, "Sorry, Anon! I was workin on something."

Lucy wondered if that _something_ had anything to do with Natsu promising to make it up to her for stealing her work.

She received an inbox notification and instead of seeing an ask, she saw a submission. A submission was where people can send their work to other blogs, usually popular blogs, so that the popular blog posts it and the person gets a lot of recognition.

Except this wasn't the case.

Her breath stopped. It was from Natsu.

She wasn't sure how he did it, but Natsu had colored and edited a manga cap of Haru and Happy cheering up a depressed Elie. He must have taken the three photos from different panels, Lucy figured.

There was a speech bubble for Haru, "Cheer up, Lucy," Lucy rubbed her eyes in disbelief. _He used my name?!_ "You'll go to the next Comic Con! I'll make sure of it!" her heart thumped wildly.

Happy's bubble read, "Yeah, Lucy! But why would you want to go Comic Con anyway? It's just a bunch of nerds dressed up...oh now I see why you want to go!" A giggle erupted from her within her. There was another panel of Elie going after Happy with an angry expression, "BAKA NEKO!"

Now Lucy was in tears from her laughter.

With a huge smile on her face, she read Natsu's note on the bottom, "For your eyes only and also this isn't me making it up to you for stealing your work! Anyway, hope this cures your depression!"

A tingly warmth spread throughout her body. She was so happy that it was almost bewildering that she had ever been depressed.

Resting her chin on the back of her hands, she said softly, " _Natsu_ , you're really something else..."

And with slightly shaking hands, she messaged him, "Congrats! You cured my depression :)."

* * *

XOXOX

Was this chapter any good!?

Hope you all liked it!

As always, thanks for reading!

6. Chapter 6

**Okay so I was totally supposed to catch up on Yamada-kun, but somehow I ended up writing the next chapter?*

Anyway...enjoy!

**** Indicates possible spoilers**

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Accent challenge?" Lucy watched as the phenomena circled throughout _Tumblr_. People from all over were challenging one another to say a list of words in order to hear everyone's accent.

The _Fairy Tail_ fandom, in particular, made up its own accent challenge; One that was a bit different than the regular one that wasn't made for a specific fandom.

The post read as:

****Fairy Tail Accent Challenge****

****Introduce your name and Tumblr URL and mention who challenged you.****

****Pronounce the following names:**** _Hiro Mashima, Haru Glory, Elie, Musica, Let, Julia, _

Seig Hart, Mystogen, Mavis, Zeref, Acnologia, Igneel, Aquarius, and Capricorn.

****Pronounce the following words:**** _Unison Raid, Lacrima, Celestial Spirits, Tenrou Island, Galuna Island, Oracion Seis, and Edolas_

****Give an attack imitation****

****Who's your favorite character and why?****

****Favorite arc and why?****

****How did you get into Fairy Tail?****

****Any last words you want to say?****

****Challenge 3 other users****

It sounded both nerve wracking and fun, as she secretly hoped to be challenged and it's not like she had anything better to do on her Wednesday night.

She listened to an audio of a URL she did not know well. She knew of him and his group of friends, but they are such a tight-knit group, that Lucy knew better than to try to join in.

His name was Laxus, also known as _LighteningSlayer_, who had a scary-deep voice that made her shiver just picturing him angry. He had challenged three other users named _RealLifeFairy, FigureEyes_, and _RaijinTribe_. _RaijinTribe_'s blog amused Lucy because his title was _Laxus is the Greatest Being to Ever Exist_. And Laxus most certainly did not seem to mind it one bit.

She grew bored after listening to a few other audios because none were of people she actually talked to and just as she was about to log off, a notification stating she had been mentioned in a post had appeared. With new found interest, she clicked on it.

"What the?" she ogled blankly.

It was an audio post.

Posted by _DragonSlayer_.

"ACCENT CHALLENGE" it was labeled.

"I'm going to hear his voice?" Lucy's jaw nearly dropped. "No way..." she could hear her heart thumping in her ears. With a nervous finger, she double tapped her mousepad on the play button.

"Yo! I'm Natsu," her breath instantly caught. " _Tumblr_ user _DragonSlayer_ , and I was challenged by _FireMagesRule_ . Thanks, buddy!" She could almost hear him smiling.

FireMagesRule was a young user named Romeo, who was obsessed with Haru and seemed to idolize Natsu.

"Okay _Pronounce the following names_ , Hiro Mashima, Haru Glory, YOSH! MY TWO FAVORITE PEOPLE!" Lucy found herself giggling as she marveled at the fact that he really talked the way he typed..."Elie..." And he continued throughout the names. She took careful notice of how he pronounced everything almost the same way she did. Did that mean they were from the same area?

She shot the thought down, because why did it even matter?

Natsu got up to _Acnologia_ and said, "Ahhhk-noo-log? Or is it lowg? I think it's lowg actually. Ahk-no-low-gi-ah? Ehhe close enough!" Lucy clutched her stomach from laughing so much. Was it really that hard to pronounce _Acnologia_?

Natsu also had trouble pronouncing _Oracion Seis_.

"Or-Or-ra-ci-cion Seis," he had cheered when he finally got it right.

" _Give an attack imitation_ , alright! "KARYŪ NO HŌKŌ!" And to her utter amazement, he really did a perfect Haru imitation of his 'ROAR OF THE FIRE DRAGON!' She was enjoying this so much that her cheeks began to ache from smiling so much.

"Favorite character, ahh well that's a given. Haru's my favorite for a lot of reasons. One is because I relate the most to him. I'm always hungry, I love hot foods and fire...and I'm a bit rowdy and rash. I like to goof around just like he does and I can be serious when I need to be. We both are awesome fighters!" He paused. "I know what it's like to lose...Ehhe enough about me." Lucy sucked in a breath. She wanted to know what Natsu was going to say, _to lose what?_ She thought of Haru. What he had lost? _His father_ ... Her brilliant smile had faltered.

"I like that Haru will do anything in his power to make his friends happy and keep them safe. I strive to be like that...to be like him. And plus, he's crazy powerful and awesome! And other stuff too that I can't remember on the spot..."

***** "Favorite arc? Hmmm...Tenrou Island!" Lucy squealed, that was her favorite arc as well. "So much stuff happened in this arc, like the introduction of Zeref and the battle at the end! It was just epic. The way Team Haru all fought together to take on Master Hades. And Haru had major character development. He learned to accept fear and he relied more on his friends for help and he gained the Lightning Dragon Mode! Best arc by far." *****

"How did I get into _Fairy Tail_? Hmmm," he paused. "Well things were kind of rough in my life and I needed a distraction, ya know? But I couldn't seem to find an anime or manga that could distract me...I kept searching for top ten animes and stuff like that and then I accidentally clicked on something that brought me to an interview of some Mangaka. The guy talked about his love for magic and adventure and other stuff that really spoke to me... so I decided to look him up and that's when I saw _Fairy Tail_ . So thank you, Hiro Mashima."

Lucy's face softened. It was a sweet tale. A tale that touched her heart.

" _Any last words?_ I'm all fired up!"

Not only were her cheeks still aching, her stomach was now aching from laughing too much, but her laughing broke off because a musical laughter filled her ears. Natsu had _laughed._

Her breathing stopped all together as she found herself gushing like crazy over something so mundane.

He had the cutest laugh.

Natsu felt like the real life Haru...

"_Challenge 3 others_ ...I challenge Ice Princess, _RequipMageTitania,_ and Lucy. Well I guess that's it. Hope ya enjoyed this!"

The had audio ended, however, Lucy didn't even notice.

She was frozen with her jaw smacking her desk.

She had to have heard wrong.

... _and Lucy_.

He said my name. "He said my name? HE SAID MY NAME!" she squealed running a hand through her blonde locks.

"WHAT'S WRONG?" Jude slammed open her door with the bat ready in his hand.

"Déjà vu," she muttered to herself. "Nothing, Dad. Why do you even have a bat? It's not like we play baseball!"

"I don't really know why we have one, but that's not the point! Why were you screaming? And don't say you weren't ! I know for a fact you were!"

Lucy blushed, "I-I," her eyes searched frantically all around her room, hoping to find something and they _did._ Landing on her stuffed Glaceon plush, that was on her neatly made-bed, "I uh caught this legendary Pokemon I spent hours trying to catch...Guess I got a little too excited..."

"Oh," her father was no longer in attack-mode. "Well good job! Proud of you! Good night then."

"Night," she scratched her arm as she watched her father close her door.

The second the door _clicked_ shut, she whirled back around and hastily replayed Natsu's video, skipping to the challenging part. "I challenge Ice Princess, _RequipMageTitania,_ and Lucy." She paused the video. Chills traveled throughout her body. Why did she have suddenly have this new fondness for her name?

She looked under the audio and saw a caption, " _IceMakeMagic, RequipMageTitania, CelestialMage_." Now she understood why she was tagged.

Does this mean Natsu wants to hear her voice?

Or was he challenging her because he had no one else to choose. But that couldn't have been it since he had tons of friends to choose from. So why did he choose _her_?

Lucy clicked the _heart_ button to like the post.

What was she supposed to do now? Accept the challenge?

Well if her dad was going to sleep now...it would be the perfect time to do the challenge without him walking in and asking her who she is talking to, because how could she possibly explain she was recording herself for the internet.

Just to make sure he really asleep, she called out, "Dad?" No response. "Daadddd?" Again, no response.

"Alright," she said. "Guess it's now or never..."

She clicked the audio recorder on her laptop and with a shaky breath, she began to speak. "Hii! My name's Lucy and I am _Tumblr_ user _CelestialMage_. And I was challenged by Natsu, she stopped for a second, caught off guard by how odd it was to finally voice the name she's been reading for months, "thanks for challenging me."

Lucy flew through all the pronunciations and was up to the imitation portion. "Open the Gate of the Water Bearer, Aquarius!" She was proud of herself for not stuttering.

"My favorite character is Elie, but I guess that's obvious. I really admire her strength and spirit. She may not be the strongest on her team, but she always does her best...And people tend to forget that she _is_ strong, especially in her magic type, celestial magic...It's just that the others on her team are just really strong in an abnormal way. And people forget this little key fact and decide to hate on her."

Lucy took deep breath, "She's also very smart and cunning, like on Tenrou Island, how she figured out where Mavis' grave was located. I love that she's so kind and forgiving, like with the whole Flare ordeal. I strive to be like that. And also I like that I am able to relate to her. We both like to read and write and...we both lost...our umm moms..." she trailed off.

"Umm," with a fake cough, she continued, "We both go out of our way to help out a friend in need. And in all honesty, I love almost every character in _Fairy Tail_. That's one of the things Hiro Mashima does, he makes you fall in love with every character. He makes you envious of their close bonds and friendships and I think I'm rambling so I'll stop now."

***** "My favorite arc is Tenrou Island because...well...I absolutely loved the last battle! It was great seeing them all fight together and the character development was perfect!...I loved Julia's fight with Azuma and Musica versus Ultear. And gahh everything was just perfect! Especially Haru and Elie versus Kain! Ahh the part where Elie says she won't run away and Haru's expression...It was perfect. And I think I used the word 'perfect' a little too much...I'm sorry!" *****

"How did I get into _Fairy Tail_? Well when I first discovered it, I saw a picture of Musica on this anime website I was looking at and I was like, 'Wahh he's hot!' So I had to go watch it. And then Elie appeared on the screen and I became instantly obsessed because she was so cute! And I was a bit disappointed to find out Musica wasn't the main protagonist, but then by the end of the first episode, I fell for Haru and no longer cared who the hell Musica was. "But that's my fun story..."

Lucy paused to breathe.

"After I watched the first three episodes, I took a break for no real reason. I was just busy I guess. But anyway, my mom got sick and I guess like Natsu said, I needed a _distraction_. " she swallowed tightly, "I bought the first 5 volumes and I read it with my mom in the hospital and we would switch back and forth from reading to watching the anime...But then things went from bad to worse...And _Fairy Tail_ was the only thing keeping me sane. It was the only thing able to make me laugh and to give me a break from my painful reality. So umm yeah..."

"_Any last words_? Umm I'm all fired up! And I challenge Levy, Mira, and Wendy! Thanks for putting up with my awful voice! Bye!" Lucy ended the audio. She wasn't sure why she chose to copy Natsu's last words, but it felt right.

She had to have replayed her audio at least a dozen times, making sure it was perfect. Once she was satisfied, she qu

ickly tagged Levy, Mira, and Wendy and posted it without even a second thought.

Nervous sweat began to trickle down her forehead and dampen her underarms as she "patiently" waited for people to listen.

Her leg bobbed up and down.

Her teeth gnawed on her finger nails.

"AHHH I CAN'T DO THIS!" she slammed her laptop closed, needing a break, and she knew the perfect thing to do to help relax her nerves. Her bathroom filled up with the calming and tranquil scent of lavender as she soaked in her bath. She let out a long sigh. She couldn't believe that she talked about her mother... She never told anyone about that story and now she just told 900+ people? Well she doubted all her followers would listen, but still...

And then she thought back to Natsu. His voice was perfect. It was almost like she imagined, not too deep, not too light.

Was she crazy for wanting to replay his audio?

Was it possible to be in love with a voice?

She shook her head to rid herself of this nonsensical thinking and got out of the bath and brushed her teeth.

She changed into baggy black shorts and a blue tank top. Then grabbed her phone as she walked towards her bed.

She checked her _Tumblr_ app to see if anyone listened to her audio yet.

There was only one note.

**DragonSlayer** _liked your post._

He heard her voice.

Her entire world seemed surreal as she collapsed onto her bed in a dreamlike state.

Yes, dreamlike...because this must be a dream.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Replying to Cowron: Yes, Nisekoi is a real anime and 10/10 would recommend! It's about this boy and girl who hate each other, but are forced to date in order to end the gang violence caused by their feuding families. There's a lot of other stuff too, but I don't really know how to describe it in a brief way. I'm awful at summaries :D****

****And omg the Fairy Tail movie teaser photo looks insane! And I'm so scared for the next chapter because of Mashima's tweet!****

****Well anyway, Hope this chapter was okay!****

****THANK YOU FOR READING!****

****THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!****

****GLAD YOU LIKED THE LAST CHAPTER! :D****

****The new Fairy Tail Chapters, OMG! All I can say is, Gray + Nekos gives me life****

****And for those who asked, the accent challenge is a real thing on** _ ****Tumblr**** **, but I tweaked it a bit in my story.****

****Please enjoy this chapter :)****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

BEEEP. BEEEEEP. BEEEEEEP.

Lucy scrambled to shut off her incessant alarm, and then froze. She actually woke up _because_ of her alarm? How strange. She chuckled, shaking her head because _that shouldn't be_ considered strange, but she had grown accustomed to waking up before it thanks to the past week.

Shaking off her daze, she dashed into the bathroom to get ready for school, hoping to have time to go on _Tumblr_.

She got ready in record timing. For once she was grateful for school uniforms, otherwise it would have taken her forever to decide what to wear, giving her less time to check her favorite website.

She quickly logged on and gasped. She had 12 new inboxes. Her stomach clenched. "Oh no," she chewed on her forget-me-not blue finger nail, "What did I do wrong?"

With one eye closed and the other one squinting, she clicked on the box.

She read the first message, an anon.

"You sound pretty!"

She blinked, _pretty?_ She replied back with a coloring manga cap of a blushing Elie and wrote, "Thank you, Anon!"

The other messages were similar all from a mix of either anonymous and random blogs. All of which complemented her voice or commented about how they could relate to her losing her mother or how inspiring Lucy was.

She madly blushed as she publicly replied to all of them with different variations of "Thank you!"

After that was done, Lucy checked her _activity_ and saw that her audio post had almost 70 notes. She also noticed that there were a few comments.

_ ****SolidScriptMage**** _ said: Woww your voice is so adorable! I'm jealous! And that was really brave of you to share that stuff about your mom! I want to give you a real hug, but since I can't guess I'll have to settle with this *HUGS*_

_ ****SatanSoul**** _ said: you sound so cute, Lucy! :)_

_ ****SkyMagicDragon**** _ said: you have a pretty voice :3_

**RequipMageTitania** said: I have to agree with you, the Julia vs. Azuma fight was amazing_

**IceMakeMagic** said: nice voice :)_

She was blushing even harder. Was she supposed to reply to them? But that would mean spamming everyone's dashboard. Well her best bet was taking a screenshot on mobile then tagging them all in one giant 'THANK YOU!'—which is exactly what she did.

Lucy would be lying if she said she wasn't disappointed that Natsu hadn't commented anything since even _Gray_ did, but she didn't comment on his either, so she figured they were even.

Without even thinking, she clicked on Natsu's blog.

He had tons of asks, just like Lucy did. Each one complementing his voice and calling it cute or telling him he sounds hot.

Natsu responded with different images of Haru, with the many weird faces he tended to make, and for some reason that made Lucy smile.

She saw that Natsu had reblogged his own audio post multiple times, with each reblog, the post grew longer and longer.

It started with Gray reblogging Natsu's post and writing, "Your voice is dumb."

Natsu had reblogged back, "Not as dumb as yours!"

Gray had written back, "You haven't heard my voice yet, you idiot!"

Natsu had retorted, "I don't have to hear it to know it's dumb!"

Lucy giggled, clutching a hand to her chest. These two were too amusing for their own good.

"What a dumb comeback," Gray had shot back.

"What a dumb statement."

"Dumb dragon."

"Dumb stripper."

"YOU'RE BOTH DUMB! NOW STOP SPAMMING MY FREAKING DASH!" _CarddMagee_ had interrupted.

Tears leaked from Lucy's eyes as she struggled to breathe. She hadn't expected _Cana_ to be the one to break up the fight.

Her eyes accidentally landed on the time, "Ahh no! I have to go already?" She logged off and hurriedly gathered up her school bag and ran out of her house.

XOXOX

It was a lone and bitter journey to school, but to make it less bitter and lonely, she played on her phone and that's when she saw that Gray had just uploaded his audio post.

She pulled out her headphones and quickly plugged it into her phone and then put the buds in her ears.

She tapped the 'play' button.

"Hey, I'm Gray, _Tumblr_ user _IceMakeMagic_ and I was challenged by some flaming idiot." Lucy laughed at the _flaming idiot_ comment.

Gray went through everything pretty quickly. His favorite character was obviously Musica and his favorite arc was Galuna Island because that was what sold him on Musica.

And his voice matched Lucy's expectations. It was deeper than Natsu's and she couldn't help but notice that he didn't seem to have an accent either.

Gray had challenged _CarddMagee_, LokeTheLion,_ and another user she did not recognize.

She _liked_ the audio post and commented on it, "Nice voice ^_^," just as she arrived to school. She slipped her phone into her bag as she walked inside.

****XOXOX****

Lucy was lucky one of her classes were cancelled. She and her two friends, from that class, sat in the cafeteria since there was nowhere else to go. Lucy, as per usual, played on her phone.

Something caught her eye.

She was tagged in something from Gray. He had replied to her comment a simple, "Thanks!"

Lucy was about to _like_ the post, but she realized that there were a ton of notes. _That's weird_. She clicked on it and saw that each note was a reblog between _DragonSlayer_ and _IceMakeMagic_, each adding a new comment.

"They're arguing again?" she exclaimed with bewilderment.

"Who's arguing?" One of her friends asked.

Lucy froze, "Uh...my umm friends from camp?" She couldn't tell them the truth. Her friends would think Lucy was weird for considering people she had never met before as friends.

"You went to camp?" Her other friend quirked. Lucy mentally cursed. She had spent the entire summer hanging out with her friends. It wouldn't be long until they realized she was lying...

"Yeah, like a few years ago though," she waved them off, thankful they seemed to buy the lie and how _would_ they know_ she was lying? Lucy had only moved here about two years ago.

She clicked on the last reblog so that she could see the entire conversation.

The conversation started with Natsu commenting under Gray's "Thanks!" to Lucy.

Natsu wrote, "Pshhh more like 'awful voice'."

Gray replied, "Jealous?"

"Like that's likely," Natsu commented. "And yosh! I was right!"

"What could you possibly be right about, asshole?"

"Your voice sounds dumb!"

"Not according to _CelestiaMage._ "

"Pshhh she was only bein' nice."

"Well I don't see a compliment from her to you so..." Gray trailed off.

"That's 'cuz you complimented her first! She probably felt obligated to compliment you back!"

Gray ignored Natsu and wrote, " _CelestialMage_ likes my voice better!"

"Lucy likes my voice better!"

"No, she likes MY voice better."

"LIKE HELL SHE DOES!" Natsu exclaimed. "LUCY LIKES _MY_ VOICE BETTER AND THAT'S FINAL!"

"NO SHE LIKES MINE BETTER, FIRE DICK."

"YOU WISH, ICE DICK!"

"WELL WHY DON'T WE ASK HER? _CelestialMage," _ Gray tagged her, "_ WHO'S VOICE DO YOU LIKE BETTER?"

" _CelestialMage_," Natsu tagged her as well, "LUCY, YOU LIKE MY VOICE BETTER, RIGHT?"

Lucy was stunned, to say the least. She was a sputtering mess. A blush that rivaled any blush she ever had, colored her face, ears and neck.

"Are you okay, Lucy?" One of her friends asked, but Lucy didn't hear her. She was too deep into her virtual world. Natsu and Gray were fighting...over her. _FIGHTING OVER ME?!_ she let out a squeal.

"Did you get confessed to?" Her other friend asked with a giddy look on her face.

"Did someone ask you to the Spring Fling?"

"Oh my God! I'm so jealous!"

"Me too!"

Lucy snapped away from her phone and quickly said, "No, no! Just two of my friends are fighting and it's getting intense."

She reblogged the long post and added a reply, "*Sweats* ermm can you two leave me out of this? ^ _ ^".

Gray typed back almost immediately, " _DragonSlayer_ , hah! Since I'm the only one who got a compliment from her, that means, by default, she likes my voice better!"

"NO THAT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING!" Natsu raged back.

"Don't be so bitter because _CelestialMage_ doesn't like your voice. I'm sure lots of other people don't like it either."

Lucy bit her lip as she nervously intervened, "I think _DragonSlayer_'s voice is nice too :)."

"HAH! IN YOUR FACE, SNOWBALL!"

"We tied, you idiot -_-."

"DAMN IT!" Natsu wrote back. "LUCY, TELL US WHO'S VOICE YOU LIKE BETTER!"

"_CelestialMage_, TELL US! I CAN'T TIE WITH THIS DUMB FIRE FREAK!"

"Ummm," she was tugging at her hair, unsure of how to get out of this mess...

"_IceMakeMagic_ AND _DragonSlayer_, STOP HARASSING _CelestialMage_ THIS INSTANT!" _RequipMage Titania_ chimed in.

"Aye, sir!" Both boys rapidly replied.

She let out the breath she hadn't realized she had been holding. Erza had become her savior. How did she even get herself in that situation? Why did either boy care about whose voice she liked better?

She bit the insides of her cheek as the bell rang, signaling the next class.

Lucy refreshed her _activity_ one last time and saw she got a message.

She clicked on it.

It was from a URL she had never seen before.

DropsOfRain, "LOVE RIVAL."

Lucy sweat-dropped, "Ummm?" She publicly posted her reply, unsure of what to do or say.

With a heavy breath, she decided to pay no attention to the weird message.

****XOXOX****

Lucy got home and quickly went on her laptop. She was glad she had no homework for once, allowing her more free time.

She saw _SatanSoul_ had posted, "Wahh the NaLu and GrayLu ships are strong today! I don't know which one I ship more!"

Lucy paled. Mira couldn't be talking about her, Natsu and Gray, right? Then Lucy read Mira's tags, _But there are still hints of Levy x Lucy too with that whole *hugs* comment, AHH WHY IS LUCY SO SHIPABLE?_

Lucy fell out of her seat.

She quickly sat herself back up and frantically typed, "YOU'RE COMPLETELY DELUSIONAL! AND DON'T MAKE UP SHIPPING NAMES FOR REAL PEOPLE! IT'S EVEN WEIRDER THAN SHIPPING REAL PEOPLE!"

"Gahh," she cried, rubbing her palms against her eyes. "What if Natsu and Gray see that post? I'm going to die!"

Lucy decided the best thing to do would be to reblog tons of stuff, hoping to bury Mira's post.

****XOXOX****

Later that evening, Lucy decided to binge-watch _Yamada-kun and the Seven Witches,_ lying on her stomach with her legs up in the air on her bed. She had to pause as for her phone rang.

"Hi, Dad."

"Hi, Lucy," he greeted, "I'm going to be home really late tonight. Probably around one or two a.m. Are you okay by yourself?"

"Yeah," she assured him, "Don't worry about me. I'll be fine."

"Alright, have a good night."

"Bye, Dad."

She rolled over on her bed. It was almost eight and the sun had nearly set. She hated being home alone at night. It made her super paranoid and on edge that even the littlest of creeks could make her jump out of her skin.

She quickly went back to watching her anime, ignoring a banging noise she _might_ have heard.

She heard a bang again, confirming she had, in fact, heard a banging noise.

She paused _Yamada-kun_.

She didn't hear anything.

She clicked play again.

But she could hardly pay any attention as she mentally debated grabbing the metal bat her father seems so keen on using as a weapon, but instead, she pulled out her phone and made a post to help calm her anxiety, "I hate being home alone at night _," and wrote in her tags _, eep, I'm scared._

Halfway through the episode, she checked her _activity_ on her phone and saw that there was a comment, "I'll keep you company if you'd like." It was from _DragonSlayer._

Lucy stared at the comment and then paused her show to reply on her computer.

" _DragonSlayer,_ you don't have to. I have _Yamada-kun_ to keep me company."

"Yamada-kun?" Natsu replied back, except he did this through the _fan mail_ messaging option.

"Anime," she explained.

"Never heard of it," Natsu wrote back, "but anyway, I want to keep you company!"

Her face warmed. _Did he really just say that?_ With trembling hands, she replied, "Thanks."

"Go on your 3DS," Natsu said. "Let's have a Pokemon battle."

"Alright :D."

She pulled out her _Nintendo 3DS_ and before she knew it, she and Natsu were battling.

His team consisted of a Charzard, Talonflame, Medicham, Flygon, Greninja, and Dragonite.

Lucy's team was, Swampert, Ampharos, Arcanine, Espeon, Glaceon, and her new shiny Klefki.

They had countless battles. Lucy and Natsu would swap out different Pokemon teams for each round. They each seemed to take turns winning, which made Natsu keep begging for another battle so that he could be the last winner by the time they finished, but Lucy decided to quit while she was the winner. "I don't want to battle anymore!"

"Fine! You only won that last round because Happy sabotaged my game play by climbing all over me."

"You actually named your cat Happy?" she asked. Happy was Haru's cat-partner.

"Cat? Happy's not a cat!"

"Exceed?" Lucy raised a brow. Was he really that obsessed with _Fairy Tail_ that he called 'cats' 'exceeds'? _What a weeb..._

"Happy's my pet salamander."

She gaped blankly at the screen. He has a _salamander?_ "You have a pet _salamander?_"

She pondered if Natsu got a pet salamander because he _actually_ _likes_ salamanders or because that was Haru's nickname.

"Yup! Want to see a pic?"

Natsu then tagged Lucy in a photo he uploaded. She clicked on it and well...it was a lizard. A lizard standing on what she presumed was his keyboard.

"Cute!" she commented aloud and she meant it. Lucy found all animals to be cute and precious.

"He's a cutie," she messaged. "I want a pet :/. "

"Why don't you get one then?"

"My dad won't let me," she frowned, thinking back to all the times she had begged, but each time he told her no—without a good reason, might she add.

"Hmmm, well looks like you're going to disobey your dad," Natsu typed.

"Huh?"

"I want you to co-own Happy with me," he simply said.

Her breath hitched, "Really?"

"Yeah," he sent back. "Virtually, of course."

"Thank you, Natsu," her heart fluttered around in her chest as a grin broke out onto her face.

"No prob."

She found herself yawning soon after that as she glanced at the clock. It was already 11:00. "Well thank you for keeping me company. I'm gonna go to bed now."

"Wait," he hastily messaged.

"Okay," she messaged back.

She sat there anxiously, waiting for what Natsu was going to say next.

He seemed to be taking longer than usual to reply as minutes ticked by.

Maybe he hadn't meant to message that to her? Her heart sank a little.

And then it appeared; her new message notification.

"Do you really like Gray's voice better than mine?"

Lucy's pulse sped up.

What should she say?

The truth?

Her hands began to shake as she typed back her reply, which caused her to make a bunch of typos that she had to keep backspacing to correct.

"I like your voice better. Actually, I like your voice a lot."

She had to get off her laptop.

"WHY WOULD I EVER ADMIT THAT!?" she pulled down hard on her hair, before she turned off her laptop and ran to the bathroom to cool her burning face.

Why would she admit something like that?

Now he will never talk to her again.

"I'm so stupid!" she yelled hotly with each splash.

The water seemed to calm her down a little, but every time her mind wandered back to the message, her gut would twist.

With reluctance, she climbed into bed and placed her phone on her bedside table.

She refused to look at it.

Nope.

Resist, Lucy.

Don't do it.

"UGHHH," she grabbed her phone, giving into her temptation.

She went straight to her inbox.

Her heart jolted and her breathing stopped.

" _I like your voice a lot too." _

XOXOX

* * *

Ahh I spent four straight hours writing this chapter :O

Hope you all liked it!

Thanks for reading :D

8. Chapter 8

Thank you all so much for the kind words! You really are the greatest and I feel so happy!

Hope you all enjoy this chapter!

* * *

XOXOX

Lucy still couldn't believe her eyes as she reread Natsu's message to her from last night for the umpteenth time that following morning.

" _I like your voice a lot too_."

She could almost hear him saying it.

She wondered what she should reply back, but figured nothing was probably the best thing.

Was she crazy for taking a screenshot of it?

"Ahh I'm so neurotic," she cried into her sweaty palms as she walked to school.

In the midst of her petty tears, she saw that Levy and Wendy had posted their accent challenges.

She fervently clicked play after she put on her headphones.

"Hii, I'm Levy, but you all probably know me as _SolidScriptMage_ and I was challenged by the adorable _Celestial Mage_. Thanks for challenging me, Lu-chan!" Without even realizing it, a huge grin had formed on Lucy's lips. It was official, Levy was both cute in the virtual world and the real world—with talking at least since Lucy had no idea what the girl looked like.

"Levy, you have the cutest voice in the entire world omg," she commented.

Then she listened to Wendy's audio, "Hi, everyone. My name is Wendy, my blog URL is _SkyMagicDragon_. It is nice to meet you all! And I was challenged by _CelestialMage_! Thank you so much!"

"Sorry, _SolidScriptMage_, " she tagged Levy, "I lied. Wendy...YOU HAVE THE CUTEST VOICE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD!"

Wendy's voice was so light and polite. Lucy nearly drowned in the cuteness.

"Why can't I be as cute as them?" she sighed staring up at the abyss of blue in the sky.

****XOXOX****

When Lucy arrived home from school, she quickly went on her laptop to reblog as much _Fairy Tail_ stuff she could find within an hour.

Down her dashboard she went, until she came across a post by Natsu, which was about him updating his blog. She quickly clicked on him to see his redesign, but to her bemusement, it looked exactly the same.

What was even stranger was _SatanSoul_'s post, "Ooooh looks like NaLu is in the lead!"

Lucy scratched her head as she typed a reply, "Ummm?" before she closed out of _Tumblr,_ deciding she better get off now before things get weirder.

Besides, she had a history paper that was calling her name. _Sighhh_.

****XOXOX****

After Lucy finished her homework and ate dinner, she quickly logged on and noticed she had reached over a 1000 followers, "Oh my God," she gasped. "Why are all these people suddenly following me?"

She made a text post, "Did someone promo me or something because I just had a random surplus of followers O_o. Greetings new followers!"

She got a reply almost immediately from _SolidScriptMage_, though it was through the message system instead of a public reply, "Might have something to do with you being a new proud owner of a salamander ;) ."

Lucy gaped, "How does she know about _that_?" Unable to shake herself from the shock, she could only reply, "Eh h?"

"You might want to check out _DragonSlayer_'s _about_ section," Levy cryptically sent back.

She frantically typed in Natsu's URL and the second the page loaded, her eyes shot to his melted _about_ section.

Yo! I'm Natsu. 17 years old. Part dragon, part pyromaniac, part dragon slayer. Co-owns a salamander with CelestialMage.

Lucy sputtered. "Why would he add that to his blog?!"

If even possible, her eyes' widened more, "Oh!" Now Mira's text post made sense...

Ackk! What if people think we are dating? her face scorched.

"Ahahaha oh right," Lucy nervously replied to Levy.

But then a thrill shot through her. She hastily clicked her _Customize_ button.

She changed her old _about_, adding in ' _Co-owns a salamander with DragonSlayer._ ' and then made her own text post, "Updated my blog ^^."

A few minutes later someone replied, "Looks good to me :D." It was Natsu.

"Thanks ^_^," she beamed and then asked, "How is Happy doing today?"

"I'll show you!" he then uploaded another photo of Happy and tagged her in it. This time Happy was crawling on top of a lightly tanned arm, which Lucy assumed was Natsu's arm.

Happy was interesting looking, to say the least. Black with electric blue spots. He was both wide and a bit flat-looking and really contrasted with Natsu's skin.

Happy almost looked like he was smiling.

She reblogged and cooed in a comment, "Aww he looks so happy! :3."

IceMakeMagic had reblogged the photo and added, "Am I missing something here? When did you two become parents of a lizard?"

"Happy's a SALAMANDER, you Ice Dope, not a lizard, sheesh," Natsu reblogged back.

"Same thing," Gray wrote back.

"No! A _salamander_ is an _amphibian_ and a _lizard_ is a _reptile_. And you call me dumb?" Natsu lectured.

Lucy blushed in her own embarrassment. She had thought a salamander was a lizard as well and who could blame her and Gray? It did have a lizard-like appearance with its long tail.

"Tch, whatever," Gray reblogged back, "So when did you two start parenting one?"

"Why do you care?" Natsu shot back. "Jealous?"

"Pshhh," Gray replied. "Why would I be jealous of someone co-owning a lizard with you?"

She broke out in a fit of giggles. She liked how Gray turned Natsu's statement against him.

"SALAMANDER! GET IT RIGHT!"

"LIZARD!" Gray typed back.

"SALAMANDER!"

"LIZARD, LIZARD, LIZARD!"

"SALAMANDER, SALAMANDER, SALAMANDER!"

She had a feeling this fight was going to go on for the rest of the night considering no one who usually stopped them was online...

And seeing as nothing was going on, on her dash except for Natsu and Gray's argument, Lucy logged off for the night.

XOXOX

Another week went by and nothing much had really changed in Lucy's life except for now Natsu tagged Lucy in daily pictures of Happy, which never failed to make her smile, no matter how bad her day was.

She was glad it was Friday.

But she wasn't glad that her friends were begging her to hang out.

"Lucy, you have to go!" they begged. "Everyone's going and we all miss you! And you never go out anymore! It's like you became some kind of recluse."

Lucy exhaled in defeat, "Fine. I'll go."

"We'll pick you up at 7!"

"Okay."

Her friends ran off and left Lucy by her locker. She carefully stuffed her backpack making sure not to forget anything and with a hefty sigh, she headed home.

Lucy had to say yes because she has been a bit reclusive as of late. It wasn't Lucy's fault really. It was just that she had more fun with her online friends than with her real life friends.

Was it terrible to not like your friends in real life?

"Now I'm going to miss the new _Fairy Tail_ episode," she sulked, crossing her arms over her chest. "Levy's gonna kill me."

Lucy moped the rest of the way home.

****XOXOX****

"I really hate being home alone," Lucy posted on her blog. She had just gotten back from hanging out with her friends and it was really late, but that's not what scared her. What scared her was returning to a pitch black house. She quickly turned on all the lights and grabbed her father's bat as she did rounds around the house.

A bit of fear still lingered as she made her way to her bedroom.

She logged on the internet and clicked her inbox because she saw that she had a new message.

It was from _DragonSlayer_, "Want me to keep you company again?"

Lucy's heart stuttered as she typed back a, "Yes please ^^."

"Yosh! Let's talk on _Skype_," he sent back, "because it's easier to message back and forth. What's your username?"

Her heart pounded. She only used to _Skype_ to talk to Levy...She wasn't sure how comfortable she felt adding someone else...But she is co-owning a salamander with this boy so how bad can it be?

"My _Skype_ is my URL," she replied back and then she logged onto _Skype_.

"Kk. Sent you a request."

And Lucy got the request from _DragonSlayer_. So his URL was his _Skype_ username as well, she took notice as she accepted the request.

Now what appeared on her contact list below _Levy_ was _Natsu_.

A new conversation appeared.

"Yo, Lucy!" Natsu wrote.

"Hi, Natsu ^_^," she wrote back. She couldn't believe she was doing this; _Skype_ chatting with Natsu.

"So why are you always home alone?" he inquired.

"My dad goes away on business often," she explained. "And he's going to be away for the entire weekend :/ ." She bit her lip, wondering if that was too much information to give away...

"Wish I could give you Happy to keep you company," he wrote.

Her stomach slightly fluttered.

"Me too," she wrote wistfully. "So how was your night? Or day? Or afternoon? Depending on your time zone..."

"Night," he replied. "It was boring. I skipped hanging out with my friends and no one was online." And before she could reply, he added, "Usually you're the only person on at night."

"Sorry," she replied. "My night sucked too. Had to hang out with my anti-anime friends _."

"Well then I guess we should make do something to make this night less crappy, huh?"

"Okay," she licked her lips and grinned.

"Do you own _Super Smash Bros_ for the 3DS?" he asked.

"Yeah."

"Let's vs each other," he typed.

"Okay." Lucy pulled out her 3DS from her desk drawer and took out her Pokemon game and replaced it with _Super Smash Bros._

Her laptop panged, indicating a new message, "I hate playing video games with someone without talking because then it just feels like I'm playing against a NPC." _Non-Playable-Character_.

"Yeah, I get what you mean," she replied, thinking back to their Pokemon battle. Sure it was fun, but it also felt like fighting a player that was already programmed...

"Great! So let's do a _Skype_ _Call_."

Lucy's eyes bugged just as her heart stopped. What did she just agree to? _Skype Call_? _Does he mean... "You want to video chat!?"

"No, you weirdo!" he instantly sent back. "You don't know what a _Skype Call_ is?"

"No :3," she blushed. "I'm sort of new to _Skype_."

"Oh well a _Skype Call_ is like a phone call, except it's on _Skype_," he explained.

"So we would _only_ hear each other's voices?"

"Right! That's not a problem is it?"

She swallowed thickly, "No, no problem at all."

And then a ringing sound rang from her laptop. Her stomach twisted into knots. What was she doing? Agreeing to something like this? _Stupid, Lucy._

It was too late to back out now... With a deep breath, she answered the call.

She opened her mouth to speak, but nothing came out.

"Yoo, Lucy!" Natsu's voice rang through her speakers.

Her heart stammered and she was no longer breathing.

Breathe, Lucy! she commanded.

"Lucy?"

She repressed a shiver.

"Hi, Natsu," her voice came out breathy. Not the best idea to breath while talking...

"Ready to be crushed at _Smash_?"

How is he able to talk so causally?

"I think it's you who will be crushed," she managed to tease back.

"We'll see about that!"

****XOXOX****

"QUIT USING THE DAMN GROUND POUND EVERY FIVE SECONDS!" Natsu roared.

"No way!" Lucy smirked. She was playing as Yoshi while Natsu was using Fox. Despite, Natsu's complaint, she used Yoshi's Ground Pound move again, and this time she knocked out Fox, meaning Natsu lost.

"DAMN IT!" he cried. "THAT WAS A CHEAP SHOT!"

"No it wasn't!" she insisted. "If you want to talk about cheap shots, let's talk about our Pokemon battle, where you used a whole line up of legendries!"

"There ain't anything wrong with using legendries!" he haughtily stated.

"Then there isn't anything wrong with me using Ground Pound over and over again," she pointed out.

"Grrrr, fine!" he reluctantly gave in. "Let's change characters each round so that we have none of this nonsense."

"Fine by me," she smirked. "But just be warned I'll kick your ass with any character!"

Natsu chuckled, "If you say so."

For the next round, Natsu played as Little Mac and Lucy played as Zelda and Natsu completely destroyed Lucy.

"HAH! IN YOUR FACE, CELESTIAL MAGE!" he cheered.

"Hmph," she selected her next character, Luigi.

"That's ironic," Natsu laughed as he picked Mario.

"How is that ironic?" her brows furrowed, slightly confused.

"Hehe, well when I first found your _Tumblr_, I read your name as _Luigi_ instead of _Lucy_ so whenever I saw you posting in the tags, I mentally referred to you as _Luigi_."

Lucy's eye twitched. "Lovely," she muttered. "Ohhh take that!" Luigi was destroying Mario. "And that! And that!"

"Oi!" he groaned. "Cut it out! I can't even get an attack in!"

"Sucks to suck!" she laughed as she flung Mario off the course.

"DAMN IT!" he yelled.

"You're a sore winner and a sore loser," she mocked.

"Am not," he indignantly said.

"If ya say so, _DragonSlayer_, " she teased.

The next round, Lucy used Pikachu and Natsu used Charzard.

"Yosh! A Pokemon battle!" She could hear the smile in his voice.

She giggled.

"STOP DOING THAT!" Natsu nearly cried.

"Stop doing what?" Lucy asked innocently.

The sound of Pikachu's _CHUUUUU_ echoed through her 3DS and through her laptop from Natsu's game.

"_THAT_!" He yelled. "THIS IS WORSE THAN YOSHI'S GROUND POUND!"

"I think so too," she mischievously laughed.

"No fairrrrr!" he moaned as he lost another round. "I don't like you anymore."

Lucy's insides jolted at the word _like_. She knew he didn't mean it in the romantic sense, but a little part of her hoped he did.

"One more round?" she pleaded.

"Yes!" He sounded eager. "I'm going to win this one!"

Lucy chose Samus while Natsu chose Link.

It was tough battle for Lucy. Samus was a bad choice for her considering Natsu was destroying her.

"Heh," he laughed as he went in for the finishing blow, "you lose—HAPPY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?"

Lucy chuckled because whatever Happy did, he caused Natsu to not attack.

"QUIT IT!" he yelled. "HAPPY! NO, GET OFF! GAHHHH! I CAN'T SEE!"

Tears streamed down her cheeks from laughing so much and with Natsu distracted, she beat up his character.

"NO, HAPPY! YOU CAN'T LAY ON MY DS! ARGGG I THINK I LIKED IT BETTER WITH YOU ON MY FACE!"

"Yay! I won!" she cheered.

"LUCY, THAT DOESN'T COUNT!" he wailed.

"It count!"

"Happpyyyy, whyyyyy?" Natsu whined in defeat.

"I wish I could see what Happy's doing to you!" she said through her laughter.

"You want to video chat?" his voice suddenly perked up.

Her eyes widened as she sputtered, "Wh-what? No!"

"I never video chatted with anyone before...it could be fun?" his voice was softer now

"No," she gulped. "I mean, it's late and-and I should really go to bed. I don't know what time it is for you but it's one a.m. for me...so I should go...umm good night, Natsu."

"Err...Night, Lucy," was the last thing she heard before she logged off.

She mentally cursed herself for freaking out.

But then her body went stiff as a board.

Realization hit hard.

She talked to Natsu.

Natsu talked to her.

And it felt so natural too...

Lucy gulped as she got ready for bed, unsure of what to think about all this.

And she was certainly unsure of what to make of the message she awoke to...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe bit of a cliffy!****

****I have a love-hate for this chapter...Like I liked the first half, but I don't know how I feel about the second half...

****Did you like it?****

****Thanks for reading!****

9. Chapter 9

****A lot of you have asked for a Natsu POV, but right now, I don't even know what's going on in Natsu's POV :D so we are going to have to wait for that!****

****Well anyway, thank you all so much! You're the best!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"I lied earlier."

Lucy stared at the message, her eye twitching as she tightly grasped her cup of matcha.

It was 8 a.m. The last thing she wanted to see was a cryptic message...a cryptic message from _DragonSlayer_, for that matter.

"What about? Lemme guess, Happy isn't really a salamander?" she teased, trying to make light of the message, but really, her heart clenched. _What could he have possibly lied about?_

"Nahh, Happy's 100% a salamander :D I lied about your blog looking good." he replied back a couple of minutes later.

Her face scrunched up with anger and disappointment, "Oh?"

"I mean it looks fine I guess, but it could use a little something. You should let me fix it for you!"

"No way," she replied. "I like the way it looks."

"But I can make it look better," he pushed.

And there was no doubt in her mind that Natsu could make it look better. It was just that she was so proud of her work and not to mention, it took her forever to make her theme. The thought of having someone tamper with it...well that just didn't seem to sit well with her. But that someone was _Natsu_ and Natsu is incredible with designs...So with slight reluctance, she wrote back, "Fine."

"Yosh! Send me the HTML code."

She did as he said and Natsu simply wrote, "Give me a couple of hours."

"Okay," she wrote back, her stomach fluttered with anxiousness.

****XOXOX****

"I'm sorry, Lucy! I completely forgot about the new _Fairy Tail_ episode!" _SolidScriptMage_ had inboxed a while after Lucy had talked to Natsu.

"I didn't watch it either!" Lucy replied back.

A couple of minutes later, Levy asked, "Want to watch it now?"

"Yes!"

She logged onto her _Skype_ and noticed Natsu's name had a red circle next to it, indicating he was offline.

Her _Skype_ pinged as Levy sent her a message.

"Hi!"

"Hey!" Lucy sent back.

"Ready when you are," Levy wrote.

Lucy got _Fairy Tail_ up on her screen. "Ready!" But she hesitated in sending it. Her eyes had wandered over to the _Call_ button.

Besides Lucy's minor freak out last night, she really did have a blast _talking_ to Natsu, rather than _typing_. Maybe Levy would like it too...

She backspaced what she wrote and instead typed, "Can we try something?"

"Uh sure?" Levy questioned.

Lucy clicked the _Call_ button and waited to see if Levy would pick up. She bit her lip with nervousness as a few seconds passed by. _Maybe it was a bad idea..._

"He-hello?" A timid voice spoke.

"Levy!" she gasped with surprise, having been expecting rejection.

"Lucy! Hi!" Levy sounded less timid as she awoke, "Wow this is so weird! I mean we've been talking for so long, but this is only my second time hearing your voice!"

"I know!" Lucy agreed. "This is very weird!"

"I always wondered what the _Call_ feature was like! I thought about calling you loads of times before actually," Levy admitted.

Lucy giggled, "Really? I only just discovered it last night!"

Levy sounded guilty as she asked, "Did you discover it while waiting for me to sign on? I'm so sorry! I completely forgot it was Friday and went to bed at nine and I know that's really early, but I was so exhausted and—"

"Levy! Don't worry about it! I completely forgot about _Fairy Tail_ as well," she said and hastily explained, "The only reason I was on _Skype_ last night was because Natsu wanted to chat on it since it's easier to message back and forth and then he wanted to play _Smash__Bros_ so he said it's more fun if we can talk to one another rather than mes

sage and so he called me."

"Natsu?" Levy repeated. "You mean _DragonSlayer_?"

"Ye-yeah," Lucy stuttered, feeling slightly warmer than before.

"You and _DragonSlayer_ exchanged _Skypes_? And you guys did _this_?" Levy was indicating the _Skype Call_.

"Yeah," Lucy felt shy, like she wanted to hug a pillow to her chest in hopes it would protect her from where ever this conversation was headed.

"I didn't know you two were so close," Levy sounded like she was smirking.

"Me either," Lucy muttered, wishing for the conversation to end.

"Parenting a salamander and playing video games together? That's so cute," Levy gushed. "I want a relationship like that!"

"We don't have a relationship!"

"If you say so," Levy said.

"Let's watch the show now!" Lucy pleaded.

They both clicked _play_ and began to watch.

Lucy was glad Natsu showed her this feature. She had always felt lonely watching anime by herself, well she had Levy to message, but it wasn't the same as talking.

And instead of seeing Levy type, 'Lol,' Lucy could hear her laughing and Lucy laughed along.

The two made comments and minor jokes during the episode and giggled until there were tears streaming down Lucy's face and she had a feeling Levy was tearing up as well.

"That was great episode," Levy said, once it was over.

"Yeah it was!" she agreed. "And it was so much better talking rather than typing because I didn't have to miss any of the subtitles!"

"Oh right!" Levy laughed. "I forgot you need subtitles."

"Way to rub it in," Lucy joked.

Levy was the master of all languages. She could read, write, and speak with ease in any language. She often did translations for new manga chapters or doujins and requests people give her, like translating one of Lucy's stories into another language.

"Sorry!" Levy apologized. "Well I had fun! Let's do this again next week!"

"Okay," Lucy grinned. "Bye, Levy."

"Bye, Lucy!"

And then they hung up.

****XOXOX****

There was something strange going on in the _Fairy Tail_ tag.

First _RequipMageTitania_ had posted a selfie of herself wearing her second Julia cosplay outfit; the one with the red pants with flames and the taped up chest.

Then a few minutes later _CarddMagee_ had posted a selfie of herself wearing a bra so blue that it rivaled the sky, holding a handful of cards. It was her cosplay of the Card Mage in _Fairy Tail._

She had never seen a picture of Cana before so she immediately _liked_ and reblogged it. Cana was beautiful, with long, golden-brown wavy locks and hypnotizing blue eyes.

You're so pretty! Lucy wrote in the tags.

And then another user named _LokeTheLion_ posted a selfie of himself, an orange mane of hair and glasses, wearing a suit, looking awfully a lot like the Elie's celestial spirit Leo.

"Since three of us have posted a selfie, everyone in the _Fairy Tail_ fandom should post a selfie today," _RequipMageTitania_ declared.

Lucy gulped. _Should I?_ Beads of sweat trickled down the back of her neck.

She refreshed the tag and saw that a few other blogs had posted a selfie, but Lucy only recognized one blog, _SatanSoul._ Mira was gorgeous. She had long, angelic white hair and deep, trustworthy blue eyes. She looked like she could be a model with that kind of beauty and grace. Lucy was a bit envious as she reblogged her friend's photo.

And Lucy refreshed again and saw a pretty, yet very cute girl with short blue hair with a orange headband that contrasted quite nicely and warm fudgy eyes. Lucy gasped as she read the name; _SolidScriptMage_.

"LEVY YOU ARE SO PRETTY!" she hastily reblogged and commented.

She stared longer at the picture, _so this is who I was talking to today_ ...It was so weird. Not only did she have a voice to read the messages in, Lucy had a picture as well...

She refreshed again, growing very eager and antsy to see who she would see next and saw that Gray was the next victim. True to Natsu's nickname for him, Gray had posted a shirtless selfie. And she blatantly ogled at him. He was hot, there was no denying that, With his raven-black hair and dark eyes to match. His chest was perfectly sculpted and he wore a cross-sword necklace that Musica wears and Gray had drawn on a guild mark over his chest in the same place as Musica's as well.

There was a comment under the photo from _CarddMagee_ , "Gray, your shirt."

Gray reblogged and commented back, "DAMN IT! I SWEAR I WAS WEARING A SHIRT RIGHT BEFORE I TOOK THE PHOTO!"

Her face scrunched up with bemusement. What did he mean by that statement? How could he suddenly _not_ be wearing one without his acknowledgment?

"Once a stripper, always a stripper," _DragonSlayer_ commented.

Lucy snorted.

And then she sucked in a breath as though someone punched her in the gut. _Was Natsu going to post a photo?_ She refreshed again and again, but sadly there was no photo from _DragonSlayer_.

But she felt inspired, wanting to join in the fun.

She grabbed a marker and drew the guild mark on the back of her right hand. It came out quite neat for someone using their non-dominant hand.

And then Lucy did her hair up like Elie.

She held up her right hand and smiled brightly at her phone, trying to imitate the panel of Elie showing Haru her guild mark.

To her amazement, the photo came out great.

With newfound courage and eagerness, she posted it.

**DragonSlayer** liked your photo._

Her heart stopped beating.

He saw her photo.

He was the first one to _like_ it.

"Oh my God," Lucy muttered aloud.

A new message appeared in her inbox.

"Finished! Here ya go!" Natsu had sent her the new code for her profile.

Numbly, she copied and pasted it into her HTML section and then updated her profile.

She inhaled sharply thanks to her utter astonishment.

Natsu had added fire to her theme. Her huge celestial gate was now outlined with glowing golden flames, her title for her blog had blue flame engulfing it and so did her _about_ section. Natsu had even layered the bottom of her page with flames.

It was a Celestial Heaven.

He was right, her blog was missing something.

And that something was a touch of Natsu.

"I love it," was all she could say back to him.

With an accidental click, Lucy somehow ended up in the _Fairy Tail_ tag, just as she about to close out, something made her stop.

DragonSlayer had posted a photo.

****XOXOX****

* * *

Eep don't hate me for stopping here!

Thank you all so much for reading!

Hope you all enjoyed this chapter!

10. Chapter 10

WE ARE UP TO CHAPTER 10 ALREADY?!

OMG THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR READING AND FOR YOUR RESPONSES!

They really inspire me to keep going, so please enjoy this chapter! :)

* * *

XOXOX

Lucy nearly fainted, well not really...but she did feel light headed from the lack of breathing.

Maybe it was the spiky pink hair, or maybe it was that glint in his dark, slanted eyes, or maybe it was that devilish, fanged smirk, but somehow she found herself falling even harder for this peculiar-looking boy.

He was the type of boy her friends would snuff their nose to and for some reason, that made him even more desirable.

With an open vest, revealing toned set of abs, a scaly scarf tied over his neck, a taped on guild mark on his right bicep, it was pretty obvious Natsu was cosplaying Haru. And to top off the picture, he had a ball of fire in his palm. It was so lifelike...whether edited or not, she was very impressed.

And on Natsu's shoulder, perched a black salamander, dotted with exotic blue spots, Happy.

Their Happy, since they were co-owning him.

God, that made her stomach somersault.

What was happening to her? _A crush?_

She put her palms to her face and cried, "I can't be falling for someone over the internet. This is ridiculous! Get a grip, Lucy!" she scolded her rapid-beating heart.

She wasn't sure what to do. She felt nervous. Should she _like_ the photo? He _liked_ hers, so she should, right? Swallowing that painful lump in her throat, she clicked the _heart_ button.

She was Natsu's first _note_, just as he was for her.

Now Lucy wondered if she should comment or not.

She had only commented on female photos because she felt weird telling a guy he looked cute or something. But she wanted to comment on Natsu's. But what would she even say?

"Gahhh," she moaned. "Why is this so hard? Huh?" Something in the background of the photo interested her. She clicked on the photo and zoomed in. It was his bed, which had a giant red _Fairy Tail_ symbol on the center and on top of the bed was a purplish book with a girl on it wearing a hat.

Lucy hoped off her seat and ran over to her manga collection on her bookshelf that was across the room, searching frantically for a similar book. And there it was. Running back to her laptop, she typed without thinking, "You're reading _Yamada-kun and the Seven Witches_" After she posted it, she wondered if Natsu would even see it considering he had gained a lot of notes and comments in that short time frame; each one stating how great his cosplay looks, or how cool or cute, or even hot he is.

But shockingly, it only took a few minutes for her to get a notification that Natsu had replied. "Huh?"

"On your bed," she simply wrote.

"What the? How the hell did you even see that?" he asked.

"Well I saw something on your bed so I decided to zoom in," she sheepishly admitted, feeling a bit embarrassed, but also _amused_.

"You are so weird," was all he wrote.

"Am not," she typed with indignation.

"Everyone else who commented on my photo talked about my cosplay while you comment about a book that is barely visible on my bed. I think it's justifiable that you're a weirdo."

She smiled as she wrote back, "I don't see how that makes me weird."

And then she heard her phone's text message ring. She ran over to check.

"We are going to the diner in a half hour. Want to come?" It was one of her friends.

Lucy wanted to say _no,_ and talk with Natsu longer, but alas, he didn't answer. "Sure," she texted back.

She was about to close out of all open tabs, but she stopped. Her eyes rested upon the beautiful redesign of her blog.

Licking her lips, she quickly made a post, "Edited my theme. What do you all think?"

Lucy left to get ready.

****XOXOX****

While she was with her friends, Lucy couldn't resist checking her _Tumblr_. She had tons of _notes_ flooding in, all telling her how pretty, or gorgeous, or cute she looked in her selfie. That certainly had Lucy grinning like an idiot.

Her text post about her new theme got a few comments as well:

_ ****SolidScriptMage**** _ said: _ Whoaaa, Lu-chan, it looks amazing! And why didn't you tell me about you and _ DragonSlayer_?!

_ ****SatanSoul**** _ said: _ ARE YOU AND NATSU DATING!?

_ ****IceMakeMagic**** _ said: _ Are you seriously in love with that idiot?

Lucy took a screenshot on her phone of the comments so she could reply to all three at once, " _SolidScriptMage, SatanSoul, IceMakeMagic,_ WHAT ARE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT?"

"Your blog theme," all three replied.

"What?" she felt perplexed and helpless since she couldn't see her theme for that she was on mobile.

"What's wrong, Lucy?" One of her friends asked.

"No-nothing," her voice wavered. She needed to go home. "I actually have to go home." She pulled out some cash, "This should cover my half of the bill."

And with that said, Lucy raced home.

****XOXOX****

In what felt like the blink of an eye, Lucy was already on her laptop, clicking on her blog.

Despite her panicky nerves, Natsu's redesign was able to astound her again. She quickly shook it off though, not allowing herself to be distracted by the gleaming flames. She was on a mission.

Her eyes scrutinized the entire blog, but she didn't see anything wrong with it. Maybe they thought all the flames signified Natsu? But that didn't make much sense...So she decided to be meticulous as she searched again, starting from the top. Her eyes skimmed her title and then the flames below it— _Oh. OH. " _ HE DID NOT!"

Right under Lucy's blog title, written in smoldering flames, read, "I Love Natsu."

How did she miss that?

"HOW COULD I POSSIBLY HAVE MISSED THAT?!" she flailed her arms and stared at her ceiling, as though she were expecting some magical being to answer her.

Boy did she feel stupid.

She didn't even have her old theme code saved so she couldn't change it back...

"FIX IT!" she frantically typed into Natsu's ask box.

"Fix what :O ?" he asked.

"YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT!"

"Can we talk on _Skype_" he said. "It's annoying having to refresh and stuff."

Without replying, Lucy logged onto _Skype._

"Yo, Lucy!" he greeted just like he did yesterday.

"FIX IT!" she demanded.

"Fix what?"

"MY BLOG!" she raged.

"Why? You said you loved it a few hours ago."

"THAT WAS BEFORE I REALIZED!" she felt like dying. Did he really have to be so difficult?

"Realized what?" he inquired.

"The thing you wrote in the fire!" Why was he dragging this out?

"And what was that exactly?"

Lucy's eye twitched. With blind fury, she clicked the _Call_ button.

It rang a few times before Natsu picked up.

"He-hey, Lucy," he stammered.

She was glad he seemed nervous, "FIX MY BLOG!"

Natsu let out a yelp before chastising her, "Don't yell! I'm wearing headphones!"

"I'LL STOP YELLING IF YOU FIX MY BLOG!"

"_Lucy!_" he pleaded.

Something about the way he said her name sent shivers down her spine. "Fi-fine," she stuttered, resigning to his plea. "Can you please get rid of the thing you wrote in the fire?"

"What thing?" He sounded like he was smirking. She could almost picture it too now that she knew what he looked like. Her face lit up like a candle as she remembered his tousle of pink hair and those smoldering eyes... Why did she have to think about his looks right now?

Swallowing her pride, "The _I Love Natsu_ written in the flames!"

"Oh! That?"

"Yes, _that!_" she snapped.

"Nahh," Natsu said in a lethargic tone. He was definitely grinning, probably leaning back in his chair with his arms resting behind his head...

"Why not?" she exasperated, pinching the bridge of her nose.

"Cuz I like it," he simply said.

Lucy sputtered, "But, but, but..."

"Not changing it."

"Fine!" Lucy glowered at the computer screen with such contempt and venom that even a king cobra would have been scared. "Then I want you to add a giant _I Love Lucy_ to your blog!" She shot her hand to her mouth. She couldn't believe she suggested that...but it didn't sound like such a bad idea...

"No way!"

"Yes way!"

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"Then I'll change my blog theme," she threatened.

"No you won't," he challenged, calling her bluff.

"Naatttssuuuu!" she whined, burying her face into arms against her wooden desk.

"You can't make me! I'm very stubborn."

She wasn't about to back down just yet as she lifted her head back up. With a breathy voice, she pleaded, " _Please_ , _Natsu_?"

She thought she heard Natsu gulp. Maybe she was close to getting him to crack... " _Natsu?_ "

"ARGG, FINE!" he groaned.

"Fine what?"

"I'll add _I Love Lucy_ to my theme, happy?"

Lucy's breath caught. _I love Lucy_. It made her heartache and for some unknown reason, a part of her _wished_ he was really confessing that to her. She nearly jumped out of her seat. What was she thinking? Those thoughts were utterly ridiculous...

"Very," she whispered, because she was truly happy.

"Good," his voice sounded uneven.

There was a brief silence.

Lucy desperately tried to think of something to say. She glanced around her room, gazing past her flat screen and her unkempt bed, landing onto her bookshelf, _oh yeah_ ... "So you're reading _Yamada-kun_?"

"Err yeah," Natsu answered, clearly not expecting the question.

"What made you start reading it?" she quirked, cocking her head to the side.

"Ahh well I was at this small bookstore over by my house and I saw it there and I remembered you mentioned watching the anime and I've seen you reblog manga caps of it so I figured if you liked it then I'll probably like it."

Heat gradually spread throughout her body like pan on the stove. _He's reading it because of me?!_ She wanted to squeal, but she repressed it, wanting to keep her cool. "It is pretty good. What do you think of it so far?"

"So much kissing," he moaned. "I mean _everyone_ is _kissing_ _everyone..._ Didn't know you were into that kind of stuff."

"WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!" she shrieked. "I'M NOT SOME KIND OF PERV!"

"GAHH," he cried out. "NO YELLING! Headphones, remember?"

"Sorry," she flushed. "It's a funny manga and it's pretty romantic, that's why I like it. Okay?"

"It is pretty funny," he happily agreed.

"Have you watched the anime yet?" she asked.

"Nah," he said. "Is it any good?"

"I think so," she answered nonchalantly. "It's pretty similar to the manga."

"Wanna..." he hesitated. "Wanna maybe...watch with me?"

Her respiratory system seemed to have malfunction because she couldn't take a single breath, as she rasped, "When?"

"Right now?" he suggested.

"Su-sure," Lucy stammered on her words just like her heart stammered on its beats.

"Great—"

"But first," she interrupted. "Your theme?"

"Oh right," he grumbled. "I finished it while we were talking. Let me just update it now."

"Okay."

"Done."

"Now make a post about your new theme," she commanded.

"Lucy!" he protested, sounding applaud.

"Natsu!" she mocked his tone.

"Grr fine," he sounded like he was pouting. "Made a post."

A sly smile started to stretch upon her cheeks, "What happened to you being stubborn?"

"You happened," he mumbled so lowly that Lucy was surprised she heard him.

That smile now turned into a gigantic grin, "Ready to watch?"

"You bet!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thank you so much for reading!****

****Hope you found this chapter enjoyable!****

****You're the best ^ _ ^****

11. Chapter 11

****You know how some of you review and say you're squealing and stuff like that? Right now I'm literally squealing from all your comments. THANK YOU!****

****And omg this story is nearing one month old!****

****AND WE JUST HIT 200 FOLLOWERS!****

****THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR BEING AMAZING!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Argggg!" Natsu groaned. "Am I seriously caught up already?"

Lucy giggled, "It appears so."

"Damn it," he grumbled bitterly.

"Well the new episode comes out tomorrow, so it's not that long of a wait," she informed him, remembering it airs on Sundays.

"Really?" he perked. "We should watch it together."

"Yeah," a jittery feeling overcame her, "we should!"

"We should watch _Fairy Tail_ together too, I mean if you want to..."

"Well..." she tugged at her bottom lip, debating what to say. She desperately wanted to say _yes_, but thoughts of a blue haired girl surfaced her mind. "I usually watch _Fairy Tail_ with Levy."

"Levy?"

"_SolidScriptMage_," she clarified.

"Aww," Natsu sounded disheartened, "What a bummer."

"Sorry," her face tightened due to regret.

Dead silence hung between them. Lucy yearned to think of something clever, or something interesting to say. Something that would clear this damn silence...But she was saved from doing for that Natsu called out an, "OH!" and said, "I was thinking...we should create a _Fairy Tail Skype_ group!"

Her eyes narrowed at the _Skype_ screen. "Like a big group chat kind of thing?"

"Yeah!" he exclaimed. "We could all talk about _Fairy Tail_ and watch it together and talk about the new chapters ...It would be fun!"

"It does sound pretty fun," she mused, thinking of how awesome it would be to fangirl with a big group.

"I already have that exhibitionist's _Skype_ so we can add him to the group," Natsu stated.

"Really?" Lucy awed, curious to why Natsu would have his rival's _Skype_. "Why do you have Gray's _Skype_? Are you guys secretly best friends or something?"

"Pshh not a chance in hell," he said. "We added each other on _Skype_ so that we could continue our fights without Erza or someone interrupting us."

"Seriously?" she bewildered.

"Yeahhh," he said lazily. "It's literally just streams of nonstop insults."

She giggled trying to imagine how many different variations of _Ice_ and _Fire_ they could possibly come up with for insults, "Wow, you guys are ridiculous."

"He's the ridiculous one," he mumbled.

"Sure, sure," she teased. "Well anyway, I have Levy's _Skype_ so that's two people we can add to our group."

"Great," he beamed.

"Should we make a post in the _Fairy Tail_ tag?"

"Nah," Natsu said. "Just message whoever you want to join privately so that way we keep it just friends."

"Alrighty."

Once again, silence hung between them and even though it was getting late, Lucy had no desire to hang up. Besides, it was a comfortable silence.

In the midst of the silence, she decided to check on her selfie and gasped.

"What's wrong?" he asked, sounding concerned.

"Nothing," she amended, "Just surprised over all the notes my selfie got and all the compliments..."

"Why are you so surprised?" Natsu inquired and then nonchalantly added, "You're pretty."

Lucy was left sputtering like a broken sprinkler. He had said it so casually, it almost didn't _sound_ like a compliment; it was more like a simple fact, but that didn't matter to her. It made her heart pound so loudly, she heard it in her ears.

Natsu thinks I'm pretty. She could have died of happiness right then and there...

How was she supposed to reply?

Instead of a 'thank you' or something along those lines, she stuttered out a, "Your-your photo got a ton of-of notes to o."

"It did," Natsu concurred, but his tone hinted at a ' _so what?_ '

Lucy faltered.

Everything suddenly felt _awkward_ and the silence was no longer comforting...

"I should umm get going. Super tired."

"Alright," he said stiffly. "G'night, Lucy."

"Night, Natsu."

She logged off of _Skype._

"AHHH WHY AM I SO EMBARRASSING?" she threw herself against her pillow and screamed.

****XOXOX****

Sunday morning, Lucy's photo was the first thing on her dash. _CarddMagee_ had _reblogged_ it and added, "Damn nnnn, Lucy, your boobs are huge! I just want to squeeze them!"

Her right eye twitched.

The photo did show a generous amount of cleavage that she had to resist the urge to delete it...

With a painful sigh, she scrolled past it.

But then she got a new message, that interrupted her scrolling.

LokeTheLion , "Your beauty is so dazzling, it almost hurts to look at your photo!"

"Ahaha thanks...I think!" Lucy publicly replied, blushing.

"Why has fate been so cruel to keep us from talking sooner?" _LokeTheLion_ had replied to her response.

She rolled her eyes. Nothing she hated more than an outwardly flirty guy.

And then _SatanSoul_ made a text post, "Looks like LoLu has entered the race!"

"OMG MIRA DON'T!" Lucy typed, her face turned crimson.

LokeTheLion had replied to Mira saying, "And LoLu plans on winning ;) ."

Lucy face-palmed.

And then _LokeTheLion_ added to Cana's comment about Lucy's breasts. "Not surprising my waifu would have the perfect breasts."

"CAN WE STOP TALKING ABOUT MY BREASTS PLEASE?" Lucy hysterically typed.

"I'm jealous, Lucy," _SolidScriptMage_ joined in. "My boobs are so tiny!"

"Not you too, Levy," Lucy moaned aloud, face-palming, _again_.

And then _IceMakeMagic_ reblogged it and added, "C'mon, guys, stop harassing, Lucy."

"Thanks, _IceMakeMagic_"! His comment was like a breath of fresh air after being locked in a musty cellar.

"No problem," he replied. "It's a nice photo. Sucks to see them ruining it."

Lucy blushed a thousand shades of red. _W_ as Gray flirting? Lucy was so bad at deciphering casual flirting...

And then _SatanSoul_ commented under Gray, "**SCREAMS* GRAYLU!"

And then Lucy received a new message. She clicked on it.

DropsOfRain, "Gray-sama deserves better."

She sweated, "**sweats* I think you got the wrong idea." she publicly replied.

A few minutes later Mira commented on Lucy's reply to _DropsOfRain_, "Wait! Does this mean GrayLu is canon?!
" And then she preceded to make a post, " _CelestialMage and IceMakeMagic_ are dating!" And tagged _, GRAYL
U WINS!_

Lucy was sweating even harder, "NOO! IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK, MIRA!"

"What the hell is going on right now?" Gray had made his own text post.

Lucy had _reblogged_ and replied, "I don't even know."

Another inbox, "Nooo! What now?" she wailed as she begrudgingly clicked on it.

"Forgot to ask what time we are watching _Yamada-kun_ :D," from _DragonSlayer_.

Her stomach churned for the worst.

When did he get online? She hadn't seen a post from him at all this morning.

"Well it's out in an hour so I guess then?" she dazedly replied.

"Sounds good," he wrote back.

What would Natsu make of this ridiculous rumor? Lucy wondered as she stared at all the _notes_ Mira's post, _CelestialMage and IceMakeMagic_ are dating!" had accumulated.

****XOXOX****

As Lucy waited for the hour to pass, her inbox flooded with messages asking if it were true, but decided to ignore them all as she signed on to _Skype._

Natsu was already on.

With trembling hands, she messaged him first, "Hi, Natsu."

"Hey," he typed back. "You're on early."

"So are you :3," she pointed out, feeling a bit flustered.

It wasn't really early, only by ten minutes.

"True," he wrote.

"You weren't on _Tumblr_," she carelessly mentioned because her curiosity was getting the best of her.

"Ehh," he wrote, "it was annoying me today."

"Same," she agreed. _Stupid Mira. Stupid Loke. Stupid Cana. Stupid DropsOfRain..._

But why was Natsu annoyed? Before she could probe him for answers, he sent her a voice call request and they didn't really talk much as they waited for _Yamada-kun_ to start.

****XOXOX****

"So did you ask anyone to join the _Fairy Tail Skype Group_ yet?" Lucy asked after they finished watching.

"Nahhh," Natsu droned. "You?"

"Nope."

"Do you know who you are going to ask?"

"I was thinking Mira __, Cana, and well Levy of course," she confided, since those were the only other users she's ever really talked to.

"Who? I don't pay attention to names. Hell, I'm lucky if I remember their URLs."

Something jolted inside Lucy...Natsu knew her name right from the beginning...Her heart skipped.

"_SatanSoul, CarddMage_, and _SolidScriptMage_."

"Ohh!" he said. "Good choices. I like their blogs."

"You follow them?" she inquire.

"Yep," he replied, "for a few months now."

Her face fell. "Oh," she tried to keep the hurt out of her tone. Natsu followed them months ago? Why did he take so long to follow Lucy? Did her blog suck or something?

"_SatanSoul_ is a bit weird though," he mentioned. "Like what's with all those weird shipping posts she makes? NaLu? GrayLu? I don't get it."

"Be happy that you don't," she exhaled as she checked her _Tumblr_. She clicked on her messages since her inbox count was up to 20.

One was from Gray, "Hey, sorry about all the chaos. Didn't know people would react like that to a simple comment."

"No worries :D," she typed back.

"By the way, who the hell is _DropsOfRain_? She's _reblogged_ my photo like 10 times already -_-."

Lucy laughed aloud, almost doubling over as her palm tightly gripped her desk.

"What's so funny?" Natsu inquired.

"Oh nothing," she panted. "Just something Gray messaged me."

"You and Gray message?"

"Occasionally," she confessed with her face slightly flushing as she wondered why she felt guilty.

In a mocking voice, he said, "Well that makes sense since you two are dating and all."

She gasped, completely taken aback by his statement. So this meant Natsu saw the rumor? Her stomach knotted up ...

"Ahhh," she sobbed, "Stop! I don't understand how things escalated so quickly!"

Natsu chuckled at her dismay.

"It was all that stupid _DropsOfRain's_ fault," Lucy continued her rambling.

"Probably," he agreed. "I think she got it backwards though."

"Huh?" she froze, staring at her laptop screen with a void expression.

"She said something like Ice Freak deserves better, but I think it's the other way around."

"Wh-what?" her pulse jumped.

"Ehh, never mind," Natsu laughed it off. "I feel sorry for you though, having a stripper for a boyfriend..."

"Could be worse," she teased. "I mean at least Gray's cute and his blogs not so bad either."

"Tch, whatever," annoyance was evident in his voice.

Lucy frowned in response to his attitude. And the frown brought something else along with it. Something that had been nagging her...

"Ne, Natsu," Lucy hesitantly asked.

"Yeah, Lucy?" his tone seemed softer.

"Why did you only start following me? Did you think my blog was bad or something? I mean you would _like_ my posts and you said you stole my work before you even followed me..."

"Oh," he chuckled sheepishly, "Well you see...Gray and I made a bet to see who could get the most followers. But the rules are that we _can't_ follow a blog first."

"Oh," she blinked. That wasn't at all what she had been expecting.

"So I guess I should be really asking _you_ that," he said smugly.

"Sorry," she flushed, not liking how this conversation turned against her...

"Actually what I'm more curious about is why you followed that ice-for-brains asshole before me?"

Lucy spluttered. What was she supposed to say? Her heart frantically pounded.

"I mean my blog is a hell of a lot better than his," he continued, proudly boasting.

"I...I don't know," she said lamely.

"You always liked and reblogged my edits, gifs, and colorings," he deliberated. "So I guess our thoughts were mutual since I always wondered why you never followed me as well..."

"I was nervous," she said barely above a whisper.

"Huh?"

"I was nervous," she repeated with more ump.

"Nervous about what?"

"Well I kind of...really admired your blog...so I thought if you wanted to follow me you would have already..." she admitted, twisting her long, golden locks into a braid.

He didn't respond.

"...Natsu?" Lucy squeaked.

"Well you were right," he finally spoke. "I wanted to follow you, so that's exactly what I did. And don't you dare tell that ice bastard I followed you first!" And then Natsu whined, "He would never let me live that down!"

She giggled, "No worries, your secret is safe with me."

"I wasn't worried," his voice had deepened.

"Good," she breathlessly said.

"I should get going," he said. "I made plans for the afternoon." His tone implied that he wasn't happy about these 'plans'.

"Have fun," she said with sincerity. "I should probably put a stop to that stupid rumor..."

"Have fun," Natsu had imitated her tone.

"Thanks," she replied dryly.

"Bye."

"Bye."

And then they hung up.

****XOXOX****

Lucy had went to make a post denying her relationship with Gray, but Gray had beaten her to it:

"How could Lucy and I possibly be dating if she has "I LOVE NATSU" written her blog? Hell, even DragonSlayer has "I LOVE LUCY" on his! AND THEY ARE CO-OWNING A LIZARD! I think we can all put two and two tog

ether..."

Lucy gaped, open-mouthed at the words. She had completely forgotten about her and Natsu's blog redesign.

Well at least Gray was trying to stop the rumor...But still...

What was Gray insinuating? Actually, that was pretty obvious, but it was more like _why_ was Gray insinuating _that_?

And then she saw that Natsu had _reblogged_ Gray's text post and added, "SALAMANDER! FOR THE LAST TIME! HAPPY IS A S-A-L-A-M-A-N-D-E-R!"

Lucy was left speechless.

Natsu wasn't denying Gray's post.

And out of all things he chose to argue about, it was the lizard comment...

Butterflies.

Butterflies tumbled inside her stomach.

"Lucy!" A voice called from outside her room. "I'm home!" It was her father. "Let's go out for lunch! I'm starving!"

With a stammering voice to match her stammering heart, she replied, "O-okay!"

XOXOX

* * *

In reply to guest Magical Love:

Thank you :D

1) Yes I do have a tumblr, it's _Missyplatina!_

2) And I'm not planning on doing a Natsu POV anytime soon, but maybe much later I will!

And guess what! I already started writing my next fic for when I finish my other one, _**Texting Fire**_ **!
It will be another NaLu AU fic :D so I hope you all stick around with me!**

Anyway, was this chapter alright?! I hope you enjoyed it!

Thanks for reading!

12. Chapter 12

Hi! Thank you all so much for being the cutest readers ever :^)

This chapter is dedicated to all of you!

* * *

****XOXOX****

Natsu had started off the _Skype Group_ when Lucy got back from her outing with her father. He had added her to a chat with someone named _IceMage_ , who she assumed was Gray.

"I did the thing," Natsu had posted.

"Da fuk did you add me in, Fire Freak?" _Yep_ , Lucy thought, _definitely Gray._

"Group chat," Natsu explained.

"Obviously, idiot," Gray retorted.

"You wanna go?"

"Yeah I wanna go! How do I even get out of this chat?"

"Noo," Natsu typed. "I meant 'you wanna go' as in 'you wanna fight,' not 'do you want to leave!' stupid, Ice Princess."
"

"Ohh...well in that case," Gray wrote, "Yeah I wanna go!"

Lucy sweated-dropped. Were they serious right now? She wrote into the chat, **"*Sweats*"** breaking up the fight between Natsu and Gray. How did she end up in a chat with _only_ these two? Looking at her contact list, she noticed Levy was now online so Lucy hastily added her to the chat.

"Umm hi?" Levy sent a few minutes later.

"Hi, Levy!" Lucy immediately replied, happy to have a sane person in the chat.

"Yo!" Natsu greeted.

"Hey," Gray welcomed. "So what is this exactly? And who's _CelestialMage_ and _SolidScriptMage_?" Oh right, Gray can only see their _Skype_ usernames since neither of them are friends with him on it.

"Who do you think _CelestialMage_ is - _," Lucy nearly face-palmed as she wrote her reply.

"OH!" Gray wrote. "Sorry, Lucy!"

"It's alright, ^_^," she wrote back. "Though it's kind of insulting that you would forget your girlfriend though..."

"Ahh well it's hard to keep track of who I'm dating these days, bae," Gray joked. " _DropsOfRain_ accused me of cheating on her with _Carddmagee_ a few days ago..."

"Pfff really?" Lucy snorted.

Gray was in the midst of typing as Natsu sent a message, "WILL YOU TWO QUIT FLIRTING?"

As though an inferno of flames had engulfed her body, Lucy turned bright red.

"Jealous?" Gray probably smirked.

"No way," Natsu probably smirked back.

Gray sent Lucy a _contact request_ then after and she gladly accepted. Now her list was up to three friends and for some reason that made Lucy's heart swell.

"So what exactly is this chat?" Levy inquired, breaking up an oncoming fight.

"Just a _Fairy Tail_ _Skype Group_," Natsu informed her, "so that we can talk about _Fairy Tail_ and watch the new episodes together...etc."

"Oh!" Levy wrote. "This is awesome!"

"I hate to admit it," Gray typed, "but it's actually not a bad idea."

"Heh! I thought of it all by myself," Natsu boasted.

"It's true," Lucy admitted.

"Is it only going to be us 4?" Levy asked.

"Nah," Natsu replied, "you can have whomever you want."

"Alright :D," Levy sent.

"WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT ADD _DROPS OF RAIN_," Gray frantically typed. "SHE REBLOGGED MY SELFIE 27 TIMES NOW! WHYYY?"

"Yeah," Lucy shivered, "she kind of creeps me out..."

"She seems fun," Natsu wrote back, "but whatever."

"Okay," Levy typed. "I'll ask Mira and Cana to join?"

"Sounds good," Natsu wrote.

"Agreed," Gray sent.

"And I'll ask Erza so that we have someone who can keep Natsu and Gray in line," Lucy chuckled.

"Oi!" Natsu and Gray simultaneously sent.

"DON'T COPY ME, ICE FOR BRAINS!"

"DON'T COPY ME, FLAME FOR BRAINS!"

"My point exactly," Lucy chimed in.

She went over to Erza's ask box and sent her a message about joining. Erza replied rather quickly, "Sure, sounds like a wonderful idea."

And before she knew it, Erza was now in the chat with everyone.

"Yo!" Natsu greeted.

"Welcome, Erza!" Levy messaged.

"Hey," Gray wrote.

"Hello, everyone," Erza greeted back.

"Oh!" Levy wrote, "Mira and Cana both gave me their _Skypes_! Going to add them right now!"

And now it was a party.

"Hi, everyone ^_^," Mira sent first.

"Hey, people," Cana sent afterwards.

"Let's do a _Group Call_," Natsu suggested after everyone got acquainted.

A trail of "huhs" and "whats" streamed through the chat and Natsu only replied, "Just answer."

And with that, the computer rang and Lucy hurriedly picked up.

"Hello?" she timidly spoke.

"Yo, Lucy," Natsu said his usual greeting, a greeting that managed to make her heart burst.

Her body shook with nervous energy, antsy to say something, but unsure of what to say exactly. Her fingers tapped lightly against her desk.

"Guess no one else wants to chat," he said with a crestfallen tone.

It made her chest ache with disappointment. Was Natsu bored of talking to only her?

"Lucy?" he called out when she didn't reply. Just as she was about to, a voice interrupted, "What the hell is this?"

It was a deeper voice than Natsu's.

Gray.

"What do you think it is?" Natsu snapped, "A voice chat, duh."

"He-hello?" A light, feminine voice spoke.

"Levy?" Lucy was pretty sure this was the girl she had talked to while watching _Fairy Tail_ the other day.

"Lucy!" Levy greeted, sounding relieved.

"Hello?" Another female voice entered the conversation. This voice was deep, but still very feminine.

"Erza?" Lucy guessed.

"Correct," the voice answered.

"Hi," a very sweet voice greeted.

"Mira?" Levy asked.

"Yeah, I'm Mira! Guess I should have introduced myself right away!"

And last, but not least, Cana joined in, "Yooo, guys."

"I didn't know we could do a group voice chat," Levy marveled.

"Me either," Lucy marveled back, squirming in her seat.

"Same," Natsu said. "I figured it was worth a shot though."

"So why are we voice chatting?" Gray asked.

"Cuz it's fun," Natsu remarked.

"How could chatting with you be considered fun?" Gray's voice stung like a bee.

"Wouldn't you like to know," Natsu cockily replied.

"Ooh," Mira cooed. "Am I sensing some Gratsu?"

Lucy choked and so did a few other voices.

"WHAT?" Natsu screamed, while Gray wailed, "GRATSU?"

"Your ship name," Mira informed them.

Natsu and Gray sputtered like crazy and Lucy nearly died in a fit of giggles.

"I THINK I'M GONNA PUKE," Natsu cried.

"STOP SHIPPING ME WITH PEOPLE!" Gray chastised, causing Lucy to laugh even harder. How many times had she said the same exact line to Mira?

"What?" Mira innocently asked. "Doesn't all that fighting build up some sort of sexual tension?"

"That's kind of hot," Cana commented.

"Throwing up," Natsu announced.

"Kill me," Gray commanded.

"I would be glad to," Erza stated.

Lucy had tears streaming down her cheeks.

"Quit laughin', Lucy," Natsu groaned, but that only made it worse as Lucy clutched her stomach and bellowed over with laughter.

"How did you know Lucy was the one laughing?" Levy asked, sounding slightly amused.

Lucy froze, all signs of laughter had evaporated.

"Lucy has a distinct laugh," Natsu stated in a matter-of-fact fashion.

Distinct laugh? She wasn't sure if that was good or bad...

"You guys have voice chatted before?" Gray followed up.

"Yeah," Natsu said, not bothering to elaborate and Lucy was too tongue-tied to say anything.

"What's that I smell, Mira?" Cana asked with a laugh.

"Hmmm," Mira exaggerated the sound of her thinking, "Could it be NaLu?"

"DING, DING, DING," Cana joked, "We have a winner!"

Lucy's entire body was inflamed. "Stopppp!" she moaned. "It's not what you think! We were playing _Super Smash Bros_ and it's more fun to talk while playing so we voice chatted." she blurted.

"Sure, sure," Cana sounded like she was grinning.

"If you say so," Mira added, sounding like she was grinning as well.

"Ohh, Lucy," Levy giggled.

"Can we change the topic please?" Lucy begged, banging her head against her desk.

"Sure," Erza seemed to be the only person with mercy. "So who's everyone's favorite character in _Fairy Tail_."

"Haru, obviously," Natsu said right away.

"Ugh," Gray groaned, "Haru sucks."

"Does not."

"Does too."

"Does not!"

"Does too!"

"SHUT UP!" Erza shouted in a scary, threatening voice that made Lucy want to go duck and cover.

"Aye!" Gray and Natsu both cried with fear.

"Why do you think Haru sucks?" Levy asked.

"He reminds me too much of Flame Dick," Gray simply stated.

"Oi!" Natsu protested.

"That's kind of a lame reason," Lucy pointed out, not liking her favorite character to be hated for something so dumb.

"Well," Gray pondered, "I guess Haru's kind of alright. But he's too much of a classic shounen hero. I mean he's loud, he's always hungry, gets his strength from his friends, kind-of-an-idiot, but-is-really-smart-in-battle, and usually gets the lead girl..."

"You're just jealous," Natsu scoffed.

"Jealous of what?" Gray incredulity asked.

"That Musica isn't the main protagon."

"Like I care."

"And Musica's main ship is with a creepy stalker."

"Oi! At least Reina is hotter than Elie!"

"Pshhh!" Natsu brushed him off. "Nobody is hotter than _Lucy_!"

All the oxygen seemed to have left Lucy's bedroom as her jaw hung wide open on it's hinges.

Did Natsu just say ...

"What did you just say?" Gray gasped.

"Oh my God," Levy awed.

"I didn't realize you felt that way about her," Erza mused.

"Well this is unexpectedly entertaining," Cana chuckled.

"Oh my!" Mira squealed. "NaLu is finally canon!"

"ARGGGG!" Natsu screamed. "I MEANT _ELIE_!"

"Surrreeeee you did," Gray snickered.

And the teasing began.

Though Lucy couldn't process what was going on for that her mind was on infinite loop.

A loop that replayed the words, _nobody is hotter than Lucy_ , over and over again.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Hehe I wasn't planning on stopping here, but then I realized that it's a pretty good place to stop! But good news is that I have half of the next chapter written!****

****Anyway** , **just want to say that I am a Gruvia shipper and I don't mean to hate on the ship so much in this story. It's just a fun ship to make jokes out of!****

****And eep! Natsu! What a dork :D****

****AND OMG CHAPTER 438! *CRIES* IT WAS BEAUTIFUL!****

****Seriously, you are all amazing, *hugs*****

****Thanks for reading!****

13. Chapter 13

****Thank you all so much! You're all such cuties!****

****I'm glad you liked the last chapter!****

****And as a present, enjoy the quick update!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Surrreeeee you did," Gray snickered.

"I ONLY SAID 'LUCY' 'CUZ I WAS LOOKIN' AT HER NAME!" Natsu frantically explained.

"Bet Natsu fell for you, Lucy, when he saw those big knockers of yours!" Cana teased.

"Natsu thinks Lucy is hot!" Mira cheered, "NaLu is officially in the lead!"

"You like her," Gray jabbed.

"I MEANT ELIE! I SWEAR!" Natsu wailed in agony.

Lucy was in a catatonic state of shock, unable to say or do anything, besides sit at her desk with her jaw hanging open.

"You like her," Gray repeated.

"ARGGG," Natsu whined. "C'MON, GUYS, LUCY'S ICON IS ELIE! IT'S AN EASY MISTAKE!"

"You're right," Levy said, sounding serious. "On _Tumblr_, I occasionally call you Haru in my head because he's your icon."

"See!" Natsu sounded as though he had found the light at the end of the tunnel.

"_But_," Levy continued, "we aren't on _Tumblr_ so there isn't a reason for me to mix you up with Haru just like there isn't a reason for you to mix up Lucy and Elie."

Everybody snickered.

"CANA!" Natsu groaned.

"I'm Levy..." Levy wearily corrected.

"You like her," Gray repeated for the third time.

"SHUT UPPPP!"

Lucy was finally able to close her mouth as the shock slowly wore off. Did Natsu mean it? Did he really think that _nobody_ was hotter than _her_? And he wasn't denying Gray's comments about liking her...

She felt like she was on a roller-coaster, like the ones with the really big drop.

And then she laughed.

The whole thing was _ridiculous_.

How could Natsu possibly have a crush on her?

"Lucy?" Levy questioned.

"I think she's lost it," Mira murmured.

"Poor thing," Erza said.

"Must have been devastating to find out that this annoying idiot likes her..." Gray tsked.

"I hate all of you," Natsu moaned, followed by a loud banging. Lucy wondered if he was smashing his head onto his desk or something...

"Here's something you might like, Natsu," Mira mocked.

And in the chat, a picture was posted.

A picture of Lucy.

It was her selfie.

"MIRA!" Both Lucy _and_ Natsu cried.

"WHY DO YOU HAVE MY PHOTO SAVED?" Lucy sobbed, clearly horrified as she hugged herself.

"Well I have everyone's photos saved," she said, "so that I can put everyone next to each other and see what you would all look like together."

Silence echoed about.

"I'm kidding!" Mira laughed. "I'm not that _weird_. But now that I think about it...it's not a bad idea..."

"DON'T!" Everyone screamed.

"Speaking of looks," Mira continued talking. "We should all post selfies of what we look like right now!"

A bunch of 'sures' rang throughout the chat, though Lucy was reluctant.

Mira was the first to post. She looked just as pretty as the first photo Lucy had seen of her. Lucy envied her wavy, white hair, and those unforgettable blue eyes. Lucy found herself wishing she didn't have such dull brown ones.

Cana posted hers next. She was wearing bikini top again, but it was different from the one in her cosplay. She had her hand pointed at her breasts. "Lucy, let's see who's chest is bigger!"

Lucy blanched, "I'd rather not find out."

"C'mon!" Cana pressured.

"Here's me," Gray interrupted. He had a dull expression on his face and was shirtless, just like last time. Lucy's eyes trailed down his chest to his hip indents and gasped—"Gray, are you naked?"

"Huh? AHH," he yelped. "WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN? I'M ALMOST POSITIVE THAT I WAS WEARING PANTS RIGHT BEFORE I TOOK THE PHOTO!"

"What about a shirt?" Levy murmured.

"Nah," he said. "I lost that a while ago."

"My, my," Mira laughed.

"_Gray_," Erza seethed.

Levy was probably sweat-dropping as she said, "Oh?"

"How do you lose a shirt?" Lucy's face twisted. That made no sense.

"I don't know," Gray answered. "Just happens."

"Pervert," Natsu sneered.

And then Natsu posted his picture. Instead of wearing an open vest like last time, he wore a plain white t-shirt. His smile, which was more of a lazy smirk, showed off his fanged teeth. His pink hair was in messy tousles, messy tousles that made Lucy's stomach clench.

Lucy didn't even care that Levy and Erza had posted theirs afterwards. She didn't want to remove her eyes from Natsu.

His slanted and impossibly dark eyes seemed to trap Lucy's.

"Lucy," Mira called her attention. "It's your turn!"

"Bikini shot!" Cana chanted, "Bikini shot! Bikini shot!"

"Noo!" Lucy cried, clutching her hands to her chest.

She was so not in the mood to take a picture, but she knew she had to. She quickly clicked the camera button and nearly cringed at her face on the screen.

Normally Lucy was semi-confident with her looks, but today was not the case, thanks to her eyeliner being smeared and her hair looked frazzled.

She tried to force a smile, but it just looked awkward.

"C'mon, Lucy," Levy encouraged.

"I'm sure you look lovely," Erza sounded gentle.

"Hurry up," Gray pushed.

"Yeah, Lucy, it's not that hard to snap a picture," Natsu sounded impatient and his voice made Lucy freeze up.

And suddenly his voice calling her hot echoed throughout her mind. A huge grin lit up her face as she snapped the picture.

cture.

And to her astonishment, she looked _pretty_ in the photo.

With shaky hands, she sent it.

"Lucy, you are very pretty," Erza was the first to compliment.

"You really are, Lucy!" Levy agreed.

"Aww," Cana groaned with disappointment. "You're not in a bikini! But I guess that doesn't matter since your shirt is so damn low! Man! I wish I had your measurements!"

Lucy flushed as she eyed her photo and yet again, she had managed to accidentally reveal too much skin. "Stop looking there, you perv!" she chided.

"What do you think of Lucy, _Natsu_?" Mira asked with mischievousness.

Lucy's eyes bugged. _Mira! WHY?_ She wanted to scream.

She heard Natsu make a choking sound.

The back of her neck dampened.

"Isn't she pretty?" Cana teased.

"Pshh no," Natsu tried to answer coolly, but Lucy could hear his voice shake, however, her shoulders still slumped down.

"That's harsh, Natsu," Levy chastised.

"Yeah, Fire Jerk," Gray sneered.

"_Natsu_," Erza's voice sounded threatening.

"Why are you guys puttin' so much pressure on me?" Natsu exclaimed.

"Because it's fun," Mira said brightly.

"GRRR fine!" Natsu seethed through clenched teeth, "Lucy looks...alright..."

Her face flared up. _That's kind of a compliment, right?_ She scratched her head.

"Good enough," Mira commented, while everyone else laughed to Natsu's chagrin. "So this is what we all look like right at this moment!" Mira mused.

"Strange to see everyone right now," Levy awed.

"Wish I didn't see so much of Snow Ball," Natsu mumbled.

"What was that?" Gray growled.

"I wish I didn't have to see your stupid body!" Natsu barked.

"Well I wish I didn't have to see your stupid, pink hair!"

"YOU WANNA GO?"

"YEAH I WANNA GO!"

"Where do they want to go?" Levy asked no one in particular.

"I have no idea," Lucy answered, shaking her head.

"On a date, of course!" Mira loud-whispered. "Gratsu! It's so canon, it hurts! Sorry NaLu!"

"MIRA!" Gray and Natsu spluttered.

"NATSU! GRAY!" Erza barked.

"So-sorry," they stuttered.

Lucy broke out in another fit of hysterical giggles. It amazed her how Erza could turn those two hotheads into stammering idiots.

These people were too much.

"Lucy!" Her bedroom door barged open. "Are you alright? I thought I heard—are you laughing?"

"DAD!" Lucy cried. "You can't just barge in!"

"Idiots," Cana muttered in regards to Natsu and Gray.

"Who was that?"

"My friend," Lucy panicked. _Oh God_, if her dad found out she was chatting with people she met off the internet he would confiscate her laptop and phone...

"Friend?" He blinked. "Hello, Lucy's friend."

"Hi, Lucy's dad," everyone greeted back.

"Whoa! So many! How are you able to talk to them all at once?" He inquired.

"That's not important," Lucy brushed off.

"They don't sound like the ones I've met before," he commented.

"You haven't met them," Lucy explained.

"Really?" Her dad sounded surprised. "You made new friends? That makes me really happy to hear that, Lucy. You looked absolutely miserable with those other people you call _friends_." He paused and then said, "I can't even remember the last time I heard you laugh..."

"Daddd," she groaned, begging him to stop talking. Why did he have to embarrass her?

"So who are all of you?" He directed his question to the laptop.

"Cana."

"Gray."

"I'm Levy!"

"Erza, nice to meet you."

"Mira, hi!"

"Yo, I'm Natsu!"

"Did I hear two male voices?" Her father raised a brow at Lucy and grinned, "Either of you planning to ask my daughter to the spring formal?"

"DAD!"

"I'm sure Natsu would love to," Gray snickered.

"Oi!" Natsu snapped.

"I'm not going!" Lucy quickly said, hoping to end the conversation.

"Why not?" Her father pouted. "It sounds like fun!"

Lucy frowned, "I hate the people at my school so why would I want to go?"

His face scrunched up, "But what about your friends?" He pointed at her screen.

"They...aren't going either..." she looked away from her dad's trusting eyes.

"Oh," he sounded disappointed.

"Hey, Lucy's dad." Cana spoke up and with a devilish laugh, she asked, "What if I told you Natsu deflowered your daughter?"

Lucy's face drained of all color. _Why, Cana, WHY?!_

"Deflowered?" Her father blinked.

Natsu gasped, "WHAT? I NEVER EVEN MET—"

"SHE MEANS," Lucy quickly interrupted Natsu, her heart pounding, "Natsu poured flour all over me...in our cooking class, ya know...the elective I'm taking..."

"Oh!" Her dad said. "Well that's a silly thing to do!"

"Yup, silly," Lucy said dryly.

"I did not!" Natsu chimed in. "We are supposed to be _partners_, but Lucy never lets me do any of the work so I tried tugging the bag of flour outta her hands and it ripped 'and exploded all over her!"

"Hey," she argued, "there are good reasons why I don't let you do anything!"

"No!" Natsu argued back, "You just like bein' a control freak!"

"DON'T CALL ME A CONTROL FREAK!" she shouted.

"Now look at you," he scoffed, "tryin' to control what I call you..."

"You're...!" she was at a loss for words and then she blushed as she remembered that not only was her father still in the room, but there were five other people on the line...

"Lucy," her dad smiled. "I'm glad you found these new friends who make you laugh. I'll leave you alone now. Nice meeting all of you." He exited her room.

"Wow," Gray awed. "I would be mad at you for flirting with my girlfriend, Natsu, if I wasn't so confident of our love for one another."

"You sound like that Loke guy," Lucy sweated, thinking back to earlier today.

"That's who I got that from actually," Gray chuckled his admittance.

"You're annoying," Natsu sounded disgruntled.

"It's been two hours already?" Levy remarked.

"Really?" Erza asked. "I should get going. It was nice talking to all of you."

"I should go too," Levy said. "I want to finish translating this _Fairy Tail_ doujinshi I started earlier."

Cana sighed, "I've been sitting for too long now. See ya."

"And I have to finish up homework," Mira joined in.

"Bye," Lucy said as each one hung up.

"I should get going too," Gray said after a moment of silence. "I don't want to talk to Fire Balls any longer than necessary."

"Hey!" Natsu growled.

"Bye, Gray," Lucy giggled.

"Bye, Lucy." And then he hung up.

Another moment of silence.

Lucy anxiously tugged at her hair, not at all enjoying the silence. Maybe it would be best to leave. "Ahh well I'm gonna go."

"Wait," Natsu blurted.

"Okay!" she said with too much eagerness, hoping he didn't realize.

"I...errr wanted to ask you..." he started, but broke off.

Was he nervous? her stomach flipped. "Ask me what?"

"Was what your dad said true?"

"Uhh," her brows furrowed. "What did my dad say again?"

"Something about you never laughing," Natsu clarified.

"Ohh," her voice dulled. " _That_."

"Well is it true?" he pressed.

"I guess," she sheepishly rubbed the back of her neck, though that was a lie because Lucy _knew_ that it was true. Real life depressed her; she hates her school friends, she hates her inability to fit in, she hates that her mother died... How was she supposed to laugh with all this loneliness in her heart?

"I can't picture it," he stated.

"You can't?" she questioned with bemusement.

"Yeah," he sounded lethargic, "the Lucy I know is always laughin'."

Her heart stopped beating. "That's because you're funny."

"I'm funny?" he quirked.

"Mhmm," Lucy heavily sighed. "Funniest person I know."

"Good," he sounded like he was smiling, "That makes things easier 'cuz I plan on making you laugh all the time."

Her breathing hitched, as she somehow choked out a, "Why?"

"'Cuz I like your laugh."

Lucy realized Natsu's tone was different than before. It was softer and yet deeper...

"Thanks," her mouth felt dry.

"So I guess I'll see ya in cooking class tomorrow?"

"Yeah," Lucy murmured in a daze, "see you in cooking class."

And then she hung up.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Hope this chapter wasn't disappointing!****

****Thank you all so much for reading and for the support!****

****As always, it really means a lot!****

14. Chapter 14

****Hi! Thank you all so much for reading and your impressions always make me smile!****

****You're seriously the greatest readers ever!****

****Please enjoy this chapter!****

****I made it extra long for you! :^)****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

The following Monday was different for Lucy compared to her other Monday mornings. She read the new chapter as per usual, but instead of going on _Tumblr_, she went on _Skype_ —which was already bustling.

Something caught her eye—a something that caused her to gasp. The group chat had originally been named _Fairy Tail_ was now renamed _Natsu thinks Lucy is hot_.

Her face was now a deep shade of scarlet.

She knew Natsu was really supposed to be the one embarrassed, but Lucy was nearly dying.

With new slight hesitance, she clicked on the chat.

"THAT CHAPTER WAS BEAUTIFUL!" Levy proclaimed.

"I TEARED UP!" Mira admitted.

"It brought tears to my eyes as well," Erza agreed.

"It was a pretty good chapter," Gray sent.

"Yeah," Natsu wrote. "I gotta get started on colorings if I want to be the first..."

Lucy was still a bit intimidated by her new chat so she inhaled deeply and typed, "Hi!"

"About time, Sleepyhead," Natsu was the first to acknowledge her and then followed by everyone else who wrote, "Hey, Lucy."

"Did the new chapter make you cry?!" Mira asked.

"Yeah!" she confided. "Gahh it was perfect!"

"Lucy," Natsu called her attention, "I need you to clean up the scan on page 5 for me :D."

Her heart jolted. She was glad they were using the chat feature because she probably would have been a stuttering mess, "Sure thing :).".

"Do it quickly though," he pressed. "And try not to screw up like you did that other time."

"HEY!" she pounded at her keys, no longer smitten by him. "I ONLY SCREWED UP ONCE AND GOOD THING I DID OTHERWISE YOU WOULD HAVE KEPT STEALING FROM ME! THIEF!"

"Grump :p," was his only reply.

"Hmph :^(." But Lucy was only playing around with him. She was more than happy to clean up a scan for him.

She quickly copied the scan and began her editing process. She deleted the useless background and sharpened the image and once it was to her liking, she sent it to Natsu in a private chat.

"Thanks, Lucy :)," he wrote back instantly.

"No prob," she replied.

She glanced at her clock. It was just time for school.

"I have school now :/. Bye, guys!" she wrote in the main chat.

"Aww," Levy wrote back. "But we barely got to talk!"

"All that stupid Pyro's fault," Gray stated.

"What?" Natsu asked, "Mad you didn't get to talk to your precious girlfriend for long?"

"Yes, exactly," Gray retorted. "Have a great day at school, Bae. I'll be thinking of you :* ."

Lucy giggled, "Aww! How sweet! I'll be thinking of you too :* ."

"Bye, Lucy," Erza, Mira, Cana, and Levy wrote.

And then Lucy logged off.

****XOXOX****

School was hell...Not only did she find out she has a math test tomorrow, but also the person who sat behind her in math had a cold. The girl kept sneezing and coughing every five minutes. Lucy was positive she was going to be sick.

With a heavy sigh, she logged on _Tumblr_ for the first time all day. She saw that Natsu had tagged her in something. It was her edit she had sent him, except now it was colored in fine details and he somehow made it into a graphic.

"How does he do it?" she mused aloud.

She smiled reading the caption, _Special thanks to CelestialMage for cleaning the scan_!

Her stomach flipped, "How does he do _that_?" she asked no one, while clutching her stomach.

And thanks to Natsu for giving Lucy credit, she was now up to 1300 followers. Not that her follower count mattered to her, but it was still thrilling.

She wanted to do something to celebrate.

But what?

Write.

She stared at her math books sprawled on her floor and then her eyes darted to her blank document. _To study or to write..._

****XOXOX****

It took her nearly four hours, but Lucy managed to finish a 5,000 word oneshot, which, of course, was about Haru and Elie. It was set in the canon-verse to go with the new chapter.

After she posted it, she decided, with reluctance, to study for her exam.

And what felt like a lifetime, but was really a half hour, she finished. She immediately went back on _Tumblr_ to see how her story was doing. It had gained a bunch _notes_ already. But only one _note_ mattered.

DragonSlayer , "Haru is OOC."

Lucy's face fell. _Out of character?_ How could she possibly screw up like that? She quickly reread her story and frowned. Haru seemed in-character to her, but Natsu knew Haru best, right?

"How so?" she asked _DragonSlayer._

"Well Haru is more of a man of action, ya know? But you made him all word-vomity."

Her eye left twitched, _word-vomity_?

And then she got an anonymous message, "Hah! Even _DragonSlayer_ thinks your writing sucks!"

"So what?" she furiously published, trying not to let the rude message bother her., but it did.

Another inbox, _DropsOfRain_ , "I bet Gray-sama hated it too!"

"He's allowed to hate it," she sighed. Why was she being attacked? Was her story really that bad? No, it couldn't be because she had gotten a ton of _notes_ saying how amazing her story was, like from _LokeTheLion_ , for instance, had commented, "My waifu is beyond talented."

But still, her chest felt heavy.

"Actually I liked it unlike that flaming idiot," Gray had _reblogged_ that _ask_ to comment. "And I normally don't like Haru x Elie fics."

"Thanks _IceMakeMagic_ ," Lucy had replied back with a smile on her face.

"OI!" Natsu replied, "I NEVER SAID I DIDN'T LIKE IT!"

"Well you never said you _did_ like it either," Gray pointed out.

"THAT'S 'CUZ I DON'T HAVE TO!" he exclaimed. "LUCY KNOWS SHE'S A FREAKEN AMAZING WRITER!"

Natsu... Her hand rested against her cheek.

And Natsu had also commented on her anon hate, "LUCY'S WRITING IS THE BEST! ANYONE WHO DISAGREES CAN FIGHT ME!"

And just like that, Natsu took her breath away.

"Thanks _DragonSlayer,_ " was all Lucy could manage to type.

****XOXOX****

The next day sucked. Lucy completely bombed her math exam and she had a killer headache. Trying to distract herself from the pain of failing her math exam and from her pounding head, she tried to distract herself with _Tumblr._ But alas, it didn't help at all. There were shipping wars all over and people bashing the manga, she decided maybe the best thing to do would be to sleep it off.

The next morning, she awoke with a stuffy nose and scratchy throat. She climbed out of bed and nearly bumped into her dad while on her way to get cold medicine out of her medicine cabinet in the bathroom. "Good morning," she croaked.

Her father took one look at her, before grabbing his phone to call Lucy's school and inform them that she wasn't going to school today.

Lucy shivered on her way back to her room, thankful she didn't have to go to school. She grabbed her laptop and climbed into bed with it on her lap.

She turned it on and waited a couple of minutes before clicking around.

After it was finally on, she logged onto _Skype_.

She saw that she had notifications from both the main chat and a private chat—a private chat from _Natsu_.

It was from yesterday, "Oi, you okay? You haven't been on all day."

She swallowed, though it was painful since her throat was so sore. "I'm okay," she sent back.

"You're alive!" Natsu replied back almost instantly.

"Barely," she typed.

"Huh?"

"Sick :/," she explained.

"Sucks," he wrote back. "Are you staying home from school?"

"Yup."

"Ahh well I guess you're lucky," he messaged.

"How am I lucky?" she inquired, thinking of how _unlucky_ she was to have such a stuffed up nose. She couldn't even blow it no matter how badly she wished she could.

"I happen to have off of school today."

"Really?" she blinked in surprise. "How come?"

"Cutting :D," was all he said.

Lucy sucked in a breath, "Why would you cut school?"

"To keep you company, duh," he chided.

"Don't do that! I'm not worth it," her face flushed and it wasn't because of her fever.

"Of course you're worth it," Natsu wrote. "Besides, it's not a big deal. It's only school."

A shiver traveled down her spine, "I only shivered because I'm sick," she told herself.

"So what's wrong with you?" he asked.

"Sore throat, stuffy nose, and chills _."

"Bummer," he wrote. "Wanna voice chat?"

"NO!" she exclaimed. "I sound like a dying animal!"

"Now I most definitely want to voice chat!" he teased.

"EEP! WEIRDO!"

"C'mon! It's boring talking like this!"

"Nooo!" she frantically typed. "Besides it hurts to talk :/."

"How about I talk and you type?" he proposed.

Well Lucy really enjoyed hearing Natsu's voice... "Alright."

"YOSH!"

And then he called her.

"Hi, Lucy!" Natsu greeted after she picked up.

"Hi," she croaked out, realizing how ridiculous it would be for her to type instead of talk.

And then Natsu burst out laughing, "You really do sound like a dying animal!"

"Hey!" her hoarse voice complained.

"Actually! It's more like a boy going through puberty!" he said through his winded pants.

"You're so mean!" she cried n her raspy voice.

Natsu chuckled, "I'm only kidding. You sound cute."

That was enough to make Lucy's heart skip. "Sh-shut up."

"Oi," he said, "Happy! What are you doing? Get off my laptop!"

Lucy giggled, though it really hurt, "Owww."

"What's wrong?" he asked, his attention drawn back to Lucy.

"Hurts to laugh," she sheepishly admitted.

"Heh," he beamed, "looks like you'll be a world of pain 'cuz I plan on making you laugh a lot today."

"Great," she lightly moaned, secretly thrilled by his words.

"Happy, no! You're all wet! I don't want you breaking my laptop! What? Oh! Why didn't you say so from the beginning? Happy says he hopes you feel better," Natsu cheered.

Lucy broke out in a wheezy-cough like laugh, "Thanks, Happy!"

"Now get off my laptop!" he growled.

"Hey, be nice to him!" she scolded

"I'm always nice to him," he grumbled. "So what do you want to do? Play _Smash?_" "

Lucy stared at her _3DS_ that was all the way across her room, on top of her dresser. "No. My _DS_ is too far away."

"Lazy," he playfully reprimanded.

"I don't feel well," she pouted, crossing her arms over her chest.

"I know," Natsu's voice softened.

And then she sneezed a light sounding _chewww_.

"What was that?" he inquired sounding slightly befuddled.

"A sneeze," she shyly confessed.

"_That_ was a _sneeze_?" Natsu gasped.

"Yes?"

"That was so... _cute_," he cooed.

"Stop calling me cute!" she groaned with a blush decorating her face.

"I haven't called _you_ cute," he stated. "I called your _voice_ and your _sneeze_ cute. Big difference."

Lucy glared at her screen, "My voice and sneeze are a part of me, and therefore, you called me cute!"

"Tch weirdo," he muttered.

"Loser," she muttered back.

"So what do you want to do then?" he asked. "Since you don't want to get your lazy ass up for the _DS_?"

"I don't know," she frowned, feeling bad that he was skipped school just to be bored talking to her.

"Hmmm," Natsu pondered aloud. "How about we send each other pictures!"

"Pictures?" she questioned. She most certainly wasn't going to take a selfie in her condition.

"Yeah!" he beamed. "You ask me to take a picture of whatever you want and I'll send it to you and we'll take turns."

"Okay," she smiled, liking the idea. "Can I ask you to show me pictures of stuff already taken?"

"Sure," he sounded carefree.

"I want a picture of you from last Halloween," she said after a few minutes of thinking.

"Oh!" Natsu sounded excited. "Interesting choice. Gimme a second."

A second turned into minutes, "I'm waiting," she teased.

"I'm lookin'! Oh! Found it!" He sent a photo into the chat.

Lucy's stomach twisted as she looked at the photo. It was almost unfair how he was so cute.

It was a picture of Natsu dressed in puffy pants and an overcoat with one sleeve. "You dressed up as Haru?"

"Yup," he popped the _p_. "I went to an anime Halloween event. Oh, and here's a pic of Happy."

He sent another one of a salamander wearing a tiny firefighter jacket with a matching firefighter hat. "You dressed Happy up?!" she exclaimed, though it caused her to wince from the pain of her throat.

"Yeah!" Natsu sounded proud. "Happy the Fire-Mander."

"Fire-Mander?" she gushed. "That's so cute! Oh my God! I want to meet Happy!"

"We could video chat," he suggested. "Then you could—"

"No!" she cut him off. She was definitely not ready for that.

"Alright," he sounded indifferent. "Now it's my turn. I want you to send a picture of yourself. And I don't mean an old photo. I want to see what you currently look like."

Her eyes bugged out, "No way! I look like death!" She hadn't even looked in the mirror. She could imagine her nose being all red and her eyes puffy and her hair...She cringed.

"Don't care," he said.

"Natsuuu," she moaned, even though it scratched at her throat.

"Why does it matter if you look bad?" he inquired.

"Be-because..." she sputtered, at a loss for words. Why did it matter? Maybe it was because she sort of has a _slight_ crush on him and doesn't want him to see her in this awful state...but no way she could or would ever admit to that... "Fine."

She slowly climbed out of bed. Her body ached and the room spun a bit as she made her way over to the dresser to grab her brush. She did her best to soothe the birds nest, but it was no use. So she tied it in a low side pony. Her face was all pale, but flushed on the cheeks, and her eyes had bags...but she was too weak to try and cover that all up.

"What's taking you so long?" he complained.

"I'm taking the photo right now," she said as she scrambled back into bed.

She smiled without teeth at the laptop. The photo wasn't her best and, surprisingly, wasn't the worst. She sent it.

She wasn't sure if she imagined it, but she thought she heard Natsu suck in a breath.

And then there was silence.

He wasn't saying anything.

Why wasn't he saying anything?

"Do I look that bad or something?" Lucy shyly joked.

"Like death actually," Natsu answered, though his voice sounded breathy.

"Rude," she teasingly huffed. "I want a picture of you right now. And I want Happy in the photo as well."

"Sure," he said. "Happy, c'mere! No! Quit moving!" There was a pause. "DAMN IT, HAPPY! YOU MADE THE PICTURE BLURRY!"

Despite the pain, Lucy giggled.

"HAPPY, NO! GET OFF MY HEAD! ARGG FINE! SO LONG AS YOU DON'T MOVE, YOU CAN STAY!"

And then a photo sent.

It was a picture of Natsu wearing a white button up shirt with a loose tie around his neck. He had a tense smile on his face, probably from his annoyance with Happy, Lucy figured. On top of Natsu's head was the creature himself and Lucy broke out in a fit of wheezy laughter.

"Oi!" he called. "What's so funny?"

"Ha-Ha-Happy is on-on your head!" she laughed out.

"He's annoying like that," he grimaced.

"Is he?" she smirked. "What's with the fancy clothes?"

"Huh?" he quirked. "Oh! My school uniform. Forgot to change outta it."

"Oh," she gulped and then flinched. It really did hurt to swallow, but Lucy did her best to ignore the pain as shock hit her.

Natsu really did cut school to chat with her. Lucy couldn't believe it. She knew he had said it, but still...she figured he was planning it or something. But this was proof...proof that Natsu had all the intentions of going to school, but changed his mind last minute all because Lucy had said she was sick.

"Okay, my turn! Let's see..." Natsu sounded deep in thought. "Send me a picture of your most prized possession."

"Okay," she grinned. She already had a picture of it saved on her laptop actually. It was her Anime/Manga collection. All the anime she owned which was only _Fairy Tail_ and _Sailor Moon_ and her manga collection which was mo

stly _Fairy Tail_ and, again, _Sailor Moon._ Lucy had a huge _Sailor Moon_ phase before she had discovered other anime and manga.

Also included in Lucy's photo, was her _Pokemon_ plush collection, which contained all the eeveelutions.

"Wow," he awed. "You own so many volumes of _Fairy Tail_. I'm jealous!"

She chuckled, "Once I'm obsessed with something, I have to own it."

"I'm sort of like that," he confided, "but I'm also—"

"Cheap?" she suggested.

"Oi!" he growled. "Maybe just a little!"

she giggled, "Okay, so show me what _your_ most prized possession is."

"Easy," Natsu laughed.

A few moments later, he sent a picture of some drawing on his wall. Lucy zoomed in to see it better. It was a drawing of Haru and on the corner was a signature—a signature that Lucy recognized very well. "YOU HAVE A SIGNED DRAWING BY HIRO MASHIMA?!"

"Yep!" he said proudly. "Met him last year at a special event. He even drew the picture right in front of me."

"I'M SO JEALOUS!" she could almost cry from her envy. She would sell her soul to the devil to just be in the same room as Hiro Mashima, but to have him draw her a picture and sign it...

"Easy there," Natsu laughed. "Shouting can't be good for your throat, ya know."

"Who cares," she sighed. "I want to meet him so badly!"

"You will," he assured her.

"I doubt it," she grumbled.

"Well with that attitude you won't," he scolded.

"Whatever," she furrowed. "Let's play _Smash_," she suggested, wanting to get her frustration out.

Lucy clambered out of bed and grabbed her _3DS_.

"You're on!" she could hear Natsu's _DS_ turn on. "I'm all fired up!"

"Good," she smiled as they began to play.

****XOXOX****

They played for almost two hours, only taking breaks to eat and drink before Lucy felt sleepy.

"I'm gonna take a nap," she yawned after their last match.

"Aww alright," Natsu sounded gloomy.

"Don't sound so disappointed," she chastised. "I don't take long naps."

"Sure, sure," he sounded skeptical. "Sweet dreams, Lucy."

Her stomach flipped, "Bye," she hung up.

****XOXOX****

Lucy awoke all groggily and confused. It was dark in her room, but when she took her nap it had only been noon...S he glanced at the clock. It was 1:00. "I only slept for an hour?"

She went on _Skype_. The group chat had been lively, but Lucy had missed it. _Weird_, she thought.

She gazed out at the moonlit sky... _Wait! It's 1 AM not PM!? Oh...NATSU!_ She instantly felt bad. He had taken o ff for her...and yet she slept through the day...

She went back to _Skype_ and noticed a notification from Natsu's chat.

"You really are a sleepyhead, aren't you?"

Lucy rolled her eyes at that comment.

"Happy wants me to tell you again that he hopes you feel better. And I guess I hope you feel better too."

A small smile grew on her cheeks as she continued reading.

The last message made Lucy's heart stop.

"You know what, I'll only admit it once and I'll have to kill you if you ever tell anyone about this...you are _kind of _cute. Not as cute as your voice or sneeze though."

Even though her heart had stopped working and so had her breathing, Lucy had somehow managed to write, "Maybe I should rename the group chat, _Natsu thinks Lucy's cute_."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Eep! Was this chapter fluffy enough for you?! Kind of a whole lot of nothing though...but still! I have a lot planned for the next chapter! This was more of a filler.****

****Thanks for reading and thank you so much for the support!****

****You're the best :D****

****Hope you all liked this chapter!****

15. Chapter 15

****CHAPTER 15 ALREADY?!****

****And this story almost reached 300 followers!****

****Well here's a new chapter to celebrate!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Lucy's alarm jolted her awake. Her head was on top of her keyboard while the rest of her body laid nicely on her bed. Rubbing her sore face as she sat up and looked towards her screen trying to remember what happened last night.

She was on _Skype_, in a chat with Natsu.

She reread the last two lines.

"You know what, I'll only admit it once and I'll have to kill you if you ever tell anyone about this...you are kind of cute. Not as cute as your voice or sneeze though."

"Maybe I should rename the group chat, _Natsu thinks Lucy's cute_."

Oh right...Natsu called her cute...She smothered her face into her pillow and let out an earsplitting scream.

This is so surreal.

Through her screams, she just barely made out the chat _ping_ noise.

She jumped up so fast and turned all her attention back to her laptop.

"Oi! I called you _kind of_ cute! Not _cute_!" Natsu replied.

She giggled, "So? You still were talking about me and used the word _cute_ in the same sentence so hah! ;) ."

"Grr if you change the chat name to that, then I might ask _DropsOfRain_ to join the chat."

She smirked, "Ahh well she doesn't bother me so much as she bothers Gray so it's really him you would be annoying."

"And that's what I would like to call a win-win :D."

"Haha I guess you could call it that," she sent back, biting her bottom lip.

"So how are you feeling?" he asked.

"Better," she smiled. "My nose is still a bit stuffed, but my throat doesn't hurt anymore! I mean I was just screaming into my pillow, so now it's a bit sore, but not like yesterday."

Her hand clamped tightly over her mouth __ Why did she just tell him that?

"You were screaming into your pillow?" he inquired. "Why?"

"No reason," she hastily type, while "I got to go get ready for school. Bye."

"Bye."

"Nice going, Lucy," she sighed. "Now he's going to think you're a total weirdo..."

And instead of getting ready for school, Lucy went on _Tumblr_.

She saw that she tagged in a post by _SkyMagicDragon_. It was a drawing of Haru and Elie.

"Art for _CelestialMage's_ amazing oneshot!"

It was almost exactly how Lucy had pictured the beach scene she had written.

Wendy was truly amazing.

Lucy quickly reblogged it and added a huge, "THANK YOU, WENDY! IT'S BEAUTIFUL!" to the post.

And then she checked her inbox.

There were a few compliments in it for her writing and there was a message from Loke.

"If the sun were to blow up, the Earth would still have a shine and that would be you, my Celestial Goddess."

She sweat-dropped, "What the hell?"

"Ah thanks!" she publicly replied. "But the Earth would be destroyed in the process if the Sun blows up."

And then she got ready for school.

****XOXOX****

School sucks on a normal basis, but having a cold and being in school...that was hell. She spent her morning classes fighting that stupid tickle in her throat that was begging for her to cough, but she wouldn't. She didn't want to be that annoying kid who coughs the whole period...

And Lucy hated blowing her nose in public and especially quiet classrooms. Thus, she was forced to sniffle every two minutes, which, in her opinion, was almost as annoying as the coughing situation.

But it was lunch time, so she was free to cough and blow her nose without people staring at her, which is exactly what she did.

"Excuse me, Lucy," someone tapped her shoulder just as she was wiping her nose.

"Yes?" she turned around to see a boy in her year, grinning at her.

What's his name again? She pondered.

"I was wondering if you would like to go to the Spring Formal with me...and would you also like to go out with me?"

Lucy blinked.

Did someone really just ask her out?

And the Spring Formal was months away...why did people ask so early?

She scratched her head and looked around her lunch table to meet her friends ogling faces. They started squealing to each other about how lucky she was...

"Umm..." Lucy bit her lip and turned back to the boy.

He had a hopeful smile on his face, a smile that begged her to say yes , but she couldn't.

"I'm sorry," she frowned, trying to look apologetic, "I have to say no to both."

The boy frowned in return, "But I already thought of cute nicknames for you!"

"You what?" she sputtered. Nickname?

"Lu-tan. Lu-Lu-chan, just plain Lu-Lu! There's also—," The boy was gleaming like crazy.

Ahh yes, Lucy remembered his name now. Dan Straight...

"Ehh," she sweated as she cut him off, "I'm sorry! It's just that..." Natsu's message popped into her head, you're kind of cute. "There is someone else..."

He looked even sadder than before, he opened his mouth, but then closed it. And then his eyes gazed onto one of Lucy's friends. His eyes lit up again.

"Will you do me the honors of accompanying me to the Spring Formal and would you be my girlfriend?"

"Yes!" her friend screeched and Lucy nearly face-palmed. Did he seriously just ask out her friend the second after she rejected him? And why the hell would her friend say yes to both?

More reasons to hate her school...

She went on Tumblr to complain to her 1000 plus followers about the ridiculous event that had occurred, but something changed her mind.

It was an anonymous message that was sent to Wendy.

"Your artwork sucks. You should just stop. It's an embarrassment to the Fairy Tail fandom."

Lucy's hand that wasn't holding her phone, curled into a fist.

How could someone say that?

Wendy, being the sweet girl that she is, only replied, "I'm sorry :3."

Lucy clicked on Wendy's blog to see if there was more.

There was another more recent ask that was also anonymous.

"Seriously your work sucks. And you suck."

And then she refreshed the girl's blog again.

"I hate your blog. You should just delete."

she paled.

How could someone be so mean?

And Wendy's only reply was, "Sorry if I did something to upset you."

After another refresh, there was another anonymous message.

"To be honest, your existence is what upsets me."

"I'm sorry :/," Wendy replied.

A surge of anger swelled up as Lucy clicked to reply, but she saw someone had beaten her to it.

Mira.

"HOW DARE YOU! I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SOMEONE IN _OUR_ FANDOM THAT IS LIKE THIS! Picking on an innocent girl? What is wrong with you?! And of course you are an anon because only a coward picks on people to in order to hide their own insecurities. You are not welcomed in this fandom anymore. Clearly, you don't understand the concept of _Fairy Tail_. _Fairy Tail_ is about friends and family supporting one another. And you, you're just a vile excuse for a human being."

"And you know what," Mira continued. "I try to be understanding and forgiving, but this? There is nothing to understand! You are disgusting! And this is completely unforgivable! To think that there are people like you in this world ..."

"Wendy," Mira added, "don't you dare listen to this nasty, evil person. Your existence matters. And your artwork is phenomenal. So please, don't stop drawing and whatever you do, don't delete your blog. The entire _Fairy Tail_ fandom loves and supports you."

Tears welled up in Lucy's eyes, blurring her vision.

Who knew Mira could be so passionate about things that didn't involve shipping.

Lucy decided to add her own input, "Mira is right, Wendy. We all love and support you! And you bring my stories to life. So thank you! :)."

Before lunch ended, Lucy checked her _activity log_.

**DragonSlayer** _liked your post_. It was Lucy's reblog of Wendy's anon hate.

He also reblogged it and added, "You mess with one of us, you mess with all of us. That's what it means to be nakama."

Lucy grinned, even Natsu supported Wendy.

****XOXOX****

When Lucy got home from school, she quickly went on _Skype_.

The chat was currently dead.

With slight hesitation, she typed, "Hi, guys."

"Heya, Lucy," Cana replied first.

"Hi!" Levy entered.

"Hi, everyone :)," Mira wrote next.

"Hello," Erza greeted.

"Chats starting up again?" Gray joined in.

"Looks that way," Natsu replied.

"Mira," Lucy wrote, "that was so sweet how you defended Wendy."

"Ahah thanks, Lucy," Mira wrote. "I just can't stand such cruel hate. It makes me so angry."

"Same," everyone replied.

"And to see hate against someone so young..." Mira typed. "It reminds me of what happened to my sister."

"Oh, Mira :/," Levy wrote.

"She was terribly bullied by an anon," she confided. "To a point where she had to delete her blog. The anon would tell her to go kill herself. It was awful. Lisanna would cry all the time...and the depression she was in...That's one of the reasons why I joined _Tumblr_. To fight against those evil demons."

"What a terrible thing to happen," Lucy frowned. _How could anyone tell someone to go kill themselves?_ Anger and pity flushed through her body.

"Damnnnn, is she okay now?" Cana asked.

"She's much better! Thanks for asking :)," Mira replied.

"Lisanna?" Natsu repeated her name. "Was her URL _AnimalSoul_?"

"Yeah," Mira answered. "Did you know her?"

"Yeah!" Natsu sent. "She was my first friend on _Tumblr_! I remember all the anons attacking her...I did my best to help her out, but it sucks that they got to her...Tell her I say hey!"

"Thank you, Natsu! And sure thing!" she wrote.

"I knew you looked familiar," he continued. "Lisanna would occasionally post selfies. You guys look alike."

"We get that a lot :D," she typed.

AnimalSoul... Lucy couldn't recall a blog by that name, but she sulked. That's just terrible. It was one of Lucy's worst fears, to be attacked by a nasty anon.

"I feel bad :/," Levy wrote.

"It's a shame," Gray posted.

"The things I would do to those anons if I ever found out who they are..." Erza cryptically sent.

Lucy shivered, not wanting to find out _what exactly_ Erza would do.

"Same," Natsu replied.

"Let's change topics!" Mira announced. "This one is too depressing."

"Good idea," Cana agreed. "This conversation totally killed my buzz."

"Drunk again?" Gray inquired.

"All day, everydayyy ;)," Cana kidded.

"No surprise there," Levy commented.

"So what should we talk about?" Lucy asked.

"You!" Mira wrote. "You've been missing from the chat, Lucy! Anything interesting happen to you lately, Lucy?"

Lucy giggled, "Sorry! I was sick. But nothing really interesting happened." _Unless you count Natsu calling her cute ..._

"Boring," Cana typed.

Lucy pouted. She couldn't help that her life was so... _typical_ ...And she didn't want to share anything about Natsu ...But then she remembered something, "Oh! I got asked to my Spring Formal and the boy even asked me to be his girlfriend."

"Really?" Erza inquired.

"Ooh by who?!" Levy asked.

"Was is Natsu?" Mira teased.

"Bet it was Natsu," Gray sent a second after Mira.

"What did you say?" Natsu asked.

"Hope she tastes him first," Cana wrote. "Nothing sucks more than getting into a relationship _without_ trying the guy out first."

Lucy sweat-dropped, "You guys are rowdy as ever...I said no."

"Aww," Mira cooed. "Poor Natsu."

A split second later, Gray wrote, "Hah sucks for Natsu."

"Oi!" the mentioned boy protested, "It wasn't me, stupid!"

"Don't call Mira 'stupid'," Lucy chastised him, while smirking because she knew very well he meant to say that to Gray.

"I wasn't," he argued, "It was meant for that damn stripper."

"Why did you say _no_ , Lucy?" Levy asked.

"Ehh well..." her face burned. "I could tell he was really into me...or at least I thought he was...I mean the second I rejected him, he asked my friend to the dance AND asked her out too -_-; ."

"That's pretty funny :D," Natsu commented.

"Hey!" she scowled.

"So if he was into you, why didn't you accept?" Erza inquired.

"Oh umm..." she pulled at her hair. What was she supposed to say? The truth? _I MIGHT like Natsu?!_ Her fingers shook as she carefully typed out her answer, "I rejected him because I _think_ I might like someone else."

"OMG!" Mira exclaimed. "Is it Gray?"

Lucy sweat-dropped for the umpteenth time that day.

"Of course you would ask that," Gray commented.

"AHH, LUCY!" Levy cheered. "WHO?!"

"Are you going to ask him out?" Erza asked.

Cana gave some friendly advice, "Remember to try him out first!"

Natsu, however, remained quiet.

Was he still there? she wondered.

A few minutes went by and Lucy was unsure what she was waiting for as Mira and Levy kept asking if she was still there.

"Sorry, guys," she wrote. "As much as I love a good interrogation, I have to go. Tons of homework...bye!"

"Aww you're no fun!" Cana wrote.

And just as Lucy logged off, she just barely read a simple message from Natsu, "Bye."

So he was still on after all...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Had to talk about serious Anon Hate stuff in this chapter. I've been seeing too much of it on my dash and it's sickening :/ and one of my tumblr friends was literally told to stop doing her manga colorings -_-****

****Whelps, on a brighter note, you are all going to like the next chapter ;)****

****And I hope you all liked this chapter!****

****Thanks for reading!****

*****Hugs*****

****Hi, Friends!****

****Another quick update, yay!****

****By the way, I decided to put off the chapter that was originally going to be here, for next time...****

****Anyway, thank you all for being so kind and supportive! *Hugs*****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

It was a boring and quiet evening for Lucy. She had logged back onto _Skype_ and put herself on the _Offline_ setting so that her group chat wouldn't bug her any longer over her crush...

Her dashboard was lively so she was able to be consumed by it by reblogging almost everything she saw, knowing very well she will probably annoy some of her followers, but in her defense, she tags everything so if they don't like a certain fandom, they could just blacklist it.

Taking a break from her dash, she checked her _tracked tags_. She saw that her tracked URL name had a note. With curiosity, she clicked on it.

It was from Natsu.

He had posted his _Tumblr Crushes_, which is when someone posts the nine blogs they reblog the most stuff from.

Lucy looked curiously to see where her icon was located, starting from the last picture on the bottom.

Her eyes carefully searched each row.

She gasped.

She was number one.

She couldn't even recall Natsu reblogging _that much_ stuff from her. It was weird.

She clicked on all the notes it had. She saw that Gray commented, "Lucy's number one? Haha you're supposed to post your _tumblr_ crush, not your _real life_ crush, Assflame."

Lucy clasped a hand to her mouth, "GRAYYY!" She whined, wanting to die of embarrassment.

She wondered if Natsu would even reply...

And he did. "YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS THAT YOU'RE NOT ON MY CRUSH LIST, ICE ASS!"

And Natsu had wrote in his tag, _Gratsu is clearly one-sided_.

Lucy snorted, _Mira's going to be so happy..._

"There better not be any fighting," Erza interrupted before Gray could even retort back.

"Of course not!" Both Natsu and Gray lied.

****XOXOX****

A little while later, Lucy got a message on _Skype_ , "LUCYY, QUIT POSTING MAGICAL GIRL CRAP!" It was a private message from Natsu.

She found it amusing that Natsu knew she was still on _Skype_ , even though it said she was _offline._

"Heyy! It's not crap!" She felt defensive. This so-called _crap_ was what got her into anime in the first place.

He replied a few minutes later, "It's crap."

"Hmph, have you even watched a magical girl anime before?"

"Nope," he wrote, "and I don't plan to."

"Loser," she provoked.

"Oi!" he typed. "What's there to like about magical girl animes? The main girl is always a cry baby or something and then there's that cliché romance...and it's all about love and no one dies and if they do, they come back to life or something. And there's always that weird transformation sequence which is really just fan service. And the guys in it are so pathetic."

"Don't even go there -_-," she deadpanned. "Let's talk about the cliché of the shounen genre then, shall we?"

"At least shounen stuff is cool and deep," he retorted.

"Hey!" Lucy took offense, "magical girl animes are very deep too!"

"If you say so."

"Let's make a proposition," she typed. "You watch a magical girl anime of my choosing and if you don't think it's deep or anything, then you get to force me to do something."

"YOSH! I'M IN!"

"Yay!" she licked her lips and grinned, "I want you to watch _Puella Magi Madoka Magica._ It's only 12 episodes so you can finish it all in one night."

"Ehh? Sounds weird. What's it about?"

"All I'll tell you is that it's a very happy, feel-good kind of anime," she mischievously typed.

"Alright! Hope you're prepared to do what I wish."

"I don't need to prepare ;)."

"Gonna start it now. Can we voice chat while I watch?" Natsu asked.

Her heart soared. _He wants to voice chat with me!_ Just as she was about to answer _yes_ , she heard her name being called.

"LUCY," it was her dad. "Time for dinner!"

With a pout, she typed, "Can't :/ dinner time."

"Bummer," he replied. "Guess I'll live blog it."

****XOXOX****

It was late when Lucy finally got back online. She quickly went on _Tumblr_ , wanting to see how Natsu was doing with the anime she assigned him...

******SLIGHT PUELLA MAGI MADOKA MAGICA SPOILERS******

"Being forced to watch _Puella Magi Madoka Magica_ , Gonna live blog it," Natsu informed his followers.

"The theme song is too happy -_-."

"Their eyes look weird."

"That cat thing is kind of cute! Don't kill it!"

"WHOOAAA THE WITCH WORLD IS SO TRIPPY!"

"YOU GET YOUR WISH GRANTED IF YOU BECOME A MAGICAL GIRL?! SIGN ME THE FUCK UP!"

"Madoka, become a magical girl already -_-."

"WHAT THE HELL? IS SHE REALLY DEAD?!"

"So when does Madoka become a magical girl?"

"I changed my mind about that cat thing. It's starting to creep me out."

"This is getting intense..."

"SHE'S DEAD TOO?!"

"MOST MISLEADING THEME SONG EVER!"

"HOMURA, KILL THAT DAMN CAT!"

"The fuck just happened?"

"THE HELL?"

"MADOKA, DON'T BECOME A MAGICAL GIRL!"

"ARGGG! KYUBEY, YOU SICK BASTARD!"

"C'MON, HOMURA, STOP HER!"

"NOO, MADOKA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

"DAMN IT!"

"What is life?"

" _CelestialMage,_ WHAT THE HELL DID YOU MAKE ME WATCH?!"

****SPOILERS OVER****

Lucy laughed so hard that she had to wipe away the tears in her eyes. She had expected this reaction from him, but for some reason, it was funnier than she imagined.

"So what were you saying about magical girl animes?" she teased him on _Skype._

"I hate you so much right now," Natsu replied back instantly.

"Figured you would," she grinned, feeling giddy.

"I don't think I'll ever be happy again," he wrote.

"I felt the same way."

"I can't even function right now..."

"There's a movie if you're interested," she informed him.

"Really?!"

"Yeah," she typed. "It's called _Rebellion_ or something like that."

"Going to watch it tonight!"

"Hehe," she smirked. "Have fun with that."

"Why do I get the impression of impending doom?" Natsu questioned.

"No idea :D," she grinned. "Well have fun watching. I'm gonna go to sleep."

"Night, Lucy."

"Night, Natsu."

XOXOX

She awoke at 3 a.m. for no apparent reason and immediately checked her blog on her phone.

Natsu had tagged her in another post.

" _CelestialMage,_ I HATE YOU EVEN MORE THAN BEFORE!"

"Hehe good ^_^," Lucy giggled, before falling back to sleep..

It was Thursday afternoon, and the _Skype chat_ was well alive.

"I'm starting over my _Heart Gold_ game," Natsu informed the chat. "What should I name my starter _Pokemon_?"

"Which _Pokemon_ did you choose?" Levy inquired.

"Cyndaquil," she answered for Natsu.

"Correct :D," he said.

She grinned proudly that she knew him well enough to know which _Pokemon_ he would choose. Though it was kind of given considering his blog is all fire-like and his favorite _Fairy Tail_ mage uses fire magic.

"So what should I name him?" Natsu asked again.

Without really thinking, Lucy typed, "Assflame."

Where did that even come from? Lucy wondered.

"I second that," Gray wrote.

Oh right! Gray called him that.

"I hate you both -_-," Natsu replied.

"So much hate for Lucy these days, Natsu ;)," Mira pointed out.

"So?" he asked.

Suddenly, the chat was renamed _Assflame_ , surprisingly by Levy.

"LEVY!" he exclaimed.

"Sorry, Natsu," she typed. "I couldn't resist :3."

"I like the new name," Cana stated.

"It's oddly fitting," Erza chimed in.

"I disagree -_-." Natsu added.

"I think I figured out all this shipping stuff!" Mira informed the chat. "Lucy is in a harem with Gray, Levy, Loke, and you, Natsu!"

"WHERE DID THAT EVEN COME FROM?!" Lucy sputtered, ogling at her screen.

"Well Natsu was upset that you and Gray teamed up against him, so that means Natsu loves you. And Gray joined in your teasing because he loves you too. And Levy changed the group chat to _Assflame_ as a way to support you, which indicates love...and Loke is always sending you lovey-dovey messages. And, Lucy, you're just conflicted because you have no idea who your heart truly belongs to!"

"But what about that guy Lucy said she likes?" Erza asked.

Oh not that again! Lucy cried.

"OH! I FORGOT!" Mira typed. "Since it's a guy...sorry, Levy, you've been eliminated."

"Whatever am I going to do now?" Levy sarcastically typed.

"So now it's between Natsu, Gray, and Loke! Or maybe some random guy Lucy knows in real life, which I hope isn't the case..." Mira continued.

"You're insane, Mira," was all Lucy could say, though her heart was loudly thumping.

Natsu... Mira was getting too close to the truth for Lucy's comfort...

"Did you guys see that _Harry Potter_ post I reblogged?" Levy asked the chat, changing the subject.

"OH!" Lucy excitedly wrote, "I did! That was so funny!"

"I know right!" Levy replied.

"I'm not into _Harry Potter_," Erza wrote, "so I probably glanced over it."

"Same," Gray stated.

"Ditto," Natsu typed.

"Likewise," Mira admitted.

"You guys _aren't_ into Harry Potter_?!" Levy exclaimed.

Everybody except Lucy replied back, "Yeah."

"Oh my God," Levy awed.

"I don't think I can be friends with you guys anymore," Lucy wrote. "What kind of person doesn't like _Harry Potter_?!_"

"What's the big deal?" Natsu asked.

"_Harry Potter_ is life!" she answered. It had been one of her biggest obsessions a few years back. She couldn't fathom that there were people who haven't read the series.

"It's too long," Cana stated.

"Not really," she replied. "Appearances are deceiving. Only took me a month and two weeks to read the entire series."

"It only took me a month," Levy countered.

She sweat-dropped, "Way to brag, Levy -_-."

"Hehe, sorry, Lucy!" Levy apologized.

"I don't think I'm interested enough to read it," Gray typed.

"Someone got me the whole book series as a present," Natsu wrote. "IT'S SO THICK! NO WAY CAN I READ THAT!"

"Come on, Natsu," Lucy coaxed. "You would really like it!"

"No!" he declined.

"At least give it a try!" She felt frustrated and she wasn't sure why, but she really wanted Natsu to read the series...

"Nah, I'm good," Natsu responded.

And then she called him.

"Lucy?!" Natsu sounded puzzled.

She swallowed nervously and couldn't believe she just called him... With a deep breath, she pleaded, "Please, Natsu!"

"No!"

"Please"

"No!"

"Pleeeassseeee!" she begged.

"Stoppppp!" Natsu moaned.

"_Natsu_" her voice was filled with disappointment and melancholy.

"ARGG! I'll read it! Alright?" Natsu exasperated.

"Really?!" she gleamed.

"I'll give it a shot," Natsu sighed. "No guarantees I'll finish it."

Lucy felt elated as a smile that rivaled the brightness of the sun was displayed upon her cheeks.

"I don't get it," he sighed again.

"Get what?" she inquired.

"I don't get how you always get me to things I don't wanna do."

She nearly choked.

Before she could reply, he hung up.

But Lucy was too shocked to care.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Eep! Did you like this chapter?!****

****Out of curiosity, how many of you actually want a chapter in Natsu's POV?****

****Thank you so much for reading!****

****UPDATE: I will be changing my username to my tumblr URL: MissyPlatina****

Aakdlakflsdf omg thank you all so much for being super sweet!

Enjoy the new chapter!

* * *

XOXOX

"LUCY!"

"LUCCYYYY!"

"LUCCCCCYYYY WAKE UP ALREADY!"

With drowsy eyes, Lucy read the messages in her inbox. It was only 6:30 in the morning and, of course, she had checked her _Tumblr_ almost immediately.

She wondered when the messages were sent as she replied, "I'm awake. What's up?"

She wondered how long she would have to wait for him to reply as she refreshed every few seconds, but not seeing a reply, Lucy drifted off back to sleep.

"I FINISHED THE FIRST BOOK!"

She read when she woke up for the second time.

"First book?" she questioned aloud, with a shrug she logged onto _Skype_.

"What book?" she asked Natsu, seeing that he was online.

"HARRY POTTER! WHY DIDN'T YOU MAKE ME READ THIS SOONER?!"

He actually read it? Lucy's heart nearly tripled in speed. "I don't know! Guess I assumed everyone had already read it."

"Stupid," he replied.

"Hey! Don't be mean!"

"Sorry :D," he obviously wasn't the least bit sorry.

"So what House do you think you're in?" she inquired, already knowing the answer.

"THE HOUSE _WHERE THE BRAVE DWELL AT HEART_!" and then he added, "Though I wish the mascot was a dragon as opposed to a lion..."

She laughed as she typed back, "I'm not the least bit surprised, to be honest."

"I'm almost done with the second book too," he informed her.

"Already?" she gasped.

"Been reading all night," he sent. "Only slept for two hours."

"Eeks," she cringed, "you're going to be tired today."

"Nahhh," he sent. "That's what school is for, right?"

"Right :)," she found herself grinning at his carefree attitude.

Speaking of school, she glanced at the clock on her laptop, "Ahh well I should go. Talk to you tonight, probably."

"You should download the mobile app for _Skype_," he suggested. "Then you can talk in the chat during the day too."

She gaped at the message as though someone had just told her the answer to life. _Mobile app_? "AHH I'M SO DUMB! HOW DID I NOT THINK OF THAT BEFORE?"

"Prob cuz you're a Hufflepuff," he teased.

"HEY!" she aggressively typed, "FIRST OFF, HUFFLEPUFFS ARE AWESOME! DON'T YOU DARE TALK BADLY ABOUT THEM! AND SECOND OFF, I'M A GRYFFINDOR, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!"

"Noo way," he replied. "I can't possibly be in the same House with a weirdo like you . ."

Lucy's right eye twitched, "Well then..." And then she glanced over at the clock again, _crap_. "I really have to go now. Bye."

"Don't forget to download the app."

Right! she grabbed her phone and downloaded the app.

****XOXOX****

On a normal basis, school was boring and dreary, but today was not the case now that Lucy had _Skype_ on her phone—well actually, the chat had been rather dead, until Lucy entered her History class...

"New _Fairy Tail_ episode tonight!" Levy informed the group.

"Ahh I'm so excited!" she replied.

"We should do another voice chat while watching," Erza proposed.

"I'm down," Gray replied.

"Sounds good to me," Cana wrote.

"Ooh yes!" Mira typed.

"Yay! I've been waiting for another chat for a while now!" Levy giddily sent.

"Yosh! I'm in!" Natsu responded afterwards.

Lucy, however, couldn't reply for that class had started and she was afraid of getting caught with her phone. It was one thing to _read_ the messages, but it was another to _reply_ back since that looks more obvious.

"Well it's settled then," Erza typed, "be on the chat ten minutes prior."

Lucy was amused by the fact that _no one_ realized _she_ hadn't agreed to the chat...

****XOXOX****

School was finally over and Lucy was about to begin her walk home, when she heard a voice call out to her.

"Hey, Lucy!" she whirled around to see her friends. "Are you coming over tonight?"

"Umm..." she bit her lip.

Her phone buzzed, she glanced at it. It was a _Skype_ message.

A _Skype_ message from _Natsu_.

"Are you going on the voice chat tonight? You never answered in the group chat and I was kinda curious..."

She abruptly inhaled, _he noticed_?

Her throat felt dry all of a sudden.

She painfully swallowed as she asked, "Do you want me to?"

"Pshhh," he replied. "No way."

She grinned, sensing he was only joking, "Well in that case...I'm going to voice chat."

"Good," he instantly replied. "It's more fun when you're on."

Her cheeks warmed up, "Likewise."

"Lucy?"

Her head shot up to meet the curious stares of her friends. _Oh yeah..._ "Oh sorry! I can't hang out tonight."

Her friends pouted, but thankfully didn't protest.

It's more fun when you're on.

Lucy let out a tiny squeal as she dashed home.

****XOXOX****

"That was a great episode," Levy sighed.

"Wish the anime quality was a little better," Gray muttered.

"I think the animators did their best!" Mira beamed.

"The animation stuff doesn't bother me so much," Lucy said, thinking back to it. The new style made them look older.

And Natsu chimed in, "Same. I'm just happy there _is_ an anime."

"And we should be thankful that the anime actually follows the manga pretty well, unlike some animes..." she muttered.

"Like _Blue Exorcist_?" he inquired.

"Yeah!" she grinned. That was exactly what she had been referring to... "I still don't get it! It was almost identical until the last few episodes! Why did they do that?!"

"I don't know! So annoying..." he groaned. "Though I'm still hoping for a second season."

"Same," she sighed. "Even though we will never get one."

"Now I kind of want to rewatch it," he stated.

"Ooh!" she felt a surge of nervousness and excitement that made her tremble as she asked, "Want to rewatch it together?"

"Nahh," he lethargically rejected her.

"Why not?" she slighted.

"'Cuz you'll probably drool over how hot you think Rin is the entire time and who wants to hear that?"

"Will not!" she argued with a blush coating her cheeks. Rin was hot, no doubt about it, but Lucy wouldn't gush over him...well at least not out loud...

"Will too!"

"Will—" Lucy was cut off.

"You two do know there are other people on this chat, right?" It was Cana.

Lucy's face scorched with embarrassment.

"You guys coulda joined in," Natsu chastised.

"How could we?" Gray asked. "You two were flirting up a storm."

"NO WE WEREN'T!" Both of them screamed.

Lucy could hear Levy and Cana snickering and she _thought_ she heard Erza murmur, "They're so cute..."

Boy, did her face burn...

"So what do you guys want to talk about?" Natsu asked in a non-flustered tone, which annoyed her. How was he able to recover so quickly from the group's teasings?

"We should play a game," Cana chirped.

"What game?" Levy inquired.

"Truth or dare," she answered.

There were a bunch of groans.

"C'mon, guys," Cana said defensively. "It will be fun! I mean, who's ever played it over the internet before?"

"Good point," Gray mused.

"So who's in?" she asked.

Everyone, with reluctance, agreed.

"Okay, I'll go first," Cana beamed. "Erza, truth or dare?"

"Truth," she answered.

"Your smut fics...Are they based off your own experiences?"

"Yes," she answered in a tone that was both proud and unaffected by the question.

"DAMN!" Cana laughed. "I THOUGHT FOR SURE I WAS THE ONLY ONE WITH ANY REAL EXPERIENCE IN THIS CHAT!"

A chorus of the word, "Hey!" rang throughout the chat.

"Nothing personal, guys," she chortled. "Okay, Erza, your turn."

"Alright," she said. "Mira, truth or dare?"

"Hmmm," Mira pondered, "truth?"

"Since you love shipping so much...Who do you ship yourself with? On _Tumblr_" Erza inquired.

"My, my," she sounded taken aback.

"You must have someone in mind," Erza pushed.

"Well if I had to choose..." she started. "_LighteningSlayer_!"

Someone snorted, but Lucy was unsure who.

"Nice choice," Cana approved.

Lucy was genuinely surprised. She didn't think Mira focused on any ships if it didn't involve Lucy in some strange way.

"But _CelestialMage_ is a close second," Mira giggled.

Lucy sweat-dropped, "Not surprised."

"I'm only kidding, Lucy," she said. "I know better than to get involved in a harem."

Lucy was left to sputter.

"Alright," Cana said, "Mira, your turn."

"Levy, truth or dare?"

Being the first brave soul of the night, Levy chose, "Dare."

"I dare you to read one of Erza's smutty fics out loud," Mira's voice sounded so sweet and innocent, it was almost hard to believe she actually thought of that dare.

Everybody broke out in laughter.

"EHHH!" Levy cried. "I can't do that! That's humiliating!"

"What's humiliating about my fic?" Erza asked in a scary, yet calm voice.

"Errr..." she nervously stammered.

"C'mon, Levy." Gray pushed.

"Yeah," Natsu agreed, "A dare is a dare."

"Fine," Levy begrudgingly answered. "I'm picking the most recent one you did, Erza. 'She grabbed hold of his...and they...and he swirled his tongue on her...They both let out a sensual, wanton moan...and stuck it...ERZA, I DON'T THINK THAT'S EVEN POSSIBLE!'"

Lucy was dying from laughter. Levy reading smut was probably the funniest thing she had ever heard.

"Okay," Cana said. "Levy, your turn."

"Ahah alright," she still sounded flustered. "Gray, truth or dare?"

"Dare," he dully answered.

"Alright, I dare you to...take a selfie and tag DropsOfRain in it."

"WHAT?" he yelped. "YOU'RE KIDDING!"

"Nope," she sounded like she was smirking.

"Gahh," he groaned. "I can't."

"C'mon, Gray," Levy imitated Gray from before.

"Yeah, a dare is a dare," Natsu was definitely smirking.

"FINE!" the boy exasperated. A few moments later he said, "Done. Happy now?"

"Very," Levy said happily.

"Gray, your turn," Cana informed him.

"Lucy," he said. "Truth or dare?"

Lucy froze just as she was going to check out the selfie Gray had posted.

Truth would be safe, but dare is more fun ... with a shaky breath, Lucy picked, "Dare."

"Yes!" Gray whooped. His excitement left her with a strange feeling of dread. "I dare you to _video chat_ with _Natsu_."

"WHAT?" she shrieked with her eyes the size of baseballs.

"Huh?" Natsu questioned.

"AND you must take a screenshot of it and send it to the chat as proof," Gray deviously added.

Lucy was petrified, unable to talk or move.

This isn't real.

Nope.

It can't be.

"Well get on it, you two," Cana said. "You can't video chat while on voice chat. Hang up already."

With a numb hand, she hung up.

Not real— a chat ping brought Lucy back to reality.

"Look, we don't have to video chat if you don't wanna...I mean I know how you get weird, well you're always weird, but you get especially weird every time I suggest it...I could figure out a way to fake it. Like you can send me a pic of yourself and I'll make it look like we video chatted."

But Lucy didn't reply.

Instead, she clicked the video camera button, located on the top right corner of the screen.

Here goes nothing ...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****AHH PLEASE DON'T HATE ME!****

****And by the way, almost all of you want a Natsu POV, but I think I'm gonna have to go with the 3 who said nahh because I completely agree with them. It's more fun not knowing what Natsu is thinking!****

****Thank you again for being so kind!****

****Hope you all survive the cliffy!****

****Thanks for reading!****

18. Chapter 18

****Hiii!****

****Thank you so much for being such cuties!****

****Hope you're all hyped for this chapter!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

To say Lucy was nervous was the biggest understatement of the century.

She thought her heart was going to jump out of her chest.

She had no idea what to do with herself as she waited for him to answer. She fidgeted around for a bit, before deciding to sit stiffly straight.

How long has this been ringing?

And then something happened.

This is it!

She let out a gasp and stared at her screen with a shocked expression frozen on her face.

This can't be ...

Her mouth remained ajar.

He rejected the call...

"HE REJECTED THE CALL!?" she screamed. "WHY?!"

Her heart felt like there was some kind of vice grip clenching on it.

"You rejected it?" was all she could type.

Tears threatened to spill.

She felt so... _humiliated_.

"Yup," he replied back within the same second.

She thought about asking _why_ , but she couldn't do it. She didn't want to know his reasoning. This was already embarrassing enough as it is.

But he was always asking to video chat ...She pushed her hair out of her face, this didn't make sense.

Her hands began to shake...Maybe it had always been a bluff...

And that only made her feel worse.

"Okay," she messaged back.

She put herself as _offline_ and slammed her laptop closed.

A tear trickled down her cheek.

Was she really going to cry over some stupid boy she had never even met?

The answer was _yes_.

She climbed into her bed and curled up into a ball as tears silently spilled.

Rejection sucks.

And to make matters worse, there was an incessant buzzing from Lucy's phone. Probably messages, from the group chat. She made a mental note to delete it later.

Buzz, buzz.

"Shut up!" she shoved her head under her pillow.

But then she froze.

The group chat was on a voice call so then who was messaging...? She grabbed her phone from her night stand.

She inhaled as her eyes widened.

"AHH WHY DID YOU LOG OFF?"

"ARE YOU MAD AT ME?"

"ARGG WHY DO I ALWAYS SAY STUPID STUFF?"

"I DIDN'T REJECT YOU BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO VIDEO CHAT WITH YOU! CUZ TRUST ME, I REALLY, REALLY, REALLY WANT TO!"

"It's just that I don't want the reason we video chat to be because of some stupid dare."

"And I know how nervous you were about it. I just want to make sure you're ready."

"It's like being dared to kiss someone when it's your first kiss or somethin...just doesn't feel right."

"ARGGG I SUCK AT WORDS."

A soft smile was displayed upon Lucy's cheeks and new tears began to drip, but instead of tears of sadness, these were tears of happiness. She felt so relieved and jovial. _He does want to video chat with me!_ She let out a tiny squeal.

"Who's talking about kissing?" she deliberately teased.

"NO ONE IS, YOU WEIRDO!" he wrote back a few seconds later.

"If you say so ;)," she giggled and all sadness had completely faded.

"Luccyyyyy, you're annoyinggg."

"No I'm not ;)," she replied. "So what are we going to do about the dare?"

"Well I'm back on the group call," he wrote. "And they all yelled at me . because they saw that you logged off and as sumed I did somethin to upset you."

"Well you did reject me..."

"FOR GOOD REASONS!"

"So are we off the hook?" she inquired.

"Yeah. Told them you had to go cuz your dad needed you for somethin."

"Ohh. So anything good happening on the chat?"

"Well Erza picked dare and Cana asked her to tell us who she did all her smut stuff with AND GET THIS! ERZA WAS A STAMMERING MESS!"

"Oh my God!" she sent. "I don't believe it!"

"AND SHE DID IT WITH HER BOYFRIEND WHO SHE MET ON _TUMBLR_!"

She ogled at the screen as though it were some foreign entity.

Erza is dating someone she met online?

Maybe this wasn't as taboo as Lucy thought...

"Who's the user?"

"You might not know him. He's always changing his URL, I think it's _TowerOfHeaven_ right now. His name's Jell al."

"Oh!" Lucy said out loud. She recognized his name. He's a very mysterious user who makes these crazy theory posts once every few months and they always turn out to be accurate...

"I know who you are talking about," she wrote. "That's so weird. I can't believe Erza's dating someone she met online."

"Yeah me either," he agreed. "But I guess if you've been talking to someone long enough, I suppose it would be fine."

Her heart stuttered, _Does this mean he's okay with an online relationship_? "Yeah, I agree."

She saw that Natsu was typing and then he would stop and he then typed again and then stopped again and then he finally sent, "Would you ever date someone you met online?"

She gulped, "I wouldn't be opposed to the idea. And yourself?"

"Ehh I don't know...too many weirdos are on the internet and you remind me about that every time we talk."

"HEY!"

":D," was the only thing Natsu replied back.

"Well don't let my weirdness stop you from meeting that special someone :P."

"I have no intentions of letting it."

"Good," she grinned.

"You should go back on the group call. Gray's flipping out about that stalker girl. She saw that he tagged her in that shirtless selfie. It's really funny."

"Alright," Lucy went to the other chat, wondering if she could answer it with her phone.

And to her surprise, she could.

"WE ARE UP TO THE 18TH REBLOG!" She heard Gray cry. "WHY DOES SHE KEEP REBLOGGING IT?!"

"Poor Gray," Levy cooed.

"GRAY-SAMA LOVES JUVIA!' IS WHAT SHE KEEPS TAGGING IT AS!"

Lucy hollered with laughter.

"Lucy's back," Natsu informed the chat. Did he really know her laugh that well?

"Oh!" Levy gasped. "Hi, Lucy!"

"Hey, Lucy," Cana greeted.

"Hi, Lucy," Erza said afterwards.

"Long time, no talk, Lucy," Mira joked.

"I thought Flame for Brains scared you off for good," Gray kidded.

"Ha-ha, so funny," Natsu said dryly.

"Don't worry though, Lucy," Gray continued. "I won't force you to video chat with that freak. I'm changing the dare to myself."

Lucy flushed. Gray wants to video chat with her?

She was about to answer, but someone else beat her to it.

"LIKE HELL YOU WILL!" Natsu roared. "YOU CAN'T CHANGE DARES! THAT'S NOT ALLOWED!"

"Says who?" Gray questioned.

"SAYS-SAYS THE PERSON WHO CAME UP WITH THAT STUPID GAME! IT'S IN THE OFFICIAL RULE BOOK! LOOK IT UP!"

"Where do you come up with this nonsense?" Gray sighed and then he laughed out a, "You're just scared that Lucy and I will hit it off."

"Like that matters to me," Natsu carelessly answered. "I just feel bad for Lucy is all. No one should have to be forced to video chat with a stripping pervert."

"OI!" Gray growled. "AND NO ONE SHOULD BE FORCED TO VIDEO CHAT WITH A PINK HAIRE FREAK WITH A LIZARD AS A PET!"

"ARE YOU SERIOUS?" Natsu yelled. "HAPPY IS A SALAMANDER! IS YOUR HEAD TOO FROZEN FOR YOU TO REMEMBER THAT?"

"Nah," Gray lazily replied. "I just don't care enough to remember."

"YOU'RE JUST A STUPID, EVIL SLYTHERIN!"

"A what?" Gray asked.

"HEY!" Lucy joined in, "NOT ALL SLYTHERINS ARE EVIL! AND DON'T CALL THEM STUPID EITHER!"

"I'm just tryin' to insult that idiot, sheesh," Natsu grumbled.

"Well I don't want House discrimination," she snapped.

"Fine, fine!" he said. "Now where were we...Oh right! STUPID EXHIBITIONIST."

"STUPID PYRO."

"STUPID—"

"GRAY, NATSU!" Erza screamed. "Cut, It. Out. NOW!"

"A-AYE!" they both stuttered.

"EEP!" Mira cried. "Gratsu!"

The two boys let out disgusted groans.

"Really, Mira?" Levy spoke up. "It seemed more like NaLu vs. GrayLu to me..."

"Really, Levy?" Lucy sweat-dropped.

"OH!" Mira squealed. "YOU'RE RIGHT!"

"Ughhhh," both boys moaned.

What a ridiculous bunch, Lucy giggled.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****EEP! PLOT TWIST! AND YOU ALL THOUGHT I WOULD LET THEM VIDEO CHAT SO SOON?! PSHHHH****

****Oh I'm ending my story** _ **Texting Fire** _ **soon and I need a story to replace it so I posted the first chapters to two different stories and it would really mean a lot if you all could check them out and tell me which one you like better!****

****One is called** _ ****The Embers of a Mix Up**** _ ******, which is like a mix of this story and****** _ ****Virtual Flames.**
****** _**

****Summary:**** _ ****Through a strange mix up, Lucy somehow ends up swapping phones with a complete stranger.***
***** _

****And then there's also**** _ ****Quarantine**** _ ****.********

****Summary:**** _ ****Natsu and Lucy end up in Saturday detention, forced to clean up a research lab and through an accidental fight, a tank that contains a deadly bacteria breaks open, causing the school to be on lock down.**** _

****Both are NaLu-centric AU.****

****Thank you all so much for reading!****

****Hope you were still able to enjoy this chapter!****

****Until, next time, see ya!****

19. Chapter 19

****Thank you again for being so sweet!****

****You're seriously the best readers ever!****

****Thank you so much!****

****And to answer a question a lot of you have been asking about...No, Comic Con hasn't been forgotten about!****

****Please enjoy this chapter!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"So what happened in Natsu's turn of truth and dare?" Lucy inquired to the group.

"Nothing," Levy said. "You were supposed to be the one to ask him."

"Ohh," her heart leapt. "Natsu," she took a deep breath, "truth or dare?"

"Hmmm..." he pondered aloud. "Dare."

"I dare you to..." Lucy bit her lip. Everyone else's dares were amusing and funny...She didn't want to be lame... "I dare you to...make Gratsu canon by confessing your undying love to Gray on your _Tumblr_."

"WHATT?!" he screeched.

Everyone bellowed with laughter. Mira let out a happy squeal and Cana muttered something along the lines of, "So hot."

"LUCY, THAT'S CRUEL!" he cried. "I CAN'T DO THAT!"

"A dare is a dare," Gray mocked Natsu's response to people who didn't want to do a dare.

"DAMN IT!" he screamed with frustration. After a minute it, he said, "I POSTED IT. HAPPY?!"

Lucy checked his blog and sure enough, there was a text post that read, "I'M HOPELESSLY IN LOVE WITH _Ice MakeMagic_."

"Very happy," she smirked as she clicked the heart-shaped button to _like_ it.

"GRAY, THE FUCK DID YOU WRITE THAT?" Natsu sounded beyond freaked out.

Lucy checked to see what Gray had written, "Looks like Gratsu is no longer one sided."

She snorted, rolling onto her stomach on her bed.

"What?" Gray innocently asked. "You said Gratsu was one-sided the other day...just clearing it up for our fellow followers."

"UGHHH," Natsu moaned with repulsion.

"Yay! Now I can tell everyone Gratsu is canon!" Mira joyously laughed. "Sorry, Lucy. Looks like your little harem failed you!"

"I WAS NEVER IN A HAREM!" she cried back.

"WHAT THE HELL!" Natsu yelled. "I JUST GOT A MESSAGE FROM THAT _DropsOfRain_ CHICK! AND IT SAYS, _LOVE RIVAL_!"

"Yes!" Lucy cheered with a laugh of relief. "I'm no longer a love rival!"

"SHUTT UPPP, LUCCYYYY," Natsu moaned.

Even though it wasn't the least bit romantic the way he said her name, Lucy couldn't stop the shivers that traveled up and down her spine.

"Oi!" Gray protested. "If you want Lucy to shut up, then how about Lucy and I go video chat now? What do you say, Lucy? Ready to do your dare?"

"Umm..." Lucy nervously giggled as she twisted her blonde hair into a loose pony. She wanted Natsu to be her first...but she couldn't just bluntly say that.

"GRRR, GRAY! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!" Natsu roared. "I THOUGHT WE WERE CANON!"

She could hardly hear the others laughing because she was literally drowning in her own laughter.

She loved her online friends.

And too soon for anyone's liking, everyone logged off.

Lucy was ready for bed anyway as she stood up from her desk. All that laughing wore her out and not to mention the brief bit of tears she shed too...

"Don't log off yet," her laptop panged.

She glanced over the message and her stomach flipped as she saw it was from _Natsu._

Leaning down, she typed back, "Okay."

"Are you really going to video chat with Gray?"

"Why? Nervous I'll steal your boyfriend? ;) ." Lucy teased even though her heart rapidly thudded against her chest.

"Kinda," he jokingly admitted.

"Don't worry," she typed back, "I'll try to keep it PG...actually that's a lie... I mean once he starts stripping and all... And what if his stripping habit is contagious? GAH THIS COULD TURN INTO SOME X-RATED MESS!"

"I want pictures of it! Then I'll send them to _DropsOfRain :)_," he replied back.

"Okay :D," she giggled.

"But in all seriousness...are you going to video chat with that icy bastard?"

"I don't know," Lucy confessed. "I mean I think he was only kidding, but I never did complete the dare..." And with a wobbly fingers, she asked, "Why do you care?"

"I don't," he typed back.

Her heart deflated, "Okay."

Then added, "Good night," not really wanting to continue this conversation.

Instead of saying _Good night_ back, Natsu wrote, "I want to be your first."

Her eyes nearly bugged out their sockets and her jaw smacked the floor.

"WHY WOULD HE TYPE THAT?!" Lucy cried out loud, her hands clutching her cheeks.

As the shock slowly dimmed, she was able to rationalize what he really meant; be her first _video chat_.

"I want you to be my first too."

****XOXOX****

After that night, Lucy hadn't heard from Natsu for the rest of the weekend.

She had voice chatted with Levy to watch the new _Sailor Moon Crystal_ episode and she had chatted with the entire _Skype Group_, but Natsu was missing.

And when Sunday came, Lucy messaged Natsu about when they were going to watch the new _Yamada-kun_, but Natsu hadn't replied back.

So she didn't watch it.

And then a few more days went by, but no word from Natsu.

Not even a new post on his _Tumblr_ either.

The group chat made light of his disappearance; making fake _Lost Persons_ posters with the words, _Missing Assfl ame. Reward: Nothing. Just keep him_.

Lucy tried to join in the jokes, but she couldn't stop that strange, unsettling feeling that lived in her stomach.

She had messaged him several times asking if he was okay, but not one reply...

I hope you're okay, Natsu...

****XOXOX****

It was a late Thursday night and Lucy was bored to tears as she looked for a new anime to watch.

She was debating between _Hunter x Hunter_ and _Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood_, two animes she felt like everyone has watched except herself.

"AHHH which to choose..." She pursed her lips, "eenie meenie miney mo..."

The _Skype_ noise echoed through her speakers as she saw a little message appear on the right hand side of her laptop.

It was from Natsu.

She choked as she hastily clicked on his message.

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH MY LIFE ANYMORE!"

Oh God, her heart sank. Did something bad happen?

"I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THEIR WORLD YET." He continued typing.

EH? She blinked. "What are talking about?"

"PLEASE TELL ME THERE'S ANOTHER BOOK!"

"Another book to what?" she asked, feeling slightly irritated by his cryptic messages.

"HARRY POTTER!"

She gasped, "YOU FINISHED THE ENTIRE SERIES ALREADY?!"

He finished it within a week?! she awed to herself.

"YES!" he replied. "WHAT DO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN DOIN ALL WEEK?!"

"HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW? YOU WEREN'T ONLINE ALL WEEK!" and then she added, "You could have at least told me! I was worried about you, Stupid!"

"You were worried about?" Natsu inquired.

Lucy flushed, "Yes."

"Well you should be! I'M DYING!" He informed her. "I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE DID THAT! FRED!"

Lucy assumed the _she_ was the author, _J.K. Rowling._

"I'LL NEVER FORGIVE HER FOR THAT! AND I LOVED SIRIUS! ARGG WHYYYYY?"

"I feel for you," she sympathized, remembering her own emotions when she read it for the first time.

"I'M SO UPSET! AND I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S OVER!"

"Now you get to watch the movies!" she pointed out.

"YOSH! YOU'RE RIGHT! Will you watch them with me?" he asked. "Cuz it's no fun watchin alone."

"Sure," she messaged back, her insides fluttered. "I have all the movies so we can do a screen share."

"Great!" He typed back. "Right now?"

"Sure," Lucy repeated.

He called her through voice chat.

"So I just checked my _Tumblr_ for the first time all week and guess how many messages I got asking me about Gratsu!?" Natsu said.

"A lot?" Lucy smirked.

"A LOT IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT!" he roared. "THIS IS ALL YOU'RE FAULT, YOU KNOW!"

"You should start a new rumor then," she laughed.

"Like what?" he inquired. "Say I'm dating _you_."

"Don't-don't be ridiculous!" she stammered as her insides turned to mush.

"Yeah, like that would be believable," Natsu kidded. "You should see all the messages _DropsOfRain_ sent me...I don't know if I should be scared not."

"Maybe we should add her to the chat," she suggested.

"LUUCCCYYYY!"

Goosebumps appeared on the back of her neck. "We should start the movie..." Lucy put the disk in her laptop and the duo began their magical journey with the first movie.

****XOXOX****

At school the following day, Lucy chatted on _Skype_ at lunch.

Natsu had sent them a random manga cap of a ridiculous-looking Haru, causing her to laugh out loud.

"What's so funny?" One of her friends snuck up behind her.

"Nothing!" she jolted as she quickly tried to exit the app.

"Was that an anime character?" Her friend asked with twisted amusement.

She sweated, putting a thin smile on her lips, "Is that what it was?"

"Lucy," her friend deadpanned. "You don't like anime, do you?"

"No!" she said too quickly. "Of course not!"

"Then why was that chat thing you were in named _The Weeaboo Trashcan?_"

Lucy's face drained of all color, _she saw the chat name_?

"I don't know," she nervously laughed. "I don't even know what a _weeaboo_ is."

"It's a term anime lovers use," her friend informed her.

"Oh," was all she could say.

"Well it's a good thing you don't like anime. You're wayyy too normal to be one of _those_ people."

She shamefully looked away, keeping her stare focused on the ugly tiled floor of the lunch room.

"Are you guys talking about anime?" Another friend joined in.

"Yeah," Lucy said.

"You know, it's funny how I never befriended someone who likes anime."

Same, Lucy thought bitterly to herself.

"That's because they are all like _weird_, " her other friend said. "And I'm not a judgmental person, but I just don't get it. They're so ughhh," her friend cringed.

"I hate real life," Lucy posted on _Tumblr_.

"What's wrong?" Natsu privately messaged her a few minutes later on _Skype_.

"My friends are trashing people who watch anime as per usual."

"THE HELL? WHAT KIND OF FRIENDS ARE THEY? DON'T LET THEM MAKE FUN OF YOU!"

"They aren't directly making fun of me since they don't know that I'm into anime," she informed him. "I'm in the _anime closet_, so to speak."

"Still it's wrong for them to make fun of people," he replied. "You should stand up to them."

Lucy pouted. Natsu was right, but how could she?

"I can't," she sent.

"Why can't you?" he challenged.

"I'm scared to," she admitted with her gut twisting.

"You shouldn't be scared of your friends."

"They aren't my _real_ friends," she stated. "You are and so are the others in our group chat."

"Well in that case," Natsu typed, "Defend your nakama like the _Fairy Tail_ mage you are!"

Her frown deepened.

If that's the case, she wasn't cut out to be a _Fairy Tail_ mage.

Just as she was about to send that to him, he sent her another message, "Besides, I believe in you."

She sucked in a breath.

He believes in me ...

"And I can't stand it when they draw pictures of those dumb anime characters! They really are freaks..."

Lucy's heart pounded, "Hey," her hands began to shake so she curled them into a balls to hide her nervousness. "You shouldn't make fun of people who like anime."

"What?" Her friends all blinked.

"There's nothing wrong with enjoying something. It doesn't define you as a person. So stop generalizing all anime lovers as _freaks_. It's just plain mean. And I don't tolerate mean people!"

With that said, Lucy picked up her belongings and left the cafeteria.

She didn't realize how bad she was shaking until she tried messaging Natsu, "I did it."

"Knew you could," he messaged back.

"It was all because you believed in me," she blushed as she typed, "so thank you."

"No problem, Lucy :D ."

Lucy ungracefully leaned back into a random locker, clutching her phone to her chest.

Oh how badly she wished Natsu was her friend in real life...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thank you for reading!****

****I had to put in her friends against anime again, because that was literally the exact conversation my friends had the other day with me just awkwardly sitting there.****

****Sighh.****

****Whelp anyway, did you like this chapter?!****

****Thanks for reading!****

20. Chapter 20

****Some of you have mentioned I should give Lucy's friends names and be more descriptive with them, but there is a reason why I don't.****

****I'm trying to paint reality as dull and bland as possible and I'm trying to make the internet world very vibrant—Sort of like what they do in** _**Sword Arts Online**_. Reality is in dull, bleak colors, but life in the game is beautifully colored.****

****And once again, thank you all so much for the kind words!****

****You are amazing!****

****AND OMG CHAPTER 20?!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

It was a rather boring evening for Lucy. No one was on _Skype_ and she was...well really bored...

She scrolled through her dashboard searching for anything interesting and there she saw it.

An ask meme.

It wasn't anything special, nor was it really that interesting, but she was bored and this was her only ray of hope for entertainment.

Fun Asks:

If you had one wish, what would it be?

If you could turn invisible for a day, what would you do?

If you could live in any book series, what series would that be?

If you could be any animal, what animal would you be?

If you were going into battle, what's your weapon of choice?

And so on and so forth...

Lucy waited...and she waited...and she waited a little bit more...but she didn't get a single ask...

"Are you kidding me?!" she exclaimed out loud. "Out of a thousand followers, not one will send me an ask!?"

She leaned back in her chair, crossing her arms over her chest while sulking.

So much for her only entertainment...

She sighed, deciding to search for fanfics to read since she had nothing better to do... After an hour, she checked her blog again and her face lit up. There was a number _one_ next to her inbox.

She elatedly pressed on it.

It was anon that said, " _A_ for the ask thing."

If I had one wish ...Lucy didn't even have to think about it.

Her one wish was to meet Natsu.

But no way in hell could she publish that...So instead, she came up with something pretty lame, "If I had one wish, I would wish for Haru x Elie to be canon...to fall in love."

"LUCYYY," her father called from outside her room. "Time for dinner!"

"Coming!"

She quickly closed her laptop and exited her room.

****XOXOX****

To Lucy's surprise, dinner was pancakes; her favorite meal. "You made me pancakes? Why?"

"Just want to make my daughter smile," Jude beamed as he turned on the TV that was in their kitchen. "Anything you want to watch?"

She shook her head _no_ as she devoured her plate of pancakes.

He settled on the show _Catfish_, a reality show about people in shady online-relationships where one person in the relationship wants to meet the other or find out if the person they've been chatting with is really who they say they are. The host of the show does research and eventually uncovers who the person really is—which, in most cases, is some creepy person...

"I will never understand this show," Her father commented between bites. "I mean how stupid can someone be to fall in love with someone they never met? And just talking to strangers on the internet in general..." He shook his head in disgust.

She silently took another bite.

"Kids these days," he shook his head. "I hope you aren't dumb enough to talk to strangers. I mean God knows what you are doing on that laptop all day...I shouldn't be worried, should I?"

"Of course not!" she denied, slightly panicked...the thought of her father snooping through her laptop scared her. "I'm not stupid!"

"Good," he grinned. "I just want you to stay safe. There are a lot of bad people in this world unfortunately."

"I know," she looked away, feeling bad for lying. "I'm gonna go back to my room."

"Alright," he said.

Well this certainly put a damper on her wish to meet Natsu...

What if Natsu was _catfishing_ her?

Well he was always asking to video chat, if anything, she was the one who seemed like _she_ was catfishing _him_.

But then again, she did try to video chat with him and it was _he_ who denied it...

This is so confusing, she moaned.

****XOXOX****

Back on her laptop, the group chat was once again lively, though Lucy didn't let her presence be known yet.

"I still can't believe I'm going to Comic Con the same day as that stupid Fire Dick," Gray messaged.

"Fight me!" Natsu replied.

"I plan to," he stated.

"I'm going the same day too," Erza replied. "Guess I'll have the pleasure of breaking your fights up in person."

"Truce?" Gray offered.

"Truce," Natsu agreed.

"Good boys," Erza typed afterwards.

Lucy sulked. _Oh right, they all get to meet each other_ ...

"You guys are so lucky," Levy messaged. "I couldn't get tickets."

"Sucks for you, Levy," Cana chimed in.

"Sorry, Levy," Mira wrote.

"EVEN CANA AND MIRA ARE GOING?!" Lucy screamed to herself.

She tugged at her hair...she had been able to get tickets...it was just that she was scared to go alone, but now she felt stupid, "I blew my one and only chance..."

And then she received a private message from Natsu, "Your one wish sucks."

"Does it?" she replied back with her eyebrow raised, _how random._

"KNEW YOU WERE ON!" he messaged and then he called her.

"Hi, Natsu," she greeted, sounding sullen .

"I knew you were lurking!" He said.

"I wouldn't call it lurking..." she blushed. "I just...didn't know what to say so I was waiting for the perfect opportunity to join in."

"Yeah, _lurking_, that's what I said."

She rolled her eyes, "So you don't like my wish?"

"Nah," he said. "There's got to be something less...I don't know... cliché?"

"Well I did sort of lie..." she bit her lip. Was she really going to tell him the truth?

"You lied?" he asked, his voice held amusement.

"Yeah," she swallowed. "It's not my real wish..."

"What's your real wish then?"

"To meet you...in person..." she was blushing so badly, she could feel beads of sweat on her forehead as her body's temperature rose considerably.

Natsu let out a choking noise.

And then followed by silence.

Oh God ...she panicked. _I shouldn't have said that..._

"Natsu?" she tentatively called out to him.

A few seconds later he finally spoke in a quiet, yet yearning voice, "Don't waste your one wish on me, Stupid."

"It wouldn't be a waste," she breathily replied, suddenly finding it hard to breathe.

"I'm not worth it," he said.

Lucy nearly whispered, "I think you're worth it," silently remembering the time Natsu said to her, _of course you're worth it_.

She heard Natsu suck in a breath and for some reason that made Lucy all jittery.

"Tch, Weirdo," was all he said back. "I'll talk to you later... Bye," he abruptly hung up.

But Lucy didn't care.

She had a feeling that she affected him just as much as he affected her...

And another thought popped into Lucy's head...if he's meeting everyone at Comic Con...then there is no way he is catfishing her.

She clasped her hand over her mouth before letting out a loud squeal.

Tonight she would go to bed happy.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Thanks for reading!****

****Sorry the chapters a bit on the short side!****

****But I hope you were still able to enjoy it!****

****Thanks again!****

*****HUGS*****

21. Chapter 21

****Hi!****

****Thanks for always being kind!****

****Hope this chapter brightens your day!****

****Enjoy!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

It was nearing that time of the year, the year that every Haru x Elie shipper looked forward to... _Haru x Elie Week_ .

Lucy didn't know who ran the blog, but for the past few years, they come up with these amazing prompts, in which people either write or draw stuff for.

It was a glorious week, indeed.

This would be her first one though since she hadn't had a _Tumblr_ for the past years, though she had seen all the past work for it and irrevocably fell in love with it.

She dreamt of the day she would get to write her own Haru x Elie Week story.

Except, here she was, staring at the prompts, with blank documents opened in front of her.

She couldn't do it.

There was not one plot that came to her mind...

Hell, she hadn't been able to write for a couple of weeks now...ever since Natsu had commented on her last story about Haru being OOC...

She lost all inspiration.

It was strange, really, how she got tons of comments admiring her story, but Natsu's one negative comment seemed to outshine them all...and by outshine, Lucy meant completely destroyed all her motivation to write.

And she knew she was being ridiculous.

It was constructive criticism, the best kind of criticism there is...but still...she couldn't help but feel like she failed.

So with a sigh, she exited all the documents.

Maybe next year she would participate while she stared longingly at her friends posting about which prompts they already completed and such...

****XOXOX****

"Are you participating in Haru x Elie week? I hope you are because I really like your writing!" An anonymous user asked.

Lucy frowned, "Sorry, Anonny, I won't be participating."

On the _Skype_, Levy asked, "Lucy, you aren't participating in Haru x Elie week?!"

"Nope," she messaged back.

"I thought you would have been all over this event!" Levy typed.

"Haha," was all she could reply back, while she frowned, not wanting to explain why she couldn't.

"Why aren't you participating?" Natsu inquired.

Because you destroyed all my creative energy to write, "Can't think of anything to write."

"You haven't really written anything in a long time, Lucy," Gray messaged.

"Yeah," Erza commented. "I look forward to your writing."

"Really?" Lucy's eyes lit up. Erza was her writing senpai...the fact that she looks forward to Lucy's work had her blushing like a maniac.

"Mhmm," Erza replied.

"Ahh well sorry," she pouted. "I can't think of single thing. And it's not like my writing is any good...I'll just screw up."

"Screw up on what?" Gray messaged.

"Everything! Like characterization for instance..." she sulked, but then her eyes bugged. _Shit! Natsu might realize..._ "Got to go," she logged off without reading anyone's replies.

Her heart was in a frenzy.

She didn't want Natsu to know she was still bothered by his comment.

"A spaz in real life and a spaz on the internet..." she sighed, rubbing her eyes before flopping down on her fluffy, cherry blossom-colored bed.

And without helping it, she went on the mobile app to see if they were talking about her.

"Poor thing," Erza wrote. "I wonder why she's being so critical of her work."

"It's all Ash for Brains' fault," Gray stated.

"OI!" Natsu wrote back. "What makes you say that?"

"You were the one who criticized her characterization of Haru," he informed him.

"THAT WAS SO LONG AGO!" Natsu argued.

"Then how come she hasn't written anything since?" he challenged.

"HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW?"

"She did mention characterization in particular," Levy pointed out. "I think you might be on to something Gray."

"STOP TRYIN' TO MAKE ME FEEL BAD!" Natsu frantically replied. "Besides, it's not like my opinions ever matter much."

"Well you never know how much your words can mean to someone, Natsu," Erza chided. "Especially to Lucy. I can tell your words mean a lot to her."

"No they don't," he refuted.

"Whatever you say, Natsu ;), " Levy teased.

"Whatever," he typed back.

Lucy's face was hot with embarrassment. Why did they have to imply she might like him? And why did they have to be right about it? "Nooo!" she wanted to cry. "Why can't they just butt out of this?!"

And then Natsu privately messaged her, "Am I the reason you aren't participating in Haru x Elie week?"

Her face drained of all color.

What was she supposed to say?

Taking in a large gulp of air, Lucy replied, "Yes, Natsu, of course you're the reason I'm not participating in Haru x Elie week!"

"Haha," he wrote. "Drop the sarcasm. I'm serious!"

"What sarcasm? ;). "

"Lucy!" he typed. "You leave me no choice then..."

She let out a loud, "EEP!" as he called her on Skype. She tentatively answered, putting her phone to her ear. "Hello?"

"Lucy," his voice held no trace of humor, "are you really not participating in Haru x Elie Week 'cuz of me?"

"No," she said too quickly, causing her to grimace.

" Lucy ," he deadpanned.

"May-maybe," she stuttered, looking up at her purple walls. They were too bare for her liking. Maybe she should buy a poster or something.

"Is that why you haven't written anything since...since I made that uhh OOC comment?"

"Maybe," she said again, clamming up.

"Lucyyy, your writing is amazing though," he pleaded. "Why would my dumb comment make you stop writing?"

"I don't know," she confessed. "I...figured you know Haru best...and I feel like I failed..."

"Bull shit," he sighed. "I don't know Haru any better than anyone else. It was just my opinion. I didn't mean for you to take it to heart."

"Sorry," Lucy felt miserable. She was upset that she made Natsu feel bad, she was upset that she was such a baby... and she really wanted this conversation to end...

"ARGG DON'T APOLOGIZE!" Natsu cried. "I'M THE ONE WHO'S TRYIN' TO APOLOGIZE AND NOW YOU'RE MAKIN' ME FEEL ALL SHITTY!"

"Sorry," she apologized again, by accident.

"LUUCCYY!" he moaned. "STOPPP! I'M SORRY, OKAY!" Lucy felt a smile forming on her saddened lips. "YOU'RE THE BEST WRITER OUT THERE! PLEASE DON'T LET MY STUPIDITY STOP YOU FROM WRITING!"

"Natsu," she said gently, but Natsu continued on his rant, "PLEASE DON'T HATE ME! WHY DOES MY OPINION EVEN MATTER?"

Lucy blushed, not believing what she was about to admit, "Because you matter to me."

"I—What?" he choked.

"You're important to me," she continued, trying to keep her voice as even as possible. "And how could I possibly hate you? I mean we are co-owning a salamander together, you know that's an unbreakable bond, in my opinion."

"Lucy..." his voice sounded raspy.

"I'll admit..." Lucy said deliberately slow, "you did kill my writing buzz...and I've had awful writers block since...and it did turn me off from writing for Haru x Elie Week...And I do appreciate constructive criticism in general." She took a deep breath, "It's just that your comment hurt me more than the usual criticism because your opinion means the most to me."

"Lucy..." he said again, but it seemed like he was struggling for words since he didn't say anything else.

"I know a lot of people want me to write for it," she mused. "And maybe I will...but I just need time, so don't push me. Okay?"

"Well—"

"_Natsu_," she begged for him to understand.

She heard him swallow, "Okay, fine."

She smiled, "Thank you, Natsu."

And then Natsu burst out, "UGHH STOP SAYING MY NAME!"

"Why?" her brows furrowed, feeling slightly hurt.

"Becauseee it makes me feel weird!" he groaned.

A mischievous smile settled on her face, "Alright, _Natsu." _

"LUCY!"

" _Natsu_."

"STOP!"

"Okay, _Naatssuu_," this time she purred his name.

"Whyyy are you doing this to mee?!" he moaned.

"Because I like making you feel weird, _Natsu,_ " she giggled with her heart beats increasing.

"I hate you," he glowered.

"Love you too, _Natsu," _ she teased.

She heard him let out a sputtering noise.

Followed by silence...

"Natsu?" She questioned, wondering if he was still there.

"I'M HANGING UP NOW, BYE!"

And then the line went dead.

Lucy's heart was pounding so fast, it was almost painful.

What just happened?

She threw her phone far away from her on her bed, replaying their conversation in her head...

Suddenly she felt inspired to write...

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Hehe Natsu is such a dork, isn't he?!****

****Thanks for reading!****

****Hope you all have a lovely day/night/morning!****

*****Hugs*****

22. Chapter 22

****For reaching 1k reviews, I decided to give you all a present that you have been asking a while for :D****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Natsu was anxious today... Well, he was always anxious these days, but today he felt _extra_ anxious.

What was he anxious about exactly? Well it might have something to do with the weird blonde girl he talks to on the internet...

Lucy ...

How did she always manage to make him do things he wouldn't normally do?

He found himself waiting for her to log on, checking her blog to see if she's alright, while secretly hoping she had posted another selfie, reading through old group messages that he had missed to see if she had messaged anything...

Hell, he began to wonder if it was normal for people's hearts to pound at such an intense pace... And are hearts supposed to skip beats so often?

Maybe he developed an anxiety disorder... yeah, because that's the only thing that it could be...

To add to his newfound anxiety, Natsu could never tell if she was flirting with him. But why did that even matter? And why did that make him anxious?

He couldn't answer that.

The scariest part of all was that he couldn't tell if _he_ was _flirting_ with _her_.

I love you too, Natsu, his face instantly flamed up like Haru's fire magic...

He knew it was only a joke, but still... "ARGHHH," He shoved his face into his hands as he stumbled over to Happy's tank.

Natsu tapped on the tank's glass with his index finger, "What should I do, Happy?"

The salamander stared him straight in the eye.

"Yeah, I think so too," he sighed. "Just don't know how _she_ will feel about that..."

****XOXOX****

Haru x Elie Week had finally passed and Lucy was quite impressed with herself. She had managed to finish each prompt before the day they were due and her stories received tons of praise.

Natsu had commented on each story, giving his own praise and putting major emphasis on how in-character everyone, especially Haru, was.

It made her smile like a lovesick idiot.

Everyone else's work for the week was amazing as well. Wendy and Levy killed it with their drawings and Erza, of course, wrote some pretty interesting smut for each day.

It had been a fun week and today was the last day of it.

But that didn't matter anymore as Lucy and the others decided to voice chat.

They were waiting for the new episode of _Fairy Tail_ so they could watch together just like they had been doing.

"Lucy," Levy called out, "Your stories were phenomenal! It's like you're a professional writer or something."

"Thanks," she sheepishly laughed, "though I think that's a bit of an extreme compliment! But then again, I could say the same about your artwork..."

"Ahh thank you, Lucy!" Levy gushed.

"Lucy!" Cana called. "YOUR FINAL PROMPT!" Her face heated up...the final prompt had been _intimacy_. "THAT WAS SO HOT! I COULD KILL YOU FOR LETTING THEM GET INTERRUPTED!"

She nervously chuckled, "Sorry! I couldn't go through with it!"

"BUT YOU MADE THEM _DO_ ALL OF THAT STUFF! AND THEN YOU JUST ENDED IT _THERE_?! HOW COULD YOU?!" Cana continued.

"Sorry!" she apologized again, though she couldn't wipe the grin off her face.

"But it was still really hot," Mira said cheerfully.

"You did a great job," Erza complimented.

Lucy's smile doubled in size, "Thanks—"

"For someone who has absolutely no sexual experience whatsoever," Erza finished.

her smile faltered, "—I think..."

"It was so hot," Mira spoke up again, "I bet it made Natsu and Gray blush."

Cana snorted, "I bet it made their nose bleed."

Lucy choked on her own spit.

"CANA!" Gray yelled and Lucy could hear Natsu sputtering in the distance.

"Looks like I was right," she barked out a laugh.

Both boys continued sputtering while the girls, minus Lucy, hysterically laughed at their pain.

Lucy, however, clamped her hands over her eyes. Her body felt like it was on fire from the awkwardness of this conversation.

And to make matters worse, her bedroom door barged open. "DAD!" she cried. "WHY DID YOU BARGE IN?"

"Sorry, got worried," he said. "I was knocking and calling your name for a while..."

"You were?" Lucy blinked, surprised she hadn't heard his knocks.

He nodded, "But now I know why you couldn't hear me," his gaze shifted to her laptop.

The group chat went dead silent.

"Sorry," she apologized, scratching her forehead in a rather awkward manner.

"You should be," he said sternly. "It's a nice night and you are spending it in your room all by yourself! Why don't you invite your friends over?" And then he looked back at her laptop. "Come on over, Lucy's friends! If you need our address it's—"

"DAD!" she let out a panicked wail. "I'M PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF MAKING PLANS FOR MYSELF!"

He chuckled, "Just trying to help."

"But your help isn't necessary," she tried to calm down her rapidly beating heart as she had avoided a huge disaster of letting people on the internet have her address...

"So why aren't you all hanging out?" he inquired to the laptop.

"It's a bit complex, Sir," Erza said.

"Oh?" her father raised a thin brow.

"Sorry," Levy said afterwards.

"Well I can't say I'm not disappointed," he pouted. "I was really looking forward to meeting the friends who make my daughter so very happy."

"Maybe one day, Old Man," Natsu wistfully said.

"Natsu, right?" Jude asked.

"Yep!" Natsu merrily answered.

With bemusement, Lucy asked, "You remembered their names?"

Her father sheepishly rubbed the back of his head, "Afraid not. I only seem to remember Natsu's name."

"Well I am the most important person..." the boy boasted.

Everyone let out a sound of protest in response.

"Most important?" Jude quirked.

"Yep!"

"Are you the most important because you plan on dating my daughter?" Lucy's father grinned at her eye-bugging expression.

"I—WHAT?!" Natsu exclaimed in utter disbelief.

Everybody broke out laughing.

"You set yourself up for that one, Natsu," Gray wheezed through his laughter.

"We will have to meet first before I give you my permission, Boy," her father continued grinning so Lucy knew that he was joking, but to Natsu, he probably sounded serious.

"I'M NOT—" Natsu started, but was cut off.

"Lucy's father," Mira spoke gently. "Natsu can't date your daughter because he's dating Gray, the other boy who was talking before."

"MIRA!" Natsu sounded appalled.

"Really, Mira?" Gray sounded disgruntled.

Her father blinked, "Oh! I'm sorry! I had no idea!"

"It's alright," Mira said. "Though you weren't too far off. You see, Natsu liked Lucy, but Lucy was dating Gray, his best friend. But Natsu still fought long and hard for her love and it paid off since Lucy had developed feelings for Natsu. But because Natsu and Gray are best friends, it tore her apart on the inside. So she ended things with Gray and brought a new guy into the mix, Loke."

Lucy's eye twitched.

"Natsu and Gray were so upset that they came to each other for comfort...and before we knew it, Gratsu was formed! And now Lucy is happily dating Loke, or as we call them, _LoLu_!"

"Lo-ke?" her father stared blankly.

"THAT'S NOT TRUE!" Lucy screamed, her face looked as though she spent too much time in the sun.

"Lucy," he shook his head. "This is too complex for a man of my age..."

"IT'S NOT COMPLEX BECAUSE IT'S ALL LIES!" her hands flailed all over.

"WHAT SHE SAID!" Gray and Natsu frantically yelled.

"Ah...well I will leave you to your friends, Lucy," he smiled. "Night, everyone."

"Good night," they chorused back.

"And Natsu, Gray," her father sounded stern. "Young love is an exciting and thrilling adventure and where there's adventure, there is a lack of safety...So remember, always use protection. Otherwise you might wind up with an STD and—"

"DAD, GET OUT!" she jumped out of her seat and shoved him out the door. "Sorry about that..." she apologized to the laptop. Why was tonight so awkward?

"It's not your fault," Gray sighed. "It's Mira's."

"I hate you, Mirraaa," Natsu groaned.

The girl in question giggled, "I couldn't resist."

Lucy let out a laugh, just as they started the new episode of _Fairy Tail._

It really was ridiculous how her father believed Mira's strange fabrication of reality...

****XOXOX****

Lucy's Saturday was pretty busy. Her father made her run errands with him and she had tons of homework, but before she did all that, she had posted a oneshot, surprising herself that she was still able to write after Haru x Elie Week.

She was excited to see how her story was doing so she went on as soon as she was free. She saw that it gathered tons of notes, making her feel all giddy on the inside.

But now she had nothing to do...

She had tons of animes and mangas she could catch up on, but that didn't appeal to her. What she really wanted was some fluffy OTP crap. So she decided to go on her favorite writing site that she hadn't been on in what felt like eons ...

She scrolled through, looking for a story that appealed to her and then she saw it.

A story that certainly appealed to her alright...

Because it was _her_ story.

Someone by the name of _RavensTail_ stole her work.

"You have got to be kidding me," she felt dazed as she numbly clicked on the person's profile.

She gasped.

Every story this person had published was Lucy's writing that she had posted on _Tumblr_ ...

She immediately reported the account, but how long would it take for the account to be taken down? _Would the account_ even be taken down? So she decided to message the person, "I would appreciate it if you would take down my stories you stole from me. Thank you."

The person messaged back almost right away, "Um excuse me, this is my writing. Not yours."

Her heart twisted.

It wasn't fair...

She could keep arguing with this person, but what good would that do?

Before she could delve on it further, her _Skype_ panged, "Yo, we are voice chatting if you're interested."

It was from Natsu.

Tears welled up in her eyes, but she pushed them back. "Okay."

"Yo, Lucy!" Natsu was the first one to greet her.

"Hey," her voice sounded dead.

"What's wrong?" he inquired, but his question was washed out as everyone else greeted her.

As the chat went on, Lucy remained quiet.

No one seemed to realize, except for one person.

"Why are you so quiet, Lucy?" Natsu asked.

"I'm not," she quickly answered.

"Yes you are," he argued. "Right now you would normally be laughing at me to the point where you can't breathe..."

"Guess you aren't that funny tonight," she her tone was dry and bitter and quite frankly it stung.

"Ouch," Cana laughed.

"Oi!" he sounded hurt.

"What?" Lucy sneered. "You aren't always funny, Natsu. In fact, tonight you're just annoying!" She regretted the words the second they left her mouth. She didn't mean to snap at him...but she hated that he saw right through her...and she was letting out her frustration for her stupid problem...

Natsu let out a startled noise, but didn't say anything.

"That was unusually mean, Lucy," Mira chided.

"I have to agree," Erza said. "Natsu didn't deserve that."

She sulked into her seat, "I'm sorry, Na..." Her voice cracked at his name. "I didn't mean to snap at you..." A tear dribbled down her cheek.

"It's-It's okay, Lucy," Natsu sounded tense. "You're not...like cryin', are you?"

"No," she let out a little sniff.

"Liar," he gently teased.

"Aww, Lucy," Levy cooed. "What's wrong?"

Lucy's body quivered as she let the words rush out of her, "Someone's been stealing my writing. And I messaged them about it and they said it's their work and I also reported them but it's been like an hour and nothing's happened!"

"Shit," Gray muttered. "We will figure out something!"

"Aww," Mira sounded gloomy.

"Something like this happened with my art," Levy shared. "But Gajeel was able to get the person to take it down..."

"Who's Gajeel?" Cana quirked, straying off topic.

"No one!" Levy hastily answered.

"There's got to be something we can do," Erza murmured.

What could they possibly do? Harass the person until they take it down? It just seemed futile.

"I'm gonna go," she sniffled, not wanting to talk about this any longer. "Bye."

Just as she laid her head against her cool desk, a loud pang made her jump back up.

Natsu had privately messaged her asking for the link to the person's account. Lucy obliged, sending the godforsaken link to him.

And it was literally only minutes later, Natsu replied, "Done."

"Done?" she blinked.

"Done," he repeated.

Lucy clicked on the link and to her astonishment, the page that popped up read, "Error. Account does not exist."

Her jaw had smacked the floor as she typed, "How did you do it?"

"Does it matter?" he inquired.

No, it doesn't matter.

She didn't know what to type so she settled for a "Thank you," but it didn't feel like it was enough...

"No prob, Lucy :D ."

Her heart was in such frenzy, she felt like it was going to explode.

How could she show him the intensity of her gratitude?

Her eyes lingered on one little button.

The button that happened to be shaped like a video camera...

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****AHHH CLIFFYY!****

****DON'T HATE ME!****

****AND OMG NATSU POV!****

****Hehe thank you again for the 1K!****

****You're the best readers ever!****

****Also, I posted a story for NaLu Week, though it contains spoilers of Tartarus to the current manga chapter.****

****And I also posted a oneshot called _Names and Kiss_es,_ if any of you are interested. ****

****Thanks for reading!****

****I'm so nervous about this chapter :0****

****Hope you all like it!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

She clicked it.

And suddenly it felt like that day she had originally tried to video chat with him...

She waited and waited, wondering if he would pick up this time. Her leg bounced up and down, her teeth were chewing on her bottom lip, and her fingers drummed her desk.

And then something happened; the screen froze.

"NO!" she rubbed her finger back and forth on the mouse pad, hoping to see it unfreeze. "Why does this have to happen right now?"

To her relief, the laptop unfroze and the video button was still ringing...

And then it stopped and so did her heart.

She wasn't ready for this...

Oh God.

She abruptly inhaled as the screen revealed a boy around her age with spiky hair that was colored a soft pink shade, clad in a green t-shirt.

His slanted eyes were pulled in showing slight confusion.

Her eyes drifted down to his lips and watched as they began to move, "Lucy?"

Her heart jolted.

I watched him say my name.

"Luccyy?" he repeated, but this time he dragged out her name.

A smile was playing on his lips.

"Natsu," she breathed out. "Hi."

He looked amused as he waved and said, "Yo!"

Lucy continued to ogle at him. _He is real_... "You're real..."

Natsu let out a chuckle, "And you're weird."

Her heart clenched. It was one thing to _hear_ him laugh, but it was another thing to _see_ it.

Her heart wanted to explode.

"You're real..." she said again in her daze.

"Errr..." he scratched the top of his head, looking lost.

"Sorry," she could feel herself blushing.

"No worries," he smiled, a smile that managed to make her heart thump a mile a minute. "So...you called me..." he said dumbly.

"I—yeah," she tugged at a strand of her hair.

She could see Natsu's eyes watching her twirl her hair around her finger. Feeling self-conscious, she immediately stopped.

"Why?" he asked.

Lucy sputtered, "Well...I...you see...I wanted to..." she took a deep breath and observed Natsu raising his brow. Deciding to end her miserable fumbling, she smiled sweetly and said, "Thank you, Natsu."

Natsu gaped at her and she could see a rush of red flooding to his cheeks.

Was he blushing?

"_Thank you_ for what?" he inquired, his voice sounded uneven.

"For getting rid of that jerk's profile," she explained.

"Ohh, right," he looked as though that had completely slipped his mind. "No problem!"

But how did he do it? she wondered. Was he some kind of hacker?

"So should I be worried?" she playfully smirked.

"Of course not!" Natsu's face flared with anger. "I won't let that person or anyone else, for that matter, steal your stuff!"

She could feel her heart turning to goo, "Thanks. But that's not what I meant."

"Huh?" he blinked.

"I meant should I be worried about you? Like you got that person's page down within minutes...Are you a hacker?"

Natsu laughed, causing her heart to have a minor implosion, "I wish."

Her eyes widened, "You're not a hacker?"

"Nahh," he lazily grinned, leaning back in his seat with his arms resting behind his head.

"Then how did you do it?" Lucy's hands grasped the edge of her desk.

"I know a guy," he shrugged. "_ArchiveMage_". Ever hear of him?"

"No," she shook her head.

"Well he's like this awesome computer wiz," Natsu stated. "There ain't nothin' he can't do."

"Can he find out who an anon is?" she asked.

"Yup," he grinned, but then his grin faltered, "The only annoyin' thing is that he charges too much..."

Charges too much? He didn't... Lucy gasped.

"What?" he looked bemused as he tilted his head to the side.

"You paid him to take down that site?"

Natsu choked, but quickly recovered and said, "You really think that's likely?"

His face was bright red, giving her the answer she needed.

"Why would you do that for me?" she asked.

"Because you were upset," he grumbled, looking away from the camera.

Lucy giggled at his dismay.

And then Natsu whipped his head back towards the screen. His eyes were wide with shock, "You laughed!"

"I did," she laughed again.

His eyes went even wider, "I've wanted to see you laugh for so long..."

Her heart jumped, "Well now you have."

"ARGGHH," Natsu shoved his face into his hands and groaned.

"What's wrong?" she inquired, confused by his odd gesture.

"Nothing," he moaned. "Nothing is wrong. Everything is just perfect."

"Okay," Lucy found herself laughing once again out of pure amusement.

He looked ridiculous with his face in his palms; he looked _cute_.

She found herself blushing again, "Thank you for paying that guy to take down that website for me... That's the sweetest thing anyone's ever done for me... I wish you hadn't. I feel bad."

Natsu pulled his hands away and said, "Don't feel bad. He gives me a special discount since we're kinda friends."

"I want to be his friend," she wistfully sighed. "Then I can find out who all those stupid, mean anons are. What was his URL again? _ArchiveMage?_"

"DON'T MESSAGE HIM!" he looked panicky.

"Hmm?" she blinked. "Why not? He seems like he could be a useful friend..."

"He's annoyin'," he scoffed, crossing his arms over his chest, bringing Lucy's attention to his muscular biceps. "Flirts

with anything that has boobs..."

"Oh?" she raised a brow. "And that's a problem because...?"

"Be-because you get annoyed with flirty guys, right? Like when Loke flirts with you!" he argued.

"Yeah, but I don't know...I might make an exception. I mean a computer hacker sounds pretty hot..." she winked.

Natsu looked away, "Tch, whatever."

She chuckled at his annoyance, though she was really curious to _why_ he was annoyed.

Deciding it was best not to ask about that, Lucy, instead, asked, "So do I finally get to meet Happy?"

Natsu's face perked up as he looked back at her, "I'll go get him!"

He scrambled out of his chair and Lucy got to see what he was fully wearing; green t-shirt with orange shorts that had a design of flames. She wasn't going to comment on his weird fashion, especially since it was pretty late and it could very well be his pajamas...But what was his time zone? Lucy had always assumed they were in the same one...but what if she was wrong?

She could see the rest of his bedroom now that Natsu had vanished from the camera.

His bed was unmade and there were clothes tossed on the floor.

He had a dragon poster on his wall and a _Fairy Tail_ poster as well.

She could hear Natsu speaking, "C'mere, Happy. I have someone I want you to meet! Good boy!"

He reappeared and sat down in his chair, "Lucy, I would like you to meet Happy." He stuck his arm out and on top of it was a liz—salamander.

"Aww!" Lucy clasped her hands over her mouth. "Nice to meet you, Happy!"

Happy stared at Lucy.

"Say _hi_ , Happy," Natsu instructed the salamander. Happy, however, turned to face him. "No look the other way!" Natsu went to turn Happy around, but Happy was too quick.

He raced up the boy's lightly tanned arm and climbed onto his face, "HAPPY!" Natsu cried. "GET OFF!"

Lucy watched with pure joy as Natsu tried to grab the salamander, but every time he almost caught Happy, Happy managed to crawl away at the last second. "GRR! C'MON!"

Tears poured down her cheeks.

So this was what she had been missing out on...

Happy climbed on top of his nose.

"SEE WHAT I HAVE TO DEAL WITH?!" he exclaimed, waving his hands all over.

Lucy continued laughing.

"LUCCYYYY, IT'S NOT FUNNY!" he chastised as he almost caught Happy, but failed again.

"I have to disagree," she said between laughs.

"Mean!" he huffed. "C'MON, HAPPY! ENOUGH!"

The salamander had settled over Natsu's eyes.

Lucy let out another cry of laughter, this time she doubled over, nearly falling out of her desk chair.

"STOP LAUGHING!" he demanded, but it only made her laugh harder.

She watched as Happy crawled up his forehead and onto the top of his head.

"About time," Natsu muttered, wiping his face with his arm. "He's a nightmare."

"I think he's cute," she grinned.

"Of course you do," he sweated. "Wait until you meet him..."

She froze. _Wait until you meet him..._

Does this mean Natsu wants to meet her?

But her thoughts were interrupted as Natsu let out a loud yelp, "GET OUT OF MY SHIRT!" He was grasping all around his chest, Lucy could see Happy's slight outline bulging as he crawled away from Natsu's hands.

Natsu broke out laughing, "THAT-THAT...TICKLES! ST-STOPP!"

She rested her head against the back of her hands, with her elbows perched on the desk.

"GOT YOU!" Natsu held the salamander in his hand. "Back to the cage..." He briefly left the screen.

When he came back, he let out a deep sigh, "He's annoying."

Lucy was too busy laughing to answer.

Natsu grinned at her. "I like watching you laugh," he mused.

That sobered her up, "Thanks."

He was about to say something else, but she could hear someone calling him from the distance.

"I got to go..." he frowned, looking towards his door.

"Okay," he tried not to look as disappointed as she felt.

"I don't want to go," he looked pained, while his words made Lucy want to squeal. His name was called again. "I'M COMING, SHEESH!"

"Bye, Natsu," Lucy waved.

"Would you want to do this again soon?" Natsu asked, his coal-dark eyes looked hopeful.

"I think I would," Lucy beamed with her caramel eyes gleaming.

She could see Natsu's Adam's apple move up and down.

Then he shook his head and smiled, "Yosh! Can't wait."

And then he hung up.

Lucy swallowed...How many times had she heard him say _yosh_? Now she got to see him say it?

She rubbed her forehead.

Her heart was still pounding erratically.

She had video chatted with Natsu...

What is life?

XOXOX

* * *

AHH I ACTUALLY LET THEM VIDEO CHAT!

I hope you all weren't disappointed :3

And the lovely _ **Moonlitember** _ **drew me amazing fanart for this story! If you want to check it out, go to my tumblr and go to my** _ **Story Art** _ **link on the top, I have it tagged there :)**

Thanks for reading!

24. Chapter 24

Is it bad that I'm updating so quickly? ;)

But you are all so awesome, how could I not give you a quick update?!

And it's a long chapter, yay!

Please enjoy!

* * *

XOXOX

Sunday morning Lucy awoke to her father telling her he had a last minute business meeting and he wouldn't be back until dinner time.

Lucy was fine with that for the most part, except he had woken her up at 7 a.m. and now she couldn't fall back asleep.

So instead, she showered and got ready for the day, a day of doing nothing that is...She had sort of cut ties with her friends from school after she had told them off.

Though they would still text her occasionally, asking for plans, but she would always decline.

What's the point in hanging out with people I don't like_? she thought as she blow dried her damp blonde hair.

She put the blow dryer down and brushed her hair, looking at herself in the mirror.

But now I'll never leave my house unless my father wants me to go with him somewhere...

She frowned at her reflection.

A double edge sword...

She could hear her laptop ringing with new messages from the group chat. "They're already up?" She raced out of her bathroom and quickly clothed herself in a magenta skirt with a gray V-neck.

But she froze.

Natsu.

Did they really video chat last night, or was it all a dream?

A part of her knew it was real... _he was real_.

Her heart hammered.

How was she supposed to act around him?

It wasn't like anything happened, right? So she had no reason to be freaking out.

And yet here she was, nervously pacing back and forth.

"C'mon, Lucy!" she pep talked. "You can do this!"

She sat down at her desk and clicked on _Skype_. "Oh!" she gasped, as she saw that they were voice chatting.

Without hesitation, she joined the call.

"Mannnn," Cana sluggishly dragged out, "I was sooo wasted last night."

"There's a surprise..." Gray muttered.

"You really shouldn't drink so much, Cana," Levy lectured.

"Ohh shush, Levvyyy," Cana scoffed.

"Levy's right," Erza stated. "Frequent drinking can be dangerous."

Lucy decided now was the right time to join in, "Well as my mother used to say, a glass of red wine a day keeps the doctor away."

"HAH! Thank you, Lucy!" Cana said as though Lucy were some sort of angel.

"I doubt Cana's drinking red wine," Levy murmured.

"Same," everyone agreed in union, _including_ Cana, herself.

"Hi, Lucy," Mira was the first to greet her.

"When did you get on?" Gray inquired.

"Just now," she informed him.

"Well the whole groups here now," Levy said happily.

Her eyes widened, _Natsu's on_?

"Flame Brain is missing," Gray pointed out.

She let out a breath she didn't realize she had been holding, her startled heart slowly returned back to normal.

"Oh right!" Levy giggled. "How could I possibly forget? It was much too peaceful..."

"No worries, Levy," Mira beamed. "I forgot as well. And Gray only remembered because, you know, him and Natsu are—"

"Mira, if you say anything _Gratsu_ related," Gray interrupted, "I'm going to kick you out of this chat."

Lucy and Levy broke out in hysterical laughs.

"Well it _is_ kind of suspicious you were the only one to remember..." Cana droned.

"Guess they have a special relationship," Erza murmured.

"Who knew?" Lucy joined in the teasing.

"I did!" Mira sounded elated.

"Girls are annoying," he muttered.

Everyone, besides Gray, laughed.

"Yooo," a new voice joined the chat. A new voice that made Lucy's heart rate spike up again.

"Hi, Natsu," Mira was the first to greet him just like she had been the first to greet Lucy.

"Great, Natsu's here," Gray said dryly.

"Oi!" he growled. "You wanna go, Ice Brains?"

"Yeah, I wanna—" Gray started.

"Don't you dare finish that sentence, Gray," Erza barked.

"Ay-Aye," he stuttered.

Then after, she said in a very sweet voice, that it came out kind of creepy, "Hello, Natsu."

"H-Hi," Natsu stuttered just like Gray did.

"Yoooo, Natsssuuuu," Cana slurred.

"Hey, Cana," he sounded amused.

"Don't mind her," Levy quickly said. "She had a rough night. Oh and hi!"

"I had a feeling," Natsu chuckled. "And hey!"

Lucy remained quiet.

She wasn't able to speak for some reason. It was like her mouth was glued shut.

It's only Natsu! She told herself.

"Lucy's not on?" Natsu inquired.

"She was a minute ago," Gray mentioned.

"Wonder where she went..." Mira pondered.

She was paralyzed with fear, but she knew she had to speak now, otherwise it would be pretty suspicious...

Sucking in a breath, she said, "I'm here. Hi, Natsu."

"Hey," was all he said to her, causing her to falter. _Hey? _That's all I gets?_ To her dismay, it wasn't even an upbe at _hey._ "So what were you all talkin' 'bout before?"

"The usual," Gray sighed.

"And that is..." Natsu pushed.

"Gratsu, of course," Mira said cheerfully.

"Gah, sorry I asked," he groaned.

"Speaking of Gratsu," Levy said, "Erza, what's it like to be in an online relationship?"

This perked Lucy's interest.

"Well it's kind of painful, but painful in a good way," Erza said slowly. "The distance is the painful part, but when you finally meet up...it's like falling in love all over again."

"That sounds nice," Levy's voice was filled with both yearning and melancholy. "So how did it happen exactly? Like how did you and Jellal's relationship develop?"

"Ooh why are you so curious, Levy?" Cana asked. "Could it be that you have fallen for someone online?"

"N-No!" Levy stammered. "I'm-I'm just asking for a friend."

Lucy didn't buy Levy's lie...she was definitely going to interrogate Levy later...

"Would that friend happen to be Lucy?" Mira quirked. "She so desperately wants an online-relationship..."

Her face changed colors, "NO THAT FRIEND IS NOT ME! AND WHO EVEN SAID I WANT AN ONLINE-RELATIONSHIP?"

"You wouldn't date someone you met online?" Natsu asked. The curiosity in his voice made her stomach churn. "I thought you said you weren't against that idea or somethin' like that."

"I-I," she sputtered, her mouth went dry like a desert.

"May I answer Levy's question already?" Erza's patience had run out.

"Go ahead," she gulped, relieved that she didn't have to reply to Natsu.

"Jellal and I met on _Tumblr_," the girl began. "He had followed me first and I instantly followed him back...he kind of fascinated me with those strangely amazing theories for _Fairy Tail_. So I decided to message him to discuss a few theories I had of my own. And then we exchanged _Skypes_ so that we could talk easily."

She took a breath before continuing, "And soon we started voice chatting and we had stopped talking about _Fairy Tail_ and began to talk about our personal lives. And then we video chatted and after a few of those he asked me to be his girlfriend."

"Awww," Levy cooed.

"That's sweet," Mira awed.

"Erza, you're supposed to _try_ the guy out first," Cana chided.

Lucy, however, could only remain quiet.

Why did Erza's story sound so eerily familiar?

"That's a nice story," Gray commented.

And Lucy couldn't help but notice that Natsu had remained quiet just like she had...

"You know what?" Gray said. "I'm going to take things to the next level with Lucy and put an end to Gratsu."

"Huh?" Natsu blurted.

"He doesn't mean that, Natsu," Mira whispered. "Gratsu will forever be canon."

"Lucy," Gray called to her, as he ignored Mira, "let's video chat."

Lucy let out a nervous giggle, uncertain of what to say, but she was saved from a response.

"Why do you want to video chat with her?" Natsu sounded leery.

"'Cuz she never completed her dare," Gray simply answered. "Is now a good time, Lucy?"

"Uhh I guess?" Well her dad wasn't home, so it seemed like the perfect time.

"Gray, remember your clothes," Erza warned.

"I'm not a perv," Gray scoffed.

"Coulda fooled me," Natsu said grumpily.

"Have fun, you two," Mira said brightly.

Lucy hung up on the chat, feeling all numb.

Was she really about to video chat with Gray?

And before she could process anything, Gray sent her a video chat request and she, with slight hesitation, accepted.

In the square box, a boy appeared, much different in appearance than Natsu. This boy had raven-black hair with beautiful dark blue eyes. She was surprised for that she had always thought his eyes were a black-brown.

More to her surprise, Gray was wearing clothes; a button down shirt.

A smile played on his lips, "Hi, Lucy."

"Hi, Gray," she smiled back.

"This is so weird," he marveled. "I never video chatted before..."

"This is only my second time," she admitted, though purposely keeping quiet that Natsu had been her first. "But it's weird for me too."

"Glad you think so too," he laughed. Afterwards, he said, "It's good to know you look exactly like your photos," he mused. "Thought for sure you edited them."

"Hey!" she glared at him. "That's rude!"

"Sorry!" He put his hands up in defense. "Just thought you were too pretty to be real..." And then he blushed at what he had just admitted. "I mean...you...I...Never mind..."

She giggled. Gray looked cute when he was all flustered.

Something strange dawned on her... She felt so calm and chill talking to Gray...Natsu, on the other hand, made her feel like she was on fire.

"Well I'm glad you look like your photos too," she smiled.

"I wonder if everyone else looks like their photos as well," he pondered.

"Me too."

"Don't tell anyone, but I'm really curious if Natsu really has pink hair."

Lucy broke out in laughter.

Out of all things Gray wanted to see...It was Natsu's hair?

"What?" He glared at her, crossing his arms over his chest. "And don't you dare say _Gratsu_ ..."

"It's really pink," she informed him through her laughter. "I saw it with my own eyes yesterday when we—EEP!" She slapped her hands over her mouth. She didn't mean to admit that. _Oh God..._

Gray's face twisted into pure confusion, "What do you mean you saw it with your own eyes?"

She rubbed the top of her head, "I—we—I don't know!"

His eyes widened as he let out an accusation, "You two video chatted yesterday."

"No!" Lucy denied, pressing her palms flat against her desk.

"Liar," Gray smirked. "So who called whom?"

She hung her head as she confessed, "I called him."

He let out a gasp, "Really? Damn...I thought for sure it would be the other way around..."

"Sorry," her face heated.

"Ehh, whatever," he was smiling again. "So what did you two do?"

She pursed her lips, "Hmmm...well he played with Happy for a bit and that was it really..."

He snorted, "Him and that stupid salamander..."

Lucy let out an excited gasp, "You called Happy a _salamander_!"

He chuckled, "I only call Happy a _lizard_ to rile that fire dork up."

She laughed, "I should have known." And then she decided to start up an actual conversation, not wanting to talk about Natsu any longer, "So what's it like where you are?"

"Kind of cold," Gray stated. "I'm in the Northern Continent right now...Visiting my parents' graves."

"Oh, Gray," she put a hand to her mouth. "I'm sorry..."

"Ehh don't be," he put a smile on his face. "They died when I was young...Murdered by some bastard by the name of _Deliora._"

"I lost my mother," she stated, feeling the need to share.

"I remember you saying that in your _Accent Challenge_ tape," he said. "Guess that's why I felt I could talk to you."

"Gray..." she felt touched.

"I haven't told many people about that..."

"Thank you," Lucy said softly, "for confiding to me."

"You know what," Gray said as his fingers started to unbutton the top button of his shirt. "Video chatting is a lot of fun."

"Yeah," she agreed as she watched him move down to the second button and then to the third... A vein throbbed on her forehead. "Gray, what are you doing?"

"Hmm?" He looked down at his hands. "DAMN IT! How does that always happen?"

"How do you even develop a stripping habit?" she cringed at the thought of herself suddenly undressing without any conscious awareness to it...

"I don't even know," Gray sighed as he buttoned his shirt back up. "Think we should head back to the regular chat?"

"Yeah, otherwise they'll think something kinky is going on..." Lucy shivered.

"Right," he shivered back. "It was nice to see you, Lucy."

"Likewise," she beamed.

And then they hung up.

Lucy went back to the regular chat, but to her disappointment, the call had ended.

****XOXOX****

"Almost time for _Yamada-kun_," Natsu messaged Lucy. "Want to voice chat?"

"Sure," she messaged back and picked up his call the second it appeared.

"So how was video chatting with that stupid stripper?" he asked as his greeting.

"It was nice," she admitted.

Her heart sped up.

Why did Natsu want to know?

Maybe he's jealous ... _Nahhh,_ she quickly pushed the thought away.

"Was he wearing clothes?"

"Surprisingly he was," she laughed. "Though he did start to unbutton his shirt towards the end...but I stopped him just in time."

"Interesting," despite what he had said, Natsu sounded completely disinterested. "So who did you like video chatting with better? Me or that perv?"

"Hmmm," she contemplated, "well you were funnier—"

"Hah!" He boasted.

"—but Gray called me pretty."

"HE WHAT?!" Natsu exclaimed.

Lucy flinched at the sudden rise in his voice and then chastised, "Don't sound so surprised!"

"WHY WOULD HE CALL YOU _PRETTY_?!" he continued as though he didn't hear her.

"MAYBE BECAUSE HE THINKS I'M PRETTY?" she yelled back.

"WELL I THINK YOU'RE PRETTY, BUT YOU DON'T HEAR ME TELLIN' YOU THAT!"

Lucy's stomach dropped and so did her jaw.

That was the second time he had called her _pretty_ , remembering back when he first called her that.

" _What's wrong?" Natsu had asked, sounding concerned._

" _Nothing," Lucy had amended, "Just surprised over all the notes my selfie got and all the compliments..."_

" _Why are you so surprised?" Natsu had inquired and then he had nonchalantly added, "You're pretty."_

"Stupid Gray," he muttered, as though he didn't realize what he had just said.

Stupid Natsu , Lucy placed her hand against her rapidly beating heart. " _Yamada-kun_ is on now," was the only thing she could say.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe Natsu giving accidental compliments :)****

****Thanks for reading and thanks for being so kind!****

*****Hugs*****

25. Chapter 25

****EEP! CHAPTER 25!****

****Thanks so much for the support!****

****And OMG TODAY'S MANGA CHAPTER!****

****SPOILERS FOR CHAPTER 442: I'M FREAKING OUT! Ahh poor Lucy and Erza! And Natsu's facial expression killed me :(Do you think that girl at the end of the chapter could be Juvia's sister?****

****Anyway, please enjoy this chapter!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"They coulda stuck more to the manga with that episode," Natsu complained. "Don't you agree?"

"Yeah, I agree," though Lucy had no idea what she was agreeing to for that she was still too distracted by his indirect, yet strangely direct compliment.

WELL I THINK YOU'RE PRETTY, BUT YOU DON'T HEAR ME TELLIN' YOU THAT!

This led her thoughts to the time when he called her voice and her sneeze cute...and then he straight up admitted that she was _kind of cute_.

And what about the accidental _NOBODY IS HOTTER THAN LUCY_ comment?

Was it really an accident?

Does Natsu think she's hot?

Do _pretty_ and _hot_ have two different meanings?

"And this is why I prefer manga over anime," he continued.

"GAHH I'M GOING CRAZY!" she screamed into her palms.

"Ehh?" he said, surprised by her outburst

"Eep!" she squeaked. "I didn't mean to say that out loud."

She was thankful they weren't video chatting right now...

"Happy and I agree with you on that crazy comment," he murmured.

"Hey!" she glared at the screen.

"What's that, Happy?" he asked. "Ooh! Ahah I like that better!"

Lucy winced, almost afraid to ask, "What did Happy say?"

"He says you're weird," he gleefully stated. "And I have to agree. Though _crazy_ comes in as a close second."

"I SAID THAT I WAS _GOING_ CRAZY," she cried, "NOT THAT I _AM_ CRAZY, STUPID!"

"Ehh," he lazily said, "same thing."

"No!" she exclaimed. "It's not the same thing!"

"Happy and I think so," his tone was serious. "That makes it two against one. Majority always wins."

"I don't like you," she huffed, crossing her arms.

"I don't like you either."

"Hmph," she noticed that the main chat was now in a voice call. "They're voice chatting. We should probably join them."

And with that, they both hung up and joined the other call.

****XOXOX****

"So how was video chatting?" Levy asked Lucy and Gray.

"It was fun," Lucy happily answered.

"Yeah, it was really fun," Gray replied, his tone was just as elated as Lucy's.

"Ahh I would be too nervous to ever video chat," Levy confessed.

"It's not as bad as you think," Gray said. "I mean, Lucy was pretty easy to talk to."

"Aww thanks, Gray," she smiled. "You were pretty easy to talk to as well!"

"Tch," she could hear Natsu scoff in the background. She wondered if anyone else heard him...

"This is so romantic," Mira cooed. "You two were each other's first! Ahh the Graylu ship has set sail once again!"

Lucy's stomach churned, knowing very well what was going to happen next...

"Actually," Gray said, "We weren't each other's firsts."

She cringed.

"What?" Mira gasped. "You've video chatted before, Gray?"

"Nahh, Lucy was _my_ first," he said, "but I wasn't _her_ first."

Now it was Levy's turn to gasp, "What!? Who was your first, Lucy?"

"A certain loud mouth idiot who's been pretty quiet..." Gray answered for her.

Her face was currently draining of color.

"I haven't been quiet," Natsu grumbled. "Just nothin' interesting to talk about."

She felt sick.

"_Natsu_!?" Erza bewildered. "You video chatted with _Natsu_?"

"Oh my God!" Mira squealed. "Natsu and Lucy are so the new Jerza!"

"Huh?" Natsu was in a stupor.

"Ehh?" Lucy's eyes practically popped out of her head, understanding exactly what Mira was getting on about.

"Jerza?" Erza choked.

"Natsu and I are not the _new Jerza_!" Lucy denied. "And why is it such a big deal that we video chatted anyway?!"

"What she said," Natsu muttered, and she could have sworn there might have been a tinge of embarrassment in his voice...

"The video chat itself is not a big deal," Cana stated, "but the fact that you two kept it a secret _is_."

Lucy sputtered, silently praying Natsu would take the lead on this.

"We didn't keep it a secret," he said with resentment. "We only did it last night and before we could bring it up, Ice Bastard, here, decides he wants to video chat with her."

"Jealous?" Gray teased.

"Pshh, no," he scoffed.

"Oh no!" Mira cried. "Looks like Gratsu might be breaking up..."

"Aww, bummer," Cana disappointingly huffed.

"Don't worry, Natsu," Lucy giggled. "I won't steal your precious Gray from you."

"Thanks, Lucy," he said dryly.

"So who did you like video chatting with more?" Erza inquired.

"Let's rephrase that," Cana said, "Who was hotter?"

"That's not really a rephrase," Levy murmured.

"Do they look like their photos?" Cana continued.

Even better than their photos. "Yeah," she admitted.

"WAIT!" Cana exclaimed. "DOES LUCY LOOK LIKE HER PHOTOS?!"

"Yes," Natsu and Gray answered simultaneously.

"So she's not photoshopping her boobs?!"

Lucy sweat-dropped, "Seriously, Cana?!"

"Nope," Natsu nonchalantly answered.

"Natsu!" Lucy hissed, her eyes bugging.

He noticed her chest.

Is that what makes me hot in his eyes? _WHY AM I THINKING ABOUT THAT RIGHT NOW?!_ she mentally scolded herself.

"Ahh!" Cana sighed. "Lucy, if we ever meet, the first thing I'm gonna do is squeeze your boobies!"

"C-CANA!" Lucy stuttered.

"Oi!" Natsu protested. "If Cana gets to squeeze them, then I want to also."

And once again, her face drained of all color.

"Ooh," Levy joined in, "I want to feel too!"

"Same," Gray chimed.

"It could be fun," Erza mused.

"I'd be interested also," Mira beamed.

"I hate you all," she shivered, instinctively covering her breasts with her arms.

"Oh you know you love us, Lucy," Cana teased. "Just think—"

"Cana?" A new voice entered. "Who are you talking to?"

"I'M TALKIN' TO PEOPLE I MET ON THE INTERNET" Cana screamed. "NOW GET OUT!"

"Cana," the voice objected. "I just want to see what my precious baby is up to!"

"DADDD, I JUST TOLD YOU! I'M TALKIN' TO MY INTERNET FRIENDS" she groaned. "NOW FUCK OFF ALREADY!"

Lucy flinched at Cana's language to her father. She, herself, was physically incapable of cursing in front of her dad. Though she was very amused because, for once, it wasn't her dad barging in...

And then Lucy's eyes lit up.

Revenge. Revenge for the time Cana told her dad that Natsu had deflowered her...

"Hi, Cana's dad," Lucy greeted.

"Ooh, who's that?" he asked. "She sounds hot."

"SHUT IT, YOU NASTY PERV!" Cana bellowed. "And her names Lucy."

"Hiya, Cana's dad," Levy said next. "I'm Levy."

"Hello, I'm Erza."

"Yo, I'm Natsu."

"Gray."

"Hi, I'm Mira!"

"Whooaaa," he awed. "So many friends! My little girl is popular!"

"Yup," she sighed.

"Sir," Lucy spoke up. "What if I told you, Cana, your beloved daughter, was deflowered by Natsu?"

"OI!" Natsu cried out. "WHY IS IT ALWAYS ME?"

"My little girl!" her father wailed. "Growing up so fast! Where did the time go?"

Lucy blinked.

That was not the reaction she had been expecting...

"Ughhh," Cana groaned. "Can you get your ass outta here already? You're annoying me."

"MY BABY GIRL!" he continued.

Everyone was practically in tears laughing at this point.

"YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME!" she roared. "NOW LEAVE!"

"Alright, alright," he relented. "But can you get me that Lucy chick's number? I'll bet she's one hot—"

"FUCK OFF ALREADY!" Except this time it wasn't Cana who said it.

It was Natsu.

Lucy let out a gasp.

Her pulse sped up.

The chat went quiet for a few seconds before Levy broke the silence with a, "Whoa."

"What?" Natsu growled. "He was annoying me!"

"I wonder why," Mira mused with a hint of amusement.

"There ain't nothin' to wonder about," he grumbled.

"Ohh I think there's lots to wonder about," Cana laughed.

"What an idiot," Gray muttered.

"WHAT WAS THAT, SNOW BRAINS?"

"I CALLED YOU AN IDIOT, FIRE BRAINS! WHY DON'T YOU LEARN TO LISTEN!"

"MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE YOUR OWN ADVICE MR. I'M-GONNA-KEEP-CALLIN'-HAPPY-A-LIZARD
!"

Lucy's rapidly beating heart drowned them out.

Why did Natsu yell at Cana's dad to leave?

Was he bothered by Cana's dad's interest in her?

Lucy shook her head.

She was definitely going crazy...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thanks again for reading!****

****Totheblue99 drew me amazing fan art for Natsu and Lucy's skype chat if any of you are interested.****

****I have it linked under my fan art tab on my tumblr, which is** _ ****missyplatina**** _ **, for those who were asking.****

****Hope you all enjoyed this chapter!****

26. Chapter 26

****Hi!****

****Please enjoy the new chapter, cuties!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Thank God that old guy finally left," Cana heavily sighed and then with a mischievous glint, she added, "Thanks to you, Natsu."

"You're welcome," he sounded thoroughly pleased with himself.

"No one's ever spoke to my father like that before," she mused. "Well except for me..."

"Really?" Lucy asked, not quite believing her.

"Yeah," she said lazily. "I mean you have to have balls to tell off the top boxer in the entire country..."

"Eh?" Natsu gasped.

"Top boxer?" Gray questioned. "You mean—?!"

"Your old man is—?!" Natsu asked.

"GILDARTS?!" The two boys simultaneously screamed.

"Who?" Levy inquired.

"Yupp," Cana exhaled. "That's him."

"Wow," Erza awed. "He's a legend."

"Who is he?" Levy asked again with more urgency.

"A boxer apparently," Lucy answered, slightly lost as well.

"I don't know anything about boxing," Levy huffed.

"Me either," Lucy frowned.

"Same here," Mira joined in.

"YOU'RE RELATED TO GILDARTS CLIVE?!" Gray exclaimed.

"Yes," Cana seethed, clearly annoyed.

"YOU'RE TELLIN' ME THAT I JUST TOLD GILDARTS CLIVE TO FUCK OFF?!" Natsu cried in horror.

"Yesss! How many time do I have to say it?" she said with aggravation.

"Hah," Gray gleamed, "Bet he's gonna hunt you down, Fire Dick."

"PSHH I CAN TAKE HIM!" he boasted. "GILDARTS! FIGHT ME!"

"You're gonna die, Stupid," Gray sneered.

"No I ain't, Icicle!" he argued.

"He's number one in all of Fiore!" Gray stated. "Of course you're goinna die!"

"Well you're gonna die too!" Natsu laughed.

"I'm not the one who challenged him, Stupid!" he growled.

"That's 'cuz you're not brave like I am," Natsu mocked.

"Don't confuse bravery with stupidity," he jabbed.

"Oi!"

"Natsu! Gray!" Erza said with such intensity that Lucy jumped out of her seat. "Shut up!"

"Yes, Ma'am," they gulped.

"I didn't know Gildarts had any children," Erza said thoughtfully.

"Neither did he," Cana laughed, "until a couple of months ago."

"EHHH?" Everyone in the chat exclaimed.

"My mom had died a few years back," she said, her voice unusually flat. "And in her last moments, she told me who my father was... So I sought him out... and I found him, but I was so scared... I mean he's so successful, would he really want someone like me as his daughter? So I waited around after every match, working myself up to tell him the truth, but failing every time."

"So what happened?" Levy sounded intrigued.

"I drank some liquid courage and finally told him the truth," she chuckled. "And now here I am, living with the top boxer in all of Fiore!"

"Damnnn," Gray awed.

"And that's why he's so annoying," she groaned. "All that _my precious baby_ talk. UGHHH! He's tryin' to make up for all the years he missed... kill me now."

"I think that's sweet," Mira mused.

"Me too," Erza agreed.

"I can't believe I told him to fuck off..." Natsu was still in shock over that.

"So wait a minute," Levy said. "Since you all know who he is and that he's number one in Fiore, does this mean we all live in Fiore?"

"Well I live in Fiore," Cana said.

"Me too," Gray said next.

"Same," Natsu muttered.

"I do too," Erza said after.

"Likewise," Mira cheered.

"Lucy?" Natsu asked, sounding eager to know.

"Err yeah," she bit her lip. It was okay to admit that, right?

Too late now ... Lucy thought.

"Wow," Levy marveled. "We are all from the same country! How awesome is that?!"

"Well I always figured," Cana said. "Since we are all going to the Crocus Comic Con."

"Not everyone," Lucy murmured.

"Yeah," Levy murmured back.

And after about a few more minutes, everyone except Natsu and Lucy had left.

"So quiet now," Natsu pointed out.

"Yeah," Lucy swallowed, nervous that she was left alone with Natsu.

"Wanna have a Pokemon battle?" he asked.

"Sure," Lucy grabbed her _3DS_ that was right next to her laptop. "Don't be cheap this time," she warned.

"I'm never cheap," he grumbled.

"Need I remind you, you used a team of legendries?!" she raised a brow.

"Oh shush."

And just like that, the battle began.

Natsu sent out a Shiny Charzard and Lucy sent out her Shiny Klefki.

"Oh, wow," he awed. "I almost forgot I gave that to you."

"I was so happy that day," she confided. "I never won a contest before..."

"And you still haven't," he said with nonchalance.

"Huh?" her head snapped up to the screen of her laptop.

"I chose to give it to you," he simply said.

"Wait what?"

"The rules were that if the winner didn't claim the prize within 24 hours, I _choose_ a new winner. So I chose you."

She gaped at the screen, even though they weren't video chatting, Lucy couldn't stop staring at her laptop. "Why would you choose me?"

"Dunno," he said. "You seemed like you really wanted it, I guess?"

"Well thank you, Natsu," she whispered. "I love it."

She could hear him gulp and then he said rather loudly, "You know what? I'm bored of this. I'm gonna go clean Happy's cage."

"Doesn't Happy have a tank?" she inquired. "And we haven't even started battling!"

"Cage, tank? Same thing. And I would have won anyways. Bye—"

"Don't leave," she said quickly, surprising herself. "I-I'll be bored if you go."

"Sucks for you," his voice was oddly breathy.

"Hey!" she pouted, feeling slightly hurt. "I want my own Happy. Then I would never be bored..."

"But you aren't allowed pets," he reminded her. "That's why I'm letting you have part ownership of Happy."

"I know, but still..." she sulked. "Anyway, can't you stay a little longer?"

Natsu choked before saying, "Cleaning Happy's tank is a lotta work and you're just gonna distract me."

"How will I distract you?" she glared at her laptop.

"I dunno!" he yelped. "You just will..."

"What do you..." he hung up before Lucy could finish her sentence.

Lucy got up and shoved on a pair of boots, grabbed her purse and exited her house.

She was going to buy her own Happy, whether her father approved or not.

****XOXOX****

"Hi, how may I help you?" the sale clerk at the pet store asked.

"Umm, I'm looking for a salamander," Lucy said.

"Right this way, Miss," the clerk led her over to a section of tanks that had lizards, snakes, frogs, and even a scorpion. She eyed the thing with caution, as though it were going to climb out of its tank.

"Right here," he pointed to a tank with a yellow and black salamander with a reasonable price.

"I'll take it," Lucy grinned.

"Alright," the sales clerk grinned back. "Now I suggest you buy both crickets and worms, I know some prefer to just feed either one or the other, but I highly recommend both."

"Are these the crickets and worms alive?" she stared at a tank of squirming creatures with her face turning a slight shade of green.

"Yes."

"Do you have any non-bug eating salamanders?"

The guy sweat-dropped. "Well there is this little fellow over here..."

****XOXOX****

"Natsu!" Lucy hastily typed. "Are you there?!"

"Hey, what's up?"

"I want you to meet someone!"

She didn't even wait for his reply as she clicked the video button of the top screen.

She was too excited to be even remotely nervous about video chatting with Natsu for the second time.

It only took a moment before Natsu picked up.

His slanted eyes were wide with shock and his pink hair was a little flatter than the day they had originally video chatted since his usually spiked up bangs were now covering his forehead.

Her heart stuttered, he looked...She shook the thoughts away, "Natsu!"

"Hi, Lucy." he looked taken aback by her wide smile. He licked his lips before asking, "You said you wanted me to meet someone?"

"Yeah!" she reached over to grab her new friend who was lying on her desk next to her laptop. "I would like you to meet my salamander, Charla!" She held out the salamander in front of the screen.

Natsu's eyes bugged, probably surprised she bought one, "Lucy!"

Charla was very different in appearance to Happy.

Instead of being small, black and electric blue colored, Charla was rather large, grayish, brownish color.

And instead of being all flat like Happy, Charla was pretty bumpy with popped out scales forming a straight line down its back.

Charla also had droopy skin under its neck.

And let's not forget those claws...

"What do you think?!" Lucy looked at Natsu with a hopeful expression.

"Lucy," he said again, his voice sounded tense. "That's not a—"

"Isn't she adorable?!" she brought Charla's face up to her own and nuzzled her cheek against her.

"I don't think you should do that..." he sweat-dropped.

"I thought you said salamanders were semi-aquatic?" she said.

"They are."

"The guy at the store said Charla doesn't need much water, only a huge tank that's kept heated."

"Lucy—"

"And I got this guide book, How to Care for Your Reptile, which makes me think Gray has been right all along about Happy being a lizard."

"LUCY!" Natsu yelled for her attention.

"What?" she asked.

"That's not a salamander!" he exclaimed.

"Eh?" she blinked, pulling Charla at arms length. "What is it then?"

Natsu's face twisted from shock to amusement, "It looks like a wingless dragon."

"Dragons don't exist, Stupid," she huffed. "The guy said it was a vegetarian salamander. You have a carnivorous one so it makes sense you wouldn't recognize this."

"Lucy," he chuckled. "I'm a hundred percent sure that's not a salamander."

"She's so cute!" she, once again, nuzzled her face against the strange creature.

"I think it's a he actually," he said, sheepishly rubbing his head.

"How can you tell?" she cocked her at the screen.

"I know a little bit about lizards," he shrugged. "I think it's an iguana by the way."

"Well in that case," Lucy held the lizard out at arm's length again and said, "I'm gonna call you Plue instead!"

Natsu hysterically laughed.

"What's so funny?" she pouted.

"No-Nothing," he said between laughs.

"Hmph," she turned her nose up, "I think he's making fun of you, Plue!"

"Oi!" he sobered up. "No I'm not!"

"I think he's a reptile snob," she loud-whispered to Plue.

"Am not!" he huffed, his face twisting into a cute pout.

Lucy had to look away to hide her blush.

"The guy at the store said it's potty trained," she informed him.

"The fuck?" he awed, his eyes widening.

"Jealous?" she smirked.

"Kinda," frowned, looking away from the screen.

And then Natsu bolted up, "DON'T COME IN! I'M CHANGING!"

And as if to convince himself of the lie, Natsu ripped his white t-shirt off.

"WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!" Lucy sputtered, her face instantly turning red.

"What?" he turned to face the screen, giving Lucy full-view access to his rippling toned body.

Her eyes popped out of her head, "Six pack..."

"Huh?" Natsu's brows furrowed.

"WHY ARE YOU SUDDENLY STRIPPING?!" she cried out, trying her best not to look, but how could she not?

"I'm not!" he claimed, folding his toned arms across his chest.

Her eyes trailed down, drinking it all in. Her eyes stopped at the top of his pants, which hung low enough to show off his hip indentations, giving him the perfect V-shape.

She knew he was fit from his cosplay pictures...but she didn't know it was to this extent.

And suddenly hearts filled Lucy's eyes.

This made him even more attractive...she didn't like noticeably bulky guys, she liked that Natsu was discreetly muscular.

Quickly breaking out of her daze, she wailed, "YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN GRAY!"

"DON'T COMPARE ME TO THAT STRIPPER!"

"WHY NOT?!"

"CUZ I'M NOT A STRIPPER!"

"BUT YOU JUST STRIPPED!"

"I'M CHANGING CLOTHES! THERE'S A DIFFERENCE!"

"THEN WHY ARE YOU STILL SHIRTLESS?!"

"CUZ YOU'RE DISTRACTING ME!"

"STRIPPER!"

"WEIRDO!" his face was now a shade of pink. Then he turned back to the door to yell at some unknown person, "I'M COMIN', SHEESH!"

He looked back at Lucy and just like the last video chat, a look of pain appeared on his face, "Got to go."

"Bye, Natsu."

"Your dad's gonna kill you by the way," he shot her a devilish smirk.

"What do you mean?" Lucy's face scrunched up from perplexity.

"Iguanas grow 2 to 4 feet," his smirk widened. "When your dad finds out..." He ran an index finger past over his throat to imitate it being slit.

"JERK!" she seethed.

"See ya, Lucy!"

And then he hung up.

"2 to 4 feet?" she looked at Plue, who was sitting contently in her lap. "I'm so dead..."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe silly Lucy and eep shirtless Natsu!****

****Hope you all have a great day!****

****And more fanart stuff if you all want to see!****

****Tumblr user** _ ****Lindako7**** _ **drew amazing art of Lucy and Natsu talking about Haru being out of character scene.****

****Tumblr** _ ****nalu-4tw**** _ **drew Lucy's reaction to Cana and Natsu talking about squeezing her boobs.****

****I have both linked on my tumblr for you to find.****

****And on deviantart, user** _ ****Desiluff**** _ **drew a picture of Lucy making a text post about her friends making fun of anime.****

****(Desiluff . deviantart art / Lucy-Heartfilia-543266351 just remove the spaces!)****

****Thanks for reading!****

27. Chapter 27

****I really appreciate all the encouraging words, so thank you all so much!****

****Hope you all like the quick update!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Last selfie before my funeral," Lucy had commented on the picture she had posted of her touching cheeks with Plue and in her tags she wrote, _my dad's going to kill me when he finds out about Plue._

Prior to her selfie, she had go make another trip back to the pet store for that she couldn't carry Plue's tank back to her house all by herself. By showing a generous amount of cleavage, she convinced one of the pet store workers, a boy around her age, to carry the tank back home and she even got him to set it up in her room.

He also tried to ask her out, but Lucy slammed the door in his face before he could finish asking.

Now lying on her bedroom floor with Plue next to her, she refreshed her _activity_ on her phone to see if her photo received any notes.

And it did.

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post and added_ : Reblogging because you look cute (talking about Plue btw)

**IceMakeMagic** _reblogged your post and added_ : Reblogging because you look cute (talking about Lucy btw)

**LokeTheLion** _reblogged your post and added_ : Reblogging because the bae is hot

**SatanSoul** _reblogged your post and added_ : Reblogging because this is proof of Lucy's harem

**SolidScriptMage** _reblogged your post and added_ : Reblogging because you're beautiful, Lucy! And when did you get an iguana? And you probably shouldn't put it near your face like that...

**CarddMagee** _reblogged your post and added:_ Reblogging cuz of Lucy's tits.

**DropsOfRain** _reblogged your post and added:_ Juvia thinks the iguana is better looking than Love Rival.

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post and added:_ I completely agree with you, _DropsOfRain_.

**LokeTheLion** _reblogged your post and added: DropsOfRain_ and _DragonSlayer_ are just jealous that they lack such a gorgeous, voluptuous waifu.

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post and added_ : Pshhh like I would be jealous, _LokeTheLion_.

**IceMakeMagic** _reblogged your post and added:_ I think you're jealous, _DragonSlayer_.

**DragonSlayer** _reblogged your post and added:_ LIKE HELL I AM, _IceMakeMagic_.

Lucy sweat-dropped and added her own comment to her selfie, "Would everyone please stop reblogging and commenting? Thanks!"

And then she noticed a strange flood of messages in her inbox.

She winced as she tapped on it, scared to see what they would say.

"EHHHHH?!" There were almost thirty messages, all asking the same thing, "Can I join your harem?"

Some were anon, some weren't.

"MIRA!" Lucy curled her hand into a fist and shook it into the air. "THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT! UGH!"

And then she took a screenshot of all the messages and posted them on her _Tumblr_ , " _SatanSoul_ , LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!"

"YES!" Mira replied back. "LOOK HOW POPULAR YOU ARE, LUCY! EVERYONE WANTS TO JOIN!"

" _SatanSoul,_ STOP SOUNDING HAPPY ABOUT THIS, DUMMY!" she typed with pure aggravation.

She chuckled her phone away from her and rubbed her temples as she tried to process what had just happened.

Natsu and Juvia think Plue is better looking than her.

Gray thinks she looks cute.

Loke thinks she's hot.

Cana is in love with her boobs.

Levy is the only sane person.

And everyone wants to join Lucy's harem thanks to Mira...

"How annoying," she groaned, rubbing her aching eyes.

She was pretty irritated by Natsu's comments, even though she knew he was kidding...but still...

She could hear her laptop making pinging noises from the _Skype Chat_.

With hesitance, she made her way over to her desk.

"Lucy," Levy wrote, "when did you get an iguana?"

"Strange choice of pet," Gray typed.

"Lucy?" Levy called out for her.

"GAHHH LET'S GROUP CALL," Natsu messaged. "I'LL TELL YOU WHY LUCY HAS AN IGUANA!"

Lucy answered the call, hoping they wouldn't notice she joined in.

"—telling me she wants me to meet someone and then on video chat she pulls out her iguana and says, 'I would like you to meet my salamander, Charla!'"

"Oh, Lucy," Levy giggled.

"Poor thing," Gray murmured.

"I had to break it to her that it wasn't a salamander AND I had to tell her it was a boy."

"How does that even happen?" Levy inquired. "I mean you have to be pretty uhhh oblivious to not realize the difference between a salamander and an iguana..."

"Guess who ever sold it to her probably lied," Gray theorized.

"Nahhh," Natsu brushed off. "Lucy's just stupid."

Anger washed over Lucy in heavy, fierce waves. She hastily placed her hand against her mouth to keep quiet.

"I mean," he continued, "she did take over a month to finish the entire _Harry Potter_ series. Clearly she's not the brightest person around."

Her hands balled up, finger nails biting into her palms.

"I take offense to that," Levy muttered. "It took me a month to finish it..."

"We aren't talkin' about you, Mira," he grouched.

"I'm Levy!" she exclaimed. "Do you really not know that by now?"

"What are we all talking about?" Mira now joined the chat.

"_That's_ Mira," she exasperatedly pointed out.

"Talking about how stupid Lucy is," Natsu said, ignoring Levy.

"How is she stupid?" Mira inquired.

"She bought an iguana thinkin' it was a salamander," he explained.

"Ooh," Mira sounded like she was grimacing. "How can anyone make a mistake like that? They look completely different."

"Like I said," Natsu sounded as though he were grinning. "She's stupid."

"AT LEAST I'M NOT A PERVERT!" Lucy, unable to keep biting her tongue, finally let her presence be known.

"GAHH, Lucy!?" Natsu yelped, sounding horrified.

"Busted," Gray laughed. "I knew she was on the entire time."

"GRRAYYY!" he seethed.

"How's Natsu a pervert?" Levy quirked.

"I'm pretty curious myself," Mira mused.

"I'M NOT A PERVERT!" he cried just as Lucy screamed, "HE STRIPPED WHILE VIDEO CHATTING WITH ME!"

"What?!" everyone gasped.

"NO I DIDN'T!" he denied.

"YES YOU DID! YOU RANDOMLY TOOK YOUR SHIRT OFF!"

"Oh my," Mira gushed.

"Damnnnn," Cana had now joined the call.

"Your relationship is heating up quicker than I imagined," Erza said, making her presence known.

"And you always call me the pervert, Lava Brains," Gray jabbed.

"I DIDN'T STRIP," Natsu continued denying it. "I WAS CHANGIN' CLOTHES! BIG DIFFERENCE!"

"AND HOW DO YOU CHANGE CLOTHES, NATSU?" Lucy rhetorically asked. "BY STRIPPING!"

"Looks like Natsu's the new group stripper," Cana laughed.

"I'M NOT A STRIPPER!" he growled. "THAT'S LIKE CALLIN' ME _GRAY_!"

"Oi!" Gray protested.

"Well maybe we _should_ start calling you _Gray_," Lucy said, "since you're no better than him!"

"Oi!" Gray said again. "I take offense to that!"

"I AM A HELL OF A LOT BETTER THAN THAT PERVERT!"

"YOU'RE A LOT WORSE, ACTUALLY!" she exclaimed. "AT LEAST GRAY DOESN'T CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE TO STRIP!"

"ARGGHHH," Natsu roared. "AT LEAST I DIDN'T BUY AN _IGUANA_ THINKIN' IT'S A _SALAMANDER_!"

"WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?" she threw her arms up in the air.

"IT'S GOT EVERYTHING TO DO WITH ANYTHING!"

"YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE!"

"Aww," Mira cooed. "Lovers spat."

"NO!" Lucy and Natsu wailed.

"Umm, Lucy," Levy timidly spoke. "I wanted to tell you to make sure you wash up after playing with Plue because reptiles can carry salmonella..."

"Oh," she blinked, glancing over at Plue who was just lying on the floor, looking oddly like a big stone in the middle of her bedroom. "Thanks, Levy! That's good to know."

"I coulda' told you that," Natsu scoffed.

"But you didn't," she leered.

"Yeah well—" he started.

"SHUT UP, BOTH OF YOU!" Erza roared. "I HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR BICKERING!"

"Sor-Sorry!" Lucy squeaked.

"Sorry," Natsu grumbled.

****XOXOX****

It was pretty late and Lucy's father still hadn't returned home.

She grabbed her phone to call him, but saw she had a voicemail from him.

"Sorry, Lucy," he said. "I have to stay overnight. There's leftover pasta in the fridge. Call me if you need anything. I love you. Bye."

She pouted. He wasn't coming home? Well she already knew about the pasta and had indulged on it a couple of hours ago so now she was tucking herself into bed for the night.

But the message left her feeling unsettled.

Home alone and it was night.

Boy did she hate that.

The paranoia started to sink in.

She could hear strange footsteps. Immediately, she turned on her lights, but to her relief, it was only Plue walking around in his tank.

Well, at least she had Plue to keep her company...

****XOXOX****

Lucy tossed and turned for hours.

She couldn't sleep.

Why was she still freaked out about being home alone?

"I'm such a baby," she groaned into her pillow.

Finally having enough of trying to sleep, Lucy grabbed her laptop off her desk and sat it on her lap as she plopped down on her bed.

Without any conscious effort, she was on _Tumblr_.

She could see Natsu had answered an ask from _FireMagesRule_, Romeo, the young boy who admired Natsu.

"Can you do a tutorial on how you color manga scans so well? And could you color tomorrow's entire chapter?"

Natsu had replied, "Sorry, man, I don't give away my secrets and sure thing!"

_How did Natsu color so well? she wondered as she mindlessly reblogged anything that caught her interest.

Her _Skype_ lit up on the bottom of her screen.

"You're still up?" It was from Natsu.

"Yeah," she replied with reluctance.

"Wanna voice chat?"

"No," she hadn't realized it until now, but she was mad at him. And she had every right to be. He had went on a whole rant about how stupid she was when he didn't know she was on the line and he never even apologized to her. The bitterness she felt stung like a bee.

"Why not?" he asked.

"I'm mad at you," she simply stated.

"What did I do?"

"You called me stupid."

"You always call me stupid," he pointed out.

"You did it behind my back, jerk," Lucy huffed. "So now I don't want to talk to you."

"Lucy," he wrote. "C'mon! I didn't mean it."

"If you didn't mean it, you wouldn't have said it behind my back," she merely typed.

"I'm sorry," he messaged. "I don't think you're stupid."

"Okay."

"Now can we voice chat?"

"Nope."

"What is it now?" he asked.

"I didn't accept your apology."

"Why not?"

"It didn't feel sincere," she stated.

"YOU'RE NOT STUPID!" he typed in caps. "YOU'RE THE SMARTEST PERSON I KNOW AND I GIVE YOU MY HUMBLEST OF APOLOGIES. PLEASE FORGIVE ME, LUCY!"

Lucy didn't reply back, smirking to herself. She was enjoying his groveling.

"YOU CAN CALL ME STUPID BEHIND MY BACK SO WE CAN BE EVEN!"

She still didn't writing anything.

"C'MON, LUCY! PLEASE FORGIVE ME!"

"Why?" she decisively ask.

"Because," he typed, "I can't stand the thought of you being mad at me."

Her breath hitched and slowly she typed, "Make it up to me and then I'll forgive you."

"How?" he asked.

"Hmmm," she typed her pondering, "Let me watch you color the manga panels for tomorrow's chapter."

"You mean today's?" he asked. "It's already out."

"IT IS?!" she gasped. "Be right back," and she clicked on her Fairy Tail bookmark link and immersed herself in the new chapter.

Her shipper heart nearly died.

Haru x Elie angst.

It was beautiful.

"Amazing chapter," she wrote to Natsu.

"Agreed," he stated. "Now I gotta start coloring."

"Let me watch."

"No," he wrote. "Anything but that."

"But that's all I want," she typed back.

"Lucy..."

"We can screenshare while video chatting," Lucy suggested. "It will make me forgive you."

"UGHH I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M AGREEING TO THIS."

And then he sent her a video request.

Her stomach fluttered with nervous energy as she answered.

Natsu looked disheveled, his hair wilder than ever, resembling a lion's mane and Lucy was sure she matched his appearance.

He gaped at her for a few seconds. She watched as his Adams apple went up and down, "I'm sorry, Lucy." His voice was so soft and tender, it made her shiver.

"Half your apology is accepted," she crossed her arms over her chest and turned her head away from the screen, ignoring the thudding in her chest.

Natsu chuckled, "Alright, let's make this apology fully accepted then."

And before she knew it, her screen was now Natsu's screen.

"Whoa," she awed as she watched him open up his photo editing program.

A colored manga cap appeared and Natsu quickly closed out of it before Lucy could take in what she had seen. He screamed, "ARGH SHIT! YOU DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING, RIGHT?!"

"No," she giggled in response to his flustered reaction. "Why?"

"No reason," he opened up a folder with pictures from the current chapter and then he began.

He went through the process step-by-step, explaining everything with passionate detail. What brushes he liked to use, what shades and colors, and what not.

Lucy found his voice to be soothing as she tucked herself in, curling to her side and placing the laptop in the direction she was facing.

"Damn it!" he groaned. "I already screwed up..."

"Screwed up again."

"Shit."

"UGH WHY!"

"FUCK IT! I CAN'T DO THIS WITH YOU WATCHING!"

"Why not?" Lucy innocently inquired.

"Beaussee," he whined, "you're making me nervous."

"Sorry," she giggled.

"Tch, sure you are," he mumbled.

But soon Natsu got into the groove and Lucy grew more and more sleepy.

His voice was so smooth and lulling, her eyes began to drift shut.

"Lucy?" Natsu called. "Luucccyyyy? You still there?"

The screen switched back to video chat.

"Lucy? You're asleep?!" He observed through the screen. "At least say _goodnight_ first, weirdo."

A smile spread upon her lips.

She was just lucid enough to hear him, but she couldn't answer for that she was too tired.

"ARGHH why do you have to be cute when you're awake _and_ when you're asleep?" he groaned and then the video chat ended.

At least say 'good night' before you hang up, Lucy thought to herself before she was consumed by sleep.

XOXOX

* * *

****I don't know much about screensharing, so sorry if I was really inaccurate!****

****Hope you all liked this chapter!****

****Made it extra long for you!****

****Thank you so much for reading :)****

28. Chapter 28

****cryINGGG DON'T ASK ME HOW, BUT HERE'S YOUR THIRD UPDATE IN A ROW****

****And for those asking about** _ **Texting Fire,**_ ****I'm going to post the last chapter after NaLu Week because I want my full undivided attention when I write it :)******

****Here ya go, cuties!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Hmmmmmm?" Lucy groaned as her eyes opened on Monday morning to the sound of _Skype_ noises.

She sat up, rubbing the sleep out of her eyes as she looked at her laptop that somehow had managed to stay on the bed the entire night.

"Did I fall asleep on Natsu?" she questioned aloud, trying to remember what exactly happened.

Something stirred inside her head; a memory: _ARGHH why do you have to be cute when you're awake and when you're asleep?_

But did he really say it?

A smile spread upon her cheeks, "He called me cute again."

Next thing she knew, her face was pressed against her pillow as she let out a series of ecstatic squeals.

Pinggg.

Lucy jumped up, "_Skype_!" She quickly whirled towards her laptop to see what her friends were talking about so early in the morning.

They were messaging instead of voice chatting.

"Where's Lucy?" Levy asked.

"She's usually the last one on in the mornings," Gray answered.

She blinked, _Gray noticed that?_ She felt slightly touched and she was also touched by Levy asking where she was.

"She went to bed late," Natsu stated.

"How late?" Cana asked.

"I think she fell asleep around 2?" he replied.

"Wussy," she wrote back. "That's not late at all. I went to bed at 4."

"How would you know all this?" Gray asked. "Are you stalking her or something, Fire Ass?"

"You wish," he replied. "We were video chatting and she fell asleep on me."

"Aww," Mira chimed in. "That's so cute! I can't even."

"Can't even what?" Natsu inquired.

Lucy giggled, debating if she should explain to Natsu it's just an expression...

"Video chatting at 2 in the morning?" Erza typed. "That's a pretty irresponsible thing to do on a school night."

"Well this is Lucy we are talking about," Natsu wrote. "She is pretty irresponsible. I mean she did buy an iguana in the spur of the moment..."

"Hey!" Lucy finally joined in. "I'm not irresponsible!"

"Morning, Lucy," Mira greeted.

"And I wasn't video chatting at 2 AM! That's when I fell asleep!" she continued, ignoring Mira.

"Lucy, did you read the new chapter yet?!" Levy asked, trying to change subjects.

"AND we weren't even video chatting! I saw Natsu's face for like two seconds. We were screensharing so that I could watch him color today's chapter."

"You allowed her to watch you color, Natsu?" Erza questioned.

"Maybe," he wrote.

"You won't even tell anyone what program you use to edit with! But you let Lucy watch?" Gray wrote, clearly bemused.

Lucy blushed, remembering Natsu's response to Romeo's ask.

"So what? Stop makin this a big deal," Natsu sent back.

"You like her," Gray teased.

"Do not!"

"Do too!"

"Do not!"

"Do too!"

"How could I possibly like someone that weird? And besides, she makes this really ugly face when she sleeps."

Lucy sputtered, annoyance evident on her face.

"You watched her sleep?" Mira wrote. "THAT'S SO CUTE! I SHIP THEM SO HARD RIGHT NOW!"

"Hey!" Lucy individually pounded each key, "That's not what you told me last night! As I recall, you said, _ARGH H why do you have to be cute when you're awake and when you're asleep?_ "

"YOU HEARD THAT?! I THOUGHT YOU WERE ASLEEP!"

She was grinning from ear to ear as she wrote, "HAH! I WAS ONLY LIKE 90% SURE YOU SAID THAT AND NOW YOU JUST ADMITTED TO IT!"

"WELL THE JOKES ON YOU," he wrote, "BECAUSE I DIDN'T ADMIT TO ANYTHING!"

"You just did, Stupid," Gray commented.

"Well you called her _cute_ yesterday also, Ice Ass!"

"Oh so you _are_ admitting it now?" Gray retorted.

"No way."

"Ohh," Mira wrote. "I see what's going on. Natsu only called Lucy _cute_ because he was mad at Gray for calling her that. Sorry, Lucy, Gratsu is still canon."

"Good," she teasingly wrote, "because they're my OTP."

And then Erza somehow veered the conversation back to the manga, but she wasn't really interested in talking about it right now, so instead she went on _Tumblr._

In her _activity_ she found that Natsu had tagged her in something.

It was the entire chapter in color and it was stunning.

Everything, from the sky to the grass and the in-between was beautifully colored in vibrant, yet realistic shades.

And this was only the first page.

Natsu colored like this for 20 pages? "How?!" she exclaimed.

It had been pretty boring to watch, if she were to be honest about it...but wow. How did he do it? She planned to watch him color again, vowing not to fall asleep again because she did not believe this sorcery all happened in one night.

Natsu captioned his edit with, "Here you go, _FireMagesRule_! Sorry this kinda sucks. You can thank _CelestialMage_ for that."

Her heart throbbed as she remembered why he kept screwing up last night, _you're making me nervous_.

No, Natsu, she thought, _you're making me nervous._

Switching back to _Skype_, she privately asked, "So you don't think I'm cute?"

"Didn't we go through this once before? I don't think you're _cute._ I think you're _kind of cute_ , okay? That's all you're gonna get from me."

"That's good enough for me." she logged off.

"Good morning, Plue," she happily tapped on the iguana's tank. "Time to get ready for school..."

****XOXOX****

As always, school was an endless hell of tediousness, but one thing changed...

Instead of her usual doodles, Lucy found herself writing out Natsu's name over and over again.

What was she doing?

She never thought she would be _one of those people_ who doodled their crush's name on everything, but here she was, doodling _Natsu_ on well... _e_ _verything_ ...not that she had a crush on him or anything, right?

Well either way, it felt oddly satisfying to write his name.

Besides writing _Natsu_ in Romaji, she wrote it in both Hiragana AND Kanji.

She had to look up the Kanji character for _Natsu_ since she didn't know it already.

She was obsessed, wasn't she?

But who cares.

It made her day go by quicker.

****XOXOX****

Lucy hummed to herself as she walked into her house.

It was amazing how Natsu calling her _kind of cute—_ even though he did straight out call her _cute_ last night—could make her feel like the happiest person in the world.

"LUCY!" her father's scream broke her out of the daze. "HELPPP! THERE'S A MONSTER ON THE LOOSE!"

"What?!" she gasped, running into her kitchen to see her father standing on top of the table with his trusty bat in his hand.

He was trembling mess, swinging his bat all over.

"THERE'S A MONSTER!" he wailed. "GET ON HIGHER GROUND! WE HAVE TO CALL THE POLICE!"

"What do you mean there's a monster?" she looked around nervously, not seeing anything out of the ordinary.

"OH NO!" he cried. "IT'S HERE! LUCY, RUN!"

Her eyes squinted as she looked around, "I don't see any—"

"IT'S RIGHT NEXT TO YOU!"

"Huh-KYA!" she jumped, feeling something brush against her leg. She dropped her gaze to the floor, only to see Plue standing next to her. "Oh! Plue! You scared me!" She placed a hand over her rapidly beating heart.

"Pl-Plue?" her father stammered. "You-You _know_ this-this monster?!"

Lucy bent down and picked Plue up. _Looks like I've been caught..._ "Plue's my new pet. I guess I forgot to put him back in his cage this morning... Isn't he adorable?" she gently rubbed Plue against her cheek.

"Don't put it near your face!" he chided. "What is _that_?"

"An iguana."

"You bought yourself a pet iguana?"

"Yup."

"Can you return it?"

"Nope."

"I see..."

"Wanna hold him?" she held Plue up so that her father, still standing on the table, could reach him.

"NO!" he screamed, cowering to the opposite side of the table. "Just-just keep that thing out of my sight. Alright?"

"I can keep him?" her eyes widened with astonishment.

"Against my better judgment...yes..."

"You're not going to murder me?"

"Murder you?"

"Never mind—THANK YOU, DADDY!" Lucy squeezed Plue to her chest and skipped off to her bedroom.

She had to tell someone the good news.

And she knew exactly who that someone was going to be.

"You were wrong," Lucy messaged Natsu, sitting on her bed with Plue on her lap.

"About what?"

"My dad didn't kill me AND he's letting me keep Plue!"

"Congrats :D," he messaged back. "How did you tell him about Plue?"

"It's kind of a funny story," she started.

"Tell me through video chat."

"Okay."

He called her.

She picked up.

Even though this was their fourth time video chatting, Lucy still wasn't used to it.

She wasn't used to seeing his oddly unkempt, yet, in a way, kempt pink hair.

She wasn't used to the way his slanted eyes would widen the second they caught sight of her.

And she certainly wasn't used to that strange giddy feeling that overtakes her when she sees him...

"Yo, Lucy!" his look of surprise quickly changed to a radiant, fanged-tooth smile.

"Hi, Natsu," she smiled back.

"Oh, hi, Plue!" he greeted after.

Lucy waved one of Plue's clawed hands, "He says _hi_ back."

"Atta boy," Natsu grinned. "So what happened?"

"Well I came home from school and I found my father standing on our kitchen table with a bat in his hand, screaming about some monster being on the loose!"

He broke out laughing, "Mannn I would pay to see that."

"Poor little Plue being mistaken for a monster," she brought Plue up to her face and nuzzled her nose against Plue's.

"Errr I still don't think you should do that," he sweat-dropped.

"Why does everyone keep saying—"

Her door banged open, "Lucy! I want to set... _Who is that_?"

Shit.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Ehh minor cliffy :)****

****Everyone's a dork.****

****And for those interested, there's more fan art!****

****On deviantart,** _ ****Mofojuju**** _ ****drew out Lucy's reaction to Natsu calling her hot.******

****Mofojuju . deviantart art/Fan-Art-Sketch-Virtual-Flames-543699814****

****And also on deviantart,** _ ****Desiluff**** _ ****drew the scene of Natsu taking his shirt off during his skype call with Lucy!******

****Desiluff . deviantart art/Lucy-and-Natsu-Video-Chat-543734039****

****(Just remove the spaces to use the links!)****

****Thank you both very much! The art is amazing!****

****Anyway, thanks for reading!****

29. Chapter 29

****ADKSADA im going crazy with all this writing!****

****Enjoy!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Her door banged open, "Lucy! I want to set... _Who is that_?"

Shit.

She whirled around in her seat, placing Plue carefully in her lap, to see her father glancing over at laptop with curious eyes.

Her mouth flopped open and then closed and then open again, resembling that of a fish.

Am I really going to have to introduce Natsu to my dad? THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING! she mentally screamed.

"Yo, Lucy's dad!" Natsu seemed relaxed and uncaring as ever to her relief.

"Na-tsu?" her father leaned in closer to the screen.

"Right," he beamed. "Nice to finally meet ya!"

Maybe this could be a good thing...if Natsu makes a good enough impression, maybe they could take their friendship onto the next level by _actually_ hanging out?

Lucy blushed at the thought.

"Likewise," her father scratched his head. "I never talked to someone on video chat before..."

"It's pretty sick, isn't?" Natsu grinned.

"Sick?" Lucy's father tilted his head to the side. And then he said, "Your hair is pink?"

"Dad!" she pulled on her blonde locks. "Stop!"

"Err ...well anyway," he turned back to face her, "I want to set up a tank for that...thing..." he pointed to Plue who was still on her lap, "so that it doesn't wander around the house ever again."

"It already has a tank, Dad," she pointed over to the tank that was right next to her desk.

"Oh," he blinked. "How did you manage to set it up? Actually how did you manage to carry this home? It's got to weigh more than you..."

"I...uhhh..." she nervously swallowed, glancing back at Natsu who looked pretty curious as well, "Natsu carried it for me..."

"I did?" Natsu asked dumbly.

"He did?" her father asked.

"And he set it up too," she continued, her forehead started to glisten with nervous sweat.

"How nice of me..." Natsu murmured, rubbing the back of his neck.

"You're telling me you had a _boy_ in your _bedroom_ when I wasn't home?!" her dad exclaimed.

"He's not a _boy,_ Dad," Lucy teased. "He's just _Natsu_."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Natsu grumbled.

"Lucy!" her father's face twisted in outrage. "I know I raised you better than that!"

"Huh?"

"Just because Natsu may be more on the _feminine side_, doesn't make him any less of a boy than anyone else!"

"Feminine side?!" Natsu choked. "WHAT?!"

"What are you talking about?" she blurted out feeling utterly lost.

"I mean it's clear that Gray is the more masculine of the two, but Natsu is still a male regardless! And you will treat him with the respect he deserves! We Heartfilias are not judgmental people!"

Lucy's jaw smacked the floor.

Her father had just given away their last name to a stranger on the internet...

She waited for Natsu's reaction, but to her surprise, Natsu hadn't seemed to have realized. probably due to the shock of Gray being called more masculine than him.

"WHATTTTT?!" Natsu roared. "LIKE HELL THAT ICE PRINCESS IS MORE MASCULINE THAN ME! THE FUCK ARE GOING ON ABOUT, OLD MAN?!"

"Natsu!" she slapped a hand over her mouth.

He just cursed at her father...

So much for good impressions...

"WHAT?!" Natsu yelled at Lucy, with his arms out and his palms facing upwards, "HE'S CALLIN' ME LESS MASCULINE THAN GRAY!"

What was her father even going on about exactly? Calling Natsu the feminine one of the two...

Oh...

She understood it now.

"I am trying to defend you from my daughter's rude remark, young man!" her father chided Natsu.

"I think your remark was ruder to be honest..." Natsu muttered with defeat.

"Was it?" he looked terribly guilty. "Oh no, I'm so sorry! I offended you while trying to defend you..."

"Dad, I think there's been a misunderstanding," Lucy sweat-dropped.

"Ehh?" His eyes widened.

"Natsu's not dating Gray," she sheepishly rubbed the back of her head. "That was just a joke Mira told you..." Think back to the day Mira had told her father about Gratsu...

"WAIT HE THOUGHT I WAS DATING GRAY?!" his slanted eyes turned round. "UGHH I HATE MIRA!" he banged his head against his keyboard. He popped his head back up, "AND OI! JUST SO YOU KNOW, TWO GUYS CAN BOTH BE EQUALLY MASCULINE IN A RELATIONSHIP!"

"What?!" her father gaped. "So does that mean he's not—"

"He's not gay," she laughed.

"Oh," he scratched his forehead. "My sincerest of apologizes, Natsu."

"It's alright," Natsu grumbled, looking away from the screen with a blush plainly on his cheeks.

"So then is that other thing that girl said that day true?" her dad asked.

"Huh?" Natsu suspiciously looked back at the screen with squinted eyes.

"About you liking my daughter?"

"DAD!" Though despite her desperate tone to get her father to stop, Lucy couldn't help but look at Natsu on the screen, anxiously awaiting his answer.

Natsu let out a sputtering noise as his face twisted into a grimace, "Pshhh no way! She's too weird for me!"

Her lips pulled downwards into a frown.

She turned quickly away from the screen, not wanting Natsu to see her look of disappointment.

"Oh," was all her father said.

Ugh she wanted this to end already.

"Hey, dad," she pulled Plue up from her lap and cradled him in her arms. "Plue wants to say _hi_."

"KYAAAA!" he cried. "GET THAT THING AWAY FROM ME!"

He was out of her room within seconds.

"Good boy, Plue," she hugged him tightly.

Natsu broke out into a fit of laughter, "He said _kya_!"

Her heart jolted.

She loved the sound of his laugh.

It was full of pure joy and completely contagious as she, too, found herself laughing along with him.

"Sorry he thought you were gay," she gently smiled after they both stopped laughing.

"Pshh I don't care about that," Natsu stated. "I care that he thought I was dating that stupid exhibitionist!" His face twisted with revulsion.

"Do you really have the right to say that?" Lucy sweated.

"Eh?" he cocked his head to the side.

"Well Gray wasn't the one who stripped while video chatting with me soooo..." she trailed off with a smirk on her face.

"I'M NOT AN EXHIBITIONIST! AND YOU ONLY VIDEO CHATTED WITH HIM ONCE! HE WOULD PROBABLY STRIP THE NEXT TIME YOU GUYS DO IT!"

"Guess I'll have to test that out," she winked.

She heard him gulp before he crossed his arms over his chest and muttered a, "Go ahead."

She giggled.

And he peered back at her with curious eyes, "So how did you get Plue's tank into your house and set it up?"

"Oh!" Lucy blinked. "I used my female charms on one of the sales guys, who looked around our age, at the pet store. Poor sucker," she mischievously grinned at the memory.

"What female charms?"

A vein throbbed on her forehead, "That's hurtful!"

He only shrugged in response.

"I'll have you know that my female charms can ensnare any guy I want!" she huffed, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Prove it," an amused smirk spread upon his face.

Fueled with anger, she said, "I will! Gimme a second."

She stood up and carefully placed Plue back into his tank.

She tugged down her red tank top to show off her cleavage and returned to the screen.

Natsu raised a brow as he watched Lucy tousle her blonde hair.

She let out a sultry purr as she fluttered her eyes and said, " _Nattssuuu._ I want to meet you _sooo badlyyy_ ~~ _And the things I wanna do to you_ ~~"

Natsu stared at her blankly before his hand clutched his chest and he bellowed over laughing, "You-You look ridiculous!"

"THAT'S SO MEAN!" she cried, throwing her palms over her eyes to hide her embarrassment. "I'M HANGING UP!"

"WAIT!" he tried to sober up, but he was still laughing.

Lucy pouted, crossing her arms once again, "Hanging up—"

"Okay! Okay!" he said, "I'm done laughin'."

"What do you want?" she continued pouting.

"You don't need to do all that ridiculous stuff, ya know..."

"Hmm?"

"Like that weird hair flipping, eye-batting stuff..."

"I also pulled my shirt down," she dumbly pointed out.

He blinked, "You did?" She watched as his eyes traveled to her chest.

"DON'T STARE!" Lucy covered herself with her arms.

"It's always that low," he shrugged earning a dirty look from her. He ignored it and continued, "Anyway, you don't need to do all the dumb stuff..."

"Why not?"

Her heart skipped a couple of beats.

"Because..." he looked away from the screen.

"Because...?" Lucy pressed.

She needed to know what he was going to say.

"BECAUSE-BECAUSE I DUNNO!" He turned back to face her and wailed, "YOU JUST DON'T NEED TO, ALRIGHT!"

His face was painted a nice shade of pink, almost matching his hair.

That made her feel oddly satisfied...

"Alright," she smiled back.

She watched as his eyes widened slightly before he hung up.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Thank you all for being so nice!****

****More fan art!****

****I'm crying because you are all so awesome!****

****On DeviantArt,** _ ****Mofojuju**** _ ****drew out the scene of Lucy's dad freaking out on the table from the last chapter.******

****Mofojuju . deviantart art/Fan-Art-Sketch-Virtual-Flames-Sketch-2-543964012****

****On tumblr:** _ ****Lindako7**** _ ****drew Lucy falling asleep on**** _ ****Skype**** _**

****lindako7 . tumblr post/123234536200/quick-sketchy-thing-for-the-amazing-based-on****

****Also on tumblr:** _ ****Blazexkeys**** _ ****drew Natsu and Lucy video chatting!******

****Blazexkeys . tumblr post/123289933906/virtual-flames-by-missyplatina-this-is-one-hell-of****

****THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH! SERIOUSLY SO SWEET AND YOUR ART IS AMAZING!****

****Remember to remove the spaces on the links! And if they don't work, I have them tagged under**** _ ****Story_Art**** _ ****on my tumblr!****

30. Chapter 30

****Long chapter today in celebration of making it to CHAPTER 30! AND WE REACHED 700 FOLLOWS!****

****Thank you all so much for being so sweet and adorable!****

****Hope you like this chapter!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"The accent challenge thing started back up," Lucy informed the group the following evening.

"Ohh!" Levy gasped. "I just saw that. Hope I don't get challenged again. I was so nervous the first time."

"I thought it was fun," Natsu mused.

"Yeah," Erza agreed. "I really liked hearing everyone's voices."

"I was listening to a few of them earlier," Mira said. "Everyone sounds like a cutie."

"I was challenged again," Gray sighed. "I'm just gonna reblog the one I did last time."

"I don't get who would want to hear your voice," Natsu said with a snide.

"You did," he sounded smug. "Remember? You challenged me, Fire Brains."

Mira giggled, "Early Graylu hints!"

"Don't sound so happy! I just wanted to hear the voice of the annoying guy I'm always arguing with!" Natsu said defensively.

"Sure, sure," Gray joked.

"We all know the truth, Natsu," Levy joined in the teasing.

"Seriously?!" Natsu groaned. "Even you, Mira?!"

"I'm convinced you're doing that on purpose now," Levy grumbled.

"Doing what on purpose?" he asked with a blank, confused tone.

Levy let out a frustrated sigh that made Lucy giggle.

"Have you guys listened to _DropsOfRain's_ voice challenge?" Mira asked. "She sounds so cute. She talks in the third person though...and she mentioned your name, Gray, about 40 times."

Gray let out a choking sound while everyone laughed at his pain.

"I stopped listenin' to people's voice challenges," Natsu lethargically said.

"Why?" Lucy asked. Wasn't he as curious as she was to find out what his fellow mutuals sound like?

"I heard the voice I had wanted to hear," he simply said.

Lucy's heart stuttered.

Why did she get the feeling it was _her_ voice he had wanted to hear?

A series of gasps ran throughout the chat followed by a bunch of _who's voice?_

"Not saying," he replied.

"Wait!" Mira called. "Who did Natsu tag in his challenge?! It has to be one of those three!"

"Well we know Gray was one of them," Levy pointed out.

"Oh my God," Mira inhaled. "Natsu really does have feelings for Gray!"

"IT WASN'T GRAY!" he wailed. "THAT'S ALL I'M GONNA SAY."

"I was tagged by Natsu," Erza spoke up.

Lucy's heart pounded into her ears and her mouth became impossibly dry as she tried to will herself to speak next, but just as she was about to come forward to Natsu tagging her, she was interrupted.

"Ertsu? Naza?" Mira tasted the words on her tongue. "I think Naza sounds better, what do you all think?"

"I think I have a boyfriend and I suggest you never say either of the two words again," Erza's voice was cold and snippy.

"My, my, okay," Mira nervously giggled. "Not Erza then..."

"Can you guys stop?" Natsu grumbled. "This is annoying."

"Oooohhh," Cana cooed. "I know who the third person is. Bet you do too, _Lucy_."

Lucy flinched, not liking the way Cana said her name. "Oh right, it was me..." she begrudgingly admitted.

"So Natsu wanted to hear your voice, Lucy!" Levy gasped.

Lucy's breath hitched.

It felt weird hearing it said aloud...

"N-NO!" Natsu stuttered out.

"So NaLu is real?" Mira awed.

Lucy watched as her hands began to tremble...

Her breathing was erratic and that tumbling feeling in her stomach had amplified. ...

She was malfunctioning.

"So what if I tagged her?" Natsu tried to scoff, but his voice was uneven. "I was talkin' to her before it so I was kind a curious 'bout what she sounded like."

"Why do you sound so defensive then, Natsu?" Cana asked with a glint of mischievousness.

"Wouldn't you be if you were bein' accused of likin' Lucy?"

"What's wrong with liking me?" Lucy's brows furrowed.

"Well you're weird," Natsu mumbled.

"Shhhush now!" Cana scolded. "Don't you listen to him, Lucy. I wouldn't mind being accused of liking you."

"Thanks, Cana," she sweated.

"That's because you _do_ like her," Gray commented.

"Can't deny that," Cana teased. "Bet you would be so much fun to flirt with, Lucy."

"Lucy sucks at flirting," Natsu dully stated.

"I do not!" she argued.

"How would you know, Flame for Brains?" Gray asked. "I doubt she's ever flirted with you."

"She did," he said in a tone that suggested he didn't care whether Gray believed him or not.

"That's because you asked me to!" Lucy slammed her hands on her desk.

"Not really," he said. "I just questioned your _female charms._ You were the one who took it too far."

She let out a sputtering noise, not liking the way he was twisting this conversation into a spiderweb. "YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SAID, _Prove it_!"

But everyone ignored her.

"How did she take it too far?" Levy inquired.

"She was all like," with a bad, exaggerated impression, " _the things I want to do to you_."

Within seconds, Lucy's face morphed into the color of a tomato.

"Kinky," Cana murmured.

"Wow, Lucy," Erza awed. "Didn't think you had it in you..."

"What's that supposed to mean?" she muttered scratching her forehead.

"What do you want to do to him, Lucy?" Mira quirked.

"Yeah, Lucy," Natsu teased. "What do you want to do to me?"

Instead of freaking out in embarrassment, a devilish thrill overtook her, "Ooh lots of things, _Natsu._ Likeee...hug you...maybe kiss you..." Was it in her head, or did she just hear someone suck in a breath? "Or maybe STRANGLE YOU, YOU JERK!"

Gray broke out into hysterics, "I would pay good money to see that."

"Oi!" Natsu complained. "I'm not letting you, Lucy, anywhere near a hundred foot radius of me!"

"Good," she scoffed, rolling her eyes.

"Aww!" Mira gushed. "They are so cute! I can't..."

"Can't _what_?" Natsu sounded irritated.

Déjà vu, Lucy shook her head. Did he really not know that expression?

"So wait," Levy said. "Natsu, you video chatted with Lucy _again_ last night?"

"Yup," he cheekily answered.

"Damnn," Cana whistled.

"I'm jealous," Levy muttered.

"Jealous of what?" Lucy asked. "You want to video chat with Natsu?"

"No!" Levy said quickly. "I want to video chat with Gaj—NO ONE! AHAAH NO ONE, YEAH TOTALLY! THERE ISN'T ANYONE I WANT TO VIDEO CHAT WITH!"

"Well that didn't sound suspicious at all," Gray remarked.

And then Lucy received a private message.

"Hey, would you wanna video chat right now?"

She gaped; it was from _Gray._

Nervously biting her lip, she typed back, "Sure."

"Well I gotta go," Gray said right after. "Be back on in a little if you guys are still chatting."

And then he hung up.

Tugging on her blonde locks that draped over her shoulder, she followed Gray's lead and abruptly said, "I gotta go to o." And hung up without waiting for a reply.

Gray called her then after and Lucy picked up, not bothering to look over her appearance.

"Hey, Lucy," Gray grinned.

His blue eyes were brighter today thanks to the blue shirt he was wearing.

"Hi," she smiled back. "What's up?"

"Ahh nothing," he folded his arms lazily behind his head. "You?"

"Nothing really." She really hoped this conversation wouldn't turn awkward...

"How's your iguana?"

Her face lit up, "Plue's great! Wanna meet him?!"

"Sure," he chuckled.

"Gimme a second," she stood up and happily pulled Plue out of his tank and sat back down in front of the screen. "Gray, I would like you to meet Plue!"

She held the iguana in front of the webcam.

Gray's droopy eyes turned circular and he let out a sputtering noise.

"He's so precious!" she hugged Plue against her, tucking him under her chin.

"I don't you think you should let him near your face..."

"Seriously!" Lucy complained. "Why does everyone keep saying that?"

"Might have something to do with those claws," he sweated.

"Don't you think he's cute?!" she asked, ignoring his comment.

He let out another chuckle, making his blue eyes sparkle, "Yeah, he is kind of cute."

"I feel less lonely with him around," she confided, looking at Gray's smiling face.

His grin faltered a bit, "You're lonely?"

"Well...yeah," she set Plue down on her floor. "I mean I'm an only child and my dad's away on business a lot...and well my mom is..."

"I get it," he smiled softly. "I envy you sort of..."

"Really?" Lucy blinked. "Why?"

"Well you know both my parents are dead, but what you don't know is, is that I have a brother and a sister."

She gaped, "You have siblings?"

He nodded his head, "Yeah, not blood related though. My adoptive mother, Ur, took me in after the incident happened. I was only about five. She was the lead investigator who was after Deliora." He paused for a breath and then continued, "Deliora had also killed the family of this other boy named Lyon, who is now my brother. And Ur also had a daughter of her own, Ultear, who is my sister. And together, we moved from Northern Continent to Magnolia."

Without even realizing it, Lucy's hand was placed over her mouth. "What a sweet story." But she realized something, Gray spoke in _past tense_. "You are using past tense..."

His bright eyes turned dark as they drifted downwards and a bitter look overtook his face, "Ur was...was..." His voice cracked.

"You don't have to say it," she said gently, understanding his unspoken words.

"It was all my fault," his hands were covering his face.

Lucy could feel her heartbreaking.

Was he crying?

"Gray, unless you're some kind of psycho murderer, I highly doubt it was your fault."

"But it was!" He tore his hands away and Lucy could see the shine in his eyes from fresh tears. "I thought...I thought I could take Deliora on all by myself! But I couldn't and Ur sacrificed herself to protect me!"

"Gray..." her own lips started to quiver.

How long had he carried this heavy burden?

Don't cry, Lucy! she commanded herself.

But a tear dripped down her cheek.

She couldn't help it; she was empathetic.

"Ur would never blame you," Lucy said with determination. "So don't blame yourself."

"How can I not blame myself?!" he pulled at his dark hair, more tears streamed down his cheek.

"I know how you feel," she thought back to her mother's death... "I blamed myself for my mother's death...I thought maybe...maybe if I noticed something was wrong sooner, it could have all been avoided..."

"Lucy," he sucked in a breath.

"Blaming yourself is not going to get you anywhere! What happened, happened, alright? You loved you, Gray! That's all that matters"

"Lucy..." he looked at her with a teary face.

"Gray," she smiled sweetly, "don't let the demons of your past get to you. You would never blame you and besides, you're too sweet of person to be feeling this guilt."

"Thank you, Lucy," he nearly whispered.

"Anytime," she beamed. "So tell me...what's it like to have siblings?"

"Well let's see..." Gray pondered aloud, shaking out of his sadness. "In a word, _annoying_."

Lucy giggled, "Do tell."

And just then, she received a message, "Everything alright?"

This time it was from _Natsu._

She swallowed, "Yeah, why?"

"You hung up rather quickly. Thought you were upset or something."

"Ohh," her heart thumped, feeling touched by his concern. She tried not to let her expression change as Gray continued to talk.

"And then Lyon smashed my ice sculpture that I spent hours working on..."

"You're not mad at me again, are you?" Natsu asked.

She wasn't mad at him, "Why do you always think I'm mad at you?"

"Dunno, guess I'm just used to pissing people off :D."

"Why do you sound so proud?" she teased him.

"Takes talent to piss off as many people as I have," he replied.

Instead of replying to Natsu, she said back to Gray, "That kind of makes me happy to be an only child."

Gray grinned, "It makes me wish I was one again..."

Natsu messaged her again, "Anyway, I just want to let you know that I'll allow you near me at a 50 foot radius instead of a 100."

"Damn," she joked. "I was hoping for a 200 foot radius."

"I could work with that," he messaged back.

Lucy laughed aloud.

"What's so funny?" Gray asked.

"Nothing," her gaze moved back to Gray's and she gasped, "WHERE'S YOUR SHIRT?!"

"Huh?" he looked downwards. "Shit! When did that happen?"

"Lucy!" her father knocked and then barged in. "I decided that—WHERE IS THAT BOY'S SHIRT OFF!"

"That's what I would like to know..." Lucy mumbled more to herself.

"LUCY! EXPLAIN YOURSELF!"

"DAD!" she cried. "I SWEAR IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE! HE HAS A STRIPPING HABIT!"

Her father's eyes gleamed with disbelief and rage, "WHO HAS A STRIPPING HABIT?!"

"I do, sir," Gray muttered, raising his hand slightly.

"WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY?" Jude barked at Gray.

"Gray," he answered.

"NATSU'S GRAY?!" her dad exclaimed. "DOES NATSU KNOW ABOUT THIS?!"

Gray's eyes bugged out, "The hell? I'M NOT NATSU'S! AND I DON'T CARE IF HE KNOWS OR NOT!"

"Lucy, you better explain to me why you have a half-naked guy on the screen."

"I told you," she moaned into her palms. "He has a stripping habit!"

She removed her hands and looked at Gray, just in time to see him unbuttoning his jeans, "GRAY, IF YOU TAKE YOUR PANTS OFF, SO HELP ME, I'M GOING TO HURT YOU!"

"Huh—WHAT!?" he noticed his hands were unzipping his pants. "NOT AGAIN!"

Lucy's dad watched with wide eyes, "Oh my—He really does have a stripping habit..."

"Told you!" Lucy exclaimed, slapping her forehead.

He ignored her and asked Gray, "What are your intentions with my daughter?"

"Friendship?" Gray sweat-dropped.

"Hmmm," Her father scratched his chin.

"Dad," she frantically called. "Please leave!"

"Look, Lucy," he said. "I don't think I can leave you alone with—SOMETHING JUST BRUSHED AGAINST MY LEG!" he glanced downwards. "KKYAAAAA!" And he fled the room.

Lucy looked down at the floor to see Plue standing right where her father had once been, "Good boy, Plue!" She patted

ed his scaly head.

"Did your dad just say _Kya_?" Gray's mouth twitched into a smirk.

"He did that yesterday with Natsu..." Lucy shook her head at the memory.

"Natsu met your dad?" he tilted his head to the side.

"Mhmm."

"Interesting..."

"What is?" she blinked with bemusement.

Gray shook his head, "Nothing. Anyway, should we go back to the group chat."

"Yeah," she agreed.

****XOXOX****

"Back," Gray and Lucy announced at once.

"That's really weird," Levy stated. "You two left AND came back at the same time?"

"Yeah," Natsu said. "That is weird."

"We were video chatting," Gray nonchalantly stated.

"Again?" Natsu gasped.

"What do you mean _again_?" he growled. "You guys video chat all the time."

"Yeah well that's because Lucy and I have a special relationship!"

Lucy let out a choking sound. _A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP_? She was screaming internally at this point.

"Ohh!" Mira yelped. "What kind of relationship?"

"Friendship," Natsu boasted with pride.

Lucy's elated mood faltered.

That wasn't what she had been expecting...

"Lucy and I have a stronger friendship," Gray sneered. "We have heart-to-heart conversations with one another. Doubt you have ever had that with her."

"Heart-to-heart?" Natsu questioned.

"Exactly my point," he laughed.

"Tch, whatever, Ice Princess," Natsu brushed off and then the conversation in the chat carried on as though nothing had happened.

And Lucy ended her call.

But before she could sign out of _Skype_ , Natsu messaged her, "What does Gray mean by _heart-to-heart conversations_?"

She flushed, "He means we talk about personal stuff."

"We talk about personal stuff too," he wrote.

"I guess, but Gray and I talk about more _personal_ stuff than what we normally talk about. Like I know more about him than I know about you..."

Natsu called her.

"Like what?" he asked when she picked up.

"Well he told me where he lives for starters..." she mentioned, thinking back to their chat.

"I could tell you where I live," Natsu said right away. "I don't care if you know."

"You don't have to—"

But Natsu interrupted her, "—I live in—"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe, will we find out where Natsu lives?!****

****Thank you so much for reading!****

****Have a lovely day!****

31. Chapter 31

****Short chapter today, folks!****

****Please don't be mad because I do update almost every day!****

****Anyway, it's pretty fluffy so I hope you like it!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"I could tell you where I live," Natsu said right away. "I don't care if you know."

"You don't have to—"

But he interrupted her, "—I live in Magnolia."

"_Magnolia?_" Lucy restated with pure disbelief and amusement. "You have got to be kidding me..." And then she

fell into hysterics.

Gray lives in _Magnolia_.

What are the odds that the two people who hate each other the most live in the same area?

"What's so funny?" his voice held annoyance and she could almost picture the grumpy look on his face. With slight hesitation in his voice, he asked, "...You don't like live in the same town or somethin', right?"

Her laughter halted.

Oh right...

"No," the corners of her mouth turned downwards.

"Well then what's so funny?" his voice flattened...with what? Disappointment maybe?

Why did her heart kind of feel like it was breaking?

"Ahh I don't think it's in my place to say why that's funny," she gave a half-hearted chuckle.

"Alright."

Tears sprinkled her eyes.

She was so glad they weren't video chatting.

She harshly rubbed at her eyes.

"Soo uh... " Natsu trailed off. He seemed at a loss for words like herself.

"I can tell you where I live if you want..."

"Nah," he quickly answered. "You don't seem comfortable so—"

Following what he did earlier, she cut him off and said, "I currently live in Acalypha..."

"Oh, that's uh..."

"Far?" Lucy let out a sad laugh.

"Not really," Natsu lazily said. "What? Three hours away by train? Could be worse..."

"I used to live closer to Magnolia," she confided.

"Really?" he sounded intrigued.

"Yeah," she continued, while picking at her cuticles. "At most, it was probably like an hour away..."

"Why did you move?"

"Well my mom got sick..." she bit the inside of her cheeks, hoping to keep her emotions at bay. "And things weren't getting any better...so my father moved us back to the place where they had met so that she could be happy in her ...final days..."

The tears streamed without her consent.

It was like picking open an old wound.

And it _hurt_.

She smacked her head against her desk, willing the tears to stop as she aggressively bit her lip to hold back any sobs.

"Lucy..." a gentle voice spoke after a few minutes of silence, "these heart-to-hearts suck."

She let out a sputtering noise. That was not what she thought he would say...not even close. She thought it would be one of those classic _I'm sorry for your loss_ or something along those lines...but this was Natsu and when did Natsu ever follow the clichés of society?

"Tell me about it," she laughed and what surprised her was that it was real heartfelt kind of laugh, the kind that reached the eyes. "How do you always manage to cheer me up?"

"Takes a lot of skill and determination," he boasted.

"Determination, huh?" Lucy grinned, wiping away her old tears. "So that means you put in a lot of effort to cheer me up?"

"Of course," his voice changed. It was no longer playful. "I don't want you to ever be sad."

Her breath caught.

"...It doesn't suit you."

And just like that, she wanted to melt into a puddle.

"I didn't always live in Magnolia either," he admitted after a while. "My father—adoptive father—vanished without a trace one day and I ended up in Magnolia tryin' to look for him...eventually learned he was murdered by some bastard with a dumb long name that starts with an _A..._ but it turned out my father was sick anyways so he was gonna die regardless.. _._"

"Natsu..." Lucy's hand gripped her cheek, "these heart-to-hearts really do suck."

"Can we stop them now?" he pleaded.

"Yes!" she smiled.

"You can have them with Gray if you want," he stated. "I don't like these kinds of serious talk."

"It's what builds relationships, you know," she informed him.

"On second thought," he hastily said, "don't have them with Gray." Then he mumbled something so low, that Lucy had to strain to hear, "Don't have them with anyone who's not me."

"Well then I don't want you to have them with Gray either," Lucy teased.

"You don't have to worry about that," he chuckled. "So what else did you an Ice Princess do on video chat?"

"He stripped."

"HAH! THAT PERVERTED EXHIBITIONIST!" Natsu gleefully roared. "AND YOU CALL ME A STRIPPER! H AHAHA!"

"You really don't have the right to talk," she deadpanned.

"STOP TRYIN' TO PUT ME IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS HIM, LUCCYYYYY!"

"Alright, alright," she giggled. "But if you strip again...the nickname sticks."

"Like that'll ever happen again," Natsu said. "So what happened after he stripped?"

"Well...I discovered the habit is contagious because suddenly my shirt was off too," she smirked.

"Well you barely wear a shirt in general so it's not that hard to believe..."

"THAT'S HURTFUL!" A vein ticked on her forehead.

"Kidding!—Kind of..." he teased. "So what really happened?"

"My dad walked in the very next second and pretty much freaked out on me." Natsu broke out in a fit of laughter and Lucy continued, "I tried to explain he has a stripping habit and my dad didn't believe me until Gray tried taking off his pants..."

"HE WHAT?!"

"I stopped him before he could," she said quickly. "And then Plue brushed my dad's leg and he ran out of the room screaming _kya_ again."

"If only Plue could scare away that stupid guy..." Natsu murmured and then he went on to tell her about what happened in the group chat, which wasn't anything that interested Lucy really, but she enjoyed listening to him talk.

"Well I should be going..." she started, "but umm, Natsu."

"Yeah?"

"I was wondering...whose voice was it that you wanted to hear during the accent challenge?"

"It was your voice, weirdo," he said. "Wasn't that obvious?"

"How would that be obvious?!" she cried despite her heart stuttering.

"I dunno!" he cried back. "Just thought it was!"

"Well you seemed pretty adamant of denying it was my voice earlier..." she huffed with her cheeks heating up.

"That's 'cuz I was tryin' to stop the teasing! You know they would never let that go!"

"What-Whatever..." And with uneasiness, she confessed, "I wanted to hear yours too..."

"Tch, weirdo," but his tone contradicted his carefree words...He sounded _tense_.

"How does that make me a weirdo?!" she exclaimed. "You just said the same thing!"

"I dunno! It just does!"

"Well, talk to you tomorrow..." she abruptly ended the call.

And with a heavy sigh, she decided to take a bath in hopes it would calm her erratic heart.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe so many of you thought I wasn't going to give out Natsu's location!****

****Again, sorry it was short.****

****And fanart on tumblr by lindako7! She drew out the scene of Lucy's dad walking in on Gray stripping while on video chat!****

****lindako7 . tumblr post/123666202400/missyplatina-you-always-make-me-laugh-around-2-07****

****Just remove the spaces if you want to see!****

****But thanks for reading!****

32. Chapter 32

****I apologize in advance for the boringness of this chapter!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"I've been thinking long and hard about something, Lucy," her father said grimly during breakfast.

Lucy munched around her oatmeal as she asked, "Thinking about what _exactly_?" _Please don't be about Plue_, she silently pleaded, taking in a gulp of green tea.

He took a big sip of his coffee before slamming the mug down next to the newspaper he had been reading. "I think I was right...Gray is more masculine than Natsu."

That tea she had gulped, was now everywhere as Lucy nearly choked to death, "Wh-What?! Where did that even come from?!"

"Well I mean after meeting Gray, it's clear that he has a more masculine charm to him. The dark, brooding eyes, deeper voice...He would be perfect for you to date..."

"DON'T TALK ABOUT MY FRIEND LIKE THAT!" she clawed at her eyes.

"BUT I have to say...I like Natsu better," he took another sip of his coffee.

"Eh?" she gaped. "Why do you like Natsu better?"

"Well besides Gray's errr _talent_ ...you weren't laughing as hard as when I heard you talking to Natsu and as your father, I like to hear my daughter laughing."

"Why are you saying all this?" Lucy's stomach churned with uneasiness.

He nonchalantly picked up his newspaper and peered down at it as he said, "Just thought I would put my input in to help you decide which boy to date."

"DADDDDD!" she left the table, dying of embarrassment. "I'M GOING TO SCHOOL NOW!"

She quickly grabbed her schoolbag and left.

****XOXOX****

"What a long day, Plue," she shuffled into her room.

Long and boring.

She had left her phone home in her mad rush to get out of her house and damn was school awful.

No contact whatsoever with her precious internet friends.

Nothing to distract her from boring, tedious class.

Absolutely nothing, but pure unadulterated torture.

She practically ran over to her laptop and immediately checked the group chat.

She wasn't the least bit surprised that they were voice chatting

"Bout time, Lucy," was the first thing she heard when she joined the chat. "We've been waitin' forever!" It was Natsu chastising her.

"I'm sorry," she flushed. "How long have you guys been talking?"

"Twenty minutes," Gray snorted. "Ass Flame, here, kept asking where you were every two minutes."

"Was it every two minutes?" Mira mused. "Felt like every two _seconds_ to me..."

"Was not!" Natsu growled indignantly..

Her heart leapt in her chest.

"So now that she's here," Mira said. "What do you want to do with her?"

"Don't phrase it like that!" he chided. "I don't want to do anything with her."

"Then why were you asking about her?" Gray challenged.

"Why did you strip in front of her dad?" he challenged back.

"I DIDN'T STRIP IN FRONT OF HER DAD! I ALREADY STRIPPED _BEFORE_ HER DAD WALKED IN!" Gray frantically explained.

Lucy chuckled at the memory. It really was funny now that she thought about it...Seeing his stripping habit in action

"Like that makes it any better," Natsu scoffed.

"Gray, you stripped in front of Lucy?!" Levy gasped.

"Now you're as indecent as Natsu!" Erza sounded furious.

"What do you mean I'm indecent?" Natsu puzzled.

"Well you stripped in front of Lucy as well... That poor girl is probably beyond traumatized."

"I'm over it to be honest..." she rubbed her forehead, not wanting to delve on this any longer.

"WELL AT LEAST I KEPT MY PANTS ON!" Natsu screeched.

"LUCY, YOU TOLD HIM THAT?!" Gray asked incredulously.

She flinched, "Ahh maybe..."

"Grayyyy," Cana slurred. "Wee need to video chat likeeee stat."

"Ughh I'd rather not..." he moaned.

"Drunk, Cana?" Levy asked.

"You betchaaa!" she laughed.

"Gray," Erza said. "I think me and you should video chat. Someone needs to teach you how to behave properly around a lady."

"It's not what you think!" he pleaded.

"Haha! Have fun chatting with Erza!" Natsu mocked.

Lucy laughed, but she felt kind of bad that Gray was being picked on over something that really wasn't a big deal...

"You know, after meeting Gray, my dad still thinks he is more masculine than you, Natsu."

"WHATTTT?!" Natsu roared. "ARE YOU KIDDING ME?" and then he shouted extra loudly, "LUCY'S DAD, FIGHT ME!"

"Wait what?!" Gray burst out laughing. "Your dad thinks I'm more masculine?! Oh man, this is too great."

"WHY WOULD YOU TELL GRAY THAT, LUCY?" Natsu continued. "NOW HE'S GOIN' TO HOLD THIS AGAINST ME BECAUSE HE'S PETTY LIKE THAT!"

"Petty?!" Gray sputtered.

"Sorry, Natsu!" she wasn't the least bit sorry.

It was too much fun messing around with him.

"Well we can't deny that it's true," Gray said haughtily.

"I'llll agree to that afterrr wee video chat, Grayyy," Cana garbled.

"Ughhhh," Natsu groaned in misery. "I hate you, Lucyyyy."

Twinge of regret came upon Lucy. She felt—sort of—bad... Maybe it wasn't a good idea to share that information... "Well to be fair..." she spoke up. "My dad likes you better, Natsu."

"Huh?" that perked him up a bit.

"Oi!" Gray protested.

"Yeah," she licked her lips. "He said he likes that you make me laugh."

Natsu's voice softened, "Good, 'cuz ya know I like makin' you laugh."

"I know," she chewed on her bottom lip, biting back the smile from his heartwarming statement.

"Aww..." Levy sighted in the background.

"Ughh you twoo are makinggg me feel sicckk with all that loveeyyy doveyyy talk," Cana droned.

"I think that might be the alcohol," Levy commented.

"I ain't bein' lovey dovey!" Natsu flamed.

"Me either!" Lucy's arms flailed.

"I love them together," Mira cooed.

"They are really cute..." Erza mused.

Lucy pulled at her blonde hair.

The embarrassment was too much for her to handle.

Surprisingly, Natsu remained quiet.

She wondered what was going through his head...but before she could ponder any further, something distracted her.

"GAHHH!" Gray suddenly cried. "_DROPSOFRAIN!_ Her accent challenge! I just listened to it. WHY DOES SHE SAY MY NAME IN ALMOST EVERY OTHER LINE?!"

"Well what did you expect?" Lucy sweated, remembering the scary _Love Rival_ message she had once received from her.

"Isn't it sweet how she got into _Fairy Tail_ because she saw how much you liked it, Gray?" Mira asked.

"NO IT'S NOT SWEET AT ALL! IT'S CREEPY!" he roared. "AND IT'S LIKE HER WHOLE VOICE CHALLENGE WAS ABOUT ME! _Ooh Juvia loves Musica because Gray-sama loves Musica_! _Ooh the Galuna Island arc is Juvia's favorite arc because that's Gray-sama's favorite arc!_"

"You know what," Mira said. "I ship it."

"Eh?" he sputtered.

"Oh God..." Lucy muttered, shaking her head.

"Here we go," Levy muttered back.

"Gruvia!" Mira beamed. "Doesn't it sound lovely?"

"STOP!" Gray cried.

"It's not really creative to keep combining the first names, Mira," Erza commented.

"Yeah," Lucy agreed. "That's why Pokemon ships are so much fun. I mean there's franticshipping, amourshipping, and preciousmetalshipping..."

"Well if we have to call it anything," Gray exhaled, "let's call it _stalkershipping_,"

"_But I like Gruvia_," Mira said with a scary-tense voice that no one knew she was capable of.

"Gru-Gruvia is fine!" Lucy, Levy, Gray, and even _Erza_ stuttered.

"Glad we are all in agreement!" Mira cheered.

"She's scary," Lucy's voice trembled.

"Who knew?" Gray's voice trembled back. "Anyway, I don't get why she's so obsessed with me..."

"I'll say," Natsu muttered. "Who would be that obsessed with a freaky stripper?"

"Jealous that no one is obsessed with you, Fire Balls?" Gray jabbed.

"Oi! I get tons of messages of people tellin' me that they're obsessed with me!"

"Sure you do," Gray teased.

"I do!" he argued. "Don't you see my daily asks!?"

"Nope"

"Anyway," Levy interrupted their soon-to-be fight. "Natsu, why were you asking for Lucy?"

Oh right! She forgot all about that. "Yeah, why were you asking for me?"

"Ahh it doesn't matter anymore." he answered.

A frown curled on her lips, "But now I'm curious!"

"Too bad," Natsu laughed. "Doesn't matter anyways."

"Meanie," Lucy huffed.

The group idly chatted away.

****XOXOX****

Going on _Tumblr_ for the first time all day, Lucy saw in her _tracked tags_ that her URL had a notification in it.

She clicked on it to see an anonymous ask that _DragonSlayer_ had posted.

"I was just wondering are you and _CelestialMage_ dating? Because you have _I Love Lucy_ written on your blog in fire and her name is Lucy and she has something similar with your name."

"Ahhh it's kinda complicated, Anon." Natsu had replied. "You see, _CelestialMage_ is into harems so I'm in it along with _IceMakeMagic_, _LokeTheLion_, and I think _CarddMagee_ might be in it and I can't remember if _SolidScriptMage_ is in it anymore."

"NATSU!" Lucy screamed to herself. "WHY WOULD YOU WRITE THAT?!"

She checked the notes because it had several.

**IceMakeMagic** liked this._

**SolidScriptMage** liked this._

**CarddMagee** liked this._

**LokeTheLion** liked this._

**SatanSoul** reblogged this and added, _I approve.

Lucy hated everyone as she clicked on her inbox and once again, it was filled with people asking to join her harem ...

"I hate you," she messaged Natsu on _Skype_.

"Why? :D," he asked.

"BECAUSE OF THAT STUPID HAREM POST! DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE DOING TO MY INBOX?! EVERYONE KEEPS ASKING TO JOIN!"

"You should let them," he messaged back. "The more the merrier right?"

"NO WAY!" Lucy frantically typed, horrified by the idea of even having a harem.

"Harsh, Lucy :/."

"Whatever," she sighed and then decided to ask the question that's been on her mind for a while now. "Why were you looking for me earlier?"

"I wasn't," he wrote back.

"Liar :P."

"Fine. You weren't on all day," he messaged. "Like you weren't blogging or nothin'." Her brows furrowed. "So I made that harem post to see if you were in hiding or something. But you didn't reply back so I was kinda, maybe worried," he continued.

"_SLIGHTLY*_ worried." he amended.

"Only slightly?" she giggled to herself.

"Yup, only slightly...so I asked the others if they talked to you at all and they turned it into something completely over the top -_-."

"Well they do like to overreact ;)."

"Especially that annoying guy," Natsu wrote. "So thankful I'll never have the pleasure of running into him in real life."

And Lucy lost it at that point.

She was thankful that he couldn't hear her laughing.

If he only knew _that he and Gray lived in the same town..._

"What about Comic Con?" she typed through her laughter.

"DAMN IT!"

Lucy laughed even harder—if possible.

A knock on her door startled her.

"Lucy," her dad spoke through the door.

Of course now that she's not voice chatting or video chatting, he chooses not to barge in?

"Yeah?" she called back.

"Tell Natsu I say, _hi_!" he said.

"How do you know I'm talking to Natsu?" she blinked.

"You're laughing," he simply said, before she heard his footsteps walk off.

"My dad says _hi_," Lucy told Natsu.

"Hi, Lucy's dad!" he replied back. "I'M MORE MASCULINE THAN GRAY, OKAY?! GET THAT THROUGH YOUR ANNOYING HEAD!"

Lucy chuckled, "He's not in the room and I'm not going to tell him that!"

"Bummer :/, " he sent back.

"It's funny," she wrote. "He only knew I was messaging you because he heard me laughing."

"I wanna hear you laughing," was his only reply.

Her throat tightened, "Not today :p. (Laughing while I'm typing)."

"THAT'S MEAN, LUCYYYY!"

"Hehe bye, Natsu."

She turned her laptop off, clutching her hand to her heart.

Are internet relationships really that bad?

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Again, I apologize for the boring filler chapter!****

****Lemme know if any of you see any mistakes please!****

****Hope you all were still able to like it though!****

33. Chapter 33

****Wasn't going to write a new chapter today, but I'm upset so why not write a fluffy chapter to make me feel better?

* * *

****XOXOX****

"LUCYYYY," Natsu roared into the chat the next day. "I HATE YOU SO MUCH! LIKE I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER HATED SOMEONE THIS MUCH IN MY ENTIRE LIFE!"

"EHHH?" Lucy gaped at her laptop.

"Damn, Lucy," Cana laughed. "What'd you do?"

"Nothing!" the blonde cried.

"YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID!" he continued his wailing. "HOW COULD YOU NOT TELL ME THAT ANNOYING GUY LIVES IN THE SAME TOWN AS ME?!"

"Yeah, Lucy," Gray now joined in the voice chat, sounding very irritated, "You could have at least given me a heads up..."

"I didn't know you and Natsu lived in the same town until _after_ we video chatted," she explained to Gray.

"WELL YA COULDA TOLD ME THEN!" Natsu seethed.

"Sorry," she flinched at his tone.

"Wait a second," Cana interrupted. "Gray and Natsu live in the same town?"

"NOT ANYMORE," Natsu yelled. "LUCY, I'M MOVING IN WITH YOU!"

"No way!" she blushed. "And besides, I thought you hated me!"

"I DO HATE YOU! IT'S JUST THAT I NEED TO GET AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE!"

Though he didn't mean for the words to hurt her, she couldn't help but feel a stinging sensation in her chest, "I thoug

ht you said we don't live far away from each other?"

"We don't!" he amended, his tone had completely changed. It was no longer hysterical, but panicky and flustered. "I just want to get away from that stupid stripper and you're just the perfect distance."

"So I do live far away then..."

"ARGHH that's not what I meant!" he let out a frustrated growl. "I just don't want to be in the same town as him, is a ll!"

"Uckkk when did you two start acting like a couple?" Cana moaned with disgust.

"WE AREN'T ACTING LIKE A COUPLE!" Lucy and Natsu simultaneously bellowed.

"I'm curious as to why Lucy's so concerned about Natsu living far away," Mira giggled.

"I'm curious as to why everyone's freaking out," Levy murmured.

"Me too," Erza said. "So, Natsu, how did you find out Gray lives in the same town?"

"Well I was walkin' to the pet store over in our shopping district and I hear some guy yellin' somethin' like _DON'T COME BACK HERE UNLESS YOU'RE WEARIN' CLOTHES_! So I had to go see what kinda pervert is walkin' a round without clothes on. And that's when I spot a droopy-eyed bastard dressed in nothing but boxers."

"Oi!" Gray growled. "I spotted you first, you idiot! I saw your stupid pink hair and shouted, _Ass Flame_? And you looked over at me with those dumb slanty-eyes!"

"Nahh," Natsu lethargically disagreed, "I doubt that happened."

"What do you mean you doubt that happened?! That's exactly what happened!" he exclaimed.

"I can't believe this!" Mira squealed to herself. "Gratsu _actually_ has a chance of becoming canon!"

"NO IT DOESN'T!" the boys wailed.

"What happened next?!" Levy asked with excitement.

"We started to fi—" Gray started.

"You two better not have been fighting," Erza crisped.

"Of-Of course not!" Natsu's and Gray's voices went up a few pitches.

"Good," she sounded pleased.

"Wow," Levy awed. "So you two met each other! This is like huge news! What was it like seeing each other in person?"

"It sucked," Natsu mumbled.

"Natsu's short," Gray stated.

"Am not!"

"Are too!"

"I'm average height!"

"Oh," Gray sneered. "So that's what they are calling _short_ these days?"

"GRRR SHUT IT! I'M ONLY LIKE THREE INCHES SHORTER THAN YOU! STOP TRYIN' TO SOUND ALL SUPERIOR!"

"Alright, Short Stuff."

"I'M NOT SHORT!"

"What's so wrong with being short?" Levy asked dryly.

Lucy was curious now...how tall was Natsu? She wasn't very tall herself so she was willing to bet Natsu was taller than her, _but how much taller_? Would she have to stand on her tippy toes to kiss him? Would he have to lean far down to kiss her? Her face flamed up.

"BOTH OF YOU! SHUT UP!" Erza roared.

And that quieted both Natsu and Gray.

****XOXOX****

"How could you not tell me, Lucy?!" Natsu whined to Lucy on video chat, later in the night.

"It wasn't my place to tell you," she explained. "And also the dramatic irony was kind of funny," she smiled to herself.

"So cruel," he crossed his arms over his chest and glared at her and then he yelped, "HAPPY! HOW DID YOU GET OUT OF YOUR CAGE?!"

She watched as the tiny salamander crawled onto Natsu's face.

"NOOO!" Natsu moaned. "GET OFF!" He tried to grab for the salamander, but Natsu was just too slow and Happy ran on top of his head and vanished in his hair.

Lucy let out a chain of giggles during the whole event. She really loved Happy.

"Anyways," Natsu panted. "It's so cruel that I have to live near that annoying guy..."

Her face fell.

Why do Natsu and Gray get to live near each other? Or more like, why does she have to live far away from them? "I wish I lived near you guys..."

"Lu-cy..." he looked awkward and uncomfortable as he shifted in his seat.

"You should stop complaining so much..." she continued. "You're so lucky and you don't even realize it...I would do anything to live near any of you..."

He remained quiet, staring at her with his impossibly dark eyes.

"Sorry," she flushed. "Forget I said anything..."

"No," he shook his head and gently smiled. "You're right...I am lucky that I have a friend close by...guess I'm just upset that the one person I wish lived near me, lives three hours away..."

She sucked in a breath.

"Ahh, it's whatever, right?" Natsu sheepishly grinned. "Three hours is nothin'."

"Yeah, three hours is nothing," a small grin grew on her face. "Practically neighbors."

"Yeah!" he beamed. "So close that I could just come over any time and steal your food..."

"And I could play with Happy," Lucy smiled.

"And I could steal all your food," he mentioned again.

She laughed at that.

"And I could hear you laugh all the time..." his tone had changed from light and cheery to low and husky.

His eyes were penetrating and unreadable.

Her mouth fell agape.

His serious expression vanished and was replaced with a huge, eye-squinting smile, "It's great being your neighbor!"

"Yeah," she found herself smiling back.

"You know what? I'm in the mood to kick your ass at _Super Smash Bros_, " Natsu playfully smirked.

"Like you can kick my ass," she stuck her tongue out.

"Pshhh I know I can," he shot her a devilish smirk.

"Well let's test it out, shall we?" she held up her 3DS to the screen and smirked back.

"Let's make it interesting," he said as he pulled out his own 3DS. "Whoever wins gets to make the other person change their URL to whatever he or she wants."

"I'm all fired up, _DragonSlayer_, " Lucy winked, picking Pikachu as her character.

She watched as Natsu's dark eyes widened and his mouth gaped slightly.

Her stomach twisted and she could feel her cheeks tinting in response, _What is he thinking_?

After a few seconds, he seemed to shake out of his thoughts as he picked Pikachu as well.

Lucy raised a brow to question him and Natsu shot her an innocent smile back.

And the two duked it out for three rounds.

Natsu had won the first round, Lucy had won the second round.

During the third round...Well Happy decided to crawl on top of Natsu's DS...

"_HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_", she mischievously grinned.

Natsu let out a choking sound as his face turned a lovely shade of pink. "NO WAY!"

"A bet is a bet, Natsu."

"GAHH I CAN'T DO THAT!" he cried, looking away as he tugged at his spiky locks.

"Why not?" Lucy fake-pouted. Her pout turned into a teasing smirk as she coyly asked, "Is it because maybe...you might _actually_ be _hopelessly_ in love with me?"

Natsu's head snapped back to the screen and his cheeks were now blazing, "Don't say such weird things!"

"Well then just do the bet, Natsu," she challenged as she carried her laptop to her bed.

His face morphed into a scowl as he muttered out a "Fine." She watched him with heavy eyes as he changed his URL, his scowl never wavered.

"Hey, Natsu..." she curled up on her side.

"Yeah?" he glanced at her through the screen.

"I want to trade places with Gray."

Natsu cocked his head to the side, "You want to be a stripper?"

"No, I—"

"You want your own personal stalker?"

She was too tired to yell as her eyes slowly drifted shut and her mouth was too tired to open.

"Lucy?"

"...I want to live in the same town as you."

"Arghhhh," she could barely hear him groan. "Lucyyy...I hate what you're doing to me..."

What am I doing to you? was the last thing she remembered thinking before sleep took over.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Sorry if there are any mistake! I kept rereading, but I'm so tired that I probably missed a few mistakes.****

****Anyway, thanks for reading!****

****Hope you all have a lovely day/night!****

****Sweetest readers ever :)****

****And for those asking, my update schedules are irregular!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

The morning sun shone brightly through Lucy's bedroom window, hitting her square on the face. "Mmmm go away, sun," she turned over, burying her face into her pillow, but it was no use. The sun had already awakened her.

She sat up, rubbing the sleep out of her eyes and nearly gasped.

Her laptop was still on her bed, but that wasn't what made her gasp.

It was the boy who was sleeping on her screen...

"Natsu?" she breathed out. With slightly hazy memory, she knew that she was the one who fell asleep first... "You n ever hung up?"

The boy didn't stir from his slumber. He was resting on his arms on top of his desk. She pursed her lips, "That can't be too comfortable..."

Her eyes traveled all over his face, right down to the ever present smile on his lips. He looked so happy, peaceful...and _adorable_. She pouted, crossing her arms over her chest, "Why are you so cute?"

So Natsu fell asleep on _Skype_ with her...

Her eyes bugged out just as her jaw dropped.

Does this mean that they _slept_ together?

"Oh my God," she panicked to herself. "I slept with a boy? Virtually...but still!"

"Soo...loud..." her gaze snapped right back to her laptop.

"Eep!" she squeaked, hitting smacking her hand over her mouth.

Should I hang up?!

But it was too late because she found herself unable to look away from the screen...

Natsu's peaceful face had scrunched up and his eyes blinked open a couple of times. He slowly lifted his head up, yawning as he rubbed his eyes. His hair was pretty flat, with bangs covering his forehead, making him look extremely hot—Lucy quickly chased the thought away.

He glanced at the screen as he yawned for a second time. He stretched his back by leaning back against his chair with his arms stretched over his head, "Morning, Lucy."

"Morning, Natsu," she tried to sound as calm and natural as he did, but her voice ended up wavering.

"What were you goin' off 'bout before?" he asked, scratching his chest.

"Nothing," her face blazed at the thought of them sleeping together...

His brows furrowed, but then he shrugged it off, deciding not to push the subject any further.

Silence filled the gap between them, causing Lucy to squirm a bit.

"So ummm," she nervously tried to think of something to say, but failed as she, once again, noticed how hot he looked with his tousled-sleep hair...

A moment of pure panic struck her like a lightning bolt as she thought about her own hair...And she could see his slanted eyes scrutinizing her...

With hesitance, she looked at her tiny video box in the corner that revealed her own appearance. She could see her blonde hair sticking up in random places and quickly shot a hand up to smooth it out.

Though that was easier said than done...

She combed her fingers through the tangled locks, but still couldn't get it to look decent...She tugged even more at her hair, but still, she seemed to resemble a lion...

He cocked his head to the side as he observed her odd behavior, "Why do you keep playin' with your hair? It's annoying."

"It's messy," she looked away to hide her embarrassment.

"So?" he raised a brow. "Who are you tryin' to impress?"

"I—Ah never mind," she slumped back, hitting her bed's headboard.

She watched as Natsu's content face morphed into pure confusion, "WAITTT!" He bolted closer to the screen. "WHY ARE WE VIDEO CHATTING?! WERE YOU WATCHING ME SLEEP?! GAHH YOU MIGHT BE EVEN CREEPER THAN THAT STRIPPER'S STALKER GIRL!"

Lucy gaped at him with pure astonishment before blinding fury took over, "WHAT DO YOU MEAN I WAS WATCHING YOU SLEEP?! I FELL ASLEEP BEFORE YOU, STUPID! SO IF ANYTHING, _YOU'RE_ THE CREEPY ONE!"

His cheeks tinted red as he mumbled, "That's 'cuz I get lonely at night..."

Her angry simmered down, "Huh?"

"Arghhh I dunno..." the red in his cheeks darkened. "I get lonely when I'm up late and no one's online...So I didn't want to hang up until I was ready to go to sleep," he shot her a cheeky grin,

"but I guess I passed out..."

"Well if that's the case," she said, "then no one's a creep, right?"

"Right," he beamed.

And right then, Lucy's phone alarm went off, startling the both of them.

With a sheepish grin, she said, "That's my cue to go get ready for school."

"Ahh I should too," he frowned, standing up. He went to pull off his shirt, Lucy let out a terrifying scream. "WHAT?!" He froze in place, staring at her with an alert expression.

"WHY ARE YOU TAKING YOUR SHIRT OFF?!"

"I'm not taking my shirt off—GAHH!" He noticed his hands were gripping the hems of his shirt. "WHEN DID THAT HAPPEN?!"

"YOU MET GRAY ONCE AND NOW YOU DEVELOPED A STRIPPING HABIT?!" And then she slapped her hands to her cheeks, "All those times we were joking... Who knew it was actually contagious?!"

"ARGHH I HAVEN'T DEVELOPED A STRIPPING HABIT, YOU WEIRDO!" Natsu cried and with a nervous laugh, he said, "I guess I'm just used to takin' my shirt off when an alarm goes off. I wasn't thinking 'bout you still on the screen."

She completely understood where he was coming from, but still...she couldn't help but tease him, "So you do have a stripping habit after all."

"Luccyyyyy," he groaned. "Stop twisting my words!"

"I'm not twisting anything," she winked.

He let out a choking sound before quickly muttering "Bye."

And once again, he abruptly ended the video chat.

"I'm going to do that to you one of these days..." she sighed, before dragging herself to her shower.

****XOXOX****

"Okay, I know I've been drunk a lot these past few days, buttttt...." Cana wrote in the group chat during Lucy's history class, "THE HELL IS GOING ON WITH NATSU AND LUCY?"

"Huh?" Gray asked.

"_HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_" was all Cana wrote.

"Ahhh I squealed so much when I saw that!" Mira replied next.

"Me too :)," Levy joined in.

"So he finally confessed," Erza wrote.

Lucy sputtered aloud.

Several of her classmates turned to see who made the noise, so she quickly ducked her head down to hide.

"WAITT A SECOND!" Gray messaged, "THAT'S _NATSU_?! I've been trying to figure out who the hell that was all morning."

"YEAH!" Cana replied. "LIKE I ASKED BEFORE, THE HELL IS GOING ON WITH THOSE TWO?!"

"Wonder how the idiot confessed..." he pondered.

"Well this is Natsu we are talking about...I wouldn't be surprised if that was the actual confession," Erza messaged.

"Oi!" Natsu finally joined in. "What's that supposed to mean?!"

"What do you think it means, Ass Flame?" Gray sneered. "She's calling you weird."

"Lucy's the weird one!" he replied back, causing Lucy's right eye to twitch. "She's the one who made me change my URL to _that_!"

"Dammnnnn," Cana wrote. "That's harsh."

"Yeah first she rejects Natsu...then she makes him change his URL to his confession," Levy wrote. "Poor Natsu."

"I hope she made the rejection painful," Gray messaged.

"OI! WHAT MAKES YOU ALL THINK SHE REJECTED ME?!" Natsu asked.

"I don't think she rejected you, Natsu!" Mira sweetly wrote.

"Thank you, Mira."

"So she didn't reject you?" Erza inquired.

"No!" he wrote. "She didn't reject me!"

"Ahhh! I knew it! It's so obvious she likes you, Natsu," Mira typed.

"So you two are dating now?" Gray asked just as Levy asked, "NaLu is canon?"

"Don't say stuff like that, Mira!" was the only message Natsu replied to.

Lucy's face had completely drained of all color...

What is Natsu doing? she internally cried.

If she weren't in class, she would probably be screaming right now...

Hoping her teacher wouldn't notice, she finally joined the chat. "NALU IS NOT CANON! AND I DIDN'T REJECT NATSU BECAUSE HE NEVER ASKED ME OUT IN THE FIRST PLACE!"

"So then why's his URL _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_?" Cana challenged.

An evil grin appeared on her face, "I dunno. He did that all on his own."

"LUCY!" Natsu wrote.

She bit back a laugh.

"Wow, Natsu," Erza wrote. "That's very gallant of you."

"SHE'S LYING!" Natsu replied back. "I LOST A DUMB COMPETITION SO SHE GOT TO DECIDE MY NEW URL!"

"Niceee, Lucy," Cana praised.

"Thanks!" she happily wrote back.

"Aww so they aren't dating :/ ," Mira glumly wrote.

"Nope," Lucy typed back with a frown firmly painted on her face.

If only...

XOXOX

"Sooo why did you change your URL to _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_?" an anon asked Natsu.

"It's the only way to get noticed when you're in a harem," Natsu explained.

Lucy's cheeks puffed up, "When will they drop this harem nonsense?!"

"It's official," another anon wrote to Natsu, "I ship you with _CelestialMage_."

Her face immediately burned red.

"Interesting," Natsu had answered.

And she saw that Mira had reblogged and added, "We call them _NaLu_!"

"Really, Mira?!" she face-palmed.

And Lucy had her own fair share of asks, all centering around one question in particular, "Are you dating _DragonSlayer_?"

"No!" was the only thing she replied.

"Look what you have done!" Natsu angrily called her. "I lost like 10 followers thanks to my new URL!"

"Why would that cause you to lose followers?" she inquired.

"'Cuz no one knows it's me!" he explained. "When can I change it back?"

"Hmmm," she pondered out loud, "I was thinking never?"

"NEVER?! NO WAY! I'M KEEPING IT FOR A WEEK TOPS! IF I LOSE ANYMORE FOLLOWERS, THEN THAT ICY BASTARD WILL HAVE MORE FOLLOWERS THAN ME!"

"How about two weeks?" she bargained.

"Why?" he exasperated.

"Because I like this URL." She heard him suck in a breath, which gave her the confidence she needed to continue speaking, "It makes me feel...special..."

"Why would it make you feel special?" he half-heartedly grumbled.

"Because..." her temperature spiked up, as she twisted her hair, "I don't know...you're special to me and to be in your URL...it makes me feel like I'm special to you too..."

Did she really just confess that?

She kind of wanted to bash her head against the wall...

"Lu-cy?"

"Ahh forget I said anything," she nervously laughed, trying to brush off what she had said. "Change it whenever you like...I was just messing around..."

"Lucy—"

"Bye!"

And she got her wish from earlier—she got to abruptly hang up on him.

"Stupid, Natsu..." she grumbled. "Stupid, me..."

And as she browsed her dashboard, she decided to reblog an ask meme.

"_Tell me on anon, if you were my boyfriend/girlfriend, what would you do?"_

And then she got ready for bed.

But before laying down for the night, she checked to see if she got any asks.

And she did.

"If I were your girlfriend, I would squeeze your boobs. Psstttt, can you guess who?"

"Cana," Lucy wrote while rolling her eyes and laughing.

Another ask read, "If I were your boyfriend—I mean prince, I would make you feel like a princess every day."

"Loke?" she wondered.

And her third ask made her heart stop for a bit...

"If I were your boyfriend, I would make sure you're always laughing and smiling because the Lucy I know should always be laughing and smiling. And I would make sure you always felt special—because you're special to me."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****I spent a good half hour debating whether or not I should put the last ask or not, but I decided to have mercy on you guys and kept it!****

****Anyway, I have more really cute fan art on tumblr for anyone who wants to see!****

Dickneel****and**_**Phantompierce-okamoto**_**both drew really cute Lucys!****

****Dickneel . tumblr tagged/virtualflames****

****phantompierce-okamoto. tumblr post/124075367533/fanart-for-virtual-flames-by-missyplatina-its****

****Thank you both so much! Just remove the spaces to use the links!****

****And thank you all so much for reading and being kind! :D****

35. Chapter 35

****XOXOX****

"_If I were your boyfriend, I would make sure you're always laughing and smiling because the Lucy I know should always be laughing and smiling. And I would make sure you always felt special—because you're special to me." _

She was wide awake now.

"Natsu..." there was no doubt in her mind that the strange romantic message was from him.

He was always talking about making her laugh and their last conversation coincidentally involved the word _special _ ...

— _because you're special to me_.

Her heart melted as she read over the line again.

And without helping it, she let an ear-splitting squeal, jumping onto her bed and hugging her pillow to her chest. She felt like some kind of crazy fangirl. "I'm special to him..."

"LUCY! I'M COMING!" she could hear her dad yell. "IF IT'S A BURGLAR, USE PLUE TO SCARE THEM!"

"Eh?" she blinked just as her door slammed open.

"WHAT'S WRONG?!" he asked with his iconic bat ready in his hands.

With hearts in her eyes and her hand clutching her chest, "I'm special to him."

"Huh?" her father scratched his head.

"Nothing—it's nothing—well it's something, but it's nothing to be concerned about..."

"You're doing that weird night-screaming thing again?" he asked with a line of worry on his forehead.

"Yeah," she flushed in embarrassment.

"I thought you were done with that..." he murmured with disappointment, before leaving her room.

She waited two seconds before bolting off her bed to get to her laptop.

She danced the mouse around _Skype_ , wondering whether or not she should ask Natsu or not...

"You can do this, Lucy!" she commanded herself.

And as if it were fate, her _Skype_ lit up.

"Lucyyy, how did you know that I was the one who sent that ask?"

"Because you're the only one who's obsessed with my boobs, Cana," she giggled to herself.

"Damnn," she wrote back. "I was hoping you would guess Loke..."

"Nahh," Lucy smiled, momentarily forgetting about Natsu. "It was obvious the other ask was Loke."

"Oi, you're still up, Lucy?" Natsu asked.

Her heartrate doubled.

"Yeah," her fingers trembled as she typed. "Looks like you're still up too."

"I'm always up this late," he replied. "You're the one who goes to bed early."

"How can you call 1 AM early?" she indignantly asked.

"Don't tell me I'm stuck third wheeling you two," Cana interrupted.

"Nahh, you're not Cana," Gray joined in. "I'm still up as well."

"Greaattttt," Natsu typed. "Just what we need...more people."

"Go chat with Lucy one-on-one if you want to talk to her alone so badly," Gray messaged back.

Lucy's cheeks blazed.

"Nahh she gets extra weird this late at night..."

She sweat-dropped and sent the emoticon of it into the chat.

"Whoaa everyone's up?" Levy now joined in.

"Hey, Levy!" Lucy greeted.

"Hi, Lucy! Why is everyone up so late? :0 ."

"Couldn't sleep," Lucy explained.

"Why not?" Natsu inquired.

Because you sent me the most romantic ask ever?

With apprehensiveness, she confessed, "I got this ask that made me really happy :3."

"Can we voice call?" Levy asked. "Typing is annoying..."

"Sure," Gray initiated the call and everyone picked up.

"What did the ask say, Lucy?" Natsu asked with urgency clear in his voice.

She toyed with a lock of her hair as she said, "Something about always making me laugh and that I'm special to him ..."

"Aww, how cute!" Levy cooed.

"Damn that really is cute," Cana murmured.

"Interesting," Gray commented.

"Weird," Natsu was the last to say anything. He suddenly sounded uninterested.

That irked her quite a bit...

But still, her heart leapt as she re-read the wonderful ask.

"I wonder who sent it," Levy pondered.

"I have a few guesses," another voice joined the chat.

It was Mira.

"Hello, Mira," Levy greeted.

"Hi, Levy!" Mira greeted back. "Are we all having sleepover or something?"

"Looks that way," Lucy giggled. She didn't think of it like that as she glanced over at the clock and watched it strike two a.m.

"Anyway," Levy said, "Do you know who sent the message, Lucy?"

"I think I have an idea," she coyly bit her lip.

"I bet it was Gray," Mira gushed. "Or maybe Natsu! Or maybe they decided to combine messages and send them in one ask! Ahhh how cute!"

"Mira," Gray sighed. "I think you need help."

"What he said," Natsu scoffed, but his scoff sounded forced.

"Don't be mean to Mira," Lucy chided.

"Ahh don't be mad at them, Lucy!" she said. "We can't help it that they are in denial."

"Denial?" Gray questioned.

"I'm not in denial about anything," Natsu huffed and then abruptly said, "Night, everyone."

"Night," everyone except Gray said back.

"Hope I didn't annoy him..." Mira sounded sad.

"I wouldn't worry about him," Gray lazily said.

Lucy's face fell a bit.

Why did Natsu leave so suddenly?

And she didn't get to interrogate him...

But all her sad thoughts were halted as she received a video chat request from the boy who was making her stomach go up and down...

Should I accept it? she wondered...

"I should go to bed," she fake-yawned. "G'night."

And then she accepted the request.

The screen revealed a scowling Natsu and Lucy bit back an _eep_.

Why does he look angry? she sucked in a breath.

But his scowl morphed into an eye-squinting smile once he caught sight of her, "Yo, Lucy!"

She deeply exhaled with relief, "Hi, Natsu."

"Nice shirt," he grinned.

"Ehh" she was almost afraid to glance down...

What if she, too, had developed a stripping habit?

He cocked his head to the side, "What's with the ugly face?"

"Don't call my face ugly!" she exclaimed, dropping her gaze to her shirt.

She let out another sigh of relief. She was, in fact, wearing a shirt—a tank top to be exact. It was a dark shade of pink with a black _Fairy Tail_ guild mark on the center, which she wore to bed most nights.

She glanced over at his shirt, which was just a plain white t-shirt.

"You would think I would be used to your weirdness by now," he sighed, shaking his head with a huge grin on his face.

"Hey!" she profusely blushed as she watched his spiky hair bounce with each shake.

She found herself wondering what it would be like to touch it... Would it be soft? Would it be hard and have that gross, jell-like texture? _Nahh_, she decided. It looked nice and soft.

His chuckling pulled her away from her thoughts, "What? It's a good thing I'm not."

"Why's that?" her brows furrowed.

"Because it's like a new adventure every time I talk to you," he smiled brightly, showing off his sharp canines.

"Likewise," she smiled back. "So why did you wanna video chat?"

"Dunno," he shrugged. "Just thought it would be more fun than voice chattin'."

"Oh," she raised a skeptical brow.

"So that ask..." she watched his cheeks tinge pink as he glanced sideways, while rubbing his neck.

"Yeah?" she said too quickly that she mentally cursed herself.

"Who do you think sent it?"

She couldn't keep the grin off her face as she answered, "I think it was from you."

"ME?!" Natsu's eyes nearly popped out of his head as he gaped at her with pure bewilderment.

"Yeah, you."

A smile cracked onto his stunned lips and before she knew it, he was doubling over with laughter.

Lucy's eye twitched, "What's so funny?"

"Y-YOU!" he cried, pointing at her. "I CAN'T-CAN'T BELIEVE...YOU WOULD THI-THINK...I SENT YOU...THA-THAT!"

She saw the glistening in his eyes from tears.

"Why is that funny?" a frown drew upon her face as she crossed her arms.

"BE-BECAUSE!" he continued laughing.

"I only thought it was you because you're always going on about trying to make me laugh!" She slammed her palms on her desk, standing up slightly. "And I told you, you were special to me earlier and the message said I was special to him!"

The second the words left her mouth, she slapped her hand over it.

Natsu stopped laughing and sighed, "I think you're a bit paranoid, Lucy."

"Well I was only kidding anyway," she huffed, turning her nose in the air.

"Hmm?"

"I think it was Gray who sent it."

"EH?" She watched as Natsu's face twisted into a horrified expression. "WHY WOULD YOU THINK THAT ICY ASS SENT IT?! LIKE HELL HE'S ROMANTIC LIKE THAT!"

"Well I don't really have a reason to think otherwise, right?"

"Errrr..." he looked uncomfortable as he scratched his forehead.

"Maybe I should go to that guy you went to when you got that account taken down for me, and pay him to find out who the anon is..." Lucy mused.

Natsu made a choking noise as he tried to say something, but nothing coherent came out of his mouth.

"What was his URL again?" she tapped her finger on her chin, pretending to think. "Oh right! _ArchiveMage_."

"I don't think you should do that!" he protested.

"Why not?"

"Be-Because!" he started. "He's a total perv! He makes Icy Pants look normal!"

"That bad, huh?" Lucy asked. "That's a shame. I really want to find out who sent it to me..."

"Why do you want to find out so badly?" he looked very uncomfortable.

"Because he made me so happy," she gushed. "I was squealing and hugging my pillow after I read it..."

"You were?" his eyes widened.

"Yeah," she said softly. "But maybe it wasn't the message itself that made me react like that...Maybe it was the person who I thought sent it..."

"Gray?" Natsu frowned.

"Nah," she shook her head and then winked. "Doesn't matter who, right?"

"Err right," he averted his eyes, rubbing his forearm arm.

"Well I should really go to bed," she said. "Otherwise my dad will come in here with his bat again..."

"Again?" Natsu tilted his head to the side with curiosity.

"Don't ask," she giggled, shaking her head.

"Guess I know where you get your weirdness from," he smirked.

She bit back a grin and said, "Night, Natsu."

"Night, Lucy," he happily grinned back.

And Lucy ended the chat.

But before going to bed, she decided to reply to her not-so-anonymous-anon...

"I wish you were my boyfriend."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Okay, since I'm almost 100% positive that this story is going to hit 2000 reviews after this chapter...I'm going to give you all a special chapter like I did when we reached a 1000 reviews!****

****Bonus points if you can guess what I'm gonna do ;)****

****Thanks you again because I'M LITERALLY SCREAMING! SO CLOSE TO 2000 WHATTT?!****

****I LOVE YOU ALL SO MUCH!****

****And I officially started my new fic NaLu fic,** _ ****Quarantine** _ **for those interested!******

****Anyway, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!****

****I WISH YOU ALL HAPPINESS AND SUNSHINE!****

36. Chapter 36

****WAHH WE DID IT! 2000+ REVIEWS!****

****Enjoy the special chapter, cuties!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"What just happened?" Natsu drummed his fingers on his desk, thinking over the entire video chat _._ He ran his non-drumming fingers through his fluffy hair, "Lucyy, you're so confusing..."

That dumb message he sent her...

He had meant for it to be obvious that he was the one who had sent it, but now...

"GAHH!" he slammed his head onto the keyboard, wishing he could take it back...

Not because he didn't mean it or anything—because he did—it was just that she had completely overreacted to it—with her squealing and pillow hugging...

Just picturing her doing that kind of made him want to die.

And her words:

But maybe it wasn't the message itself that made me react like that...Maybe it was the person who I thought sent it ...

There was no way she didn't know it was him...so what exactly did she mean?

It was really late to ponder over this, he decided. His brain wasn't thinking clearly.

But the way his heart was racing, there was no way he could possibly fall asleep.

It was awful how badly he let her ruin his sleeping schedule—not that she was doing it on purpose—because how was she supposed to know that she makes his heart pound as though he ran a marathon—EVERY NIGHT.

He needed to take his mind off of her... so he mindlessly went back to the group chat, "Yoo, I'm back."

"Hi, Natsu," Levy greeted. "Welcome back to the sleepover!"

"Thanks, Mira!" he beamed.

"It's Levy!" she huffed, but Natsu ignored her correction, like he always did.

"How was Lucy?" Mira asked.

"She was good—Oi! What makes you think I was talkin' to her?!" his nostrils flared with annoyance.

"We think you guys were video chatting actually," she giggled.

"Like we would be video chatting this late," he grumbled, rubbing the back of his neck.

"What's wrong with video chatting late?" Cana inquired. "That's when all the kinky fun begins."

Natsu shrugged, "I guess."

"WAIT! YOU AND LUCY DO KINKY STUFF DURING LATE NIGHT VIDEO CHAT SESSIONS?!" Mira gasped.

"Damnnn," Cana purred.

His eyes bugged out as he harshly slammed his palms against his desk, causing pain to shoot up his arms, "THAT'S NOT WHAT I SAID!"

"And all this time I thought Gratsu was the canon couple..." she murmured to herself, sounding disappointed.

Natsu sweated and he could hear Gray sputtering in the distance.

"It's kind of what you said, Natsu," Levy giggled.

"WELL IT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!"

"Oohh so you meant that you video chat with her at night hoping that you'll be doing kinky stuff with her?" Mira innocently asked.

"That's dedication," Cana sounded as though she approved.

"THE HELL?!" Natsu cried with nervous sweat dabbing his forehead. "WHERE DID THAT EVEN COME FROM? I DON'T WANT TO DO ANY KINKY STUFF WITH ANYONE, ALRIGHT?!"

"No one wants to do kinky stuff with you either," Gray sneered.

"And no one wants to do kinky stuff with you either," he sneered back, with his hands curled into fists.

"Good!" Gray growled.

"Good!" he growled back.

"I wish Erza was online," Cana muttered. "They're so annoying and they aren't even making sense..."

"AHH!" Levy cried. "Lucy's anon really was super cute."

"Heh?" Natsu's anger had vanished.

"I just read it also!" Mira exclaimed. "So cute...I can't even!"

"Can't even _what_?!" Natsu tilted his head at the screen. "How come you never finish your sentences?"

"Wonder who sent it..." Levy pondered, ignoring Natsu.

Wait ...he stiffened.

They were talking about the anon Lucy mentioned earlier. So Lucy must have posted Natsu's ask...which means...

He bit down on his lip as he typed in her URL.

And there it was.

His ask.

And her answer.

"_I wish you were my boyfriend."_

He sucked in a breath.

"I hope Lucy finds out who sent it to her...Like imagine if they started dating!" Levy gushed.

"Eh I'm okay without her finding out," Gray simply said.

"That's because you're jealous," Cana teased.

"No," he scoffed.

But Natsu couldn't care less about what they were saying.

His mind was trying to process this.

So if Lucy knew he was the one who sent it...then that means she wants him to be her boyfriend?

No way , he gulped as his heart felt electrified.

He was jumping to ridiculous conclusions...

She was just being sweet back to the anon...and besides, didn't she mention that she thought it was Gray as well...

He froze.

What if the message _was_ meant for Gray?

His stomach clenched.

Maybe he should just confess to writing the message...but then what?

Would they start dating?

Was that what Natsu wanted?

He had no idea.

This was all too new and confusing...

And what if Lucy really does go to Hibiki—_AchieveMage—_ to find out who sent the message?

For the second time that night, Natsu smashed his head against his keyboard. He pulled away and realized he had accidentally hit the refresh button.

There was a new ask from an anon on her page.

"I wish I was your boyfriend as well, Lucy. Every day would be so much fun—because no matter what, it's always more fun when we are together."

"EHHHHH?!" Natsu jumped out of his seat. Someone was pretending to be the same anon that had been _him_? "WHAT THE FUCK?!"

With seething energy, he pulled up _Skype_ and messaged Lucy.

"JUST SO YOU KNOW," he typed, "I WROTE THE ANON ABOUT YOU BEING SPECIAL TO ME, BUT I DIDN'T WRITE THE OTHER ONE!"

"I knew it!" she wrote back.

His fury deflated as his brows furrowed in, "Knew what?"

"That you sent the first message," she messaged. "Though I'll admit, the second message had confused me..."

"THAT WASN'T ME!" he wrote again. "LIKE I WOULD WISH TO BE YOUR BOYFRIEND!"

"LIKE I WOULD WISH YOU TO _BE_ MY BOYFRIEND!" she typed back.

"BUT YOU WROTE THAT YOU DID, SO HAH!" he smiled at his small victory.

"I was only saying that, Stupid!" she wrote.

"Liar," he teased.

"It's true!"

"Whatever you say, Lucyyy," his smile grew wider.

"I was just trying to think of a unique response," she protested.

"Sure, sure. Why are you still up anyways? Isn't it way past your bedtime?"

"Oh shush," she wrote. "You're annoying."

"Pshhh not as annoying as you."

"Noo you're wayyy more annoying than me!"

And Natsu laughed.

He didn't care whether or not she meant the boyfriend comment because this was what he liked—the causal teasing and riling the other person up...

That strange anon, who pretended to be Natsu, was right.

It really is more fun when they are together.

"Let's just agree that Gray is the most annoying," he elatedly typed.

"Sounds good to me," she typed back.

"And let's agree that you're weird."

"HEY!"

Yup, it was definitely more fun when they are together...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Gahhh did I do a good job with Natsu's POV? Or was this chapter a terrible mistake :0****

****Sorry if it was...I'm really nervous about it.****

****Oh and by the way, I'm doing a writing collaboration with _Proudtobeaginger_ and I posted the first chapter of it on here called:****

**** _The Horrors of Summer Camp,_ which is a NaLu AU and it will also be posted on tumblr. ****

****Anyway, thanks for reading and hope you all liked the celebration chapter of reaching 2000 reviews!****

37. Chapter 37

****YOU ARE ALL THE BEST AND I JUST CAN'T!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"So how was the sleepover?" Lucy messaged the group chat when she awoke the next morning.

"What sleepover?" Erza inquired.

Oh right...Erza wasn't up.

"Everyone was up last night voice chatting," Lucy explained, bringing her laptop to her bed so that she could lay down on her stomach in front of it, "so they called it a sleepover."

"Really?" Erza wrote. "That sounds like fun."

"Yeah, it was pretty fun," Lucy replied, though she wasn't on for that long...

"And it also sounds very irresponsible. Sleep is important," Erza had continued typing.

Lucy sweated, "True."

"That's funny coming from you, Lucy," Natsu suddenly typed.

Minor shock that Natsu was online flooded into her and then out of her as a vein throbbed on her forehead, "What's that supposed to be mean?"

"What's that supposed to mean?" Erza asked as well.

"Lucy kept me up all night," he simply messaged.

"DID NOT!" she pounded each key.

"Did too!" he typed back.

"Lucy," Erza wrote. "That's not very nice."

"HAH! YEAH, LUCY!" Natsu mocked. "NOT VERY NICE!"

"BUT I DIDN'T!" her face warmed up. "HE'S THE ONE WHO KEPT ME UP!"

"Pshh, don't believe her, Erza," he typed. "Lucy falls asleep on me all the time, like I could possibly keep her up."

"BUT YOU DID BECAUSE YOU SENT ME THAT VERY ROMANTIC MESSAGE!"

"Romanic message?" Erza questioned.

"IT WASN'T ROMANTIC AT ALL!" he wrote. "WHY WOULD I EVEN SEND YOU A ROMANTIC MESSAGE?!"

"Like I would know!" a smile grew on her cheeks. She loved this. The random teasing that will literally get either of them nowhere.

"You two are certainly interesting," Erza messaged. It was the last thing Lucy read before she got ready for school.

****XOXOX****

After finishing all her homework, Lucy decided to start her first multichapter fic.

She had the plot and everything all planned out. It was going to be a Haru x Elie alternate universe, where they met through a prank text, but somehow Lucy ended up on _Tumblr_.

"Do you have any hidden talents?!" someone asked _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_.

Lucy grinned, biting on her bottom lip.

She absolutely loved his new URL.

Natsu had replied to the ask, "I can eat and breath fire :D."

"No way," Lucy said aloud and then she commented on it, "Prove it."

Instead of replying on _Tumblr_, he messaged her on _Skype_, "Alright."

She was then sent a video chat request.

Her heart raced like it always did when she was about to see him. Her hands trembled slightly as she picked up her p

hone to look herself over on the camera before accepting his request.

"Yo, Lucy!" he cheerfully smiled, his pink hair was extra spikey today. She couldn't help but wonder if Natsu noticed the little things about her; such as her different hair styles? Like today she had a lock of hair tied up on the side of her head.

"Hi," she smiled back.

"You ready to see a real dragon?" he asked with a mischievous glint in his eyes.

She giggled and rolled her eyes, "Of course."

"Gimme a sec," he said as his body covered the webcam. "Just need to bring my laptop outside 'cuz I'm not allowed to do fire tricks inside the house."

"Well obviously," Lucy laughed as she watched his chest since she had nothing better to look while he walked with the laptop. He was wearing a plain, navy blue tee-shirt that crinkled with each step.

She could hear a sliding door and then the laptop was turned around, revealing a lush, green yard.

It was spacious, with nicely mowed grass and pretty hedges. She could also see a little bit of what was an in-ground pool.

"Alright," he walked in front of the webcam, capturing her attention.

He was holding two torches in one hand and a lighter in the other and a container. He placed them on the ground and then he pulled off his shirt, revealing his nicely toned body.

Lucy sucked in a breath just as he sent a scowl at her with his pointer finger up wagging in the air, "Don't you dare call me a _stripper_. I'm only takin' my shirt off as a precautionary!"

With an amused smile, she said, "I wasn't going to say anything."

"Good," he said with a tone of approval. "Okay so first I'm gonna eat fire." He bent down and grabbed a torch and she watched as he dipped it into the container. Then he grabbed his lighter.

She raised a brow, "Can't wait."

He lit the torch and a glorious blaze of embers roared. He held it at arm's length as he tucked the lighter into the pocket of his shorts.

"Ready to be amazed?" He grinned, showing off his pointy fangs.

"Actually, I'm ready to call for help," she winked.

"Oi!" he glared, swaying the torch all around, she almost screamed when the flame almost licked his face, "Have some faith in me!"

"Sorry!" she blushed.

He held out his right hand with his palm facing upwards and he lightly tapped it with the flame of the torch.

Lucy gasped, "What are you..."

He held the flame on his palm while grinning at her through the screen.

She tried to speak, but no words would come out as she stared in wonder at the dazzling flame.

He, then, closed his fist, snuffing out the fire, "Cool, right?" He put out the flame on the torch as well.

All she could do is awe at him.

"Lucy?" he blinked at the screen. "You okay?"

"How-How were you able to do that?"

"Do what?" he cocked his head to the side as he lit a new flame, "You mean this?" he tapped the fire to his palm again, and just like last time, he was holding the flame as though it were nothing.

"THAT!" she exclaimed, jumping out of her seat, just as her heart jumped out of her chest.

He closed his fist again, putting out the flame and shot her a lazy grin, "That's nothin'." He put the flame out on the torch again and then relit it. "Check this out!"

He stuck his tongue—which was pretty long—all the way out.

She placed a hand over her mouth and let out a muffled, "You're not going to—"

He touched the torch to his tongue.

"Oh my God," she ogled at the screen with her hand still covering her mouth.

He removed the torch and a brilliant flame danced upon his tongue.

He looked genuinely pleased with himself.

His eyes were shining brighter than both the flame on his tongue and the flame on his torch combined. Lucy found that her heart was racing, not from the fear that he might really hurt himself, but from something else.

After what was only a couple of seconds, Natsu retracted his tongue, with the flame still burning brightly, back into his mouth.

Did he just ...

She took a sharp inhale of breath. "You-You...!" she sputtered, unable to get the words out.

He opened his mouth wide, sticking his tongue back out with a wicked look in his eyes.

His mouth was not on fire...

"You ate fire...Oh my God."

"Pshhh," he waved her off. "That was also nothin'. Now it's time for my real trick." He wrapped his hand around the burning torch to put the flame out and then he dipped it into the container before he lit it back on fire.

"What else could you possibly...OH MY GOD!"

He stuck the fiery torch into his mouth and closed his lips around it, looking as though he was drinking it in and then

he pulled the torch out.

It was no longer on fire.

"You are the real life Haru..." was the only thing she could say.

"I know," he beamed, putting the torch out again and he relit it, "What do you think of this trick?" He tilted his head all the way back and dipped the blazing torch into his mouth and then pulled it out slowly with it still lit. His mouth was still open and she watched as a flame blew out of it, making him look like a human candle.

"Whoaa," she gaped. "That's so cool."

He picked up his second torch and dipped into the weird container that must be fuel or something. He tapped his tongue with it and then he tapped it with the flaming torch.

His tongue was on fire, once again, and with the torch that wasn't already on fire, he taped it.

Lucy watched in amazement as the flame transferred from his tongue over to the torch.

He put out both flames and then asked, "Ready to see some fire breathing?"

"Yeah!" a huge grin was plastered on her cheeks.

He grinned back, "Yosh! Here we go!" He picked up the container he had been dipping his torches in and poured it into his mouth.

Then he lit his torch on fire and angled it close to his lips.

Natsu, then, spit the liquid, that was in his mouth, at the lit flame and a roar of fire blazed out from his mouth like Haru's Karyū no Hōkō.

And then he did again, and again, and again, until no more fuel was in his mouth.

"You're amazing," she said with a dumb smile on her face.

He smiled back at her in response and she noticed that his cheeks had flushed up and for some reason, she didn't think that it was from the heat of the flames.

He went back to placing the fire on his hand and then he placed it on his arm, making him look like a human torch.

"Natsu," she dreamily sighed while holding her head up with her palms. His head snapped to the screen as she praised him again, "You really are amazing."

The look he was giving her... It was something she had never seen before. His expression was completely unreadable and his eyes were looking at her with this intense wonder.

Her cheeks flushed up.

Had she said something bad?

And that's when something went wrong.

Suddenly his face twisted up and he let out a loud, "AHH FUCK!"

He had forgotten his arm was on fire.

He dropped his lit torch and flailed his arm all over.

The grass was now burning up thanks to the torch. "SHIT!" He dove for the ground, throwing his body over the flame. He snuffed it out and then he rolled around, trying to put his arm out.

"Natsu!" Lucy was horrified as she watched the pink hair boy tumble around in agony, "Should I call for help?!"

"No!" he yelled. "I'm—SHIT—fine!"

Her face turned skeptical, "You sure?"

He rolled onto his back, his arm was no longer on fire. It looked terribly injured as he grasped it, "Yeah, totally—FUCK—fine! Doesn't even—GAHH—hurt—ARGHH—one bit!"

He rolled onto his stomach and buried his face into his grass and let out a muffled scream.

"Good thing...it's only...my right...arm..." he grunted out a laugh.

She blinked, "You're a lefty?"

"Nope," he shot her a smile before he threw his face back into the grass to continue stifling his screams.

And to both Lucy and Natsu's surprise, she broke out laughing.

The whole thing was ridiculous.

He stood up onto his knees, still gripping his burnt arm. He looked at her and with gritted teeth, he asked, "What's so funny?"

"You—You...set...your arm...on fire!" tears blurred her vision.

He buried his mouth into his elbow bend and let out another agonizing cry before growling, "Lucy, I think—AHH—you're a sadist."

"Am not!" she huffed, crossing her arms over her chest.

"...all your fault..." she could just barely hear him mutter as he crawled towards the laptop.

"Should I call for help?" she asked as concern once again washed over her.

"Nahh, this is nothin'," he smiled through the pain. "Gonna go shower...to wash away...the smell of my burnt flesh."
"

And then the video chat ended.

****XOXOX****

A couple of hours went by and Natsu was still missing.

Her stomach churned for the worse...

So Lucy let the the group chat distract her from her worrying.

They were all busy teasing Gray about Juvia for that she made a Follow Forever post and the only person on it was Gray.

She even made her banner one of Gray's shirtless selfies.

Gray, of course, was flipping out and Mira kept squealing, _Gruvia_.

And finally Natsu was online.

Lucy let out a breath that she didn't realize she had been holding.

And surprising herself, she sent him a video chat request.

"Do we really have to video chat right now?" he asked the second the screen loaded. His hair was no longer as spiked up like it had been earlier, for that now he had a full set of bangs.

She frowned at his words, "I was worried about you..."

"I'm fine. See?" he shot her a cheeky grin, holding up his bandaged arm. "The burns weren't so bad."

She felt so relieved. She would have never forgave herself if something severely bad had happened to him because he was showing her something...

"So how were you able to do that with fire?" Lucy inquired. "You know, without getting burned...well until the incident happened..."

"Temperature lag," he said. "The longer the fire burns, the hotter it gets, so for those few seconds I can hold it without it really burning me."

"You're crazy," she shook her head.

"I know," he boasted.

"Now you match Haru," she giggled.

"Hmm?" he tilted his head to the side.

"His right arm is bandaged," she explained, "and now your right arm is bandaged."

His face immensely brightened, "You're right! YOSH! NOW I HAVE THE ULTIMATE COSPLAY FOR CON!"

And Lucy's face fell as it always did when Comic Con is bright up.

His face scrunched up, "What's with the weird face?"

"Don't call my face weird," she glowered, sinking back into her chair.

"Is this about Comic Con?" he asked.

"No," she averted her gaze from the screen.

"It's not that big of deal that you can't go," he said gently. "Sides, who wants to go some big nerd gathering anyways?"

Me, she thought as her lips quivered.

Natsu's slanted eyes bugged, "Gahh don't make that face!"

"Sorry," she whimpered.

"Don't apologize!" he rubbed his forehead with his left hand. "You're makin' me feel bad!"

"Sorry," she said again on reflex.

"STOPPP!" he groaned, covering his eyes with his good arm. "LUCYY, YOU'RE MAKIN' IT HARD TO BE ANNOYED AT YOU!"

That snapped her out of her sadness, "Why are you annoyed at me?"

He pouted, looking away from the screen with his left arm rubbing the back of his neck, "'Cuz you're the reason my arm was set on fire."

"How am I the reason?!" she exclaimed, no longer sad, but livid, "I didn't do anything!"

"You..." a blush colored his cheeks, "distracted me..."

Her heart fluttered, "Did not."

"Did too!" he scowled. "If you weren't looking at me with that cu—YOU'RE ANNOYING AND I WANNA PICK A FIGHT WITH THAT ICY BASTARD SO I'LL TALK TO YOU IN THE GROUP CHAT."

And the video chat ended.

Lucy awkwardly rubbed the back of her head, "I think he's the annoying one, right, Plue?" she glanced down at the iguana's cage. She placed her hand to her heart, "Making my heart race like this..."

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

*****mentally scolds myself* adaskfsdk I stayed up late again to write this...****

****But you cuties are worth the lack of sleep :D****

****Thanks for reading!****

****Please don't actually try to play with fire like this!****

****Hope you all have a lovely day!****

38. Chapter 38

****I THINK I SHOULD APOLOGIZE IN ADVANCE FOR THIS CHAPTER!****

****ANYWAY, ENJOY!****

* * *

XOXOX

Friday afternoon, or was it technically evening?—was the best for Lucy. Nothing she loved more than spending her free time with her friends.

"I'M SO MAD," Natsu vocally complained to the chat.

"What's wrong, Natsu?" Mira asked. "Did Gray confess to Lucy before you had the chance?"

Lucy fell out of her seat, landing in front of Plue's tank.

Plue cocked his head to the side and stared at her.

"Don't look at me like that!" she glowered, crossing her arms across her chest.

"Who ya talkin' to, Lucy?" Natsu inquired curiously.

Her face warmed and as she opened her mouth to speak, but Erza talked over her, "Did she say _yes_?"

"Probably, _if he had his shirt off_ ..." Cana's tone was suggestive, causing Lucy to blanch.

"What?!" Natsu gasped. "No! I mean he coulda! The hell would I know?!"

"He didn't!" Lucy spoke up finally, as she sat back on her chair.

"Then why are you angry, Natsu?" Levy wondered.

"BECAUSE I RAN INTO THAT DAMN STRIPPER AT SCHOOL!" he cried. " _HE GOES TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS ME_! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!"

"Oi!" Gray finally joined the chat. "It's not like I'm happy 'bout this either! And how did you get home before me?"

Natsu ignored him and shouted, "HOW DID I NOT KNOW THAT THERE'S A _STRIPPER_ IN MY SCHOOL?! LET ALONE, IN THE _SAME YEAR AS ME_?!"

"AND HOW DID _I_ NOT KNOW THAT THERE'S AN IDIOT WITH _PINK HAIR_ IN THE SAME SCHOOL AND SAME YEAR AS _ME_?" Gray shouted back.

And before Lucy had realized it, she had broken down with laughter.

This tops them living in the same town as each other...It was perfect.

"Luccyyy, why are you always laughing at not-funny stuff?" Natsu groaned, causing her laughs to cease thanks to embarrassment.

"Did you two run into each other at school?" Erza asked.

"More like we both got detention together..." Gray grumbled.

"Well duh you got detention!" Natsu snorted. "I mean what'd you expect would happen? You stripped in school."

"It's not my fault!" the other boy protested. "And they should be used to it by now..."

He strips in school?!

Lucy nearly fell off her chair again as another series of laughter bubbled up.

"I don't think anyone should get used to that..." Levy murmured.

"Thank you, M—" Natsu started to say, but was cut off.

"Call me _Mira_ and I swear you will regret it," Levy's voice turned surprisingly dark.

With an audible gulp, Natsu choked out, "Levy! Thank you, _Levy_!"

"Good boy," she giggled.

Lucy was finally able to get a hold of herself and asked, "So what was it like meeting each other for the second time?"

"I remember when Jellal and I met for the second time," Erza reminisced. "We couldn't keep our hands off each other..."

"THE HELL?!" Natsu sputtered.

Lucy smacked a hand over her mouth to stifle another possible round of laughter.

"Well I meant it in an innocent way..."

"IT WASN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL!" Gray frantically yelled. "AND BESIDES, NATSU'S A TOTAL WEEB!"

"AM NOT!" he growled.

"ARE TOO!" Gray growled back.

"AM NOT!"

"ARE TOO!"

"SHUT UP!" Erza roared.

"How is Natsu a weeb, Gray?" Lucy asked, wondering what Natsu is like at school...

"He has his entire right arm wrapped up in a bandage just like Haru!" Gray snorted. "So embarrassing!"

Lucy chortled. Poor Natsu...

"OI!" Natsu complained, "I ain't a weeb! I actually injured my arm, you insensitive, dumbass!"

"What could you possibly have done to injure your _entire_ arm?" Gray challenged.

"I...don't want to say..." he muttered.

"Because you're a weeb!" Gray jeered.

"Ammm nottttt!" he moaned.

"You can tell us, Natsu," Mira said coaxed.

Lucy decided to answer for him, "He set his arm on fire."

"LUCY!" Natsu sputtered, causing a smug smile to form on her face.

"HE WHAT?!" everyone gasped.

Licking her lips, she said, "He took a lit torch and rubbed it all over his right arm while we were video chatting. I swear he had gone mad."

"Wowww..." Levy awed.

"...Idiot," Gray murmured.

"Oh my..." Mira said.

"Very reckless...I greatly disapprove," Erza said threateningly.

"LUCY'S A SADIST!" Natsu blurted out.

"NATSU!" Now it was Lucy's turn to sputter as she leapt out of her seat.

"Damnn..." Cana laughed. "Who knew Lucy had such a fun side?"

"What's that supposed to mean?" her right eye twitched.

"Lucy...I didn't realize you were into that...um kind of _stuff_ ..." Levy sounded flustered.

"I'M NOT!" she screeched, slamming her hands down on her desk, "NATSU'S JUST MAKING STUFF UP!"

"Am not!" he said for the umpteenth time. "Lucy was laughin' at me while my arm was on fire! A _normal person_ woulda called for help!"

"YOU TOLD ME NOT TO!"

"And the only reason I set it on fire was 'cuz she asked!"

"WELL IF I'M A SADIST," she cried, "THEN THAT MAKES YOU A MASOCHIST!"

"Heh?" Natsu choked, surprised by her accusation.

"Ooh," Gray chuckled, "she got you there, Fire Balls."

"Wow, Natsu," Cana sounded impressed, "Maybe me and you could have a little fun some time..."

"No thanks..." he sounded grim.

"I'm still trying to understand why he would set his arm on fire just because Lucy asked..." Levy said.

"I'm still trying to understand why Lucy would ask him to set his arm on fire," Gray said next.

"IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!" they both cried.

"Well I don't know why Lucy asked him to do it, but I know why he did. It was for loovvee," Mira sweetly cooed.

Lucy sunk back into her seat, _I wish_ ...She rubbed her temples.

"I DID IT BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE THAT I COULD DO TRICKS WITH FIRE!" he wailed.

"You can do tricks with fire?!" Levy gasped.

"I wanna see!" Cana sounded excited

"Maybe when my arm grows some skin back..." he murmured.

Lucy instantly felt guilty. How bad were the wounds? "I'm sorry, Natsu," her voice was glum as she sulked her face into her palms.

"Err don't apologize!" Natsu said quickly. "It-It doesn't hurt at all! I can do more tricks for ya right now if you'd like!"

"Maybe he is a masochist after all," Erza commented.

"I think he's just stupid," Gray remarked.

"That's so sweet," Mira awed.

"Ahh no thanks," Lucy felt all warm inside. He was willing to burn himself again just to make her feel better?

Her stomach fluttered.

She placed a hand against her stomach, _what is he doing to me_?

"Aww so Lucy isn't a sadist!" Levy sounded relieved.

"You really thought I was one?" Lucy's eyes bugged out.

"Anyway," Levy acted as though she hadn't heard her, "are we all excited to watch _Fairy Tail_ together tonight?!"

"I can't," Natsu groaned. "Have to write a history paper due by midnight as punishment for fallin' asleep in class."

Gray snorted.

"What's it on?" Lucy asked, eager to offer him some help.

"How Crocus became a blooming city or somethin'..." he grumbled. "I don't have any notes on it. I'm so screwed."

Blushing slightly, she said, "I could help you...we just covered that topic last week and history's one of my favorite subjects..."

"Really?!" he perked up. "That would be awesome! Thanks, Lucy!"

She giggled, "No problem."

"Awww," Cana teased, "Luccyy likes youu!"

"Offering him help," Mira gushed. "So cute!"

"It's not like that!" Lucy tugged on her hair.

"Say, Lucy," Mira said. "Do you still like that guy you said you liked a while back?"

Lucy's brows furrowed as she distantly remembered the conversation... _So random..._

"Do you?" she asked again.

"Umm..." Lucy thickly swallowed. She wanted to say _no_, she really did, but the thought of denying her crush on Natsu...It didn't sit well in her stomach, "Yes."

"Hmm..." Was the only thing Mira said, while everyone else didn't give their conversation a second thought.

Gray and Natsu started to argue over nothing and Levy babbled about what chapters were going to be covered in the new episode of _Fairy Tail,_ as Lucy let out a sigh of relief.

The last thing she needed was to be attacked with questions about that...

****XOXOX****

"Okay!" Natsu beamed at Lucy through the screen. "Where do I start?"

The two decided to video chat as she helped him with his essay.

She had pulled out all her notes and lay sprawled on her bedroom floor with Plue laying down next to her.

"Oh hey, Plue," Natsu waved, just noticing the iguana. "He looks bigger."

"Does he?" Lucy glanced over at the iguana. He didn't look any different to her... Still the same brownish color...so she shrugged.

"Say _hi_, Happy," Natsu placed Happy on his head.

Lucy bit back a laugh as she greeted the salamander and then she got down to business, "Okay, first—"

"Lucy," her bedroom door opened. "I have to leave for a business trip right now...won't be back until Sunday most likely—oh hi there, Natsu."

"Yo, Lucy's old man," Natsu cheekily greeted.

"Don't call me _old man_," her dad scratched his forehead.

Lucy frowned at her dad, "But it's Friday night! I don't want to be home alone when it's late..."

"I know," he frowned back. "But I have no choice...Just remember I'm only a phone call away."

"I'll keep Lucy company," Natsu lazily grinned. "Got nothin' better to do 'sides this dumb paper..."

Her heart stuttered, "Natsu..."

"Alright," Jude nodded approvingly.

Lucy stood up and hugged her father goodbye, not caring one bit that Natsu was watching.

Suddenly Jude pushed her away, "KYYAAAAA! IT GOT BIGGER!" he pointed at Plue before bolting out of her room.

And Natsu broke down laughing, "That will never get old! And, HAH! Told ya he got bigger!"

Lucy giggled, "Yeah, yeah...Okay, now let's get started! I'm going to send you copies of my notes."

"Alright," he shrugged, watching Lucy as she took photos of her notes with her phone.

Her hands shook, causing her to retake the photos about four times, thanks to the pressure she felt from Natsu watching her.

"Okay, sending them to you now," she opened the app up on her phone and messaged the photos into their chat.

"Got them."

She gazed at his dark eyes as they moved back and forth, reading her notes.

"Your handwriting sucks," he commented with a smirk.

"Does not!" she glowered and then glanced at her notes. She cringed. It did look like scribbles... "Okay...maybe it does a little..."

He chuckled and then his eyes grew wide, "Oi! Is that my _name_?"

"Huh?" she blinked.

"My name!" a huge smile grew on his face. "In Hiragana!"

Her face instantly drained of all color.

No.

"And in Kanji!" his smile grew even wider and then he looked at her. "Oi, why do you have my name written in your notes?"

Her heart literally stopped.

She wanted to die, "I-I don't know what you're talking about..."

"Look at your notes."

She glanced down, knowing exactly what she was going to see...Natsu's name doodled on the top of her paper and in the margins... How could she make such a stupid mistake? She knew she drew his name on everything.

She felt so stupid.

But how could she have known he would ever see her notes? ... Her heart clenched in her chest. "That's not your name!"

"It's not?" he raised a skeptical brow. "'Cuz I'm pretty sure that's the character for _Na_ and that's the character for _Tsu_ and I know how to write my name in Kanji...sooo..." he put his palms up and shrugged.

"I-I...it's not your name...it's the season...which happens to be your name..." Oh God, she was dying...Sweat dripped down her forehead. How was she supposed to get out of this? Especially with a lame excuse like that?

"So you're telling me you like to doodle the season that happens to be the same name as mine?" Natsu cocked his head to the side. "With hearts surrounding it...?"

She sucked in a breath, shoving her hair in front of her face, hoping to hide her burning face.

How could this be happening?

And on top of all this, Mira had asked that stupid question about her liking someone and Lucy stupidly admitting to it...

Even Natsu could put two and two together...

No ...Lucy wanted to cry...She wasn't ready for this...

Right on cue, Natsu's eyes widened with realization. His cheeks tinted a pale pink, "Wait! The person you like...it's ___"

"I have to go!" she cut him off. "My dad...He..." she remembered her father had said goodbye to her in front of Natsu. She mentally cursed as she buried herself deeper into the grave she had dug...

She couldn't think straight with the frantic pounding in her chest...

As if sensing she was going to hang up, he called out, "Lucy, wait—"

She mustered up a fake smile, despite the pain and said, "Good luck on your paper."

And she hung up, slamming her laptop closed, not wanting to see Natsu messaging her or calling her or something...

Nothing but silence and her uneven breathing filled the room.

She angrily brushed the hair out of her face, but froze when her fingers grazed something wet.

She was crying?

When did that happen? She briefly wondered.

But it wasn't like that mattered.

As if sensing her pain, Plue crawled onto her lap.

She absentmindedly petted the iguana as tears silently spilled.

Maybe tomorrow she would be able to pretend nothing happened, but for now, she needed to let her emotions pour out.

XOXOX

* * *

****OMGG DID I JUST WRITE SOME PROGRESSION!****

*****Cries* was this chapter okay?*****

****Asdasf hope you all liked it!****

****Thanks for reading!****

39. Chapter 39

****Thank you all so much!****

****You're the sweetest reader!****

*****Hugs*****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Lucy slowly opened her eyes as the morning sun shone into them. She was greeted by a slit-eye staring right at her. "KYAA!" she jolted into a sitting position with a piece of paper stuck to her cheek. "Plue!" she gaped at the lizard. "Why are you out of your cage?! And why am I on the floor?"

Plue only stared at her.

"Hmm," she pulled the paper off her face and glanced down at it. "History notes? Oh right, Natsu needed help—" her eyes landed on the very thing that jogged her memory. "No. no. NO!" She fell flat on her back, scattering a few of her stray notes, "It wasn't a dream..."

Plue crawled closer to her.

"He knows..." she said in a daze. "He knows I like him...I've ruined everything..." She jumped back up, getting on her hands and knees, she crawled in front of her iguana, "What am I supposed to do now, Plue?"

Plue tilted his head.

"I can't do that!" she cried with her hands clutching her cheeks, "I'm so embarrassed!"

The iguana stared back.

"Oh, don't give me that look!" she chastised as she stood up and buried her face into her palms, "...I can't believe I just ruined my online social life..."

She began to pace.

"And I ruined my social life in real life also..." she thought back to her annoying friends she had completely blown off at this point. "What do I do?"

She eyed her laptop that was seated right next to Plue.

"Ughhhh," she groaned, "I need to tell someone about all this! But I don't have anyone to talk to! Maybe I could tell Levy...but then I would feel awkward if she knew!" She threw her head back in agony, "And I can't even vent on m

y blog because _he_ follows me...maybe I should block him...No! That would make things even worse! Maybe I can kick him out of the group chat...No...that's too mean...Maybe I'll create a new group chat without him in it! But that's also kind of mean and it's not his fault that I have stupid crush on him..."

She gloomily looked over at Plue, whose chin was puffed out.

"I wonder what would have happened if I hadn't hung up..." she pondered, continuing her pacing. "I bet he would have laughed...but that look he had on his face..." she cringed. He looked _embarrassed_. "Who could blame him? I mean it must be so freaky for him to have some strange girl he met on the internet liking him..."

Plue's pink tongue stuck out.

"But then again he _did_ call me _cute_ a couple of times..." she mused. "And _pretty_ and he said I make him nervous and he blamed me for his arm incident!" her face brightened with hope. "So he must like me, right, Plue!?"

Plue retracted his tongue.

Her face fell, "But maybe he wasn't serious about any of that..."

Her stomach twisted into knots.

"And even if he was serious, why would he want an online relationship? Well... he did say he would be okay with one a while back...but still..." She threw herself onto her bed and cried into her pillow, "WHY DID I HANG UP?! I'M SO STUPID!"

She sat up on her bed and said, "You know what? I need a distraction. I'm going to watch anime or maybe read a manga or something..."

She plopped herself back on her bedroom floor and flipped open her laptop.

She froze.

Skype was going to automatically load.

Maybe she could quickly sign off of it before she sees any messages or anything, because for some reason, she had a feeling Natsu left her about a billion, like he would whenever she abruptly hung up on him.

Her stomach churned, just as her laptop finished loading.

She could see her _Skype_ icon lit up, signifying a new message.

Swallowing, she clicked on it.

All the anticipation deflated out of her chest as she stared at the screen.

The messages were from the group chat.

Natsu didn't send her message.

Not even one.

She clicked on the group chat and saw that they were voice chatting.

She wanted to join, but first, she glanced over at her contact list to check if Natsu was online. To her misfortune, Nat

su had a green circle on his name.

"I can't," her lips quivered.

Plue slowly moved next to her.

She scrolled up to see their conversations.

"Were you able to get your paper done, Natsu?" Levy had asked.

"Yup! All finished and probably an A," he had wrote back.

"Wow," Gray had messaged, "Lucy sure is a miracle worker."

Lucy snorted, but pure anxiousness washed over her as she read Natsu's message.

"Oi!" he had messaged back, "For your information, Lucy ditched me! Had to do it all by myself."

"Good for her," Gray had typed. "Wouldn't sit right with me if she wrote your entire paper."

"OI! I'M NOT STUPID, YOU KNOW!"

"Really? Could have fooled me."

"Why did Lucy ditch you?" Mira had inquired. "Doesn't seem like something she would do."

"Yeah," Levy had concurred. "She seemed really eager to help you."

Lucy's face flushed as she slapped a hand to her forehead, _this is too embarrassing._ It was almost painful for her to continue reading, but she did.

"Unless you did something to upset her, Natsu," Erza had accused.

"Nothing happened," was his answer.

"Let's voice chat," Levy had suggested. "We are all here anyway, well minus Lucy, but I'm sure she will be on soon."
"

And that's where the conversation ended.

"Maybe a little later, Levy" Lucy said quietly as she headed to the bathroom to wash away all the pain from last night and this morning.

And only one thought rang through her head.

He didn't message me.

****XOXOX****

She went onto her blog and saw a few messages in her inbox.

It wasn't anything important—or well nothing from _Natsu,_ she should say.

And of course the first thing on her dash was a manga edit that was made by _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy._

Never before had she ever felt such contempt for a URL.

She wanted him to change it.

It was like he was mocking her at this point.

With a deep breath, she scrolled right past it his edit, not giving it a second thought.

And Lucy's _Skype_ lit up with a message from Levy.

"Lucy, join the voice chat!"

"Alright," she hesitantly wrote back. There was no way she could avoid this forever...

"Lucy!" Levy greeted the second she joined the call.

"Hi, Levy," her face felt a few degrees warmer.

"Yo, Lucy!" Natsu greeted her next with his casual, happy voice.

Her heart sank low in her chest.

"Hi, Natsu" she mustered out a cheery voice and was very impressed that it didn't waver in the slightest.

"Thanks for the notes you sent me," he sounded as normal as ever.

"Don't mention it," it was killing her to keep up this cheery voice.

Maybe he really didn't figure it out? That would probably be the only thing that could cheer her up at this point.

"Ahh I love that you offered to help him, Lucy," Mira gushed. "It makes my shipper heart want to burst!"

Lucy's face completely fell.

This was cruel.

"I think NaLu might be my O-T—"

"_Mira_," Natsu's voice was harsh. "_Stop_."

Lucy sucked in a breath.

So he really did figure it out...

"So-Sorry," Mira stammered out an apology, clearly taken aback by Natsu's sharp-cutting tone.

An awkward silence hung between the chat.

Lucy could feel her heart shatter into a million pieces.

So this was his way of rejecting her?

He didn't even want jokes about them dating?

"Errr...Anyway," Gray decided to speak first. "I need a new model for my ice sculpture class since the girl who was originally going to do it quit."

"Why'd she quit?" Erza asked.

"Thanks to stupid Flame Brains, here, she thinks I'm actually a stripper."

"That would motivate me more," Cana murmured.

"That's 'cuz you are one, Ice Brains" Natsu sounded smug.

"Am not!" Gray growled. "At least I'm not stupid enough to set my arm on fire!"

"I'll be your model," Lucy offered before Natsu could say his retort.

"Heh?!" Natsu exclaimed.

"Really?" Gray sounded ecstatic. "That would be great."

"But you don't even know what kinda model he needs!" Natsu protested. "He might need a nude one for all you know!"

"So?" Lucy scoffed. "I think I have enough confidence in my body to pose nude."

"Way to go, Lucy," Cana whistled.

"So daring," Erza commended.

"I wish I could be like you, Lucy," Levy awed.

"Err..." Natsu said in stupor.

Lucy licked her lips. "I have nothing better to do, so why not? And I always wanted to try modeling..."

"Alright," Gray sounded thrilled. "Let's video chat. Bye, guys."

"Yeah, bye, everyone," she said before hanging up.

Gray sent her a video chat request right after.

She accepted it and watched as his raven-black hair and his deep, blue eyes loaded onto the screen.

"Hey, Lucy," he smiled.

"Hi, Gray," she smiled back. "So how do we do this exactly? Should I take my shirt off now or..."

Gray's normally droopy eyes grew wide, "N-NO! I DON'T NEED A NUDE MODEL!"

"Oh?"

"It's just your head and neck I'm sculpting," his face looked red.

Lucy giggled, "Okay. So how should I sit?"

He coughed and said, "Tilt your head to the side slightly." Lucy did as he instructed. "There! Perfect. Now try not to move much."

"Okay," she could still see him clearly and watched as he pulled towards him a table with a large block of ice and a bunch of scary-looking tools.

He chucked off his shirt.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!" Lucy's eyes bugged.

"Helps me concentrate," he simply shrugged.

Lucy's eye twitched, but she decided not to question him.

He slid on a pair of gloves and began his construction of Lucy's face.

"This is so cool," she marveled as ice chipped away. "What made you get into this?"

"Ur did," he said. "She was really into this stuff and taught me and Lyon how to do it. I'm a lot better than Lyon though," he smirked.

Lucy smirked back, "I'm sure you are."

"It's true," he said.

Lucy let out a laugh.

"So uhh what's going on between you and Lava Brains?"

"Huh?" she tilted her head to the side.

"Don't do that," he chided.

"Sorry!" she flushed, centering her head once again.

"Well I mean why did he snap at Mira over the shipping comment?" he clarified. "And why did you end up not helping him with his essay?"

"Oh," she dropped her head out of shame and embarrassment.

"Lucy!" he chastised. "Head up!"

"Sorry!" she flushed even more, feeling very uncomfortable.

"So?" he pushed.

"Nothing...happened..." she said slowly.

"Nothing?" he sounded skeptical as he smashed off another piece of ice.

Lucy flinched at the noise, "Nothing...I sent him a copy of my notes...he read over them...saw that I doodled his name in Hiragana and Kanji..." Gray froze as Lucy continued. "He realized _he's_ the guy I like...See? Nothing."

"Lu-cy?" Gray gaped at her through the screen.

She winced at the sound of her name.

Trepidation ran through her veins. _What is Gray going to say_?

"What happened after that?" his voice was soft.

"Well I kind of cut him off before he could ask if it was him...and then I hung up and the only thing he said was _Lucy, wait!_"

"And he hasn't brought it up yet?"

She shook her head _no_.

"Idiot," he pinched the bridge of his nose and then looked back at Lucy with a gentle smile. "So you like him?"

"Unfortunately," she frowned.

"What a way for him to find out," he mused.

"I'm so stupid!" she smacked her forehead.

"Hey!" Gray said. "Don't do that. It's not your fault or anything. You can't help who you like. And it's his for being a coward about his feelings for you."

"What do you mean?" she sulked.

"He clearly likes you," he plainly stated.

"Then why hasn't he brought it up?" her eyes began to blur.

"O-Oi!" Gray nervously held his gloved hands up, "Don't cry! Natsu's just an idiot!"

"Well it doesn't matter if he's an idiot or not," she said, "because clearly he's not interested."

"Lucy..."

"Guess I should be happy he's pretending it never happened...I just wish he didn't _know_."

"..."

Lucy's features brightened as she shot Gray a dazzling grin, "Well everyone gets their hearts broken eventually, right?"

"I'll kick his ass for you," Gray grinned back.

"Good!" she giggled. "Now back to work!"

"Right!"

****XOXOX****

"Wowww," Lucy awed. "It looks exactly like me...but _better_..."

"Thanks," Gray proudly smiled at his exact ice-sculptured replica of Lucy. "And thanks for being my model."

"Anytime," she beamed and then she shyly blushed, "Thank you for not making fun of my crush on..." she trailed off and then said, "and thank you for listening... I really needed someone to talk to."

"What are friends for?" Gray smiled gently. "And like I said, you can't help who you fall for. And what's makin' fun of you gonna do?"

"Thanks."

"Though I think you shouldn't let this come between your friendship with him."

"How can this not come between our friendship?" she asked. "Everything's just awkward..."

"I don't think anything's awkward."

"What makes you say that?"

"Because this is Natsu we are talking about," Gray shrugged and then stood up, "Lemme put this away," he carried his project away from the webcam and came back a few minutes later in only boxers.

"Gray," Lucy sweated, "where did your pants go?"

"Hmm?" he looked downwards. "Shit! I have no idea!"

"Incredible..." Lucy shook her head.

"Ahh well nothing I can do about it now," he shrugged, sitting back down in front of the webcam. "Do you know anyone else who would be interested in being my model?"

"Hmm?"

"I need one more person," he explained. "And I don't think anyone else in the group chat would do it..."

"Erza might," Lucy smirked at the cringing Gray.

"I'll pass..."

"Hmm I think I know someone who would probably die if you asked her..."

"Who?" he looked at her with pure curiosity.

****XOXOX****

"Here's a photo of my Pokemon Plush Collection for the anon," Natsu had captioned a photo on her dash.

It was a photo of all fire types; Charmander, Charizard, Cyndaquil, Chimchar, and Tepig. They were sitting on Natsu's bed, on top of his pillow that had a fiery design on it.

She decided to take Gray's advice and not let the gigantic elephant in the room come between them.

Swallowing a huge lump in her throat, she commented, "I'm jealous. I want your Chimchar plush."

"Hah," Natsu immediately replied back, "too bad!"

She bit her bottom lip, "Well at least I have a Fennekin plush..."

"OI! WAY TO BRAG, LUCY!" he wrote back.

"Whoops ;)," she hastily typed.

"THAT'S NOT NICE, LUCCYYYY!"

She let out a giggle.

Of course her feelings were still hurt, but Gray had been right and she should have known...

Nothing is ever awkward with Natsu.

But things were awkward with _her._

She still felt very awkward and she was positive this awkwardness would never go away.

Because how does one deal with their crush being completely aware?

Guess Lucy would have to find out...

And in the group chat, Levy had wrote, "I think we should attempt a group video chat..."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hope this chapter was alright!****

****If you couldn't tell, Graylu is my Brotp :')****

****And oooh group video chat?!****

****Anyway, thanks for reading, lovelies!****

40. Chapter 40

****CHAPTER 40 ALREADYYY** **AND THEY STILL HAVEN'T KISSED?!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Umm, Levy," Lucy wrote, "it cost money to do a group chat."

"I ain't paying," Cana wrote.

"Ohh :(" Levy sent back.

Lucy felt relieved for that tshe last person she wanted to see was Natsu...

"Maybe we can try something else?" Gray suggested. "Like take turns video chatting each other?"

And then the chat rang.

Lucy picked up and listened as everyone else joined the call.

"I have a video chat date with Jellal," Erza informed them. "But I can divide you all."

"That could work," Lucy said and without thinking she added, "But can I not get Natsu."

Her hand immediately smacked her mouth to cover her gasp.

"Huh?" Natsu blurted out, sounding hurt. "Why not me?"

"Cuz you're an ass," Gray scoffed.

"Or-Or Gray!" Lucy hastily amended. "I've video chatted with them tons of times...I want someone new."

"Fair enough," Erza said. "Lucy I'll pair you with Levy—"

"DAMN IT!" Cana yelled. "Just when I thought I would finally get to see Lucy's tits..."

"Cana..." Lucy blanched.

"Ahh I'm really excited to video chat with you, Lucy!" Levy squealed.

"Me too!" Lucy smiled.

"You can have Gray, Cana," Erza offered.

"YES!" Cana cheered. "GRAY, YOUR SHIRT BETTER BE OFF!"

"Oi..." Gray sounded lost.

"And of course, Mira and Natsu," Erza stated.

"Alright," Natsu's voice sounded detached.

Lucy's face scrunched up as she wondered why he sounded so emotionless.

"This will be fun, Natsu," Mira, however, sounded cheerful as ever.

"So, everyone," Erza said, "hang up and start chatting!"

Lucy hung up and clicked on Levy's chat.

It was strange how long it's been since they talked just the two of them...

She was so nervous, but nervous in a good way as she sent Levy the video chat request.

After a few seconds, the screen loaded, revealing a girl with adorably short, wavy blue hair and huge brown eyes. She had on a cute orange headband that contrasted nicely with her hair.

A brilliant smile glowed on her face as she greeted, "Hi, Lucy!"

"Hey, Levy," Lucy found herself smiling just as brightly back.

"Wowww," Levy's eyes grew wide as she took in Lucy, "You're so pretty!"

Lucy could feel her cheeks warming. She subconsciously twirled a strand of her hair around her finger, "So are you!"

"Thanks!" her cheeks turned slightly pink. "So this is what video chatting is like?"

"Yup," Lucy nodded. "It's pretty strange, but in a good way."

"I'll say..." Levy sounded breathy. "I was so nervous..."

"I was nervous my first time too."

"It was with Natsu, right?" her eyes grew with curiosity.

Lucy felt like she was stabbed in the gut as the memory of her and Natsu's video chat ghosted her mind.

She could remember how expressive his slanted eyes had been and how she watched him say her name... And his smile—she got to watch it happen. It was so different to see a smile form on someone's lips than to look at a picture of someone smiling. His smile had been so candid and _real._ If time had stopped in that moment, Lucy would have been forever happy.

All she could really remember was thinking, _He is real_... and how she had dumbly stated her thought out loud.

She could remember Natsu's response, "And you're weird."

But that wasn't what made the conversation significant, it was the fact that he _chuckled_ his response.

To see him laugh for the first time...

Correction, if time had stopped right in _that_ moment, Lucy would have been forever happy.

"Yeah," Lucy looked back at Levy, "he was my first."

"So cute," she gushed. "I think it's really sweet how close you two are."

"We aren't that close," Lucy brushed off, looking away.

"If you say so," Levy gave her a knowing grin.

But instead of blushing at her grin, Lucy grinned back—except her grin was of a devilish nature, "Say, Levy?"

"Yeah?"

"Who's Gajeel?"

Lucy watched as the petite girl fell out of her seat and a loud thud rang throughout the laptop. She shot a hand over her mouth, "Are you okay?!"

With Levy missing from the screen, Lucy got a clear view of what she presumed was the girl's bedroom. There were

shelves upon shelves of books and her bed was even shaped like a book. "Whoaa!" Lucy awed. Envy swept through her. She wished she had enough motivation to read _that many_ books.

"I'm fine!" Levy quickly clambered back onto her desk seat. "How-How do you know about Gajeel?"

Lucy giggled with a wink, "You might have mentioned him once or twice."

"AHH!" Levy cried into her palms. "I'M SO EMBARRASSED!"

"Oh ho ho," Lucy smirked. "This is getting interesting."

"Who are you?" Levy deadpanned. "Mira?"

Lucy rolled her eyes, "C'mon! I've been dying to know!"

"Fine," Levy dropped her head in shame. "Gajeel's just this guy I've been messaging— _voice chatting_ with lately ..."

Lucy figured as much with the hints Levy had accidentally let slip. "How did you meet him?"

"_Tumblr_," the blue haired girl answered. "He's into _Fairy Tail_ also."

"Really?" Lucy ogled. "What's his URL?"

"_BlackSteelGajeel_," she admitted in defeat.

"Hmmm," Lucy rubbed her thumb and index finger over her chin. "Don't think I recognize the URL."

"He keeps a low profile," Levy said. "We only started talking because I complimented one of his art designs. You see, he's really crafty with metal and he made this amazing dragon!"

"Oh!" Lucy gasped. "I know exactly what you're talking about!"

She remembered Natsu had reblogged something like Levy had described a while back. But Lucy hardly paid much attention, considering Natsu reblogs almost anything that involves a dragon.

"Please don't go stalking him or anything!" Levy pleaded.

Lucy shot her an apologetic grin, "Already stalking him." She had searched his URL and followed him.

His blog was dark and metallic looking, "Cool blog."

"Right!?" Levy had hearts in her eyes.

"So you really like him?"

"May-Maybe..." Levy's face was a deep shade of crimson.

"Have you ever seen a picture of him?"

"Yeah," she admitted.

"Is he cute?!" Lucy asked with excitement in her voice.

"Yes!" Levy buried her face into her palms. "He's got loads of piercings and his hairs pretty long, and he's just...AH H I CAN'T!"

"It's okay," Lucy giggled.

"We haven't even video chatted and yet I feel so much for him!" Levy cried with her hands still pressed over her eyes, "I can't like someone I met online! It's against my rules!"

"You're allowed to," Lucy said with sympathy or maybe it was more like empathy... "I mean you can't help who you fall for...I think you should video chat with him."

Levy removed her hands from her face, "Maybe...but it took me this long to want to video chat with _you_. I think I need time..."

"Take as much time as you need," Lucy smiled gently. "I'm sure he will be ready whenever you are."

"Thanks, Lucy," Levy beamed. "You really made me feel better... I've been holding this in for so long..." she shook her head.

"That's what friends are for, silly!"

Levy chuckled, "You're right! And by the way, we are _so_ behind on _Sailor Moon Crystal!_ I think we are gonna have to pull an all-nighter to catch up."

"I think you're right," Lucy felt all giddy on the inside.

This is what friendship was supposed to feel like.

It was hard to believe—even if it was only for a split second—that Lucy had wanted to give this all up all because of Natsu finding out about her crush on him.

"So I was thinking..." Levy began to talk, but Lucy was suddenly distracted because she had just received a message.

"Yo, Lucy!"

Her heart stopped.

Why was he messaging her?

Should she reply back?

She didn't want to, but...

"But if I did that then I would have to..." Levy had continued talking.

"Hi," she wrote back to Natsu.

"How's video chatting with Levy?" he asked.

She gulped, _why is he acting so casual?_ "It's going well. She's really fun to talk to."

"Ahh that's good," he replied back.

"How's Mira?" Lucy inquired. She could feel the back of her neck start to perspire.

"She's good," Natsu answered.

And without really thinking, Lucy typed, "I'm glad I didn't end up with Mira."

She wanted to slap herself. That came out sounding kind of mean...

"Because of all her shipping nonsense?" he asked. "She hasn't brought up any ships at all."

"That's not why," she corrected. "It's because she's so pretty. I would feel intimidated."

And that was the honest truth.

Mira's beauty was like no other—with her long, white, free-flowing hair and those piercing blue eyes... Lucy was green with jealousy.

"I don't get it," he wrote.

"Get what?"

"You're beautiful so why would she intimidate you if she's only _pretty_?"

She abruptly inhaled, gaping blankly at the message.

"So how's Natsu?" Levy's voice rang through Lucy's muddled mind.

"He's good—Hey!" She snapped her head up to see Levy winking at her. "How did you—?"

"I saw the look on your face," she simply answered. "It was the same as when I asked you about your first video chat with him."

"I..." Lucy faltered.

"I won't say anything," Levy said softly.

"Thank you," Lucy sadly smiled.

"That's what friends are for, right?"

"Right," Lucy's face brightened.

She glanced back at his message.

She had no idea what to reply back so she settled for the brisk, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Weirdo," was the only thing he messaged back.

****XOXOX****

"So how was video chatting?" Erza asked the group.

"It was amazing," Levy sighed.

"It sucked," Cana moaned. "Gray kept his clothes on the _entire time_."

"Oi!" Gray protested. "I don't choose when clothes come off! It just happens!"

"Yeah, yeah," Cana mumbled.

"Natsu was cute to talk to," Mira sounded happy.

"Cute?" Natsu questioned.

Mira only giggled.

"Maybe we could try this again next week?" Erza asked. "This time I'll take part and someone else could sit out?"

"Yeah!" Everyone agreed in perfect union.

"Wanna video chat?" Natsu messaged Lucy. "'Cuz I know you hate to be alone with your old man outta town."

"No thanks," she wrote back. "Levy and I are going to be marathoning _Sailor Moon Crystal_ tonight."

"So I asked that Juvia girl to be my second model," Gray announced to the chat.

"You what?!" Cana and Levy gasped.

"Thought you didn't like her?" Natsu inquired.

"AHH GRUVIA IS HAPPENING!" Mira gleefully cheered.

"I don't like her, Pyro," Gray snapped. "I just don't have anyone else willing to model."

"You should let her know you're not interested, bastard," Natsu hissed. "I mean you're pretty much leading her on since you asked her to be your model..."

"That's really funny coming from you," Lucy sneered, surprising herself. Guess she could only hold back her animosity for so long as she thought back to his _beautiful_ compliment.

"Errr...?" was the only thing Natsu said back.

"Well I have to go. She's already sending me a video chat request..." Gray let out a long sigh before hanging up.

****XOXOX****

"Ready to watch _Yamada-kun_?" Natsu asked Lucy on Sunday.

She didn't think she could handle a video chat just yet...

"Maybe later?" she wrote back.

"Nah," he wrote.

He didn't give her a chance to reply since he already sent her a video chat request.

Closing both her eyes, she accepted.

Lucy painfully swallowed.

Slowly opening her eyes, she was greeted by Natsu, who was wearing a grim expression on his face with his arms crossed over his chest.

"Hi?" she squeaked, hoping her blush wasn't too noticeable.

"Ready to watch?" his grim expression was replaced by an eye-squinting smile.

Her stomach flipped as she looked away, "Sure."

Gray messaged her, "This was such a bad idea. SHE'S CRAZY!"

Lucy let out a series of giggles.

"What are you laughing at?" Natsu blinked.

"Gray," she smirked. "Seems like he's having a blast with Juvia and by blast, I mean he wants us to send for help."

Natsu laughed and then said, "As funny as this is, I still think he should tell her he doesn't like her like that."

Lucy's face fell.

Was he serious?

Her heart throbbed as though something was clenching on it.

And that something was Natsu's words.

"You okay?" he cocked his head to the side. "You seem kinda down all of a sudden."

She glowered at him through the screen, "Don't you think that's kind of hypocritical of you to say?"

His eye twitched.

She let out a deep sigh, trying to maintain her temper. "Sorry," she shot him a sad smile, "Ready to watch?"

"Err...I guess," he scratched his forehead.

And Lucy put on the show to end the conversation that was getting them nowhere.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thank you all so much!****

****Hope this chapter turned out alright!****

****And special thanks to those who drew me fanart!****

Lindako, Lumos-hope, Pringloo, Marina-dragneel, and Celestialmage14****

* * *

****Lindako7 . tumblr post/ 124916676770/she-wasnt-ready-for-this-shudupp-chrissy-and****

****lumos-hope . tumblr post/124962039448/because-missyplatinas-fanfiction-virtual-flames****

****pringloo . tumblr post/125124810173/a-little-doodle-i-did-for-missyplatinas-virtual****

****marina-dragneel . tumblr post/125140761883/fanart-i-did-for-missyplatinas-fanfiction-virtual****

****celestialimage14 . tumblr post/125206391029/so-i-was-rereading-virtual-flames-by-missyplatina****

*** * ***

****And I realized you can't copy and paste so if it's easier you can just go to my tumblr and go to my** _ **Story Art** _ **link because that's where I tag all my fanarts!****

****THANKS FOR READING!****

41. Chapter 41

****AHH 1000+ FOLLOWS?! I'M OFFICIALLY SCREAMING!****

****YOU ARE ALL THE BEST!****

****I HOPE THIS CHAPTER TURNED OUT ALRIGHT!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Soo when I was video chattin' Mira," Natsu said the second _Yamada-kun_ had ended, "she let me talk to her sister, Lisanna."

"Really?" sympathy rang through Lucy's voice as she remembered Mira's tale about her sister—how she was bullied by anon's to the point where she deleted her blog. "How is she?"

"She's great," he said with a toothy grin. "Said she might recreate her blog someday."

"Well if she does, she can join our chat," Lucy beamed, wanting to make sure the girl has a safe place she can turn to.

"Yeah," he said back, though his face fell slightly with the corners of his mouth turning downwards.

"What's wrong?" she tilted her head to the right, causing a strand of hair to fall into her eye. She tried to blow it away, but it failed.

"I was thinkin'..." a light blush of red filtered his cheeks.

"Thinking about what?" she tucked the annoying strand behind her left ear.

Natsu's dark eyes widened at the gesture. She carefully watched his cheeks turn even redder as he averted his gaze with his fingers tangling in his pink hair. "About...how Lisanna just randomly deleted one day..."

Her stomach twisted into knots.

Natsu had once said that he and Lisanna used to be friends.

Fear struck Lucy.

Did he miss her because he knew of Lucy's dumb crush? "You miss her?"

His head snapped back towards her as he gawked in surprise, "NO! I mean I guess...But that's not what I was getting at!"

"Oh?" Lucy's brows furrowed.

"It's just that...GAHH STOP LOOKIN' AT ME!" he covered his face with his arms.

"Why?"

"BECAUSE THIS IS EMBARRASSING!"

Her pulse jumped.

Excitement raced through her veins and she couldn't contain her giddy giggles as she lied, "Alright. I'm not looking."

He exhaled loudly and turned back to the screen, "Good. I was thinkin' what if you—DAMN IT, LUCY!" he bashed his head down on his desk.

"Just say it!" she begged.

He looked back at her with a fresh red mark on his forehead. His slanted eyes were clearly annoyed. "Grr fine! What if you randomly deleted one day?"

"Huh?" she was baffled. "Why would I delete?"

"I don't know why!" his face was completely enflamed. "Just what if you do?"

"Okay," Lucy ruffled her hair, deciding to play along, "so what if I do delete?"

His features grew frantic, "Then we wouldn't be able to talk anymore..."

"There's still _Skype_," she pointed out.

"I meant what if you deleted everything in general," he frowned with his gaze dropping to his hands, which were fumbling together.

"What's with this ridiculous conversation?" she asked softly. She didn't want to think about this after she had spent all of yesterday debating this...

"Well after what happened..." He tugged on the collar of his shirt.

Lucy's heart lurched.

Was he finally going to talk about her dumb doodles?

The atmosphere was too tense as Natsu struggled with his words.

She needed to lighten the mood...

"When you called me beautiful?" she teased.

"I _WHAT_?!" his jaw smacked the desk. He looked completely blindsided by her question. "I NEVER CALLED YOU BEAUTIFUL!"

With gritted teeth, she said, "Are you seriously going to deny it? I have proof! Just scroll up on our chat if you forgot."

His eyes were blazing, "I WASN'T CALLIN' YOU BEAUTIFUL, YOU WEIRDO! I WAS JUST STATING A FACT!"

She sharply inhaled, "You think I'm beautiful."

She wanted to scream into her pillow.

No other compliment could ever beat _beautiful_ —not _cute_ , not _pretty_ , and definitely not _hot_.

Beautiful was a word so simple, yet held such profound meaning.

It was a compliment of the purest form.

"I don't," he scoffed, while turning away from the screen. Lucy rolled her eyes at him as he continued talking, "Anyways, quit interrupting. I was just worried you wouldn't talk to me is all."

It was her turn to look away. Her hands trembled into fists as her voice wavered, "Stupid...How could I ever stop talking to you?" Her own cheeks reddened.

"Lu-cy?" he was looking at her like he had just seen her for the first time. His mouth was slightly gaped, his eyes were searching her face..."Lucy..." he said again, as though he were under some kind of spell.

"Yeah?" her voice was breathy as she fell under the same spell.

And as though he snapped out of the spell, he inelegantly asked, "Gimme your address."

"Excuse me?" she ogled at him.

"Gimme your address," he repeated, his expression was unreadable.

"No way!"

"Why not?" he glowered.

"Why would I?" she glowered back.

"Cuz I have a present for you," he brightly beamed. All traces of annoyance were off his face.

"Is it your chimchar plush?" she inquired.

"Pshhh," Natsu reached to grab something and then pulled his hand back revealing his chimchar "Like I would give you him!" he clutched chimchar tightly to his chest, while sticking out his tongue.

"Meanie," she scowled. "You just want my address so you can murder me or worse! Steal my entire manga collection and Plue!"

"Actually both, but damn," he snapped his fingers. "How'd you figure it out?"

"Just had a hunch," she smirked. "And you were—AHH!"

A loud smash had rang from the hallway.

"Lucy?!" Natsu jumped out of his seat. "What was that?"

"Sounded like a window!" she cried, jumping out of her seat as well, turning to face her door. "WHERE'S MY DAD'S BAT WHEN I NEED IT?!"

"Lucy!" Natsu called her attention. "Call for help!"

"Right!" she searched around her room for her phone, but she froze up. She could hear heavy footsteps in the hallway.

Lucy turned towards Natsu, her eyes watering as she whispered, " _They're in the house!" _

"Call for help!" he said with urgency clear in his voice.

"I can't find my phone!"

Her heart was racing.

Was this how she was going to die?

Was this karma for making a joke about murder?

"Shit! What's your address?!" Natsu asked. "I'll call for you!"

The door knobbed turned.

"Na-Natsu!" she was hyperventilating.

It slowly creaked open.

"LUCY!" Natsu yelled with firmness. "JUST TELL ME YOUR ADDRESS!"

"LUCY!" The door pushed all the way open, revealing a tall figure with blonde hair. "I'M HOME!"

"DAD!" she fell to her knees as she rubbed the tears out of her eyes. "YOU SCARED THE CRAP OUT ME!"

"I did?" he blinked.

"YOU BROKE OPEN A WINDOW!" she wailed. "OF COURSE YOU SCARED ME!"

"Sorry!" he apologized. "I forgot my keys and you weren't answering the door so I had no other choice..."

"That's hardcore, Old Man!" Natsu praised.

"Hard-core?" Jude blinked, walking over to the laptop. "Why hello, Natsu."

Lucy stood up, wiping her dripping nose on the back of her hand.

"Yo!" Natsu cheekily grinned.

"I see you kept to your promise about keeping my daughter company."

"Course," though Natsu had averted his gaze.

"What happened to your arm?" her father asked.

"My arm?" he glanced down at his bandage. "Oh I—" he stopped midsentence. Lucy could see sweat dripping down his forehead.

"You what?" her father pushed.

"I..."

Clearly, Natsu didn't want Lucy's dad to know that he had set his arm on fire...

Lucy viciously smirked, "He set his arm on fire."

Her father snapped his head in Lucy's direction, " _He set his arm on—_ Oh my..." He rubbed a hand over his face and shook his head. "Lucy, I cannot allow you to reproduce with this boy..."

She nearly choked on her own spit and she could hear Natsu sputtering like crazy.

How badly she wished she could die for a few moments..."DAADDDDD! DON'T SAY STUFF LIKE THAT!"

"What?" her father innocently asked. "Evolutions there for a reason. Survival of the fittest. It's not likely he's going to survive long with those genes and best not to spread them..."

"THE FUCK?!" Natsu roared. "ARE YOU SAYIN' I'M GOING TO DIE?!"

"Eh," Jude shrugged.

"WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!" Natsu shouted.

"DAD!" Lucy wailed.

"I'm only teasing," he grinned and then turned back to Natsu, "Natsu, you have my permission to reproduce with my daughter."

All the color drained from Natsu's face.

"DON'T SAY THAT EITHER!" Lucy smacked her dad's chest. Her entire body felt like it was on fire.

"What am I supposed to say then?" he asked.

"ANYTHING BUT THAT!"

"Well I don't mean right now," he clarified. "When you two get married and are settled down—"

"LEAVE!" Lucy was yanking on her hair.

"But we are—"

Lucy cut her father off, "I should warn you, Plue's out of his cage."

And at a record-breaking speed, Jude Heartfilia had exited the room.

"Sorry," she cried into her palms as she was left in her father's awkward aftermath.

"Err...don't worry 'bout it," Natsu sounded as awkward as she felt. "So can I have your address?"

"NO!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Officially sleep deprived—so I apologize for any mistakes****

****But I hope you all liked this chapter!****

****And I think you all will really like the next one :D****

****As always, thanks for reading!****

42. Chapter 42

****XOXOX****

"LUCYYY," she could hear her father calling. "CAN YOU HELP ME CLEAN UP ALL THE GLASS FROM THE WINDOW?"

"Ughh," she rolled her eyes and Natsu chuckled at her disdain. "BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO BROKE IT SO WHY DO I HAVE TO HELP?"

"BECAUSE YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WOULDN'T ANSWER THE DOOR!"

"FINEEEE," she stomped off to help her father, leaving Natsu alone on video chat.

The hallway was littered with glass. Shimmering like an icy floor. She groaned, tugging at her roots, "This is going to take forever!"

"Here," her father handed her broom to sweep up the giant pieces.

"Thanks," she grumbled as she glanced up at the broken window. It was completely smashed with barely any glass stuck in the pane. "How did you even break open the window—YOU BROUGHT YOUR BAT WITH YOU ON YOUR BUSINESS TRIP?!" her eyes fell onto the weapon that was lounging against the wall next to her father.

"What?" he asked innocently. "It comes in handy."

"I can't..." Lucy shook her head out of incredulousness, "I just can't..."

"Can't what?" she could hear Natsu call from the distance.

She gasped, looking into her bedroom. "You can hear me!?"

"How can I not?" he shouted. "You're so loud!"

Steam shot out of Lucy's ears, or at least that's what it felt like as fury boiled deep inside.

"You know what?" her father spoke solemnly. "That boy asked a very good question."

"Ehh?" she quirked, turning to face her dad.

"You can't _what_?"

Lucy face-palmed.

****XOXOX****

"Okay so that new chapter was insane!" Levy gushed on the voice chat after school on Monday.

"It was!" Lucy cried, falling onto her back on top of her bed. "I can't believe we finally got answers!"

"I wasn't expecting that at all!" Mira enthused.

"But with more answers—," Gray started.

"—comes more questions," Erza finished.

"Tragic circle of life," Cana cheered moodily.

"True," Lucy sulked, as she absentmindedly braided her hair.

"Say," Levy said, "Where's Natsu—?"

"LUCCYYYYY! WHY THE HELL DID YOU TELL GRAY TO KICK MY ASS?!" Natsu's voice came roaring in like a lion.

Lucy rolled onto her stomach at the sudden accusation, "I did _what_?"

She couldn't remember asking Gray to do such a thing so why would Natsu accuse her of all people of that?

Gray sniggered, "Because you deserved it."

Her eyes widened as she suddenly remembered; Gray was serious about kicking his ass.

A small smile played onto her lips as she messaged Gray privately, "Thank you."

"Anytime," was Gray's reply.

"Wait what happened?" Levy asked with pure wonder.

"GRAY ATTACKED ME!" Natsu yelled and with a haughty chuckle, he added, "BUT I TOTALLY KICKED HIS ASS!"

"OI!" Gray's voice raged. "IT WAS _YOU_ WHO GOT HIS ASS KICKED _,_ ASH BRAINS! REMEMBER?! YOU WERE ALL LIKE, ' _OW, OW, MY ARM!' _ "

"THAT'S 'CUZ YOU TOOK A CHEAP SHOT!" Natsu growled.

"Pshhh," Gray jeered. "You _wish_ I took a cheap shot."

"You grabbed my _injured arm_! That's the definition of a cheap shot!" Natsu exclaimed. "And at least I didn't have to use any dirty tricks to get a hit on you! HAH!"

"I feel like all their fights sound the same," Levy murmured tiredly.

"Same," Lucy generously rubbed her temples, wishing they would stop already.

"Well at least I don't flirt with someone when I'm not interested in them," Gray said with enough venom to rival a scorpion.

Gray! Lucy's heart nearly stopped.

Was Gray really going to bring this up with the _whole group_ listening in?

Lucy buried her head onto her _Fairy Tail_ insignia pillow, wishing that this was some bad dream.

"Heh?" Natsu was dumbfounded and with perplexity instead of anger, he asked, "What's that supposed to mean?"

"What you did to Lu—"

"Enough fighting," Erza's voice rang in like a knight in shining armor.

"_Yesss_," Lucy breathed in relief, thankful that Erza had stopped Gray because if anyone was going to call Natsu out, it was going to be _her_.

But she couldn't be upset at Gray because he was only trying to be a good friend.

"I would never flirt with someone and not mean it," Natsu begrudgingly mumbled before the conversation officially dropped.

But the conversation continued to roll over in Lucy's mind. It made Lucy question if she and Natsu had ever flirted. They had to have, right? But then why was Natsu still ignoring Lucy's crush if he liked her back?

"Who does Natsu even flirt with?" Cana asked in a wispy voice.

"Lucy, of course," Mira whispered. "But she probably doesn't notice because of the harem."

A vein painfully pulsed on Lucy's forehead, "Don't talk about me like I'm not here!"

"So what did you think of the new chapter, Natsu?" Levy asked.

"It was alright," he sounded dazed, like he wasn't paying much attention. "Gonna be hard to color I s'pose."

Lucy thought about asking him something, but couldn't seem to think of anything specific to ask, so instead, she asked Gray, "I've been meaning to ask you, Gray, how was video chatting with Juvia?"

"Wait—Gray video chatted was serious about using Juvia as a model?" Levy gasped. "Juvia's the girl who's obsesse

d with him, right?"

"Ahh! It actually happened?!" Mira cried out. "Gruvia is one step closer to becoming canon!"

"What happened to Graylu?" Erza murmured.

"Let's forget about Graylu," Lucy warily murmured back.

"The girl's annoying," though despite Gray's words, his tone was only halfhearted. "She nearly died when I took my shirt off—"

"You took your shirt off?" Natsu asked. "As a conscious decision?"

"Yeah," Gray scoffed. "I always take my shirt off when I'm ice sculpting."

"Pervert," Natsu laughed.

"He also took his pants off when he was working on mine," Lucy giggled.

"HE _WHAT_?!" Natsu roared, suddenly sounding furious.

"Oi! It was after I finished!" Gray clarified.

"Why couldn't Gray be that fun during our video chat?" Cana whined.

"Stupid stripper," Natsu growled under his breath and Lucy couldn't help but feel giddy at Natsu's possible jealousy.

"Anyway," Gray said, "Juvia kept tryin' to take her clothes off, but I had to keep stopping her."

"So it is contagious!" Lucy exclaimed to herself, thinking back to all those times she joked about it.

"Ehh?" Gray said.

"Nothing," Lucy blushed in embarrassment, hoping the chat wouldn't think _she_ has a stripping habit.

"Lucy, you developed a stripping habit?" Cana gasped. "WE HAVE TO VIDEO CHAT LIKE RIGHT NOW!"

"NO!" Lucy sobbed, throwing her face back against her pillow. "I DON'T HAVE A STRIPPING HABIT!"

"No wonder Natsu's always video chatting with her," Mira mused.

"STOPPPP," Lucy groaned, stuffing her face even further against the pillow. Nearly everyone was laughing at Lucy's misery, causing the poor blonde to almost suffocate herself.

"So what does Juvia look like?" Levy wondered.

"Blue hair sorta like yours," Gray answered. "Different shade I think, I mean I haven't seen a photo of you in ages, and hers was pretty long."

"He said _pretty_," Mira happily pointed out.

"So cute," Erza gushed.

"Don't take the word out of context!" Gray seethed.

"Is she pretty?" Lucy was next to ask.

"Gahh!" Gray moaned. "Don't ask such weird questions!"

"Well it's hard for Lucy to not ask weird questions," Natsu said, "considering she's a weirdo and all..."

"Thanks, Natsu," she resentfully sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose.

"No problem!" he sounded pleased with himself.

"May we see it?" Erza asked.

"Sure," Gray simply said as he sent a picture into the group chat.

The ice sculpture, in a word, was beautiful; With stunning, wavy icy hair and a cute, glassy hat sat perfectly on top of her head—and her eyes, they were full of happiness and adoring passion that seemed to match the pretty smile on her lips.

"Wow," Lucy breathed, suddenly wondering how hers turned out in comparison—especially since she was so upset at the time.

"I can't believe this is ice..." Cana awed.

"She's gorgeous," Levy commented.

"You're really talented, Gray," Erza commended.

"Thanks!" Gray sounded satisfied.

"I like her smile," Mira said sweetly.

Natsu in a dull tone asked, "How did Lucy turn out?"

"Oh! I forgot Lucy also modeled," Levy gasped. "Let's see it!"

"Let's not," Lucy mumbled, burying her face into her palms.

"Here's Lucy," Gray said.

Lucy pulled herself up into a sitting position before slowly looking at the screen to see her icy reflection staring back at her—and the reflection was smiling—a real smile. So real, that her eyes were lit up and her cheeks were raised. And the hair was just right, all shimmery and perfectly matched Lucy's hair style—straight down.

A smile settled onto her lips, _what was I worried about?_ She had forgotten how pretty Gray had made her out to be.

"Whoaaaa!" Natsu marveled. "It looks exactly like her!"

"It really does!" Levy concurred.

"Mannn," Cana sounded bummed out, "I wish you included her boobs."

"Cana!" Lucy's body heated as her hands went to cover her chest.

"What?" she asked innocently. "You know I like them!"

Lucy blanched, "I know."

"So pretty!" Mira cooed at the artwork.

"Very," Erza approved.

"Can't believe Ice Princess actually has talent," Natsu sounded purely awestruck. "You even got her nose just right—all tiny and cu—" He immediately stopped talking.

Cute, he was going to say _cute_ , her heart sang. Her stomach did a huge somersault as she raised a hand to gently touch her nose.

A tiny scream escaped Mira followed by other gasps as well.

"What was that, Pyro?" Gray mischievously asked.

"Noth-Nothing," he quickly answered—sounding as flustered as Lucy felt.

"Ooh ho, _nothing_?" Cana mocked. "Really, Natsu? Because it sounded to me like you were going to call Lucy's nose _cute_."

"No way," he said.

"It did sound like that, Natsu," Erza stated.

"It didn't sound like anything!" Natsu growled.

"And there he goes again," Gray sneered. "Saying stuff without thinking, not caring if he hurts someone."

"And there you go again," Natsu sneered back. "Sayin' stuff that doesn't make any sense!"

Lucy's heart palpitations grew worse by the minute, not liking where this conversation was heading.

"What?!" Gray sounded incredulous, "You really haven't realized that you hurt Lu—"

Lucy was about to cry out something but she was too late.

"What did I say about fighting?!" Erza barked. "It is uncivilized and I will not tolerate it!"

And once again, Erza saved the day.

And once again, Natsu mumbled something afterwards, "I realized, idiot..."

Lucy stared fixedly at the screen.

Natsu knew? He knew Lucy was hurting? Why did this make her heart ache?

The chat moved on before anyone could decipher the meaning behind Natsu's words.

"So Gray," Mira said, "Are you planning another video chat with Juvia soon?"

"Do you guys message on _Skype_ all the time now?" Levy asked.

"..." seemed to be Gray's answer to both questions.

Lucy was too upset to really join in the teasing but oddly enough, she felt inspired to write a oneshot—not about Haru and Elie—but about Musica and Reina.

So she left to go write.

****XOXOX****

"Lucy," Levy said "I don't know how you do it, but that was amazing. I think Musica and Reina might be my second favorite pairing now thanks to you."

"It was really well-written," Erza complimented.

"Thank you, both," Lucy flushed. She felt all giddy from the praise.

"I liked it too," Natsu said casually. "Even though you wrote about Musica."

Lucy rolled her eyes, but a smile stayed on her face because he still complimented her—making her forget all about his heart wrenching comment from earlier.

"You did my pairing justice" Gray said. "I mean your descriptions were spot on."

"And beautifully written," Levy added to his comment. "I wish a writer would describe me..."

"Same here," Natsu sighed. "Lucy, describe me."

Lucy's eyes popped, "What?"

"Describe me," he repeated. "Describe me in a way a writer would."

"No way!" her face heated. That would be too embarrassing.

"C'monnn," he moaned.

"It would be like that text post I always see floating around," Erza said and Lucy knew the exact one she was talking about.

"Yeah!" Natsu sounded elated. "Let's make it into a meme where the person reblogs the post and people message the person to describe them." _Huh?_ Lucy felt so lost as Natsu said, "So, Lucy, describe me."

"But I didn't reblog anything!" she protested.

"Do it, Lucy," Erza commanded.

Lucy flinched, "Ahh okay..."

How was she supposed to describe Natsu with Erza, Gray, and Levy listening in?

More importantly, how was she supposed to describe Natsu with _Natsu_ listening?

She smacked her head against her keyboard.

She couldn't do this. It was absolutely humiliating.

"Well?" Natsu pushed.

"Ummm," sweat dripped down her forehead as she brought her nails up to her mouth to bite. "He's a boy with pink hair."

"Damn," Gray whistled. "She's good at this."

"You can do better than that," Levy stated.

She tugged nervously on her lip, "Can I type it? I can't really come up with stuff on the spot..."

"Sure," Natsu sounded as antsy as Lucy felt.

She pursed her lips in thought. How was she supposed to describe the boy she was majorly crushing on? She thought back to Haru, her old crush—even if he were fictional—she wrote tons of fanfics on him and described him tons of times. So that's what she should do—make Natsu the protagonist to her story...

Her fingers trembled a bit as she began to type to Natsu privately, "Natsu. A boy with a fiery name to go with his fiery personality. To the naked eye, he seems mischievous—with those slanted, dark eyes and that mocking grin—but he's full of contradictions. Sure his hair is spikey and unruly—adding to his mischievous nature and not to mention that smirk—but Natsu is warmth—with his cherry blossom hair, and that friendly fanged-tooth smile. A passionate spirit like a flame itself."

She wasn't going to talk about his body and she didn't read it over because this was already embarrassing enough as it is.

"Lucy?" Natsu's voice was rough. "This is—"

"I have to go!" she abruptly slammed the screen on her laptop down and collapsed back onto her back. "Damn it, Lucy!" she buried her head back into her pillow and stayed like that for God knows how long.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Not the chapter I was originally going to post, but that chapter will be coming up soon.****

****Hope this chapter turned out alright!****

****Thank you all so much for being so kind!****

****And thanks for reading :)****

****Have a lovely day/night!****

43. Chapter 43

****So I was watching some random movie and it made me really emotional and now I'm just bawling my eyes out and I decided I have to write because it's great to be so emotional while writing!****

****So here you go!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Normally, Lucy would just go to sleep after doing something so embarrassing—or at least that's what's she's been doing as of late—but eight p.m. was much too early to go to sleep. So instead, Lucy decided to distract herself with some mindless anime—_Noragami_.

She stole her dad's laptop, not wanting to touch her own, not because of Natsu or anything—she kept telling herself—and began her marathon of the 12 episode anime.

And she loved it.

Yato, Hiyori, and Yukine were the most precious things ever. And Yato, with his dark hair, piercing blue eyes, and a fun personality, had become the new bae—temporarily of course, since Haru would always hold that special place within her heart.

And right from the first episode, she was sucked into the Yatori ship.

She needed to talk to someone about it and a tiny blue haired girl popped into her head. A grin struck her face for that Lucy was ninety percent sure Levy watched it and read the manga, making her the ultimate fangirl buddy.

She brought her laptop to her bed and clicked a random key to get it to wake up from sleep mode.

After everything loaded, she quickly got her _Skype_ opened and clicked on Levy's name, but her finger on the mousepad halted in place.

She realized her chat with Natsu was opened, bringing Lucy back to the reality. Her head suddenly ached as her eyes, half-willingly, skimmed down to see if Natsu had replied to her description of him; he did.

"Idiot," he wrote. "Quit hanging up on me when I'm trying to say stuff."

"And you didn't let me have a turn," he continued in another text bubble. "I know I'm not good with words and I can't write a story to save my life, but all I can say is, Lucy's just Lucy."

She sat up a bit straighter, focusing all her attention on the words ahead.

"She's so weird—to the point where I question my own sanity. I find myself in constant wonder about _why_ she is weird. Is she weird because she is a weirdo—well duh, but there has to be something more to it, you follow? Maybe I find her weird because she makes _me_ feel weird. A weirdness I have never experienced before—_like ever_. (And to describe that weirdness would just be too mushy gushy and weird, so I won't)."

"Natsu..." she tenderly stroked her cheek as a warm tear dribbled down from her right eye.

"_Or_ maybe she's weird because she's honest; with her honest laugh and her honest smile, Lucy is the one bit of truth in a world full of lies. But I guess it doesn't matter why Lucy is weird, because like I said before, Lucy's just Lucy."

With tears cascading down her cheeks, effectively blurring her vision, turning Natsu's words into a messy black wall, she wrote, "And you said you weren't good with words, stupid."

And finally there was the hope she needed that seemed to say _maybe, just maybe, Natsu reciprocated her feelings to

owards him._

And suddenly a request for a voice chat from Natsu appeared on her screen. She sniffled back some of the snot her tears had brought about before she answered the call.

"Think I could become a writer?" he asked.

A playful smirk gathered onto her lips, "Maybe. Though you wrote in first person and I'm not a big fan of that."

"Pshh," he said, "that's a good thing then 'cuz I don't want you reading what I write anyways."

"Fine then," she snorted, leaning her back against her pillow that cushioned the headboard. She placed the laptop onto her lap. "Soo care to describe the weirdness I make you feel?"

"Nope," he said coolly.

"Oh c'mon," she beckoned.

"No way," he sounded stern.

"Please, Natsu."

"No."

"Natsuuu."

"GAH YOU'RE DOING IT AGAIN!" she flinched at his sudden outburst. "MAKIN' ME FEEL ALL WEIRD!"

"So you're gonna tell me?"

"LUCCYY," he pleaded, "NO!"

"Fine," her shoulders tensed, "guess I shouldn't have expected you to say anything since this is _you_ we are talking about."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"My point exactly."

"Wait what? Does this have something to do with why you had Gray attack me?"

"I didn't have Gray attack you," she huffed.

"Then why did he yell 'This is for Lucy!' when he punched me?"

"He was being protective," her fingers fumbled together, "since you hurt my feelings."

"..."

"It's one thing to _give_ a rejection," her voice was low, "but another to _not say anything at all_. The latter is cruel."

He let out a choked breath, "Lucy—I never—" he was struck dumb.

Her racing heart nearly gave out at that moment. Was this what she had been waiting for? Was Natsu finally going to let her know how he felt?

"I—HAPPY!? THE HELL ARE YOU DOING OUT OF YOUR CAGE?!"

"Eh?" Lucy's eyes nearly fell out of their sockets.

"DAMN IT! I LEFT THE CAGE OPEN?! NOO!" Natsu growled. "GET BACK HERE!"

"You have got to be kidding me..." she face-palmed as her heart slowly sank. "That stupid salamander!"

"GET OFF MY LAPTOP!" he cried. "YOU'RE GONNA BREAK IT 'CUZ YOU'RE ALL WET! SHIT! HAPPY! WHAT DID YOU JUST DO?!"

Suddenly a video chat request appeared onto Lucy's screen.

She accepted it, wondering what exactly she was going to see. Natsu chasing Happy around? She giggled at the thought, but the giggle died in her throat at the mere idea of them video chatting after their interrupted conversation.

And she was right about Natsu chasing Happy—well sort of. Natsu was leaning over his laptop, giving Lucy full view of his plain white tee and finally he sat back, with the squirming salamander clasped firmly in his hands.

Lucy swallowed, wondering if Natsu would pick up the conversation.

Could she handle looking him in the eyes while he rejected her? But how could he reject her after what he had written to her.

She really needed to stop overthinking.

She gazed back at the screen and realized something was _off_ because suddenly three more video boxes appeared.

"Oi," Natsu seemed to notice as well for that his slanted eyes grew wide. "What is—"

"What the?" Gray's image appeared—shirtless—in one of the squares, followed by Levy and then Erza.

"Lucy and Natsu?!" Levy blinked. "And Gray and Erza?!" Levy was clad in a comfy oversized Crocus University sweatshirt.

"A group video chat?" Erza cocked her head to the side, letting her scarlet hair fall in graceful tumbles.

"Erza?" Lucy awed, staring at the redhead in wonder.

Erza smiled at the screen, "Hi, Lucy."

Lucy blushed. Erza was dangerously beautiful with those gentle brown eyes that Lucy didn't doubt for a second, could turn harsh at any moment.

Erza had on a black tank top and from what Lucy could see, she was seated at her desk with her neatly-made bed in the background.

On Erza's wall, was an armory; weapons upon weapons, Lucy silently gulped.

Two more boxes appeared and suddenly Cana and Mira were on the screen.

"Oh my god..." Lucy continued her ogling.

Cana's wild brown locks hung freely and she was only wearing a sports bra, lying down on what was probably her bed. "Hey," she grinned before taking a swig of a drink that was probably beer.

Mira looked awestruck.

Her white hair was also freely hanging with her bangs—that were normally tied up—sweeping her forehead. She was in a dark purple tank top lying on her bed as well.

"Whooaaaa," Natsu said. "This is awesome!"

"I thought someone said it cost money to do a group video chat?" Levy blinked with astonishment.

"Yeah," Gray agreed, clearly remembering Lucy's dumb words.

"Who's the bozo who said that?" Natsu scowled, crossing his arms over his chest.

Lucy cringed, praying no one remembered it was her.

"Lucy," nearly everyone responded.

"I KNEW IT!" Natsu bellowed.

"Way to throw me under the bus," she grumbled, her face turning scarlet.

"Well this is certainly surprising," Mira beamed.

"Yeah," Cana smirked, "what are you all doing up at 3 a.m., anyway?"

"It's 2:30 actually," Levy corrected.

"WAIT A SECOND!" Cana bolted upwards, slushing the beer in her hand. "SHIRTLESS GRAY AND LUCY'S CLEAVAGE! THIS IS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE!"

Both, Gray and Lucy, covered their hands over their chests.

"I sleep shirtless!" said Gray.

"You're showing just as much cleavage!" Lucy exclaimed, staring at Cana's chest.

"So?" Cana winked.

Lucy faltered. What did she expect? Cana to blush like she was? _Yeah right._

"Now _this_ feels even more like a sleepover," Levy marveled. "I think we should stay up all night!"

Surprisingly everyone, including Erza, agreed.

And a warm, bubbly feeling surfaced from within Lucy.

Her first sleepover—virtual, but still real enough to make her squeal with delight.

****XOXOX****

* * *

I know I'm progressing things slowly and I would like to thank you all so much for the patience and the support and for being the best readers ever!

Anyway, we are nearing 3000 reviews and I have a chapter that I've been leading up to planned—and it's not Natsu's POV like I did last time.

I'll let you all ponder on that!

Anyway, have a lovely day and thanks for reading!

44. Chapter 44

Lol so we reached 3000 reviews sooner than I planned sooo *awkwardly coughs* this isn't the special chapter.

* * *

XOXOX

"What great timing," Levy dreamily sighed with her palms holding up her tiny face.

"What _rotten_ timing," Natsu grumbled and Lucy's eyes flickered to him. He was staring down at his cupped hands with pure contempt written on his face. His palms twitched and she saw something blue— _Happy_.

"I mean all of us being awake and online at this hour. Can't be a coincidence!" Levy had continued to speak without paying the slightest attention to Natsu's bad attitude.

"What made you try out video calling, Natsu?" Erza asked as she picked her laptop up and moved it to her neatly-made bed. The way she angled her laptop gave Lucy and everyone else the perfect view of Erza's armor collection. There was armor for every part of the body and of course, more pointy, dangerous objects decorated her wall.

"Stupid Happy," Natsu raised his cupped hands up to reveal the instigator of the group video chat. "He must've clicked the button while he was running all over my laptop."

"Uckk," Gray grimaced, "you let your lizard run loose?"

With nostrils flared, the pink haired boy jumped a little on his bed and bellowed, "HE'S A SALAMANDER! AND SO WHAT IF I LET HIM RUN LOOSE?"

"Who cares what he is." Gray droned. "Still a stupid thing to have as a pet."

Natsu gasped and endearingly clutched Happy to his chest, "Don't listen to him, Happy. He's just a bitter stripper who's gonna end up alone."

"Oi!" Gray's eyes grew icy as he raised a fist to the screen.

"C'mon, let's put you back, little guy," Natsu hopped off his bed, revealing a huge hole in his bedroom wall.

Lucy let out a small squeak because that hole was very deep and definitely new since she had never seen it before, making her wonder why he would do that to his wall.

"Lucy!" her bedroom door barged open. "I heard a male voice screaming something like, _let him run loose._ Come out, you pervert!"

"I ain't a pervert!" Natsu indignantly said. "And how did that sound perverted?"

"Dad! Don't do this now!" Lucy pleaded as she looked at her door to see her father in battle stance, with his bat ready to be swung at anyone or anything that gets in his way.

There were several female gasps.

"Oh my God!"

"Is that—?"

"LUCY'S DAD!" Cana's voice was the only one Lucy could recognize. "I'VE BEEN DYING TO MEET YOU!"

"Eh?" Her father lowered his bat and walked over to Lucy's laptop, looking over her shoulder. "Oh wow! That's a lot of people..." He scratched the back of his head. "I thought you only video chat with Natsu. Anyway, nice to finally meet all my daughter's friends."

"Dad!" she tugged on her roots.

"Yo," Natsu smirked.

"Always good to see you again, Natsu. And, Gray, I see you're shirtless again. A shame, hopefully someone will get you help someday."

"Oi!" Gray looked defensive, with his arms crossed over his chest and his nose upturned, "I sleep shirtless, okay? It wasn't from my stripping habit!"

"Save it, exhibitionist," Natsu clucked his tongue and Gray shot him a dirty look.

"Who are these new friends?" Her father asked.

"Cana!" Cana said with a grin.

"Is that beer in your hand?" he asked, causing Lucy to smack her face.

"Yup."

"Aren't you a little too young to be drinking beer?"

"Nahhh," Cana waved him off, lifting the bottle back up to her lips for another sip.

"Alright," her father shrugged.

"Levy, sir," Levy blushed.

Jude pointed to his own hair and said, "You have _blue hair._ Why?"

"Uhhh," Levy sheepishly smiled, "it's my natural hair color?"

"I see," he nodded his head carefully, while rubbing his chin. _Why does he have to be so weird?_ Lucy wanted to scream as she burrowed under her covers.

"Hi, I'm Mira," Mira said politely. "It's nice to finally meet you, Lucy's father."

"Aww now," Jude grinned as he, to Lucy's chagrin, took a seat on her bed. "You may call me _Jude._ "

"Hello, Jude," Erza smiled gently, "I am Erza. Your daughter's writing senpai."

"DON'T TELL PEOPLE THAT!" Lucy popped out from her under her covers like a jack-in-the-box. Everyone in the group chat already figured that Lucy looked up to Erza, but still...

"Nothing to be ashamed of, Lucy," Erza said softly. "Everyone needs a senpai, right? And I've been planning to teach you how to write smut, with Cana's help of course."

"EHHHHHH?!" Man was she thankful her father was already awake because her screams were only getting louder.

"Smut?" her dad seemed lost.

Lucy let out a loud gasp, "DAD! OUT! _NOW!_"

"But I want to get to know your friends," he protested.

"I DON'T CARE!"

"What is smut exactly?" her father asked, moving his face closer to the built-in webcam, as if he thought it were a microphone—which he probably did.

"Smut is—" Cana started.

"Time to pull out the big guns," Lucy murmured to herself, clambering off her bed. She unlocked Plue's cage and pulled out her beloved iguana. She gently placed him onto her bed. "PLUE, SICK HIM!"

Plue stared blankly at her.

"Hmm?" her father looked over at Lucy and then his eyes dropped to the bed, where Plue was sitting.

A bloodcurdling scream ripped out from his lungs as he bolted out of her room, not forgetting his trusty bat during his flight.

The group chat was crying with laughter at the bizarre scene they had just witnessed.

"Lucy, your dad's the best!" Levy said.

"I can't tell if he likes me," muttered Gray.

"Doubt he does," Natsu said. "Who would?"

"Can it, Ash Face."

"Make me, Popsicle."

"God, stop flirting already!" Cana yelled causing both boys to turn green with revulsion.

Lucy sat down next to Plue and carefully picked him up, "Who's a good boy?" She nuzzled him against her face.

"Ehhh, Lucy," Mira said warily, "Is it a good idea to put him so close to your face?"

"Hmm?" Lucy blinked at her.

"I tell her that all the time," Natsu shrugged. "Don't think it matters at this point. Ain't like he's gonna do something now."

"See," Lucy beamed at Natsu. "At least someone understands."

Natsu beamed back.

"That's saying a lot," Gray sneered.

"Oi!" Natsu snapped, all traces of a smile gone from his face.

"Anyway," Lucy placed Plue down onto her lap. "What's this about teaching me how to write smut?" She leered at the screen.

"Cana and I were conversing about this the other day," Erza stated. "We think it would be beneficial for you to learn how to write some."

"Ahh no thanks," Lucy sweat-dropped.

"It will be good for your own sex life," Cana winked. "And Natsu will thank us."

And in the course of a millisecond, Lucy's face scorched like a red-hot flame. "Kill me now!" she sobbed.

"Heh?" Natsu's face twisted. "What's this got to do with me?"

"Well when you and Lucy start to _ya know,_ she can show you all the stuff we taught her—"

Natsu looked very confused, but the cloud of confusion quickly faded and his face turned into a burning shade of red as realization dawned on him, "WHATTTT?!"

"CAN WE CHANGE THE SUBJECT, PLEASE?" Lucy begged, hiding her face in her hands.

"On it, Lucy!" Levy's eyes shone with determination, "So why were you all up so late?"

"Oh!" Mira happily said, her blue eyes sparkled like the morning sky, "I was binge-watching _Sword Art Online_ — Erza recommended it to me."

"What do you think of it so far?" Erza asked while she tied her long, scarlet hair into a ponytail.

"I love it!" Mira squealed. "Kirito and Asuna are _sooo_ cute and the animation is beautiful! And I love the plot!"

"Ehh," Natsu's lips pursed, "I thought it was boring. I actually abandoned watching it. Got too lovey-dovey for my taste and kept dragging. And the people who like it are annoying and stupid."

And Lucy's heart sang. _He doesn't like that anime either?!_ She thought she was the only one. Her hand pressed against her heart.

"Oh?" Mira wilted, cupping a hand over her mouth. Clearly, she was insulted by Natsu's statement.

"_Natsu_," Erza hissed, her eyes darkened with contempt.

"The plot's a good concept though!" Natsu quickly amended, placing his palms up as sign of peace. "I-I meant that stupid guy, Gray, likes it so I was just taking a jab at him that he's the annoying and stupid! I-I didn't mean you, Mira, or you, Erza!"

"Better," Erza smiled with satisfaction.

"How's that any better?" Gray looked incredulous, with his droopy eyes widening.

"I didn't like it either," Lucy squeaked, keeping her face hidden.

"Why not?" Erza asked.

She looked up through her lashes, to see Natsu gawking at her with wonder. Her face heated, "Same reasons as Natsu—minus the insults to the people who like it."

"Really?!" Natsu's slanted eyes widened.

"Yeah, stopped around episode 13, I think."

"ME TOO!" Natsu was now grinning from ear-to-ear, raising his shoulders up with excitement.

"You two are missing out," Erza sighed.

"Yeah," Gray agreed, scratching his chest.

"I like _Sword Art,_ " Levy commented. "Season two was great."

"Agreed," Cana took another sip of her beer.

"So why are you up so late, Lucy?" Levy asked with very round, burnt-amber eyes, "You logged off so quickly when we were talking about having a writer describe us. I figured you went to bed or something."

Lucy mentally cursed. _Why is she bringing this up?!_ With shy eyes, she glanced over at Natsu who's smoldering gaze was nearly burning her through the screen.

"How did you describe Natsu anyway?" Levy continued asking.

"Does it matter?" Natsu countered, opening up a water bottle and then he began to drink.

Lucy's eyes widened at Natsu. Both thankful and curious to why he interrupted Levy's question.

"I guess not," Levy scratched her forehead. "Anyway, what did you do tonight, Lucy?"

"What did I do?" she repeated, thinking back to the moments before her and Natsu's chat. What was she— _Noragami!_ "I fell in love!"

A loud swoosh of spluttering rang throughout the chat followed by a chain of coughs. Lucy's eyes traveled from person to person, until she landed on the choking culprit.

"You okay, Natsu?" Mira asked with concern clear in her features. Lucy figured he must have choked on the bottle of water that was held tightly in his hand.

But Natsu couldn't answer, he was too busy choking. Water sprayed out of his mouth like a sprinkler. A hand shot u

p to his face, "GAH SHIT! IT WENT OUT MY NOSE!"

"I'll take that as a _no_," Mira cheekily grinned.

"IT BURRNNNNNS!" he cried, falling backwards on his bed with his hand still gripping his dripping nose.

Everyone watched as he tumbled over in agony, reminding Lucy of the time he set his arm on fire. _He looks so ridiculous._ A giggle escaped her lips and then another, and soon it was to the point where tears streaked her cheeks. She had her arms pressed against her stomach as she let out a roar of laughter.

"LUCY!" he abruptly sat up again, glaring directly at the screen, with his hand pinching his nose, making his voice sound a little off. His charcoal eyes blackened even more so. "ARE YOU SERIOUSLY LAUGHING AT _MY PAIN_?"

"Y-Yes," she wheezed out, continuing her laughter.

To her surprise, Natsu's face _actually_ softened as he watched her laugh and then he, too, was laughing, followed along by everyone else.

"So who did you say you fell in love with?" Levy asked once her laughter died out.

Her question seemed to sober everyone up, except for Lucy, who, with a chuckle, purred, " _Yato!_ "

And once again, the sound of rushing water shadowed by choking provided background music for the chat.

"Natsu!" Lucy exclaimed, staring at the suffering boy. His face was a brilliant shade of red.

" _Again_?!" Gray looked bewildered. "Learn how to drink from a bottle, Ash Brains."

"Screw...off..." Natsu rasped, looking away from the screen. He looked very tense, the way his body stood stiff and his arms were crossed over his chest.

"Who's Yato?" Mira asked. "I don't recall anyone in the _Fairy Tail_ fandom by that name!"

Lucy wasn't paying any attention as for her gaze was glued onto Natsu, as she tried to decode his odd behavior.

"Yeah," Cana said. "Who is he?"

Natsu gave a sideway glance at the screen.

"Yato?" Levy cocked her head to the side. "As in _Noragami Yato_?"

"Yes!" Lucy squealed as she grabbed her pillow and held it to her chest.

"EEP!" Levy squealed back. "Isn't he just too cute?!"

"Especially when he's with Hiyori!" Lucy gushed, clutching the pillow even tighter. "They are my second favorite OTP now!"

"Eh?" Natsu's facial features scrunched up, "You're in love with some guy, but you ship him with someone else?"

"Yes!" Lucy and Levy both answered.

" _Noragami_ ," Erza said, "is a great anime and manga."

"It really is!" Lucy gushed and then thoughtfully added, "Though I only watched the anime, binged-watched it all night. I'll probably start the manga tomorrow."

"Wait!" Mira looked puzzled. "Yato is a guy from a manga?"

"Yup!" she nodded, her eyes glancing over at Natsu who looked beyond relieved, making Lucy wonder what exactly was going through his head before. Was he jealous?

"Aww," the sparkle in Mira's eyes dimmed. "How disappointing..."

"Don't look so down," Lucy chided and then she asked, "Levy, what did you do tonight?"

"I was video-chatting with—NO ONE!" Levy's hand slapped her mouth. "Forget I said anything."

"Who?!" Mira asked.

With a sneaky grin, Lucy giggled, "Gajeel."

"LUCY!" Levy cried into her own pillow, a pillow that was shaped like a book.

"Who's Gajeel?" Natsu asked, scratching his head.

"Her boyfriend," Lucy proudly stated. She was so thrilled Levy had finally started to video chat with him.

"HE'S NOT MY BOYFRIEND!"

"_Yet_," Lucy smirked. How nice was it to be on the opposite end of the teasing.

"STOPPPP!"

And then there was a chuckle. "Oi, Gray, whatcha laughin' at?" Natsu asked.

Gray's eyes weren't focused at the webcam, instead he was gazing downwards as he typed something. "Heh? Oh—nothing."

"You're messaging someone," Cana gleamed. "Who?"

"I ain't messaging anyone," Gray brushed off, yet his cheeks hinted otherwise.

"Juvia?" Lucy suggested, keeping a careful eye on Gray's cheeks.

"Like hell I'm messaging her!" His face was now full blown crimson.

"That blush says otherwise," Cana continued her teasing.

"Just shut up," he grumbled, rubbing the back of his neck as he looked away from the screen.

"Gruvia," Mira heavily sighed, placing a delicate hand to her cheek.

"Glad you're finally giving that girl a chance," Erza smiled.

"Well now we know what he was doing up so late," Cana winked.

"Whatever," he muttered bitterly, still not looking at the screen.

"Mann," Natsu said, "I got so many _asks_ from that Ask Meme I reblogged earlier."

"Same here," everyone else replied.

Lucy had reblogged the Ask Meme from Cana earlier in the day, so she quickly checked her _Tumblr_ to see how many messages she received. There were only five messages and three out of five of them were reviews for her Music a x Reina fic, one was her daily Loke message about how beautiful she is and the last one was an ask to the meme she had reblogged.

"How come whenever I reblog an ask meme," she said to no one in particular, "I only get one _ask_ for it?"

"Jealous?" Natsu mocked with amusement clear on his face.

"No way!" she indignantly turned her head away from the screen.

"I get so many that I have to delete the post to get them to stop," Natsu informed her in a bragging tone.

"Whatever," Lucy rolled her eyes.

"I'm surprised, Lucy," Levy said. "I always thought you were more popular than me."

"Guess I'm not," she grumbled as she read the reviews to her story.

"I just thought I'd let you know that you completely ruined my OTP for me, thanks. Maybe you should just stick to writing your crappy Haru x Elie fics—or better yet, maybe you should just stop writing all together, since you suck at it. And also, I saw that selfie of you and your lizard, and next to you, your lizard looks like a beauty queen. Have a great night!"

Her head hung low and her hands fisted her blanket tightly as her teeth grinded together. An ache coiled up in her chest, an ache of both anger and sadness.

"What's the matter, Lucy?" Natsu asked, noticing her weird behavior.

"Hey, Erza," she ignored him. "Have you ever received hate for your writing?"

"Nope," Erza said. "Never."

"Yeah," she sadly smiled to herself, "I figured that much."

"You got a hate?" Natsu continued to probe, looking at Lucy with worrisome eyes.

"How come I'm the only one who ever gets hate messages?" Her eyes watered with frustration.

"Well I get hate," Gray said quickly, making Lucy feel bad for her statement. How could she think she was the only one? She knew better than that—especially with Wendy's whole hate ordeal.

Natsu snorted.

So Gray sneered, "Always from that loud-mouthed idiot, Natsu. He used to go on anon when we first started following each other and he would send me all this hate."

"Oi, you did it to me first!"

"No I didn't!"

"Yes you did!"

"No!"

"Yes!"

"So annoying," Cana scowled.

"You got hate, Lucy?" Mira's eyes turned glassy. "I'll track them for you!"

"No. I don't care _who_ sent it—because anyone's allowed to hate something—but it's more like _why_. I know we always go through this, but _why_ do people think it's okay to send hate? I mean with my writing...I do it for free and I could spend hours working on a piece just to get a review telling me how much my writing sucks. Ughh, it makes me not want to write anymore."

"That's how I feel when I get hate for my art," Levy commented.

"Can we see the message?" Gray asked.

"Sure," Lucy posted the ask with only one word as her reply, _Cool._

"Asshole," Cana leered, tossing her empty beer bottle away.

"I'm so sorry, Lucy," Levy said with great sympathy.

Mira looked furious, with her nostrils flaring and her hands curling into fists.

"Lucy, your story was great," Natsu said, his voice was as soft as it was whenever he chats with her one-on-one. "And I hate all stories involve Musica—because he reminds me too much of that stupid, icy bastard—but your story actually changed my perspective on him." Lucy's glossy eyes distorted Natsu's features, but she could make out the warm smile on his face.

Natsu curled his right hand into a fist and pounded into his left palm, "And don't ever stop writing, especially Musica x Reina fics because think of how much fun it will be to piss that anon off even more when they see that you're still writing for stuff their OTP!" A laugh escaped her lips and the smile on Natsu's lips grew tenfold, "Gets you fired up, huh?"

She nodded, not trusting her voice.

"And that comment about Plue bein' better looking like a beauty queen compared to you is complete bullshit." His cheeks were painted a soft pink. "I already told you it's a fact that you're beautiful so that person's just telling lies—'cuz you can't change something that's a fact."

"Natsu," her eyes welled up even more so. It felt like they were the only two on the screen as everyone awkwardly looked away, as though they were afraid they might ruin a moment. "Thank you."

He gave her a toothy smile as a sign of _you're welcome_ and then he immediately changed the subject, "Let's play Super Smash Bros! Sucks we can't do 7-player-smash, but we could do 4 vs. 3! And then the two winners can fight each other."

Everyone seemed a little surprised by his random outburst, but the surprise faded as everyone ecstatically typed their

friendcodes for their 3DS into the group chat.

Lucy vs. Levy vs. Erza.

Mira vs. Cana vs. Gray vs. Natsu.

And it was loads of fun, though it did get confusing hearing the other battles going on, but Lucy remained focused, fighting the best she could with Pikachu as her main, but alas, Erza had beaten her with Zelda.

"Damn it!" Gray yelled.

"HAH!" Natsu roared. "I'M THE WINNER!"

"You only won because of the stupid lag," Gray scoffed.

"Yeah, keep telling yourself that," Natsu playfully smirked.

"Alright, enough fighting." Cana interrupted. "Erza won our round."

"YES!" Natsu cheered. "ERZA, FIGHT ME!" Lucy giggled to herself, laying down on her bed.

Erza looked amused, "Ready whenever you are."

And they fought, Natsu and Erza tried to angle their DS so that everyone could watch, but it didn't help much and so on, Lucy's eyes grew heavy. She tried to stay conscious, but something about Natsu's voice made her feel okay to close her eyes.

"Aww," she could hear Levy coo. "Lucy's asleep."

"She's always fallin' asleep on me," Natsu commented.

"Aw you have to admit she's kinda cute, right, Natsu?" Mira innocently asked.

"I guess."

"You just called her cute?" Gray sounded incredulous.

"No! Mira said _kinda_ cute—why doesn't anyone understand that it's completely different than calling someone _cute_!"

"Because you can't find someone _kinda_ cute—they either are or they aren't," Cana stated.

But Lucy seemed to have missed Natsu's response as her brain decided to go unconscious at that exact moment.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Wow, long chapter, but so many of you were excited about their virtual sleepover, so I had to make it long ^_^.***
*

****I hope I did a good job with it!****

****Sorry for any mistakes, I did my best with the reread :0****

****Anyway, thanks for reading and hope you all have a lovely weekend!****

45. Chapter 45 and Omake

****Well in honor of 3000+ reviews, I decided to give you all some special bonus omake at the end of the chapter!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"I really fell asleep during the virtual sleepover?" Lucy pouted, staring at her stupid laptop that had fallen off the bed in the middle of the night. Plue stared at from the opposite end of her bed. "And I forgot to put you back, Plue? Sorry!" She gently picked up her iguana and placed him into his cage.

She squatted onto the floor, "Now let's see the damage." Holding a breath, she inspected her pink laptop and to her amazement—no damage. She breathed out in relief as she clicked a key to awaken her laptop.

Looks like no one managed to pull an actual all-nighter, considering the video chat was no longer going on. She was about to ask who was the last one to survive, but something caught her attention.

The group chat name had changed to _Natsu thinks Lucy's cute_, compliments to Gray.

Lucy smirked, briefly remembering them teasing him last night about that and she remembered how she had once threatened Natsu that she would change the chat name to that about a couple of months back. "I like the new chat name," she messaged, but there was no response. "I wonder when they all passed out..."

She couldn't imagine staying up any later than when she passed out because she felt like death from the lack of sleep. Her head pounded and her body begged her to crawl back into bed, not to mention she felt feverish. Was that a side effect from lack of sleep or was Lucy actually sick? She didn't give herself much time to dwell any further as she will herself to go take a shower, in hopes it would make her feel better.

But, alas, she was hopeless, with blueish-purplish bags under her eyes and her headache and fever seemed to have made a new friend—a dull stomach ache. She looked and felt hungover—or at least that's what she _imagined_ being hungover felt like, considering she had never drunken enough alcohol to get that way.

Having a few minutes to spare before she had to leave for school, she checked her _Tumblr_ and she let out a loud gasp.

She had 20 new messages.

"Oh God," she cowered like she always did when she saw so many messages in her inbox, "Now what did I do wrong?" With her eyes half-closed and her head slightly turned away, she begrudgingly clicked the little letter icon.

"Huh?"

They were all anonymous asks for that random ask meme she had complained about last night—how everyone gets a bunch of asks, but she only receives one.

Well, it looks like she was wrong.

20 asks?

She was bewildered and ecstatic. The smile on her face could outshine the sun because now she didn't feel like the loser of the group chat.

But the happiness was replaced by an overwhelming sensation feeling as she tried to answer the messages, but that was the thing, she didn't know how to.

The questions ranged from something as vague as what's your favorite food to something as personal as have you ever been in love?

So, with a deep, calming breath, she shut her laptop, deciding to let her queue take over her blog for the day as she tried to think of answers for her asks. Besides, she wasn't feeling well, so the time would give her a chance to clear her head and feel better.

****XOXOX****

She felt worse as the day went on and that ache in her stomach seemed to have grown significantly worse, but at least it was an on and off kind of pain. She hadn't been able to eat anything all day and all she wanted was her damn chills to go away.

So the second she got home, she took a nap, hoping to feel better, but quite the opposite occurred. She felt a million times worse—like someone beat her to a pulp while she was asleep. Glancing at the clock, she couldn't believe she had been asleep for nearly four hours.

With her laptop on her lap, she decided to check Skype. There was only one message from the entire day besides the one she had sent earlier.

"Shut up, Lucy," the message read and she didn't even have to look at who sent it to know.

She giggled, but the jostling of from it caused a sharp pain in her lower right abdomen. "Gahh..." her teeth clenched until the pain subsided.

Deciding to ignore the pain, she playfully wrote, "Rude, Natsu."

"Tch," he messaged back before sending her a video chat request.

She obliged.

"Yo, Lucy!" he happily beamed with his famous eye-squinting smile.

"You seem wide awake," she mused, with a brow half-raised.

"Ehh," he shrugged and his eyes narrowed in as he inspected her. She squirmed in place, fiddling with a frazzled strand of her hair. "You look awful."

"Gee, thanks," her right eye twitched. The last thing she needed to hear—from her crush, nonetheless. And he was right, she did look awful, probably worse than she looked this morning. Her hair was a tousled mess, her tank top was skewed, and her eyes looked puffy...

"No problem!"

"I feel awful, actually," she stated, placing a hand over her stomach. "Guess it's the side effect from lack of sleep..."

"What lack of sleep?" he scoffed. "You went to bed around three. That gave you like four hours!"

"Well how many hours did you sleep?" she frowned.

"Hmmm," he held his left hand up and pointed to each finger with his right as he silently mouthed stuff, "Six."

"Eh?" Lucy blinked as a cheeky smile grew on his lips.

"Slept during most of my classes," he explained with his smile growing wider at Lucy's gapping expression. "Though I probably shouldn't have slept through history since I have a big exam tomorrow." An uneasy feeling coiled within Lucy as she remembered it was her damn _history_ notes that outted her crush on him. She averted her gaze from the screen. "I'm using your notes to help me study."

Her head snapped back to see a devilish smirk upon his lips. Whether he was mocking her or just being an idiot, she couldn't tell. "Why?" she sounded stiff.

"'Cuz I like looking at them."

That ache in her stomach seemed to have vanished completely and was replaced with the ache in her heart. "So who won _Smash_?" she asked, desperate for a subject change. "You or Erza?"

"ME IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT DAMN LAG!" Natsu roared with blazing eyes and a fist raised.

"Seriously? You're blaming the lag?" Lucy smirked. "Didn't you make fun of Gray for doing that?"

"Oiii, I'm not blaming it," he slumped back in his seat, running a hand through his spikey hair, causing it to look disheveled—not that she minded. "Maybe if you hadn't fallen asleep, I would have won."

"What does that have to do with anything?"

"Nothing," his cheeks tinged pink as he looked away.

"I wish I hadn't fallen asleep," she sighed, thinking of how embarrassing it was to be the first one to fall asleep especially on video chat...

"Well I wish Happy didn't initiate the video chat," he said grimly, with his pointed eyes falling slightly.

"Why not?" she tilted her head to the side, "You didn't have fun?"

"No, I did," he quickly amended. "It's just the timing of it..." he dropped his gaze.

Ahh, right, Natsu was in the middle of saying something—something that made her hurting stomach churn. Lucy swallowed, "What was it that you were going to say—"

"The chat's annoying," he interrupted.

"What?" Lucy asked with amusement, "You don't like the chat you created?"

"No," he grumbled, only sounding half-hearted.

"You don't mean that," she winked. "You were the one who wanted a group chat anyway."

"I only created it 'cuz of you," he glared up at the screen. His obsidian irises blended in with his pupils.

"Because of me?!" she looked incredulous, taken aback by his statement. "But it was _your_ idea!"

"You wouldn't watch _Fairy Tail_ with me, remember?" he picked at the frilly hem of his bandage while giving her a curious expression. "You said you always watch it with Levy so I came up with the idea for a group chat so I could have an excuse to watch it with you, _Lucy_."

Chills traveled up and down her spine, causing her to shiver. She tried her best to convince herself it was from her fever, but of course she knew better...

But was he being serious? She couldn't help but ogle at him to see if there was a hint of teasing. He seemed to squirm a bit under her chocolate gaze. He coughed. "Anyway, can I have your address?"

"Not this again..." she groaned, pinching the bridge of her nose, "No!"

"Why not?" he scowled.

"Because no!" she scowled back.

"What if I give you my Chimchar plush?"

"Really?" her eyes lit up.

"No."

"Then no!"

"Weirdo."

"How am I being weird?!" she marveled.

But he didn't answer her question, instead he gave her a pointed look and asked, "How come you haven't answered any of your asks? It's been like an entire day."

"Heh?" she blinked. Was he talking about those messages in her inbox? With a sheepish smile, she admitted, "Oh, I kinda got overwhelmed."

"What's to be overwhelmed about?" he deadpanned.

"I don't know!" she felt flustered. "It was so unexpected and-and—WAIT A MINUTE! HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT—YOU SENT THEM ALL?"

He rolled his eyes, "You really think I would do that?"

"YES, YES I REALLY THINK YOU WOULD DO THAT!"

Natsu shot her a huge, cheeky smile that showed off his very sharp canines, "Ahh well I guess you thought right."

Her jaw dropped. Why would he do that? "But-but-but how did you send all of them?" she stammered. "You're only allowed to send five anonymous messages per an hour!"

"I know," his smile never wavered. "20 messages, right?"

"Right," she ogled. "So you stayed up to send me a new set of messages every hour?"

"Yup!" he seemed very pleased with himself.

"Why?"

He looked nonchalant, with his arms resting behind the back of his head as he said, "'Cuz you said no one ever sends you ask stuff for the memes you reblog."

"Natsu..." her eyes bugged out. "That's so... You shouldn't have done that." she looked away from the screen, gazing at her bookshelf full of _Fairy Tail_ volumes with her mudkip plush resting in front of them.

"What's wrong with me sending you them?" he looked puzzled.

"It's just that—Oww," Lucy placed her laptop off her lap to rub her stomach—but that only made it worse as she winced.

"What's wrong?"

"My stomach's been bothering me all day," she complained, pressing her hands firmly against her thighs, hoping it will distract her from the pain in her stomach.

"Maybe you have to go to the bathroom," he offered with a teasing smirk.

"No!" she snapped, glaring at Natsu with daggers, "I think I would know if I had to go."

"Constipat—"

"I AM NOT CONSTIPATED!" she shrieked with her face flaming from embarrassment. "OWW!" her hand snapped back to the right side of her stomach.

"If you say so," he said casually, clearly unconcerned. "Maybe you ate something funny?"

"I haven't been able to eat anything all day," she muttered.

"That's probably it then," he said. "'Cuz when I haven't eaten all day my stomach always ends up hurting."

"I couldn't eat because _it_ hurts."

"Well maybe—"

A searing pain tore right through her. "GAHHHHH," she cried, keeling over with her arms pressed against her stomach. "IT. HURTS."

It was pain she had never experienced before—hell, she didn't know it was possible to be in this much pain. It felt like something was stabbing her.

Tears cascaded down her cheeks as sobs wracked through her body—but that made it worse. _Moving_ made it worse.

She was wanted to vomit.

If he was saying something, she couldn't hear him over her cries of pain. She bit down on her arm just to hold them back, allowing her to finally hear Natsu. "Lucy! Is your dad home!?"

"Noo," she was able to speak briefly as she remembered he had another business trip.

"CALL FOR HELP!" he screamed, but realizing Lucy wasn't going to move at all, he yelled out, "WHAT'S YOUR

ADDRESS!?"

Lucy was now hunched over, burying her face into her sheets to muffle her miserable screams.

"C'MON, LUCY!" his voice was unforgiving. " _TRUST ME_!"

And that seemed to wake Lucy up. "I...do..."

"Heh?" he nearly dropped his phone, for he hadn't expected that response.

She slowly sat up on her knees, gradually lifting her head up to meet his unreadable stare, "I do...trust you...Natsu." Despite her severe pain, she managed to give him her own genuine, eye-squinting smile. "I've always...ERGGGG...trusted you."

His eyes widened.

And she shared her address before collapsing back down on her bed in sheer agony.

"It's an emergency!" She could hear Natsu say as he repeated her address to whomever he was speaking with. "What's my relationship to the—THE HELL DOES THAT MATTER?! JUST GO AND HELP HER ALREADY!" Pause. "FINE! I'M HER _BOYFRIEND_! She's having severe stomach pains! Is she pregnant? THE FUCK? HOW WOULD I—LUCY, ARE YOU PREGNANT?"

"Na-tsu," she seethed through clenched teeth, lifting her head up enough to scowl at him, but she dropped it again as she let out another series of cries.

"SHE'S NOT PREGNANT!" he yelled. "GO HELP HER ALREADY, SHEESH!"

"Lucy, what's your dad's cell number?!" Natsu urged. "I wanna let him know!"

With grinding teeth, she managed to say all the digits as her hands gripped her blanket, curling into fists "It hurtttssss."

"I know," his voice was soft. And then he said, "Lucy's old man? It's Natsu—it doesn't matter how I got your cell number! Lucy's in—IT DOESN'T MATTER WHY MY AREA CODE IS DIFFERENT! NOW QUIT INTERRUPTING ME! LUCY'S SICK OR SOMETHIN'! I CALLED FOR HELP, BUT YOU BETTER GET HOME NOW!"

"Make it stop," she cried, tumbling all over her bed. "Make it stopppp!"

"Lucy..." Natsu's hands gripped his desk so tightly that it started to crack. Never had he felt so helpless in his entire life then in this moment as he watched the poor girl wither in pain.

A knock rang on his door, "Natsu, we have to go—"

"GO AWAY!" he yelled at the voice.

"Don't-Don't leave me!" she pleaded through her hysterical tears.

His heart clenched, "I won't!"

"...scared," he could just barely make out from her sobs.

"Damn it!" His fist slammed into the new crack on his desk, breaking right through the wood.

Why did he have to live three hours away?

He felt guilty not being able to do anything—and he felt guilty for keeping something from her—something that was mentioned during the virtual sleepover that he knew would make Lucy upset...

"_Guess who's going to Comic Con!"_

"_Not Lucy," Cana had sniggered._

"_You, Levy?" Gray had asked._

"_That's a little mean, Cana," Mira had chided. "Congrats, Levy! How did you get tickets so late?"_

Instead of answering, Levy's face had burned a brilliant shade of red.

"_Was it Gajeel?" Erza had asked a knowing smile._

"_Yes!" Levy squeaked. "I still can't believe it! But I feel bad...Lucy's the only one who's not going..."_

And the chat had agreed to keep it a secret for the time being, until Levy told Lucy herself.

"Poor thing..."

* * *

XOXOX

Whelps, this doesn't look so good for Lucy :P

Anyway, here's the special stuff I promised as celebration for 3000+ reviews!

**Omake #1 Gray meets Natsu** **(In honor of Chapter 33)**

* * *

"We would like to order family-style rigatoni ala vodka, but make it cold, please," Ultear said to the waiter.

"Cold?"

"Yeah," Lyon spoke up, "Is that a problem?"

"N-No," the waiter stuttered.

"And by cold, we want it frozen," Gray added. He was out to eat with his adoptive siblings accompanied by Meredy, Lyon's girlfriend—who wasn't very keen on the idea of eating frozen pasta, but she was willing to try it.

The waiter felt like he had entered some strange alternate universe, as he dashed off to get away from the peculiar people.

"Man," Gray sighed, shaking his head, "what a strange waiter."

"As much as I hate to agree with you," Lyon said, running a hand through his spikey white hair, "I couldn't agree more."

"Here are your iced waters—EXCUSE ME! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, TAKING YOUR CLOTHES OFF IN FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT?!"

Gray glanced over at Lyon, who was dressed fully in clothes. "Lyon's wearing clothes."

"Great observation, Gray!" Lyon applauded. "With skills like that, no wonder you were able to graduate grade school."

"Heh?" Gray cocked his head to the side, confused by Lyon's sarcasm.

"Gray, you're the one who's not wearing clothes," Ultear exasperated, pinching the bridge of her nose.

"EHHH?!" Gray glanced downwards. "NOT AGAIN!"

"Not again?" the waiter blinked, surprised by Gray's reaction.

"You see," Gray said, "I have a stripping habit."

The waiter's face twisted up, "GET OUT! GET OUT, YOU PERVERT!"

"Oi!" Gray growled. "I'm not a pervert!"

"OUT!" The waiter grabbed Gray by the forearm and not-so-gently shoved him out the door. "DON'T COME BACK HERE UNLESS YOU'RE WEARING CLOTHES!"

The door slammed shut.

"Jeez," Gray grumbled, rubbing the forearm the waiter had grabbed. "Couldn't he have at least given me back my clothes?" He glanced down at his naked form—well he had on boxers, but still. "Now what am I supposed to do?"

He looked around and saw that people were starting to stare at him so with heavy feet, he decided to head home—but as he went to turn, his eyes spotted a glob of pink hair from across the street. "No way...Ass Flame?"

The boy with the pink hair whipped his head in Gray's direction with slanted-eyes meeting Gray's droopy ones. "ICE ASS!?" The boy exclaimed with utter disbelief on his face as he ran across the intersection to meet Gray. "The hell are you in Magnolia?"

"I could ask you the same thing," Gray scoffed, standing face-to-face with Natsu. Natsu looked exactly like he did online—annoying and stupid. He was a couple of inches shorter than Gray and slightly less muscular too. Gray smirked at that.

"I live here," Natsu snapped. "What's your excuse?"

"You gotta be kidding me," Gray face-palmed.

"What?" Natsu scowled, crossing his arms over his chest.

"I live here too, dumbass."

Natsu's jaw smacked the floor. With his hands pressed against his cheeks, he spouted, "WHHAATTTTT?!"

"I'm right here, idiot," Gray flinched, covering his ears. "No need to scream."

"WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE YOU OF ALL PEOPLE?!" Natsu continued wailing. "WHY COULDN'T IT HA

VE BEEN _LUCYYYY?!_ THE UNIVERSE HATES ME!"

"It hates me too apparently," Gray huffed, leaning against a random brick building.

"NOW IT ALL MAKES SENSE!"

"What does?" Gray raised a brow.

"WHY LUCY WAS LAUGHING WHEN I TOLD HER I LIVE IN MAGNOLIA! _SHE KNEW!"_ Natsu banged his head against the wall next to Gray. Gray watched with both horror and amazement at how Natsu was able to bang his head against the brick in a repeated manor. "And here I thought she was laughin' 'cuz she lived near me or something."

"I doubt she would have been laughin' if she knew you lived near her," Gray smirked. "In fact, I bet she would have been running for her life."

"Pshhh," Natsu grinned. "You wish, stripper. I think you're confusing me with yourself."

"I ain't a stripper!" Gray said indignantly.

"Then why are you only in boxers?!"

Damn it! He got him there... "Why are your eyes slanted?"

"Why are your eyes droopy?"

"No wonder your favorite character is Haru! You're both stupid!"

"No wonder your favorite character is Musica! You're both perverts!"

"Haru and Elie will never be a thing!" and with a mischievous glint in Gray's dark blue eyes, he added, "Neither will _Natsu and Lucy_."

"GRRRAYYY, FIGHT ME!"

And fists flung all around as the two of them brawled on the streets of Magnolia.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****I have two more omakes that I will be adding to the next two chapters!****

****Hope you enjoyed this :)****

****Thank you for reading and have a beautiful day!****

46. Chapter 46

****XOXOX****

Lucy could hear beeping noises as consciousness slowly took over. Assuming it was her phone alarm, she stretched out an arm to grab her phone, but something was restricting her arm from stretching all the way. "Hmm?" Her eyes f

luttered open and all she saw was white.

White walls, white floor, white lights...She was even under a white blanket...She jolted upwards. _What the hell?_

"Don't worry about the noise," a voice said. Lucy startled, causing a twinge of pain on her gut. A lady dressed in blue scrubs was playing with clear, plastic bags filled with fluid. _IV_'s? Lucy wondered. "Just means one of the bags are empty. Are you in any pain?"

Lucy opened her mouth to speak, but couldn't seem to find her voice, so instead she shook her head.

"Excellent," she beamed. "I know things might be a bit hazy for you right now, but try to sleep it off, alright? It's just the effects of the anesthesia."

Lucy nodded.

The nurse shared Lucy a coy smile, "That's some fiancé you got there, by the way. I believe he called every hour on the hour asking for an update. Going to up the dosage on your pain meds, just in case, Hon."

? Lucy decided to ignore the comment as she slipped back asleep.

****XOXOX****

"Lucy," a gentle hand pushed a few stray strands of hair off her face, "you feeling any better?"

She slowly opened her heavy eyes and was greeted with her father's familiar face, though his face was a bit distorted due to her drug-hazy vision.

"Dad?" her voice rasped.

"You doing okay, kiddo?"

"Peachyy," her speech was slurred.

"You put us through quite the scare," he playfully chided. Lucy was about to question who the _us_ was, but her father held out a plain cardboard box. "Came for you in the mail today."

The mail came already? What time is it? She took the box and looked at the label, which read, "To the weirdo who lives at this address."

"I'm assuming you're the weirdo," her father teased.

With her head still foggy and her body very fatigued, Lucy had no idea what was going on as she opened the package. Inside was an orange creature.

She reached down to grab it. The object had a velvety softness and plush-like feel to it as she pulled it out.

She gasped.

It was an orange monkey with wide eyes and a friendly smile plastered on its face. Its head had a swirly flame and its tail looked like a red inferno.

"_He didn't_ ..." she awed.

"A monkey?" her father voiced aloud.

"Noo," she shook her head. "A pokemon."

"Ahh what a cute pikachu!"

Lucy nearly face palmed because why do all adults think every Pokemon is a _pikachu_? But she too giddy to actually be bothered by her dad's comment.

"A _chimchar_," she breathed, hugging the plushy to her chest.

A scent on fiery warmth filtered into her nostrils.

Her eyes bugged out.

This was _his_ scent.

This was what _Natsu_ smells like?

She took a big whiff allowing the smell of fire to intoxicate her. It was so passionate and pure, her heart skipped a beat.

Her father's phone went off, breaking her concentration on the scent. "Ughh," he groaned, pinching the bridge of his nose. "Well I know you just woke up, but please do us all a favor and take this call for me."

She grabbed the phone from his hand and said timidly said, "Hello?"

"IS SHE— _LUCY_!?" even with her sluggish mind, him saying her name was enough to make her heart implode.

"Hi, Natsuu."

"Are you—how are you?" his voice grew tender.

"_Mmm_ sleepyyyy."

"Haven't you slept enough?" he chastised. "Stay up with me."

"I'll try," she so badly wanted to curl up onto her side, but the IVs in her arm retrained her from doing so.

"I was so worried about you, weirdo," he admitted.

That struck her as odd, Natsu admitting he was worried... She smiled slyly, biting her lips. "Oohoo you were worried?"

"Err well..." he sounded very uncomfortable, causing a giggle to erupt from her. "Don't laugh!"

"NGHH OWW!" A blinding pain had shot out from her gut to all over her body causing her eyes to snap shut and her teeth to clench as her right arm, which had no IVs attached to it, instantly flew against her stomach.

"LUCY?!" his voice bellowed with panic. "WHAT'S WRONG?!"

Her breathing was heavy and irregular.

Tears trickled down her cheek.

"LUCY?!"

She tried her best to get a hold of herself as she took a deep, calming breath in and slowly exhaled. "I'm...okay...Hurts to laugh."

"Divine punishment for laughin' at me," he tried to tease, but it didn't come out right so he faked a cough.

She shoved at the white, brittle blanket she was laying under to reveal a periwinkle hospital gown. She pulled the gown upwards to see her stomach.

She inhaled sharply.

"What's wrong?" Natsu sounded anxious.

"What was wrong with me?" she asked, ignoring her question as she observed the weird slice on the right side of her stomach, decorated with gross-yet-kind-cool-looking stitches.

"No one's told you?" he sounded incredulous.

"Obviously," she grumbled. "Otherwise I wouldn't be asking."

"Your appendix burst or somethin'," he explained.

"Appendicitis?"

"Yeah!"

She let out a savage moan, "It. Hurts."

Just then, a nurse walked into her room. "How are you doing, sweetie?"

"Alright, I guess," Lucy muttered.

"Any pain?" Lucy nodded as she observed, once again, the nurse tampering with the bags attached to her IV. "Alright, going to give you just a little more...It'll probably knock you out."

Lucy felt very drowsy as she clutched her new chimchar against her. "Thought you weren't giving me your chimchar."

"I'm not!" he said quickly. "I'm just letting you borrow it!"

"You're not getting it back," she smiled in the drug-like bliss.

"Meanie," he grumbled halfheartedly.

"It smells..." her eyes fluttered shut.

"Ehh?"

"It smells...like you...I think."

"What do I smell like?" his voice held urgent uncertainty.

"Like warmth..."

"_Warmth_" he repeated. "What does _warmth_ even smell like?!"

The phone was pulled out of her grasp, "Natsu," she could hear her father say. "Time for Lucy to rest."

"WAIT!" she could hear the boy yell. "WHAT DOES SHE MEAN I SMELL LIKE _WARMTH?_ IS THAT A GOOD THING!?"

"Bye, Natsu." She could hear a _beep_ as her father hung up.

****XOXOX****

Lucy awoke again, feeling very uncomfortable. Her back ached and craved for her to turn over onto her side—her right side in particular, but she knew very well how awful that idea would be.

She let a frustrated huffing sound, punching her right fist against the forsaken bed.

And besides being uncomfortable, she was confused, unsure of what time it was or what day, but from the window that the bed rested in front of, she could tell it was night time from the way the moonlight painted the sky a nice passionate shade of blue.

She could see her dad snoozing away on a chair next to her. "Dad?" her voice croaked.

He didn't wake.

She sat up a bit and said, "Dad!" with a little more force that it made her throat sore, but it seemed to do the trick.

"What?!" he bolted upwards. "Lucy?! What's wrong?"

"Nothing," she painfully swallowed. "How long have I been in here?"

"We are going into the second day," he informed her, staring at the watch on his left wrist. "One a.m."

"_Second day?_" She smacked her head back against her pillow. "When am I allowed to go home?"

"They aren't sure yet," he said. "But from the looks of it, you might be here for the rest of the week."

"_The rest of the__week_?!" she gapped at him. "Don't you usually stay in the hospital for only a day after getting an appendectomy?"

"Well yes," he nodded with consideration, "but, of course, there were complications with yours."

"Complications?"

"You probably don't realize it with all the medication, but you have a terrible fever, but it's going down, don't worry. And also, you have salmonella—which most likely caused your appendicitis. Probably got it from that retched lizard of yours."

"What?!" her eyes mirrored the full moon. "But I always wash myself after playing with him—OH!" she buried her face into her hands. She remembered now, falling asleep with Plue still on her bed. "I don't believe this..."

"So now you've been condemned to bed rest for the rest of week."

"Great," she exhaled loudly. She watched as her father rubbed his back before slumping back in his seat. _That must

be worse than this damn bed,_"You can go home if you'd like."

"Lucy, you know I can't leave you—"

"Please go home," she said softly. "I just want to be alone and not like anything's going to happen to me...And you look exhausted and that chair sure as hell doesn't look comfortable."

"I—"

"Go!"

"Alright," he nodded. "If that's what you want...Just know I love you, my lovely daughter."

"Yeah, yeah, I know," she rolled her eyes. "Bye."

Her father chuckled, "Bye."

After he left, Lucy let out a loud cry of frustration, tugging at her tangled mess of hair, "WHYYYYYY?!"

"Everything okay?" a male nurse had entered.

"Wha—yeah," she blushed, quickly smoothing out her hair, "I'm fine."

"Alright," he smiled. "If you don't mind, I'm just going to do a little checkup—it's just our hourly procedure—I've been told that you've been asleep every time we've done it."

"Okay."

That 'little checkup' was an understatement. He checked her temperature, her blood, and her blood pressure and also readjusted her IVs, which hurt because he tampered with the needle part in her arm. "Oh, by the way, your fiancé keeps calling. He's on hold right now. Would you like to talk to him?"

"Heh?" she blinked. What was this about a fiancé? She vaguely remembered the female nurse from earlier saying the same thing. _So weird._

"Here," he handed her a bulky phone. "The pain killers will kick in soon so you might not have much time to talk, but..." he shrugged before exiting the room.

"Uhh hello?" she said, unsure of who to expect.

"Lucy?"

"Natsu?!" she exclaimed, sitting up.

"Bout time you woke up again..." he grumbled. "How are you doin'?"

"Fine, I guess. Found out I might have to stay here for the rest of the week."

"Damnn," he sighed. "That sucks."

"Tell me about it," she sighed back, fiddling with her new chimchar with her free hand. "So tell me, what's this about you being my fiancé?" she smirked.

"Well—"

"And I could have sworn you called yourself my _boyfriend_ when you were calling for help."

"Yeah because—"

"With the way things seem to be escalating, does that mean today's the wedding?"

"Of course," he answered. "Got my tux ready—but do I really have to wear one? They're so stiff!"

"Ahh well you don't have to worry about that."

"Eh? Why not?"

"Call me old fashion, but I think I'd like to _meet_ my fiancé first before I _marry_ him."

"Seriously, Lucy?" he groaned. "C'mon? Why didn't you tell me sooner? Now I gotta call off the whole damn thing and they'll never gimme my money back...And not to mention I already booked our honeymoon. What a waste..."

"I'm sorry!" she playfully apologized.

"Yeah, well I don't think this going to work out," she could practically hear the smirk in his voice. "Can't be with so meone so flaky."

"Fine by me," she bit back a giggle, knowing very well how badly it would hurt if she let it out. "Now I get to be with my true love, _Gray_."

"Lucy!" Natsu chided, "Gray's my icy bastard. Stay away!"

She let out a sputtering noise, "I can't believe you actually said that!"

"Ehhh well," he chuckled. "I've been thinking, Gratsu has a special ring to it, don't you think?"

"If you make me laugh—I swear I'm going to kill—"

"Much better than _Graylu_," Natsu continued. "Uckk just sounds nasty like a nasty disease." And in a bad accent he said, " _What's the diagnosis, doc?"_ And in a different, terrible accent, he said, " _You have Graylu's Disease."_ And in the first accent again, he wailed, " _ANYTHING BUT THAT!"_

And Lucy lost it.

The seal on her laughter finally ripped open as she bellowed over.

And pain surged all over.

"Oh my God!" she laughed, clenching an arm over her throbbing abdomen. "IT HURTS SO MUCH!"

"Your laughs seem to beg to differ," he commented.

"I HATE...YOU!" tears streamed as she continued cackling.

"Anyway," he said, "my point is _Graylu_ sounds disgusting, buttttt _Nalu_ , on the other hand," that immediately sobered her up, "sounds awesome."

"You're ridiculous," she blushed. What was he getting at?

"Am not!" he said indignantly. "Say, did you ever see the other thing that came with the chimchar?"

"Other thing?"

"There was something else in the box I sent you," he sounded nervous.

"No," she eagerly searched around for the box. It was right on her bedside table. She reached inside and felt something thick and papery. "A book?" she pulled it out and saw that it was, in fact, a book and stared at the cover. Fairy Tail, it read—the first volume. "I already own the first—" She trailed off noticing that instead of Haru and Elie on the cover, it was Natsu and Lucy, "EH?" And instead of Happy as a cat, Happy was a salamander.

She quickly flipped it open and gasped. "How did you...?" And instead of Elie in the first scene, it was Lucy and instead of Elie's lines for Lucy, they were replaced with things Lucy was more inclined to say. AND it was in color—

"I've been practicing doujins," he explained. "With all the colorings I do, kinda made me wanna try drawing instead and I think the colorings actually helped with my drawing. Still not the best..."

"I don't even know what to say," she breathed, surprised to find that the doujin, just like the Pokemon plush, had Natsu's warm scent.

"It's okay if you don't like it," he said, sounding uncaring. "I just made it for practice purposes really. And it's sorta the apology gift I was workin' on for ya when I stole your cleaned scans without asking. And—"

"I love it," she blurted out, effectively cutting him off.

He didn't answer, but Lucy was sure he was grinning from ear-to-ear.

She continued gawking at the manga. It was amazing. He got her just right—even with her hairstyle and length—and he made her beautiful. Her eyes trailed over manga Lucy's assets and her right eye twitched. "My boobs aren't that big, you know!"

"Really?" he sounded unconvinced. "I thought that was my most accurate part of you."

Her face flamed up, "NATSU!" but she would be lying if it didn't thrill her in the slightest to know that Natsu checked her out.

"GAHH MY EAR!" he yelped. "You're gonna wake up the entire hospital that voice!"

"Dummy," she scoffed as her face continued to burn and suddenly the world began to waver. "Think the meds are starting to affect me."

"Does this mean you're going to sleep again?" he groaned.

"Probably," her speech slurred as she placed the doujin on the bedside desk. She would check out it again when she woke up.

"Annoying," he muttered. "I haven't slept at all, thanks to you."

"Then sleeeep nowww," she murmured as her eyes slowly drifted shut.

"How am I supposed to?" he said more to himself. "Night, Lucy."

Even through her clouded mind, her heart was erratic as she thought over everything.

He hasn't slept because of me?

And he gave me his chimchar?

And he made me a doujin with us as the main characters?

And not to mention all the other stuff he had done and said to her prior to her hospitalization...

She felt so much...she thought her heart was going to burst...Maybe it was the drugs influencing her, but Lucy knew she had to do or say _something_ —something that will sum up everything she was feeling...

After deeply inhaling Natsu's lingering scent on the plush for encouragement, she said, "I like you, Natsuu..." her voice faintly slurred.

"I like you too, weirdo," he chuckled.

"Nooo," she argued, realizing he hadn't properly grasped her meaning, "I _like-like_ you."

She could just barely make out his sharp intake of breath. "I like-like you too..."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Okay so nearly all of you guessed Lucy had an appendicitis and the rest of you thought she was having extreme period cramps :D****

****Anyway, AFTER 46 CHAPTERS I FINALLY GAVE YOU A CONFESSION!****

****LET'S REJOICE!****

****Gonna save the omake for the next chapter because I want this chapter by itself :)****

****Enjoy your day, cuties!****

47. Chapter 47 and Omake

****I seriously cannot thank you all so much for reading and loving my story! You have no idea how much it means to me, and I really am so thankful and so grateful to have such lovely readers!****

****Just making you guys happy is worth it :)****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Lucy swore the medication had worn off because she hadn't felt _this_ alert all day or night. Her body immediately jolted upwards, causing her to wince. She did her best to only mouth a curse word as opposed to voicing one.

Did he really say it back?

I like-like you too.

Her heart fluttered.

He likes me.

Silence hung between them. Was he waiting for her to say something? Was she _supposed_ to say something?

"So...uhhh..." her eyes frantically searched around the dim-lit hospital room, desperate for something clever to come to mind. "I guess we were diagnosed with NaLu's Disease?"

"Pshh NaLu ain't a _disease_ , you weirdo," Natsu scoffed. "Only _GrayLu_ is."

"Then what's NaLu?"

"NaLu is NaLu," he said with ease, as though that was the perfect explanation and maybe it was.

The way Lucy's body reacted to his comment, surprised her. She felt this giddy, ecstatic surge of happiness that made her body tingle and tremor, made her palms feel sweaty and even her armpits felt damp. It wasn't a hot sweat; it was cold and full of nerves.

"NaLu is NaLu, huh?" she repeated, closing her eyes, to revel in the moment.

"Yupp."

Her mind was soaring with questions, but the biggest one of all was _how long_? How long had he liked her? But to voice that question would risk the possibility of being asked it back, so she restrained from asking.

"Stay up with me," her voice was nothing short of a whisper.

"You're staying up?" his voice shook with a mix of surprise and something else.

"I don't think it's possible for me to sleep..." she placed a hand against her rapidly thumping heart.

"Likewise," his voice was throaty.

A breath of relief escaped her lips, "I—"

"I eat a lot," he blurted out.

"What?" her eyes popped open. _Where did that come from?_

"Once I ate an entire buffet all by myself."

"You what?!" she gasped. Was that even possible?

"I'm always hungry so..." he trailed off.

He wasn't kidding.

Deciding to be just as random as he, she announced, "I hate greasy foods."

"I put hot sauce on everything."

"I don't use hot sauce—like ever."

"That time I set my arm on fire wasn't the first time I've done it."

"I once got a hairbrush so badly tangled in my hair that I had to cut it out—which is why I have a tiny random ponytail in my hair—to hide my stupidity."

"I have terrible motion sickness—almost as bad as Haru's."

"I love astronomy."

"I love fighting."

"I wanna be an author."

"I wanna be a mangaka."

It was as though they were testing each other out; having the conversations they never actually had, sharing information they've never once told anyone. Trying to gauge the other's reaction, but neither of them were really reacting.

"I wrote a smutty fanfic once!" The room suddenly felt a thousand degrees hotter as her eyes bugged out of her skull. Why did she just admit that? If her gut didn't hurt so much, she would have flipped herself over to scream into the uncomfortable hospital pillow.

"YOU WHAT?!" he sounded surprised—as though she had just admitted to writing smut—oh right, she did. "I wanna read it!"

"NO WAY!" she cried, flailing her arm that was still attached to the IVs.

"Oiii, you're no fun," he grumbled, sounding crestfallen. "I never read a fanfic before until yours."

"I—Wait! Really?" she gaped, looking straight at the weird, alien-looking medical machine in front of her, which had tubes coming out of it. She did not want to know what that was used for...

"I don't like reading 'em," he stated, "but yours interested me."

Despite the pain, her stomach clenched.

"Why did mine interest you?" she asked, feeling very puzzled. "They were pretty generic topics, to be honest." Like first dates, first kisses—just stuff of that sorts.

"Dunno," he said nonchalantly. "Maybe it's you that interested me."

Her heart rate monitor beeped. She glanced upwards at it to see it glowing in the red zone. Calm down, she willed herself, blushing furiously as she watched it fade back into the green zone.

"Anyways, I used to make manga edits specifically of Haru and Elie on purpose, just to catch your attention."

"WHAT?!" she stupidly pulled the phone away from her ear to gape at it. She tried to remember back in the day where she idolized him—before she knew what a dork he was. He did make an awful lot of Haru x Elie edits, but she never did think anything of it; it just made her happy to know he shipped Haru and Elie as well.

She quickly placed the phone back against her ear, "Wh-Why were you trying to get my attention?"

"Beecaauseee," he dragged, "you followed _everyone_ in the fandom _except for me_! INCLUDING THAT STUPID STRIPPER!"

"How would you possibly know who I followed?" she smirked, liking the fact that he sounded jealous.

"I checked your blog out a lot," he disgruntled. "Saw who you reblogged stuff from."

She licked her cheeky-grinning lips, "You mean _stalked_."

"_Checked_," he growled. "And 'sides, I saw you and Droopy Eyes replying to each other once since I was already following him."

"But you couldn't follow me," she said, remembering the time he admitted that he and Gray have a competition going on to see who could gain the most followers.

"Yup," he sighed. "Can't follow anyone first."

"But you broke that rule," her body trembled so much. The anxiety and excitement was getting to be too much for her to handle.

"Yup!"

"I still don't get why you would do all this just to get my attention?" she questioned and suddenly her happy buzz vanished. What did she do to deserve his attention? With a sullen voice, she said, "I'm not worth it."

"Cuz," he sounded cheery, "I wanted to be your friend!" And then his voice went surprisingly deep and serious, "And I've told you before, _you're worth it_."

"No," she sulked, not letting his tender voice persuade her otherwise, "I'm not."

"Quit sayin' that," he scolded.

"It's not like I contribute much to the fandom for you to even _want_ my attention..."

"Whatcha talkin' 'bout, weirdo? You're awesome at cleaning up the manga scans and you make awesome posts, like that one where you defended Haru—I _had_ to follow you after that."

Her breath caught.

That felt centuries ago.

Her post, defending Haru about him being overpowered...The one that made him follow her? "I forgot about that post," she whispered to herself.

"Well I didn't," he said. "It's what made me know that we would be such great friends!"

Suddenly things didn't seem fair. He had admitted so much to her, so to make things even, she said, "I wanted to follow you for the longest time." She could remember way back when, before they had even video chatted, that she had told him she had been _too_ _nervous_ to follow him. Would Natsu remember?

"WHATTT?!" he exclaimed. "WAIT! I REMEMBER YOU SAYING YOU WERE TOO NERVOUS TO FOLLOW ME!" _He remembered._ A touching warmth spread throughout her body, as a soft smile took over her face. "LA ME EXCUSE TO NOT FOLLOW ME! AND I RISKED SO MUCH FOR YOU! I MEAN IF ICY PANTS EVER FINDS OUT _I FOLLOWED YOU FIRST_, I AUTOMATICALLY LOSE!"

A coy smile appeared on her lips, "I could always unfollow you and then re-follow you, if you'd like."

"NO!" he said too quickly.

She giggled, causing that gut-wrenching pain that made her flinch, "Gahh!".

"Don't laugh, stupid!" he chided.

"I thought you liked my laugh," she managed to tease through her clenched teeth.

"LUCCCYYYY!" he moaned. "DON'T GO SAYIN' WEIRDD STUFFF!"

"But you've admitted to liking my laugh before!" she uttered.

"ARGGG!" he wailed. "I DOOOO! BUT NOW IT MAKES ME FEEL BAD 'CUZ YOU'RE IN PAINNN!"

Her cheeks flamed, "Dummy."

"You're the dummy," he muttered.

A yawn escaped her lips.

"You're tired?!" he exclaimed with disbelief.

"Mmm...yeah," she yawned again. She went to curl onto her side, but a loud yelp escaped her lips.

"LUCY?!"

"IT HURTS SO MUCHH!" she bit down tightly on her lip, her eyes squeezed shut and her hand curled tightly around the phone. Not only did she upset her stomach, but the IVs in her arm had cut into her more.

She waited for the pain to cease, but it didn't; it only grew worse.

Tears started to leak.

The pain was too much.

She needed—

"So the other day," Natsu said lazily, "I was workin' on my math homework, but then I left 'cuz I got hungry—I'm always hungry—and when I came back, MY MATH HOMEWORK WAS _DRENCHED_! AND YOU KNOW WHAT I SEE?! _HAPPY_, SITTING PROUDLY ON TOP OF MY TEXTBOOK, DRENCHING THAT AS WELL!"

A small smile covered her thinned lips.

"MY MATH HOMEWORK WAS RUINED! AND THE TEXTBOOK INK SMUDGED SO I COULDN'T REDO IT!" he continued. "AND MY TEACHER WOULDN'T BELIEVE MY EXCUSE, 'CUZ APPARENTLY IT SOUNDS FAKE THAT A SALAMANDER RUINED MY HOMEWORK!"

A giggle erupted and it shockingly didn't cause her anymore pain.

"AND THE WORST PART OF IT ALL," he yelled with fury, "MY TEACHER CALLED HAPPY A _LIZARD! You expect me to believe a lizard ruined your homework?_' _ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! WHY IS EVERYONE SO T

HICK HEADED?! And then I got detention for callin' him a _dumb shit_."

Lucy continued her laughs as Natsu continued his tales telling her all about his school escapades, like how he would purposely set his chemistry labs on fire or how he cheated on his history test.

Lucy knew exactly what he was doing; he was distracting her from the pain.

And it was working.

****XOXOX****

Natsu had eventually fallen asleep on _her_ for once. She smiled at the thought and lightly touched a hand to her permanently rapid-beating heart.

She pulled out her _Fairy Tail_, _Natsu_ had made for her. She hugged it to her chest, wafting in the sweet scent of embers. How did she end up so lucky?

She opened it up and began to read—or _ogle_ was more like it.

The shading of her blonde hair, the shine in her chocolatey eyes...It was astounding. And the guild scene— _That_ blew Lucy's mind.

He had everyone from not only their squad, but from _Tumblr_ drawn into it.

Gray—in only boxers, with his brilliant dark hair and dark blue eyes.

Cana—chugging her beer with her coffee-colored hair in long tendrils.

Levy—her adorably short, blue hair and petite features was in the background.

Loke—with an orange mane, flirting with Lucy.

He included Erza even though she suspected Erza's character wasn't supposed to be in that scene and he even included Laxus, Freed, Evergreen, and Bickslow—he had them labeled, which was a good thing because Lucy had no idea what they looked like.

And just the fact that Happy was a _flying salamander_ slayed her.

Natsu... Her chest throbbed. Was it bad she was starting to think _like_ was an understatement?

You haven't even met him yet, stupid! She chastised herself as she flipped to the last page.

And right there on the back cover was a tiny message.

" _Thank you, Lucy." _

"No, Natsu," she whispered. " _Thank you" _

"Lucy!" her father walked into her room, startling her. He was carrying a backpack—Lucy's backpack, which had the _Fairy Tail_ emblem glossed on the front. "I was so worried! They didn't tell me you changed rooms!"

"Sorry," she smiled sheepishly. They had moved her while she asleep, which was kind of freaky for her to wake up in a foreign room. It was nicer though, had a TV and a nice window view of the hospital's luscious gardens. The walls were even painted a friendly green that gave off a safe, calming feel. "I would have told you, but I don't have a pho

ne."

"Ah!" his sullen face brightened. "Got the perfect fix to that." He dug his hand into the bag and pulled out her cellphone.

"My phone!" she grinned, trying to sit up a bit, but pain swelled in her lower abdomen.

"Here," her dad placed the phone on her bedside desk. "Anndd I also brought your laptop." He pulled that out of her bag as well and placed it on the food tray that hovered over her hospital bed.

"You're the best!" her smile grew tenfold as she quickly turned it on. The thought of talking to Natsu on it made her heart go erratic.

"Well how else are you gonna keep in touch with Natsu since he can't come down to visit because he lives in _Magnolia_."

"Eh?" shock racked through her body as she turned to meet her father's disapproving gaze.

"I know a Magnolia area code when I see one," he stated firmly.

* * *

****Shoutout to tumblr user** _ **: catching-clouds** _ **for drawing me lovely fan art!****

****Missyplatina . tumblr post/126939054215/catchingclouds-quick-sketch-inspired-by****

****And seriously, thank you so much to all those who have drawn fan art for this story because I never dreamed that anyone would** _ **ever** _ **draw me fan art and it literally makes me just squeal like crazy just thinking about this—so thank you!****

* * *

_ **Omake #2 Gruvia _**

Gray couldn't believe he was _actually_ going through with this. It was Lucy's fault really, for her telling him to pick _her_. Or maybe it was Natsu's fault for making him lose his one and only model from school by calling him a pervert...

"They're made for each other," he sighed, running one hand through his raven locks while the other clicked the video icon on _Skype_.

She picked up almost instantly as Gray impatiently waited for the screen to load.

And when it did, his droopy eyes widened.

A frail-looking girl with striking blue eyes and with striking blue hair to match, appeared on the screen.

She had a cute black, snow hat on and was wearing a black button up coat to match, which seemed to accent her paleness.

Her face had a slight blush as she blatantly gaped at him.

Gray swallowed.

This was certainly _not_ what he had been expecting. He was expecting someone who was well... _ugly_ ...But this girl was surprisingly _okay-looking_.

But Gray couldn't have cared less as he said a casual, "Hey, Juvia."

"Gray-sama!" she swooned, placing her delicate hands on her cheeks. He could have sworn he saw hearts in her eyes.

He sweated dropped.

"Juvia is so happy Gray-sama asked her to model!" she nearly jumped up and down with joy.

"Oi, Oi," Gray raised a hand up. "Calm down. It ain't a big deal."

"It's a very big deal!" she gushed.

Gray shook his head with disdain. "Just sit down and stay still."

"Okay, Gray-sama!"

He pulled out all his tools, getting ready to chisel his fresh chunk of ice. He tugged off his shirt and suddenly, "S-So forward!"

"Eh?" he turned to the screen to see a crimson-faced girl gawking at him. "I always do this. Helps me work better."

"He's so dedicated!" she cooed.

"Not really..." he muttered, slipping on his gloves.

"Juvia should strip too, right?"

Not really paying attention, Gray said, "Right."

"Things are speeding up faster than Juvia ever expected!"

"Heh?" he looked up to see Juvia unbuttoning her coat. His eyes shot out of his head. "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

"Juvia is stripping like Gray-sama!"

"I CAN SEE THAT!" he yelled. "BUT WHY?!"

"Gray-sama agreed Juvia should strip too—"

"DOESN'T MATTER WHAT GRAY-SAMA SAID!" he cried. "JUST DON'T!"

"But Juvia—"

"NO!"

"Juvia thinks—"

"DON'T YOU DARE UNBUTTON ANOTHER BUTTON!"

Gray let out a sigh of relief as Juvia seemed to finally listen. "Just stay still."

"Okay!"

And he began his work.

It wasn't so bad after that rocky start. Juvia stayed silent and gave Gray this look that seemed to make his skin warm up—which was pretty odd considering he was working with ice.

"Juvia was wondering..." she said. "Does Gray-sama really have a thing for Love Rival?"

"Who's _Love Rival_?" he questioned, slamming his hammer into the ice.

"Natsu-san."

"WHAT?!" And Gray's hammer hit into the ice a little too hard... "SHIT!"

"So it's true?!" her eyes grew worrisome.

"What—NO!" his face burned brighter than any flame Natsu could cook up.

"But Juvia's seen posts about it," she said. "Even Natsu-san admitted his feelings on his blog."

"THOSE ARE JUST JOKES! MIRA MAKES THAT STUFF ALL UP AND NATSU WAS DARED TO DO THAT!"

"So Natsu-san isn't a love rival?"

"NO!" Gray snapped. "And besides, how could he be? His blog name is literally _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_."

"_Love Rival_!" Juvia's eyes glowed red.

Gray gulped, "Hey, now!" he raised his hands up. "Lucy ain't a love rival either."

"She's not?!" her face brightened up like she had just been told she won the lottery.

"No," Gray shook his head. "She's well... _HopelesslyInLoveWithNatsu_."

"Love Rivals love each other?!"

"Yes" he nodded.

"AHH!" Juvia clapped her hands together. "JUVIA IS SO HAPPY!"

Gray chuckled. She was well...as Natsu would put it... _Kinda cute._ "Sit still!"

"Right!"

He continued sculpting her on the ice and they actually started to talk about _Fairy Tail_.

Juvia went on and on about how much she loves Musica and Reina together and how she's happy with the slow and steady progression of their relationship. She went on about character development and it felt strange to Gray to see how similar their thoughts are. And it was certainly strange to be chatting so casually with the girl he would make fun of.

Guilt instantly hit him like his hammer hitting the ice.

"And Juvia was crushed during that scene where Reina had to kill Musica's—"

"Juvia," he quietly interrupted.

"Eh?" she blinked.

"I'm glad I picked you to model."

"Juvia is glad too!" she beamed, her blue eyes glistening like the ice itself. "Juvia is—GRAY-SAMA, YOU ARE SO DARING!"

"Huh?" he looked at her to see her face glowing red and her eyes _definitely_ had hearts in them. Feeling a slight breeze, he glanced downwards. "NOT AGAIN!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hope you all liked the chapter and the omake! It took me a while to write all this, I'm sorry!****

****Anyway, thanks for reading!****

****For those interested, I wrote a oneshot called** _**Grocery Madness** _**!****

****Anyway, hope you're all doing okay!****

48. Chapter 48

****So I've been revising this story because I realized what utter crap it is and I apologize for all of you who have read the gross chapters from the beginning!****

****Even though I'm far from being a decent writer, I hope I can continue to make this story better!****

****Anyway, long chapter today—which probably means tons of mistakes, so I apologize in advance!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"I know a Magnolia area code when I see one."

Lucy looked and felt absolutely horrified as her body trembled with a sense of foreboding. She tried to think of something to say, but all she felt was immense pressure—and she _always_ chokes under pressure.

"I want the truth," his features were still etched in a way that made her heart-clench.

She dropped her gaze, unable to stare at the stony face any longer, "I...Natsu...he..."

"And none of that 'cooking class' nonsense you spouted that one other time," he said, remembering back to when he had first walked in on Lucy's voice chat with her squad.

There had to be some lie she could come up with, right? Something believable—"He moved."

"Moved?"

"Ye-Yeah," she peered up through her thick lashes to gauge his expression. With his jaw locked and his chin up, he seemed rather skeptical. "A few months back. That's why we never hang out."

His face relaxed, "Oh why didn't you say so! Though it makes me wonder why he told me he's from Magnolia and that you two actually never met..." He scratched his chin.

"EH?!" her eyes bulged. "He told you that?!" Why would Natsu ever tell her father that they never met? _That idiot!_ A sickening sensation trickled over her.

"Nope," Jude smirked. " _You_ just did; falling for my bluff. Besides, I think I can tell when my own daughter is lying to me."

She almost slapped herself for being so stupid, _GAH I'M ACTUALLY THE IDIOT!_ "Dad—" she sputtered in a frenzy. She had to figure out how to fix this, but it seemed like she was just digging a bigger grave for herself.

"You met him off the internet, didn't you?" the look on his face told her that he wasn't going to believe anything except for the answer _yes._

Was there even a point to continue lying at this stage? Taking a gulp, she admitted, "Yes."

" _Lucy,_ " he threw his head back, running his hands through his balding hair. " _Why_?"

Her chest felt as though a heavy weight was sitting on it, making it harder to breathe—harder to speak, "I—"

"I _know_ I taught you better than that!" his disapproving tone was enough to make her eyes water. "I don't understand. Why would you befriend a stranger on the internet?! Do you know what kind of perverts are out there?!"

"Yes, but—"

"And that _Natsu boy_ ," he said with venom. "Probably some perverted 45-year-old man, trying to solicit sex from _my_ daughter!"

Lucy choked. He couldn't be serious. "Dad, you've _seen him!_ Clearly he's not a 45-year-old pervert!"

"Fine a 16—!"

"17," she corrected.

"—doesn't matter! He's still a pervert!"

"How is he a pervert?!" she exclaimed with higher-pitched voice. Besides occasionally checking out her boobs and that one time he took his shirt off, Natsu hardly does or says anything perverted.

As though he didn't hear her, he continued, "Haven't I made you watch enough _Catfish_?" _Catfish_ is the TV show that uncovers fake internet relationships.

"He's not catfishing me!" she stated firmly. "I mean we video chat all the time! And he's meeting up with almost everyone in the group chat for Comic Con, so clearly he's who he says he is!"

"Wait!" he went stiff as board with his face resembled the coloring of a corpse. "Does this mean _everyone_ in that group chat is _also_ from the internet?"

"Yes?" she cringed, squinting her eyes, peering nervously at her father out of fear of his impending reaction.

"So that means...that _boy!_" his hands were now in fists and his eyes were blazing.

"What did Natsu do now?" she asked against her will.

"Not _Natsu_," he gritted.

Her brows pulled inwards, "Heh?" _Who is he talking about_?

"GRAY!" he bellowed. "THAT 45-YEAR-OLD PERVERT! CLAIMING HE HAS A _STRIPPING HABIT_ JUST SO HE COULD BE NAKED AROUND MY DAUGHTER! LUCY, I BAN YOU FROM THE INTERNET!"

Damn it, Gray! She smacked her forehead in a rather pitiful manner and then cried out, "DAD! YOU'VE _SEEN_ _GRAY'S_ _BARE_ CHEST! TELL ME IN WHAT WORLD, DOES A 45-YEAR-OLD LOOK LIKE _THAT_?!"

"WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME IN WHAT WORLD, DOES SOMEONE ACTUALLY HAVE A STRIPPING HABIT?!"

"_APPARENTLY_ _THIS ONE!_" she threw her hands up despite the tug on the IVs. Were they seriously arguing over _Gray_?

"THAT BOY NEEDS HELP!"

"I KNOW!"

"Lucy, for your own good, I have to forbid you from using any internet. It's full of freaks and perverse people. _Nothing good ever comes out of it_!"

Anger struck like lightening. "Nothing good?!" she reiterated. "_Nothing good?_"

"Lucy..." his coffee colored eyes widened, shocked by the rage radiating off of her.

"Are you kidding me?" she seethed, clenching her hands, "If it weren't for _Natsu_ —my _internet friend_ —I could have _died_. I was in so much pain, Dad, that I _couldn't_ even call for help_!"

"Lucy—"

"_He saved my life_ so say what you want about people on the internet, but news flash, _I'm one of those people!_"
A trail of glistening water dribbled off her chin, dotting the white sheets on her bed.

"So I guess that makes me a 45-year-old pervert too."

More tears spilled.

His expression softened as he walked over and sat gently down next to her, jostling the bed in the process. "I'm sorry . I may have... _overreacted_ , just a smidge."

"Just a smidge?" she glowered through her watery eyes.

"Okay, okay, more than a smidge," he admitted with a chuckle, rubbing a soothing hand on her back. "It's just that y

ou're my little girl—my pride and joy—and as your father, I worry easily and constantly. And especially with this—t his _internet_ world that I know very little about. It's taboo for me, but I have to trust you, right?"

She nodded, not trusting her voice.

"So if you say Natsu is not a pervert, I'll believe you. Gray on the other hand..."

"Gray doesn't matter," she cut in and then a blush immediately streaked her cheeks.

"But _Natsu_ does?" he raised a brow with a sense of amusement written on his face.

"Don't you have work or something?" she groaned into her palms.

Her father eventually left to Lucy's relief. Though he did order the nurse to put on the channel that airs _Catfish,_ to her chagrin. But that didn't matter for that she had her laptop and free Wi-Fi so she was able to watch anime or read manga.

****XOXOX****

Mornings at the hospital sucked. Breakfast was eggs—or were _supposed to be_ eggs, but in reality, they were yello w mush that tasted _nothing_ like the sort.

She pushed the plate aside. She didn't have much of an appetite anyway.

Going to the bathroom sucked because she needed to be escorted and not only that, but it hurt like hell to get off the bed since her stomach muscles ached. And to get on and off the toilet was a whole different story...

She picked up her chimchar and tenderly hugged it to her chest, wondering if Natsu would call the hospital soon. Jus t thinking about talking to him made her insides feel all fluttery with butterflies. And that's when she realized she wo uldn't know _what_ to say to the boy.

Was she supposed to act casual?

Was she supposed to act all lovey dovey?

Hell, he never even asked her out...So was she supposed to assume they were a thing or was she supposed to wait fo r him to actually ask?

"UGHHHH," she groaned. "What am I supposed to do?"

With a bated breath, she went on _Tumblr_. She had about 30 messages, almost all asking if she was okay, as they h ave noticed that she hadn't been on in about 4 days.

She didn't answer them because well...she still felt kind of shitty. The fever from the salmonella was still going stro ng, making her head spin a bit.

As she scrolled down her dashboard, her eyes landed on a stunning edit of the Requip Mage, who Erza so greatly ad mired. With the armor looking as though it were really shining and her gorgeous, long hair whipping around, it was amazing.

And her heart tumbled around as she read who the poster was—even though she already knew; _Dragonslayer_ and his caption said it was a request for _RequipMageTitania_.

Just as she was about to _like_ it, her eyes flew back to the URL. _Dragonslayer?_ He changed his URL from _Hop

lesslyInLoveWithLucy_ back to _Dragonslayer_? When did he do that? It had to have been while she was in the hospital...

She wouldn't let that bother her.

Nope.

...

"Why did he change it now!?" she wailed, flinging her head back against the standardized hospital pillow. "I mean what a time to do it...?"

"You got your laptop?" a message appeared on her _Skype_.

Her heart nearly exploded as she read who the sender was. "Yeah," she typed, instantly forgetting about the URL change.

"Yosh!" he wrote. "Now we can video chat later!"

"I guess," her cheeks flushed, as she remembered how awful she looked in her reflection. So awful, that he would probably recant his confession the second he sees her.

And then he voice-called her.

Her mouth went desert-dry, not expecting the sudden call. Should she pick up? She still had no idea how she was supposed to behave around him. Everything was so new and confusing...But did that matter really? And she really wanted to hear his voice.

"Natsu?" she said timidly.

"Yo! I'm at lunch so we can talk for a bit. Sorry I didn't call this morning," he said. "Slept in late and had to rush to school." Then he playfully added, "Also figured you wouldn't be up early since you stayed up past your bedtime, ya know."

She rolled her eyes even though he managed to make her heart go crazy. "Tch, whatever."

He chuckled.

It was like music to her ears as she swooned back into her pillow, hugging her chimchar tightly. "It's a good thing you didn't call," she said, thinking how awful it would have been for him to call while her dad was yelling at her.

"Why's that?" he asked quizzically.

"My dad knows."

"Knows what?" his voice grew deeper, making her shiver.

"That I met you and everyone else online."

"Oh," his voice went back to normal. "And was he cool about it?"

"Not exactly," she winced at the memory. "He kind of called you all 45-year-old perverts."

"OI!" Natsu sounded furious. "I MET THE BASTARD LIKE A GAZILLION TIMES! HOW CAN HE CALL ME

A 45-YEAR-OLD PERVERT?!"

Lucy sweat-dropped, "Don't call my dad a bastard."

"THE ONLY ONE WHO'S THE PERVERT, IS THAT STUPID GUY, GRAY!"

"Wellllll, now that you mentioned it," she dragged with a smirk, "my dad _was_ nearly positive Gray was a 45-year-old pervert."

"YES!" he exclaimed. "I knew I liked your dad for some reason!"

"But I was like _In what world does a 45-year-old look like that?_ "

"Heh?"

"What? I mean my dad saw Gray shirtless when I was video chatting him once. He could clearly see Gray's really toned body. Like those abs, for instance—and well—like I said, what 45-year-old looks like that?"

"Lucy..."

"Yeah?"

"SHUUT UPPP!"

"Eep!" she squeaked, holding her chimchar up as though it would protect her. Maybe it wasn't the best idea to talk about another guy's body to the boy she's sort of dating. "Anyway," she coughed, "my dad banned me from the internet after that."

"WHAT?!" he roared. "WAS HE SERIOUS?!"

"He was," she nodded. "But I got him to calm down and we talked about all this..."

"Oh gooddd," he exhaled.

She giggled, ignoring the twinge of pain in her lower abdomen, "Would you have been upset if he actually banned me?"

"Kinda," he grunted under his breath. "Anyway, I have to go, lunch is almost over and I need to find Gray."

"Oh," she blinked. "What for?"

"My fist wants to have a little chat with him," he sounded elated.

"Have fun!" she laughed and then coyly, chewing her bottom lip, she said, "Oh and Natsu, you don't have the body of a 45-year-old either."

She could hear him audibly gulp, "I don't?"

"Nah," she smoothed out her hospital gown. "More like a 70-year-old."

"LUCY!"

And then she hung up.

****XOXOX****

Instead of watching anime, like she had planned, Lucy found herself writing a oneshot. A tragedy to be exact. She had never written one before and being in the hospital and all, she suddenly felt inspired.

The nurse who was taking care of her even offered to help, by showing her medical equipment and explaining the use for everything.

Sure Lucy had some knowledge about how hospitals work for that she spent a great deal of time at one back when her mother was sick. But it wasn't like she actually paid attention to what everything was used for. So it was fascinating to have a firsthand lesson and it really added a sense of realism to her story.

It was about Haru, a male nurse, who falls for one of the patients he had been assigned to, who of course, was Elie and who of course, dies at the end because that's what makes it a tragedy.

The best part of it all, was that Lucy found herself crying during the process of writing. She always felt that if the author doesn't feel the emotion for the scene he or she is writing, then the scene can't be very good.

Writing the death scene was too painful for her, so she had to take a bunch of breaks—maybe it was because she wasn't exactly mentally stable to write this stuff, especially since she kept flashing back to her mother...

God, she hated hospitals.

But at least her story entertained her for the entire day, up and until Natsu asked to video chat, around 4 p.m.

She accepted his call with tingles running all around her body. It was her first time seeing him since the confession. Her heart rate increased by threefold as she waited for the screen to finally load.

Natsu appeared, taking her breath away; his cherry blossom hair was disheveled, flattened in the front, spiked in the back, matching his disheveled school uniform—his tie was loose, his collar was undone, and his white shirt was wrinkled.

Her heart melted. How could he possibly like me back?

She took in her own appearance in her tiny video box, looking at her own rumpled dressing gown and pale face. At least she was able to comb her hair today and since she didn't have any makeup on, she looked strikingly ordinary.

As though his own heart was hammering, Lucy watched as his hand lightly rested over his heart as he took her in. Actually, scratch that, he was just itching his chest to her chagrin.

"You don't look too well," he commented, looking nonchalant as he leaned back in his seat with his arms resting behind his head.

"I could say the same thing about you," she huffed, crossing her arms over her chest. And she wasn't lying about that because Natsu had huge dark rings under his slanted eyes.

"Oiii," he glowered, sitting up a bit as his smoky eyes darkened. "It's only 'cuz I haven't had a decent night's sleep thanks of you!"

Her cheeks reddened, "Sorry."

His eyes softened, "Ehh don't worry 'bout it." He shot her a cheeky grin. "I'm practically immune to lack of sleep."

"Really?" she said skeptically.

"Yeah, with the amount of all-nighters I pulled tryin' to finish that doujinshi... You can't even imagine how pissed I was when I thought I had almost ruined the surprise."

"Hmm?" she blinked. "When?"

"Back when you wanted to watch me edit," he said. "I accidentally had it up when we screenshared."

"OH!" she gasped, vaguely remembering his minor freak out, asking if she saw anything.

"Yeah," his face flattened. "Course that would happen."

"Well don't worry," she smiled sweetly, "I was thoroughly surprised."

"Well duh," he smirked. "You're the most oblivious person I've ever met."

"EXCUSE ME?!" she shrieked, feeling insulted. How was she oblivious?!

"Anywayyyys," he ignored her fuming glare. "What'd you do all day?"

"Oh!" she brightened, forgetting all about his insult. "I messed around with a oneshot."

"Nice!" he beamed. "You gonna post it soon?"

Lucy dropped her gaze to her lap, picking at her fingernails. "I don't know...I never wrote anything like this before ...I'm scared of how people will react."

"Want me to read it first?"

"Would you?" her head popped right back up with excitement.

"Course," he smirked, looking a bit amused that she would even question him.

"Alright," she quickly sent him the document in their chat box.

She watched as his eyes would intensely drag across the screen and then back again as she chomped down on the nail of her left index finger.

He stiffened as his face turned a nice shade of scarlet, "Lucy..." he tugged on his collar.

"I know! I know!" she gushed, "It's not something I would normally write, but I had to try it—at least once!"

"Uhh..."

"Just—Just keep reading," she pushed. "It gets better, I promise!"

"Err...alright..." She watched as his Adams apple bobbed up and down. He looked beyond uncomfortable as he kept his face and body locked in that awkwardly stiff position. "GAH," he looked away, his face turned a darker shade. "LUCY, HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THIS STUFF?!"

"I had my nurse tell me how all that stuff works!" unsure why she felt so defensive all of a sudden.

"_TELL YOU?_" he sounded incredulous. "MORE LIKE _SHOWED YOU_!"

"Well yeah?" she blushed, though she had no idea why she was blushing. "I didn't know what to write exactly so my nurse showed me stuff! He even let me touch his—!"

"LUCY!" he smacked his head down his desk. "WHY?"

"Well he asked if I wanted to so I said yeah because who wouldn't want to?"

"Ruuushhiii," his voice was muffled thanks to his face being pressed against his desk.

"Why are you reacting like this?" she felt all flustered. "Can you just finish reading it already?"

He lifted his head up, with his bangs sticking to his sweaty forehead as he deadpanned, "I _can't_." Was it her imagination or was his nose a bit bloody?

"Why not?" she pouted. Was it really that bad? "I worked super hard on it! And I even cried when I...you _know_..." she didn't want to bring up the part where Elie was told she's going to die, it was much too emotional for her.

"LUCY!" he looked absolutely horrified and faintish as he smacked his hands against his reddened ears, "I DON'T WANNA HEAR ABOUT IT!"

This was getting annoying now. "Natsu, just shut up and read it!"

"Can't you make Erza or Cana read this instead?" he begged, looking very pained.

"You know what!" she had enough of this. "I don't care who reads it! I'm gonna post it!"

"YOU CAN'T!" he wailed, with his eyes going wild.

"Why not?"

"BECAUSEEEE," he dropped his head again and reluctantly said, "I'll keep reading! Alright?"

"Alright," she raised a brow. "Didn't know you were so sensitive to this kind of stuff."

He glared at her, but didn't answer.

His head averted from the screen again with his eyes tightly closed, "So your nurse _helped you with this_?"

"That's what I said and I mean he's very _experienced_ with this stuff, obviously. So I figured why not ask him for help?"

"...I'm confused..."

"What could you possibly be confused about?!" she exclaimed, throwing her arms up.

"I thought when you said you _like-like_ me that—" he abruptly stopped talking and continued to read.

Her coppery-brown eyes rounded. Why was he bringing this up all of sudden?

"I don't get it," he grumbled. "You didn't want me to read it yesterday. So why are ya makin' me read it now?"

"What are you talking about?" she tilted her head to the side with her eyes narrowing. "I only wrote this today."

"But you said yesterday you wrote a smut fic—"

"WHATTTT?!" Lucy's heart stopped. There was no way she... She clicked on the document she had sent him—she gasped. "YOU PERVERT!"

"EHHHH?!" Natsu bugged out. " _YOU'RE_ THE _PERVERT_! MAKIN' ME READ THIS WHEN I SAID I DIDN'T WANT TO!"

"MY DAD WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU!" She grabbed her pillow from behind her head.

"OIII, AT LEAST I'M NOT _DOING_ MY NURSE!"

"I'M NOT _DOING MY NURSE_ EITHER!" she cried, burying her face into the pillow. "IT WAS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING! I JUST WROTE THAT BECAUSE I WANTED ERZA AND CANA TO LEAVE ME ALONE ABOUT WRITING SMUT!"

"Yeah well..." he looked away and muttered, "I don't think they'd bother you ever again after reading this..."

"Really?!"

"Lucy!"

"Sorry!" she yelped. " _This_ is what I originally meant to sent you. It's a tragedy fanfic."

"So you never did..." he trailed off, wiping his glistening forehead.

"No!" she flushed, hugging her pillow like it was her lifeline "I haven't even had my first kiss yet!"

"Er—same."

The silence between them was awkward, embarrassing, and just plain painful as both of them looked everywhere but at the screen.

So Lucy finally said, "You know—the group chat is voice chatting—and I haven't talked to them in like _ages_ —so yeah..."

She hung up.

Way to go, Stupid! She slapped her forehead.

So not only did she talk about Gray's body to her possible-boyfriend, she also sent him her smutty fanfic. "He's never going to ask me out at this rate..."

Taking in a couple of deep breaths, Lucy went to go join the voice chat, knowing very well they would give her the distraction she needed.

"I still can't believe it," Levy's refreshing voice rang through her speakers. "I'M GOING TO COMIC CON!"

Her jaw went agape.

What?

She had to have heard wrong, because there was no way...

"I feel so bad for Lucy," Mira murmured. "I hope she takes the news well."

"I wonder why she hasn't been on in a while," Erza mused.

"Well Natsu said everything's fine with her," Gray mentioned. "So I guess we shouldn't be too concerned."

"Bet Natsu told her about Levy going to Comic Con and now she's just too upset to go on," Cana sneered.

"You think?" Levy gasped. "Aww, I really wanted to be the one to tell her... I was afraid of this!"

"Well what do ya expect?" Gray scoffed. "Flame Brain's a total loud-mouthed idiot when it comes to her."

"_Idiots_" Natsu's voice boomed. "I _didn't_ tell her anything, but _you guys_ just did."

"EHHHH?"

"Hi, guys!" Lucy put on the best fake-cheery voice she could muster.

Everyone kept this from her?

For how long?

She sulked back down as betrayal made her blood run cold.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****AHHH I BLAME RORY (** _**Makepretendprincess)** _**FOR THE SMUT PART AS SHE'S THE ONE WHO GAVE ME THE INSPIRATION FOR IT!****

****And aadsffd you guys are such cuties!****

****So much fan art :0****

****So special thanks to tumblr users: Zereoxys, Just-another-advance-blog,** _**Honeybellchimes, Fairy-sick, Aw ubabubbub, Catchingclouds, Celestialimage14** _**for super adorable fanart!****

****You can check it all out here: missyplatina .tumblr tagged/story_art****

****And on deviantart:** _**Desiluff** _**

****desiluff. deviantart art/ WIP-Gray-and- Natsu-s-first-encounter-IRL- 556043307****

****AND THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR READING!****

49. Chapter 49

****OKAY SO FIRST OFF, THAT LAST EPISODE OF FAIRY TAIL RIPPED ME TO SHREDS!****

*****MANGA SPOILERS* AND NOW CHAPTER 450! OMG IM JUST ASDASFADSF AND IM KINDA DYIN G THAT ZEREF IS JUST CASUALLY CREATING HIS OWN CONTINENT!****

****Anyway, please enjoy!****

* * *

XOXOX

"LUCY?!" everyone screamed in sync.

"Hii" she said again, adding in nervous giggle as some kind of reflex. She could feel herself starting to perspire under her arms. It was strange because she was both hot and cold. She was also trembling a bit as though she had the chills, but _this_ was much worse. Her fingers nervously and excessively combed through her blonde locks

She slumped all the way back into her hospital bed, keeping her gaze trained on the mundane white ceiling. _Don't be bitter_, she urged to herself.

There was a moment of pure shock and silence before Mira blurted out, "Where have you been?! It's been like a week since we last talked to you!"

"I um..." she scratched the skin around her IVs. The last thing Lucy wanted to do was talk about herself and she sure as hell didn't want their sympathies either so she decided to lamely state, "I haven't been feeling well."

"Aww, Lucy!" Levy said, her voice seeping with concern.

"You okay now?" Gray inquired, sounding mildly worried.

Unable to help it, she snapped, "Of course." She hated that she felt so resentful towards her friends, but how was she supposed to act? They didn't think she could handle the truth about Comic Con and that _hurt_ like twisting a knife in her back.

"Uh sorry?" Gray choked, clearly surprised by her harsh tone.

"That's a relief," Erza spoke softly, trying to change the icy atmosphere. "We were all so worried."

Not wanting to talk about that any longer, Lucy decided to go back to the main topic of discussion. "So you're going to Comic Con, Levy?"

"Y-Yes," the girl stammered. "I uhh—"

"I'm so happy for you!" And that was the truth. She was honestly happy that Levy would get to go because why would she want her friend to be stuck at home like her? Misery may love company, but that wasn't Lucy's motto. As though all her anger and resentment had vanished, she playfully asked, "Did _Gajeel_ get you tickets?"

"Yes!" Levy squeaked. "He surprised me with them...He made me a metal sculpture and wanted to mail it to me so I gave him my address and inside the box was a ticket to Comic Con!"

Lucy's expression softened immensely, "Aww! That's so _romantic_!"

"Tch," Natsu grunted, causing Lucy to gasp. She had forgotten all about him. A coiling, foreboding sensation filtered into her. Did he tell the others about their confession?

"Now I'll finally get to meet him!" Levy gushed.

"We'll all get to meet each other!" Mira corrected. "I'm so excited!"

"Not everyone..." Gray coughed.

"Eep!" Mira squealed. "Sorry, Lucy!"

"Don't be!" Lucy smiled sadly as she tried to keep her voice upbeat. "Just make sure you guys send me lots of pics!"

"That's the plan!" Cana exclaimed.

"I've been tryin' to get you tickets," Gray said softly. "But it's like impossible. I keep begging my brother for his."

Her heart nearly broke, "Gray... That's so swee—"

"Oi!" Natsu feisty voice cut in making her stomach twist. "I've been tryin' also!"

"Who cares if you've been trying, Ash Face?!"

So Natsu probably didn't tell anyone about our confessions otherwise Gray would have understood why Natsu would try ...

"Well who cares if you've been tryin', Ice Face?!"

Her face faltered as she dropped her gaze to her lap, picking at her cuticles, "Stop trying."

"Eh?" the boys said.

"My dad knows I met you all on the internet and he kind of flipped out," she explained. "So he would never let me go at this rate."

"Mannn," Cana sighed deeply, "I thought your old man was cool."

"Well I calmed him down," Lucy amended, "but he's still a bit... _ya know_ ..."

"Sorry to hear that, Lucy," Erza said.

"Maybe you could lie to your dad," Cana suggested. "And come meet up with us _before_ we go into Comic Con. Like we could go get food or something."

Lucy frowned, the idea of going to Crocus for just an hour or two did not appeal to her very much, considering it was like an hour and a half train ride to get there. "Maybe we can do another meet up some day."

"Yes!" everyone agreed.

"So, Natsu," Mira mused. "You haven't been on much lately either. Were you with Luccyyy?"

"What?" he said dumbly.

"He's distracted," Cana laughed.

"Wonder what's on his mind..." Mira murmured.

"Can't be anything too interesting," Lucy smirked, joining in on the teasing.

"I'll agree with you on that, Lucy," Gray jabbed.

"Oiiiiii," Natsu groaned. "I'm just thinking 'bout something I read."

"Looking at manga pictures doesn't count as reading, Flame Dick." Gray cackled.

"SHUT IT, ICE DICK! THERE WEREN'T ANY PICTURES!" and then he quietly grumbled, "Wasn't even a manga."

"So what did you read, Natsu?" Levy inquired.

Lucy's heart stopped as her face slowly drained of all color. _He's not thinking about her fic, was he?_ She fervidly shook her head, _no way._

"This oughta be good," Gray sneered under his breath.

Lucy giggled without helping it. There was just something about putting Natsu down that she found amusing.

As though angry at her for laughing at Gray's rude snide, Natsu bellowed, "LUCY MADE ME READ HER SMUTTY FANFIC!"

Her eyes popped out of her head.

"WHAT?!" everyone, except Lucy, cried.

"Lucy!" Erza gasped, sounding so startled. "Why would you even attempt to write smut before you've had lessons?! Cana and I worked very hard on our lesson plan for you! Send it right now!"

Lucy was struck dumb by both horror and humiliation.

"AND SHE WATCHED ME WHILE I READ IT!" Natsu added.

"LUCY!" Cana burst out laughing. "I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE INTO THAT!"

"I'M NOTTTTT!" she sobbed, her face turning a vibrant shade of red. The room felt as hot as desert as sweat moistened her forehead and back of her neck, making her hair stick.

"Oh, Lucy!" Levy gasped. "That's kind of weird..."

Lucy shoved the hospital pillow against her face, hoping she would suffocate or something because anything would be better than enduring this conversation.

"I don't think it's weird," Erza mused. "Jellal reads all my fics before I post them and we're usually video chatting..."

"Oi, oi," Gray's voice sounded strained. "You and Jellal certainly have a unique relationship."

"I'll say," Lucy sweat-dropped, dropping the pillow from her face.

"I think they have a great relationship," Mira chimed in.

"Thank you, Mira," Erza sounded very pleased.

"Was it good smut, Natsu?" Cana asked, very intrigued by this topic.

"THE HELL WOULD I KNOW?! I'M NOT A SMUT EXPERT!"

"Must have not been that good then," Cana muttered, sounding disheartened, causing Lucy's eye to twitch.

"Ehhh you're probably right," he sounded lethargic. "I mean this is Lucy we are talking about. Not like she would know how to write good smut."

Anger pooled from within as she announced, "SAYS THE BOY WHO GOT A _NOSEBLEED_!"

Natsu let a strange strand of sputtering sounds as the whole chat grappled with laughter.

"He-He didn't!" Gray said in between his laughs. "This is...gold!"

"IF THIS FIC WAS ABLE TO DO _THAT_ TO _NATSU_," Cana cried. "I _NEED_ TO READ IT!"

Lucy's cheeks burned with even more embarrassment thanks to Cana's words, but a smile emerged on her lips as she took notice that Natsu was still sputtering like crazy.

Only one person wasn't amused.

"I'm very disappointed in you, Lucy," Erza's tone held great disapproval, like a parent who found out their kid was dealing drugs. Lucy shrunk back. "Not only did you write smut without any real knowledge, you _chose_ a _novice_ to read it?"

Natsu sounded disgruntled as he asked, "Is that your fancy way of callin' me a virg—"

"IT WAS A MISTAKEEEE!" Lucy wailed, covering her eyes with the crook of her arm. "I MEANT TO SEND HIM A DIFFERENT FIC!"

"A different smut fic?" Levy asked, sounded very interested.

"NO!"

"Liar," Cana teased. "Now send us the fic!"

"No way!"

"_Lucy,_ " Erza's voice sent shivers down her spine. "Send. It. It's for your best interest!"

"NO IT'S NOT!" she smacked her head repeatedly against the tray that her laptop was sitting on top of over her hospital bed.

"What's that noise?" Levy inquired.

"Sounds like someone's smacking their head," Gray answered.

"YOU'RE ALL JUST A BUNCH OF PERVS!" Lucy accused, continuing her smacks.

"Oi, I haven't done or said anything pervy!" Gray said defensively.

"Gray, your clothes," she sighed, halting her assault to her head.

"What about them—SHIT!" he yelped. "How'd you know that?! We aren't even video chatting!"

"It's a given," she murmured.

"I feel violated," Gray's voice shook.

"This just proves Lucy is a giant perv," Natsu said jokingly. "Thinking about Gray naked— _for the__second time today._"

That felt like a slap in the face.

"Second time?" Gray questioned, sounding bemused.

"Does this mean Graylu's actually canon?" Mira gasped.

Lucy wished Natsu would _say something_ about them being a possible item, but instead, all he said was, "Nahhh. Just means Lucy's a mega pervert."

"NATTSSSUUU! I WASN'T THINKING ABOUT GRAY NAKED!" Lucy screamed. "AND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S THE _MEGA PERVERT_ FOR READING IT!"

"AM NOT!"

"Well you _did_ get a nosebleed," Cana added in, helping Lucy's case.

"THAT'S ALL A LIE! AND IT'S NOT LIKE I WANTED TO READ HER DUMB FIC!" he yelled.

"BUT YOU WERE ASKING TO READ IT THE OTHER DAY!" Lucy mentioned frantically as she tried not to let the insult bother her.

"I WAS ONLY TEASING! I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD ACTUALLY SEND IT TO ME!"

"WHATEVER!" she flushed, rubbing her heated cheek.

"Soo, Levy!" Mira said, changing the subject, "Do you have your cosplay ready yet?"

"I do!" Levy gushed. "I just bought the finishing touches today!"

"Nice!" Gray said. "I'm almost done with mine. Just need to find the right shirt to wear..."

"That sounds pointless," Cana commented.

"Aye," everyone agreed.

"I have all my pyro stuff ready!" Natsu boasted. "So fired up for this con! AHAHA!"

"Oii, you really are a pyro..." Gray murmured.

"So where should we meet up?" Mira asked.

"I was thinking at the diner near the train station?" Erza suggested. "That's where Jellal and I are meeting."

"AHH!" Mira screeched. "WE GET TO MEET JELLAL?!"

"Well yeah..." Erza's voice wavered, sounding a bit awkward.

"Juvia wants to meet up with us also," Gray said. "If that's cool?"

"So long as she doesn't call me _Love Rival_," Natsu said, "I don't have a problem."

"This is so exciting!" Levy exclaimed. "Gajeel and I are..."

All the heat Lucy had felt before had vanished. And its place was an icy chill. She swallowed over the lump of bitter ice in her throat as she listened to them converse over Comic Con—something she couldn't join in to talk about.

The loneliness she felt was like a frigid wasteland—never had she felt this alone, well except for the times that dated back pre- tumblr.

So she hung up without uttering a goodbye.

"Oiii, you're not like mad, are you?" Natsu messaged.

"No," she truthfully typed back.

"Good," he wrote. "Cuz that would be awkward if you were mad since I decided to take off of school tomorrow to hang out with you."

"Eh?" she ogled at the words.

"Anyways, don't let Comic Con bum you out so much," he wrote. "It really ain't a big deal, ya know."

"It's a big deal because you all get to meet each other," she gloomily typed, fighting back the tears. That was the underlying truth to it all; Lucy couldn't care less about Comic Con. She just wanted to meet her friends.

"So we'll have our own meeting then."

With her heart fluttering frantically in her chest, she wrote back, "Okay."

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Sorry for this boring filler chapter!****

****Hope you were all still able to enjoy it though!****

****And I apologize for any mistakes!****

****Have a lovely day everyone!****

50. Chapter 50

****HAPPY BELATED 4-MONTH-AVERSERY, LOVELY READERS!****

****Wish I had something special planned for this chapter, but alas, I don't ^_^;****

****But nonetheless, enjoy!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

All that yelling Lucy did to her irksome group chat had resulted in irritation to her abdomen and not only just to that, but irritation to the entire hospital. She was scolded by the head doctor on the floor for causing too much of a disturbance.

Lucy, of course, had only sheepishly blushed, wondering how much the hospital had heard from her conversation, praying that she hadn't screamed anything about her smut fic, but to her chagrin, the doctor had specifically stated, "I don't care what kind of kinky story you wrote, just don't go screaming about it for the whole hospital to hear! I have patients asking to read it!"

"S-Sorry!" was the only thing she had managed to say.

Even though a couple of hours had passed by since then, the memory was still very real and very embarrassing. She sunk under the covers of her bed, trying to hide from the mortifying pain.

What an awful day...

Her dad knows her friends are all people she met on the internet.

Natsu read her smut fic.

Everyone's going to Comic Con—except her.

Natsu told everyone that she wrote a smut fic—and even the hospital knows...

And everyone is still going to Comic Con...

And she was trapped in a hospital...

Her hands clenched into fists and her throat threatened to release an agonizing scream, but she bit it down.

Tears wanted to spill so badly, but she fought hard against them because what good would crying do? She still wouldn't have Comic Con tickets and she still wouldn't be able to meet her friends.

Ping.

Like a reflex, Lucy sat back up and looked at her lit-up Skype chat. "Lucy?" the message read. "Can we talk?"

Well in all honesty, she didn't want to talk to anyone. She just wanted to be alone to wallow in self-pity but for this person, she would make an exception.

"Sure thing," she wrote back.

A video request was sent and Lucy accepted it without a second thought.

On the screen, a girl with spiking blue hair appeared with such warm and kind brown eyes that seemed to melt the icy throb in Lucy's chest.

"Hi, Lucy," the girl sheepishly grinned.

"Hi, Levy," Lucy found herself grinning back and all the pain and bitterness from before evaporated like morning dew on the grass.

"So umm..." Levy fidgeted a bit in her desk chair, revealing one of the many ginormous bookshelves in her library-bedroom. Lucy could make out an extensive manga collection on that shelf, ranging from shoujo to shounen to even

sports manga, which made her heart jolt with jealousy.

"I'm so sorry I didn't tell you about the ticket earlier! I was just scared that you would be all sad—and why are there wires hooked up to your arm—OH MY GOD, ARE YOU IN THE HOSPITAL?!"

"Uhhh," Lucy laughed uneasily as she subconsciously tapped on her IVs. "Kind of?"

"KIND OF?!" Levy's eyes were round with horror as her palms flattened against her desk and she bolted out of her seat. "HOW CAN YOU BE _KIND OF_ IN THE HOSPITAL?!"

"Okay, okay," she put both her palms up in a surrendering motion, "I _am_ in the hospital."

"YEAH I CAN SEE THAT! WHAT HAPPENED? ARE YOU SICK!? OHMYGOD YOU'RE NOT DYING, ARE YOU?!"

"Ahah nothing happened!" Lucy tensely smiled as beads of sweat coated her forehead. "Just an appendicitis."

"WHAT?!" Levy went ghostly white. "SO THAT'S WHY YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ONLINE?!"

"Yes?" she squeaked, feeling a bit interrogated.

"AHH IT'S OFFICIAL; I'M THE WORST PERSON IN THE ENTIRE WORLD!" Levy collapsed back into her seat burying her face into her hands.

"No you're not!"

"TAKE MY COMIC CON TICKET!"

"LEVY, NO!"

"I FEEL SO BAD!" the girl sobbed loudly with her forget-me-not-blue hair shaking all around. "AND THE WAY YOU FOUND OUT! I'M A TERRIBLE PERSON! I SHOULDN'T HAVE KEPT IT A SECRET!"

"It's seriously not a big deal!" Lucy said earnestly. "I probably would have done the same, so don't feel bad! And I don't even care about Comic Con. I just want to hangout with all of you!"

"Lucy..."

"And if I take your ticket," a coy smirk coiled onto her lips, "then you'll never get to meet _Gajeel._"

Levy noticeably and audibly gulped, "Why-Why does that matter?"

"Because you liikkkeeee hiimmm."

"Don't pretend to be Happy," Levy chided while blushing. "I'm nervous to meet him..." she twiddled her thumbs.

"Well I'm sure he will be nervous to meet you also—"

"What if he thinks I look like a little kid?" her blush deepened to a lovely shade of fushia. "Everyone always tells me I look like I'm 12! What if Gajeel also thinks that?! Who would wanna date someone who looks 12?!"

"Levy, you're being ridiculous!" Lucy giggled at the girl's absurdity. Levy was beautiful and by no means looked like a little kid with those all-knowing eyes and her delicate facial features. "You don't look 12!"

All the color slowly drained from Levy's cheeks as she wailed, "I DON'T WANT TO MEET HIM ANYMORE! JUST TAKE MY TICKET, LUCY!"

"I'M NOT TAKING IT!" Lucy yelled, ignoring the stabbing pain in her stomach. "You're going to have the best day of your life! And don't-not-go because of Gajeel, go because you'll get to meet Mira, Cana, Erza, Gray, and..." she dropped her gaze to her now-trembling pale hands, "Natsu."

"Lucy..." Levy's huge eyes glistened.

Lucy turned away, forcing her stare out the window. "It'll be fun." The sky was a brilliant shade of pink and orange thanks to the now-setting sun. "Trust me."

"You're right." Levy's voice was calm and then she asked, "So, uh, how did you get an appendicitis?"

She stiffened, feeling all flabbergasted as she turned her head back to the screen.

Levy deadpanned, "Let me guess, you got salmonella from Plue and that caused your appendix to rupture?"

Lucy flinched, awkwardly dropping her gaze to her lap, "Maybe..."

The tiny girl pursed her lips, "I told you not to put him near your face!"

"I know," Lucy chuckled.

****XOXOX****

It was much later in the evening, the clock rearing towards eight p.m. as Lucy picked at her late hospital dinner. It was supposed to be a salad, but whatever that green stuff was—it was certainly not lettuce...

"LUCCYYY!" heavy foots bellowed into her room, "I'VE COME BEARING PRESENTS!"

"Eh?" Her head snapped over to the door to see her father carrying a gigantic bag while bending over with his hands on his knees as he gasped for breath. "Dad?"

He stood up straight, smoothing out his crinkled suit and grinned, "Lucy! How are you feeling?"

"Alright," she scratched her head, eyeing the suspicious bag that was resting on his right shoulder. "You have presents for me?"

"Yes!" he moved closer to her and slid his free hand into the backpack. "First things first!" he pulled out a bulky, bulging black folder. "All the school work you have missed!"

Her lips drew thin as she said dryly, "Wow, thanks." She took the folder from him with one hand and nearly dropped it since she wasn't expecting the weight, "Gahh how much work could I have possibly missed?!"

"Also!" Jude said, ignoring her, "I bought you tickets to your Spring Formal!" He pulled a pair of tickets out of his pocket.

"You shouldn't have," she exasperated, rubbing her tired eyes, "I told you I'm not going,"

"Well the money for the tickets go to charity so whether you go or not, it's not a waste," he said. "Anyway," he reached into the bag again, "I brought you books!"

"What?" she watched as he pulled volume after volume after volume of Fairy Tail. "Dad!" she beamed, nearly jumping

mping out of the bed in excitement, but reframed from doing so. "Thank you so much!" She was so close to completing her set, she nearly glowed from the thought.

"Anything for my precious daughter!" He took a seat on the chair next to her bed. "So how's Natsu?"

Her eyes peeled as she suspiciously answered, "He's alright." Did her father get over the fact that she met Natsu off the internet yet? The churning in her stomach seemed to answer _no_.

"Good, good," he nodded, unconsciously rubbing his chin signifying he hadn't heard what Lucy had said. "Look, Lucy, I've been thinking about this all day...I have to do what's best for you and that is to call Natsu up and tell him that he is never to contact you again."

"Wait what?" she sat up straighter, ogling at her father's keen expression.

"I'm only kidding! I just want to chat with the _lovely_ fellow." He pulled out his phone, dialed a number, and then put it on speaker.

"I don't—" Lucy started, but her father immediacy shushed her. Her lips jutted out into a pout as she glowered at him.

It rang and rang and by the third ring, someone finally answered, "Hello!?" Sounding out of breath, Natsu's voice rang between the silences of the still room. Lucy's brows pulled inwards, scared of what was to come.

"Old man?" Natsu sounded bemused. She watched as her father's face fell into a scowl, causing her to smirk in response, "What's up? Is something wrong with Lucy!?"

He sounded so worried, that her insides went erratic.

"ANSWER ME, YOU BASTARD!" Natsu's voice bellowed.

Lucy slapped a palm to her face the second the word _bastard_ echoed into the room. She snuck a peek at her father, who looked beyond disgruntled as he rubbed his left temple with his free hand.

"IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH LUCY?!"

Now pinching the bridge of his nose, her father, at last, decided to answer, "No, Natsu, nothing is wrong with Lucy."

"THEN WHY THE HELL ARE YA CALLIN' ME?" Natsu raged.

"I wanted to—"

"IT'S CONSIDERED HARASSMENT, YA KNOW!"

Her father looked incredulous with his face twisting in all sorts of directions, "How is this _harassment_?" Then he threw his arms up, "And you're one to talk, young man!" he chastised. "You called me every half hour the first night Lucy was in the hospital! Now _that's_ harassment."

"Dunno what you're talkin' about, old man," Natsu said with such a careless ease; it seemed to tame Lucy's unstable heart.

"Of course you don't," her dad sweat-dropped. "I'm just calling because we never had the pleasure of _officially_ chatting."

"Officially?" Natsu repeated. "Whatchu mean? We've talked loads of times. Don't tell me you're goin' senile."

Lucy smacked her hands over her mouth to stifle her laughs—but the inward laughs angered her lower abdomen, causing her to wince.

"That's not what I meant, Natsu," Jude looked on edge with the way his jaw locked up.

"Can't you just get to the point already? I ain't in the mood to talk."

"Fine, now that I know who you _really are_," he clarified. "I want to ask you a few questions."

"Who am I really?" Natsu questioned.

"You're-You're some creepy pervert my daughter met off the internet who lives in Magnolia! That's _who you really are_!"

"IT'S LUCY'S FAULT THAT IMMA PERVERT! I DIDN'T WANNA READ IT, I SWEAR!"

Lucy struggled to breathe as all the oxygen left the room. He was not bringing _that_ up again!

Jude blinked, "Wha—"

"OKAY SO MAYBE I WANTED TO READ IT, BUT I DIDN'T THINK SHE WOULD ACTUALLY LET ME! BUT LUCY'S THE REAL PERVERT FOR WRITING—"

All the blood in Lucy's body rushed up into her cheeks. She opened her mouth, prepared to shout anything that would block out Natsu's next words, but she was beaten to it.

"Hey!" Jude yelled, cutting Natsu off. "Don't call my daughter a pervert!"

"But she is—"

"What did I just say, boy? Don't make me use my bat on you!" Lucy could see her father's expression was very much playful, not matching his threatening speech.

"Sor-sorry..." Natsu sounded surprisingly afraid, causing Lucy to muffle another laugh. "I don't think Lucy's a pervert!"

"So what _do you_ think of Lucy?" her father asked curiously.

Her stomach twisted into a tangled web of knots. Why was her father doing this? Was this considered the third degree that fathers are supposed to give to their daughter's boyfriends? Was Natsu even her boyfriend?

She anxiously brought her hand up to her mouth and chewed quietly on her nails.

Nothing but silence came out of the phone.

"Natsu?" Jude called out.

Her heart raced.

It felt like hours went by before Natsu simply said, "I think Lucy is Lucy!"

"And what's that supposed to mean?"

"Well I guess it sorta means _weird,_ but not exactly. Like when Lucy says or does something completely mind boggling, I think, 'Oh! Lucy's just bein' Lucy again,' ya know?"

"Uhh," her dad shot her a quizzical look, but Lucy was too distracted by the pounding in her chest.

"Like when she randomly bought Plue—that was Lucy bein' Lucy because who goes and buys an iguana thinkin' it's a salamander?! And her liking m—" he quickly shut up before finishing the word that was probably _me._ "I mean she's just weird— _just Lucy_."

Jude didn't say anything and neither did Lucy. No matter how many times he's called her _weird_ or _Just Lucy_, it still managed to her heart turn all gooey. How was Natsu capable of turning the word _weird_ into a compliment? The way he uses the word, it's as if it's one of the grandest compliments out there. It was almost like an honor to be called _weird_ by _him_.

Natsu filled the silent void with one last sentence, "And I like that about her."

"Well, Natsu," Jude said, coughing to clear his voice. "It was sure interesting chatting with you. Do expect another one of these someday. Good day."

"Bye—"

"I'm still not quite sure what to make of him...but I still think Gray's more masculine than _him_," Jude said to Lucy, as he went to put his phone into his suit-jacket pocket.

"OI! YOU DIDN'T HANG UP YET, YOU OLD BASTARD!" Natsu's voice echoed. "AND LIKE HELL HE IS! I'M WAY MORE MASCULINE AND WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO—WAIT! WAS LUCY LISTENING TO OUR CONVERSATION—"

"Whoops," her dad said before actually hanging up.

"You wanted him to hear that," Lucy smirked.

"Nahh," he winked. "Anyway, I better get going. Plue is probably starving..."

Lucy gasped, "OHMYGOD, PLUE! I HAVE TO GO HOME TO TAKE CARE OF HIM!"

"Don't worry!" he waved her off. "Plue and I have been spending a great deal of time together."

"What?!" she asked in utter disbelief.

"He sits on my lap while I read the newspaper."

"But what about him being a monster?!" Lucy exclaimed, not quite believing what she was hearing.

His eyes narrowed, "Lucy, don't call Plue a _monster_. He is an adorable creature that deserves better."

"Umm?" she was completely baffled.

"Well I best be off," he smiled, putting his bag back over his shoulder. "Call if you need anything!"

And then he left.

"What the hell just happened?" she asked no one as she scratched her forehead, before shaking off her father's oddness.

She thought back to Natsu, _And I like that about her_.

Maybe today wasn't so bad after all.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****For those wondering why my updates have been slower: I started school (already have two essays due next week :0) and also work so I'm trying to get used to my new schedule, but I'm still gonna attempt to do two updates per week!****

****And for those asking about my update schedule:****

****I update randomly so I recommend you following this story on FF but if you don't have an account, I tag all my updates on tumblr under** _ **Virtual Flames** _ **so if you track that tag, it will hopefully notify you that I updated!****

****Anyway, thank you for reading!****

****Sorry for another filler chapter, but I felt like I had to add this in :) hope it wasn't too bad though!****

****Good luck to all of you going back to school and just good luck in general because we could all use a little bit of luck!****

51. Chapter 51

****SO OMG WE HIT 4K REVIEWS! AND IM LITERALLY JUST SCREAMING!****

****SO PLEASE ENJOY THIS SUPER QUICK UPDATE AS A PRESENT BECAUSE YOU ARE ALL AMAZING!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Finally home!" Lucy cheered as she lolled her head back against the tub of her bath.

Her father had arrived super early—early as in 4 a.m.—to the hospital to surprise her with her discharge. No more scratchy IVs, no more prison food, and no more annoying nurses poking her with strange objects every hour.

And she finally got to bathe.

She spent a good half hour scrubbing every inch of her body, even though it hurt still to move a lot and she ended her shower to go take a nice, lavender scented bubble bath.

It was terribly painful for her to lay down in the tub, but Lucy trucked through it because nothing can stop her from taking a bath.

The climb out of the bath was a real struggle. Her injured stomach muscles let out a stabbing cry of pain every time she attempted to sit up. Giving up on that, she instead placed both of her hands on the edge of the bathtub, attempting to push herself up.

Tears dotted her vision as knife-like pain dug deeper and deeper into her abdomen. Her teeth grinded and her arms quivered as she put more energy into it and somehow, she managed to stand up, but the tears streamed heavily down her cheeks.

Maybe she should hold off on the baths for a while after all...

Shoving on baggy gray cotton shorts and a loose-fitted light pink tank top, that seemed to reveal her lacy orange bra, she carefully crawled into her fluffy bed for the first time all week.

"So much better than the hospital," she sighed, pulling her laptop onto her lap.

With nothing better to do, she went on her lovely blog and checked her _activity_. She noticed she was tagged in a photo by _LokeTheLion_ so with bored curiosity, she clicked on it.

"Eek!" a squeak escaped her lips as her eyes took in a shirtless photo of an outwardly handsome guy with very toned abs. Her eyes traveled up the six pack to see a self-absorbed smile with smoky, hazel eyes peering through square-rimmed glasses. And with meticulously spiked up orange hair to top it off, his entire look seemed to say, _I know I'm good-looking._

Lucy rolled her eyes in response, not liking cocky men like that. Her eyes darted over to his caption which read, "I dedicate this selfie to my lovely waifu, _CelestialMage_. We will forever be the hottest _Tumblr_ couple to ever exist."

"I still don't get when we became a couple..." she muttered to herself as she reluctantly clicked the heart button and without helping it, she clicked on the notes to see if there were any comments.

DropsOfRain had reblogged it and wrote, "Juvia is so happy Love Rival found someone who isn't Gray-sama!"

IceMakeMagic reblogged from Juvia and said, "Oi! I told you not to call her that anymore!"

"Force of habit! Juvia is sorry! Only _DragonSlayer_ gets to be called 'Love Rival'"

"NO! THAT IS A DEFINITE _NO_! WE WENT THROUGH THIS ALREADY! And don't go tagging him! Last thing I need is him adding a dumb comment like always -_-."

Unwillingly, Lucy laughed knowing very well that pain would jab her in the gut—and it did, but she managed to smile through the pain.

"Juvia knows, but Juvia is still suspicious because Gray-sama said _DragonSlayer_ couldn't be in love with him because _DragonSlayer's_ URL was _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_. But now it's back to _DragonSlayer_ and _LokeTheLion_ declared Love Rival #1 his waifu, therefore, Love Rival #2 is still a threat."

Lucy's smile fell right off her face. She had forgotten all about Natsu changing his URL right after they confessed to one another. What was she supposed to make of that exactly? She had no idea, but it made her heart feel heavy, like someone was stepping on it with their steel-toed boot.

"Oooh, _DropsOfRain_," _SatanSoul_ joined in, "I like the way you think! You are so right! Gratsu stands proud now that LoLu is canon!"

"JUVIA DOESN'T WANT TO BE RIGHT ;-; ."

"MIRA," Gray wrote, "YOU AREN'T HELPING!"

"Hehe, sorry, Gray!" Mira apologetically messaged back.

"It's true though. LoLu is very canon," Loke confirmed, to Lucy's vexation.

"LOLU ISN'T CANON!" she frantically typed as her body seemed to fluctuate from cold, clammy sweat, to sweating-like-in-a-sauna kind of sweat.

"Shush now, bae," Loke replied. "We don't have to keep our love a secret."

Her eye twitched, "I'd rather keep it a secret, to be honest." Her mind drifted back to Natsu. Did he want to keep their confession a secret? Is that why he hadn't told anyone? What if he said it out of pity because she was in the hospital?

No! She indignantly shook her head. She couldn't let herself think like that. Besides, Natsu said all that heart melting stuff about her to her father so that's something...But she wanted answers so badly... "Ugh! I'M PATHETIC! I mean who gets scared to ask their possible boyfriend if they are dating?!"

A thought crossed her mind.

What if she sent Natsu an anonymous message asking if he were single?

Or why he changed his URL?

Or if he likes anyone?

"NOOO THAT'S EVEN WORSE, LUCY!" she pulled her hair from the roots, so hard that it hurt a bit.

She really needed a distraction from her daunting, paranoid thoughts...So with a deep breath, she returned back to her virtual life.

"Yay for LoLu and Gratsu for being canon!" Mira cheered.

"JUVIA IS CRYING!" Juvia wrote.

"GRAY IS CRYING!" Gray wrote.

"LUCY IS CRYING!" Lucy wrote.

And then someone else joined the party, "GRRAYY, FIGHT ME! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ADDS DUMB SHITTY COMMENTS TO EVERYTHING!"

"Of course he would be focused on Gray's comment about him," Lucy face-palmed, though her pulse still managed to jump.

"Great, Natsu's here -_-," was Gray's reply.

"AND YOU, DROPSOFRAIN!" Natsu continued. "DON'T GO CALLING ME LOVE RIVAL #2! I WANT TO BE NUMBER ONE!"

"AND HE'S FIGHTING FOR GRAY'S LOVE?! " Lucy screamed, cupping her cheeks, completely awestruck that Natsu ignored the whole LoLu posts or the fact that Loke tagged her a shirtless photo.

"JUVIA IS CRYING HARDER!"

"NATSU, YOU'RE ACTUALLY AN IDIOT!" Gray exclaimed.

"My, my!" Mira typed. "This is so exciting!"

"OI, I AIN'T AN IDIOT!"

"YES YOU ARE!" Gray countered.

"I am glad I'm no longer a part of this," Lucy decisively added.

"Juvia is glad too," Juvia replied.

Her right eye twitched, "Right..."

"LoLu's love is so strong that we don't need this kind of barbaric flirting," Loke stated. "Come, Lucy, let's go continue our conversation of love elsewhere. What's your _Skype_"

Her eye twitched some more, _What conversation of love_? They weren't even conversing!

"Loke, what are you doing here?" Natsu asked.

"What do you mean _what am I doing here_" Loke asked back. "I should be asking _you_ that! This is my selfie!"

"It is?!" Natsu typed. "I didn't know you were a cat."

"Excuse me?"

"OH WAIT!" Natsu quickly amended, "I TOTALLY THOUGHT THIS WAS A PICTURE OF A CAT DRESSED UP LIKE LION! My bad :D ."

"See?!" Gray commented. " _You are an__idiot._ How do you mistake a _human_ for a _cat_?!"

"Oi! It's an easy mistake!"

"I agree," A new URL joined in, _BlackSteelGajeel_. "I mix up humans and animals all the time. Like _CelestialMage_ looks like a bunny to me."

Lucy ogled blankly at the screen.

Bunny?

I look like a bunny _?_

"WHATTT?!" she cried on the top of her lungs. "I DO NOT LOOK LIKE A BUNNY!" And then she gasped; this was the first time she had seen Gajeel write anything. Sure she followed him back when Levy told Lucy his URL, but Lucy hadn't seen a post from him, like ever. This was so strange... This was the boy who Levy was crushing on... And he thinks Lucy looks like a bunny...

"See!" Natsu wrote after. "My point exactly! Thank you, random dude."

"No problem, Salamander."

A giggle erupted from her throat as Lucy mischievously commented, "Does that mean you think Natsu looks like a salamander?"

"WHATTTTT?! ARGGG, YOU STUPID METAL HEAD! CAN'T BELIEVE I THOUGHT YOU WERE COOL FOR A MINUTE THERE! COME FIGHT ME!"

"Now that you mention it," Gray wrote, "I can so see the resemblance."

"GRRRR, SHUT UP, GRAY!"

And here goes another big fight...

A chilling message appeared, "I know you all aren't messaging while in class because that would be _very irresponsible_."

Lucy stared at the clock on the wall, 9:30 a.m. They would all be well into class right now...

"Of course not!" Gray wrote, clearly lying. "Gotta go, class is starting!"

"I'm home," Natsu explained. "And oiii, aren't _you_ messaging while in class, Erza?"

Erza never replied back.

"HAH! GOT YOU THERE, PSHHH MS-RESPONSIBLE MY ASS!"

"Ahhh Natsu totally has a death wish..." she pinched her nose, shaking her head. But still, there was something about his careless nature that made him more attractive...

"Soo anyway, Lucy, what's your _Skype_?" Loke asked.

"FUCK OFF ALREADY!" Natsu replied. "LIKE HELL SHE'S GONNA GIVE IT TO YOU! YOU'RE TOO ANNOYING!"

Natsu... Her heart palpitations increased immensely as she went back to her main dash. As though it were fate, the very top of her dash was an anonymous ask Natsu had just answered.

"Do you like anyone?" the person had asked.

"Nahh, but I _like-like_ someone."

And that was the only answer Lucy had needed to see.

She exhaled in relief, _Thank you, anon._ And her heart felt a thousand times lighter, as though that steel-toed boot had finally let her go free.

And on the bottom of her screen, her _Skype_ lit up with a new message.

"You ready to video chat?"

Oh right, she had a _Skype_ date today.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe next chapter won't be as fillerish!****

****AND OMG THE NEW MANGA CHAPTER! AHhh NATSU AT THE END! I'M JUST SCREAMING BECAUSE I DON'T WANNA WAIT ANOTHER WEEK TO FIND OUTTT! AND AHhh THE GAJEVYY! I'M JUSTT AFDFFD SGFHS****

****And thank to** _**Desiluff**_**on Deviantart for the really cute pic of Gray and Natsu meeting irl!****

desiluff. deviantart art /Gray-and-Natsu-s -first-encounter-IRL-557747316

****As always, thank you for reading! And I hope you all have a wonderful day while I spend it writing two essays because I stupidly waited until last minute (story of my life :D)****

52. Chapter 52

****Eep! Thank you so much for all the nice responses! I can't stop smiling because you are all such cuties!****

****Enjoy!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"You ready to video chat?"

"Uhh could we video chat in like an hour or so?" Lucy typed with hesitance. Of course she wanted to video chat with him, it was just that she wanted to make herself look decent for once, considering how awful she looked these past couple of days while in the hospital. Plus the tank top she was wearing was rather irritating with how it kept falling too low so she wanted to change.

Instead of typing his response, he called her. "Why can't you video chat right now?" he asked, sounding impatient. "It's not like you have anything better to do. You're stuck in a hospital bed!"

A crease formed on Lucy's forehead as her blonde brows pointed inwards, "I was released today. My dad came and brought me home before he left for work."

"EHH?" Natsu's voice echoed. "HOW EARLY DID YOU LEAVE?"

She glanced at the time on her laptop, 9:50. "Probably around 4 a.m."

"Figures your dad would make you leave at a strange hour," he murmured. "Oiii, speaking of your dad, why'd you give him my phone number? That's just weird."

"What?" she blinked.

"He called me the other day, askin' creepy stuff. I think you were in the room listening or somethin'. Anyways, why would you give him my number?! You don't see me giving your number to my—"

"What? I didn't give your number to my dad!" she explained, feeling a bit bewildered by the accusation. "I gave my dad's number to _you_!"

"Nahh that can't be it," he shoved away her statement. "You must have given it to him."

"Natsu," Lucy exasperated, throwing her head back with her eyes pressed closed, "how could I give my dad your nu

mber if _I don't even have your number?_!"

"Wait a second!"

"YOU ACTUALLY DIDN'T REALIZE _THIS_?!" she shrieked, slapping her hand across her mouth. _He's incredible..._

"Gahhh I forgot!"

"CLEARLY!"

"Quit yelling!" he chided, causing Lucy to scowl in response. "Anyways, what _is_ your number?"

"I'm not telling you," she smirked.

"Why not?" he sounded disgruntled.

"I-I don't know!" she blushed, unsure why she didn't want to give it. "You're still sort of a stranger...I mean I don't even know your last name!"

"Don't see why that matters since I already have your dad's number and I have your address," he stated, "but it's _Dragneel_."

"Wh-what?"

"My last name is," his voice grew softer, " _Dragneel_."

"Natsu _Dragneel_?" she tasted his name on her tongue. It was like a trick button that made her heart want to jump out of her chest.

"That's me! Now can I have your number?"

"Hmmm," she fake-pondered. "Nahh."

"Whyyyy?" he sounded very frustrated.

"Because it's more fun this way," she giggled, liking how aggravated he was getting.

"Sometimes I forget how annoying you are," he mumbled. "Can we at least video chat now?"

"Noo," she said quickly as her body temperature increased. "Not yet!"

"Why not?"

"I'm not ready!"

"What does that even mean?"

"I don't know!" A blush crossed her cheeks as she shifted uncomfortably on her bed. "I just don't look good right now!"

"Ughhh not this again," he groaned in disgust, causing Lucy to tilt her head slightly to the right. "You always look weird so why does it matter? Don't get who you're tryin' to impress."

Look weird? A vein ticked on her forehead as anger surged through her like an active volcano, making her spew words without thinking, "MAYBE I'M TRYING TO IMPRESS YOU, YOU DUMMY!"

"HEH?" Natsu sputtered. "W-WHY WOULD YOU BE TRYING TO IMPRESS ME?"

Lucy tried to speak, she really did, but it was like her body was filled with lead; her mouth wouldn't open, her body couldn't move—everything felt heavy.

"YOU ALWAYS DO THIS!" he continued screaming. "SAYING WEIRD THINGS! ARGGG IT MAKES MY HEART DO WEIRD STUFFFF—LIKE IN THOSE DAMN SHOUJO MANGAS—THE DOKI DOKI CRAP!"

Her mouth fell open as she stupidly ogled at her laptop.

Doki doki?

Natsu's heart?

_She__makes_ Natsu's heart go _doki__doki_?

"What?" the word slipped out without her consent.

"URGGH WHY ARE YOU SAYING _WHAT_?"

"I—"

"YOU MAKE MY HEART GO DOKI DOKI, ALRIGHT?!" he exclaimed.

"I—"

"YOU'RE ANNOYING!"

Another vein pulsed on her forehead, "YOU KNOW WHAT? LET'S VIDEO CHAT RIGHT NOW!"

"FINE!" he snapped.

And as the video chat loaded, neither of them were looking at the screen. Instead, they both sat there on their beds in a crisscrossed position with arms crossed over their chests. Their faces were turned slightly the right, both held a matching pout with inflamed cheeks.

Lucy, being the first daring soul, glanced sideways to see Natsu's flaming face and adorable pout. She fought against a smile and said, "Soo." His pointed eyes shifted towards the screen. A smirk playfully overcame her scowl, "Is your heart going _doki doki_ right now?"

His features widened and his mouth gaped slightly for only a few seconds before he smoothly said, "Pshhh no way."

"_Liar_."

A nasty smirk covered his face as he rubbed his nose and sneered, "Now I get why you said you needed to get ready. .."

Despite her eye twitching, she wasn't going to let him have the upper hand. "So your heart _is_ going _doki doki_ after all!"

"BET YOUR HEART IS TOO!" he accused, looking like a rainbow of emotions, ranging from embarrassment with

his face the color of a sunset, to anger with his raging, black eyes, and frantic with the way he pointed a shaky finger at the screen.

Her blush rivaled his as she admitted, "M-Maybe!"

"HAH!" he grinned proudly, showing off his pointed canines. "KNEW IT!"

"Whatever," she sighed, going back on _Tumblr_.

"That _DropsOfRain_ chick might be even weirder than you," Natsu muttered.

"What do you—oh!" Lucy saw Natsu's _like-like_ ask blew up a bit as _DropsOfRain_ added, "LOVE RIVAL IS SO DARING WITH HIS DECLARATION OF LOVE! JUVIA IS CRYING!"

"OH I SAID _LIKE-LIKE_ NOT _LOVE_!" Natsu had replied back and suddenly it was like all the happiness of Natsu admitting his heart goes doki doki for her had burned away like a flame on a candlewick.

Well what was she expecting? He _did_ change his URL from _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_ back to his original and now he flat out admitted he didn't love her.

So what if those _extra_ feelings Lucy's been feeling were unrequited?

Not like she cared.

Nope.

Who was she kidding? She just wanted to curl up into a ball and cry. He would probably think she was an idiot for falling in love with him...

Was she even in love? Well with the way her heart felt like it was being split in half slowly and painfully by a small, dull, jagged sword, there was a good possibility. The pain reminded her of the day he found out she liked him when he saw her doodles of his name...

"HOW COULD LOVE RIVAL SAY THAT? GRAY-SAMA DESERVES _LOVE_ NOT _LIKE_!"

"Gray-sama would prefer neither," Gray chimed.

"GRAY-SAMA IS DEFENDING LOVE RIVAL!? JUVIA IS SOBBING!"

"OI, I AIN'T DEFENDING HIM!" he wrote back. "DON'T GO MAKING THINGS UP!"

"I doubt Ice Guy would wanna date a salamander," _BlackSteelGajeel_ added.

"Exactly," Gray agreed.

"AHH JUVIA IS HAPPY!"

"GRRR, _GAJEEL_!" Natsu raged to Lucy, with his teeth clenched. "I REALLY HATE THAT DUMB METAL ASS! CALLIN' ME A _SALAMANDER_!"

"He called me a _bunny_," Lucy dully added, still not over her revelation.

"YEAH, BUT AT LEAST THAT MAKES SENSE SINCE BUNNIES ARE ALL CUTE AND STUFF! BUT A _SALAMANDER_? ARE YOU KIDDING ME? I DON'T LOOK ANYTHING LIKE A FRIGGIN _SALAMANDER

_"! Actually he looked like a fire breathing dragon in Lucy's eyes with the way his pupils turned into slits and he had enough anger to look like he could breathe fire.

Besides that, Natsu did it again; he made her heart go, as he phrased it, _doki doki_, leaving her to feel all confused. He called her cute. For the first time, not _kind of cute_, but actual _cute._ "You think I'm cute?"

"Huh?" all of his fiery anger vanished as he stared at Lucy, looking perplexed and thrown off.

"You said it makes sense that I'm a bunny since bunnies are cute, therefore I'm cute."

"That's not what I—"

"Does this mean I'm no longer only _kinda cute_?" she asked coyly.

Natsu gasped, realizing his mistake. "LUCY!" he smacked his head against the laptop, creating a loud smash.

Suddenly she didn't care if he didn't love her yet. What they had right now, she wouldn't trade it for the world.

"WHY DO YOU ALWAYS FOCUS ON THE WEIRD STUFF?" He jumped off his bed, leaving the webcam focus ed solely on the hole in his wall.

"I do not!" she huffed, pulling her loose tank top up. She hadn't realized how low it had fallen.

"LIKE DO I SERIOUSLY LOOK LIKE _HAPPY_?" Natsu reappeared, but this time he wasn't alone. A little salam ander was standing still on his palm.

Happy's black and blue coloring definitely did not resemble Natsu in the slightest. "Well you know what they say," Lucy shrugged with a grin, "people tend to look like their pets."

Instead of freaking out, Natsu looked rather thoughtful with the way his lips pursed. "Hmm...Good point, Lu-I mean _Iguana_, " Natsu beamed.

"NAT—"

"Anyways, Happy missed you these past couple of days. He was really mad at me for not letting him talk to you."

"Aww!" Lucy giggled. "And how does Happy show anger?"

"By being rebellious," Natsu shot daggers at him. "HE KEPT ESCAPING FROM HIS TANK TRYING TO CALL THE HOSPITAL!"

"AHH! Well I missed you too, Happy," Lucy laughed, tears dotting her eyes while the salamander started to crawl o nto Natsu's bandaged arm, standing out against the white bandage.

All joking disappeared from Natsu's demeanor as he wistfully proclaimed, "I missed watching you laugh."

She inhaled, halting all of her laughs as her heart melted by the flames that accompanied his words.

But then the teasing look returned as he went on, "You shoulda seen him the night you were taken to the hospital," Natsu said, "he was a mess."

"I'll bet," she longingly sighed.

"I was a mess..." he coughed. His words made her heart officially turn to mush. "But enough about Happy. The poin

t is, is that I don't look like him! _BlackSteelGajeel_!" he said the URL like it were the most disgusting, vile thing he had ever heard. "Never thought I would find someone I hate more than Gray. If I ever meet the bastard..." he trailed off, letting his fist do the rest of the talking.

"Well you're going to meet him at Comic Con," Lucy pointed out.

"What?"

"He's the one who got Levy a ticket," she explained.

"WHATTTT? I GET TO MEET _HIM_ BEFORE I GET TO MEET _YOU_?!" and then he smacked his head again on his keyboard, revealing the hole. "I HATE EVERYTHING."

"Me too," she gloomed, not wanting to think about it.

Natsu's head popped back up, "I'm gonna get you a ticket for it! I swear!"

"Don't even bother," she waved off, shifting a bit as she gestured, "What's with the hole in your wall?"

"Huh?" he looked behind him and then turned back, sheepishly grinning, "I punched it!"

"Of course you did," she shook her head while touching her eyebrow. "Why did you do that?"

He tugged on the rim of his green t-shirt, "Ehh I was angry at myself for somethin'."

It was clear he wasn't going to elaborate any further so Lucy only nodded in response.

"I promise I'll visit you or something, Lucy," Natsu said with sincerity, his dark eyes looked deep with unknown passion.

"Alright," she swallowed, allowing his deep eyes to suck her in.

"So whatcha wanna do today, Iguana?"

"I think I like it better when you call me _Weirdo_," she grumbled, placing a strand of hair behind her ear. "I want to eat. I haven't had breakfast," she gently rubbed her hollow tummy.

"Eat?" Natsu blinked before excitement surged through him. "YOSH! LET'S EAT BREAKFAST TOGETHER AND WATCH ANIME!"

"Alright," she smiled as her heart expanded. Eating breakfast together while watching anime? It sounded like a... _d ate._

Though the smile fell quickly the second she tried to get up, "OWW!"

"LUCY?!" he looked panicked, with his eyes extra round.

"I'm...fine..." she painfully breathed. Her eyes snapped shut as she tried to pull herself up again. "Just feels like...a knife...is digging...into me..."

"Lucy..."

She let out a dry laugh, "I wish I was back in the hospital... Go get your food."

"Errr...alright..."

****XOXOX****

Lucy returned with a bowl of instant oatmeal and a cup of tea. She set them down on her bedside table and glanced at the laptop screen.

Her eyes bugged out.

Natsu was already scarfing down a mountain of pancakes with a huge smile on his face. It was like mountain after mountain after mountain being shoveled into his mouth.

When he said he eats _a lot_ , he really wasn't exaggerating...

"HOW ARE YOU ABLE TO EAT ALL OF THAT?! ACTUALLY HOW DID YOU MAKE THAT MANY PANCAKES IN LIKE LESS THAN 5 MINUTES?"

"They were already made!" he answered cheerfully, chomping down on another stack.

"How were they already made?" she inquired. Did he make them? Did someone else? Who did Natsu live with? So many questions...

Natsu glanced up at her, about to answer, but then his mouth fell completely open and his cheeks turned a deep scarlet color.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" she frowned as she tried to mentally prepare herself to sit back down on her bed.

He didn't answer, instead he continued to gawk blankly.

"What?" her frown deepened, not liking the strange feeling her chest as she followed his stare.

A scream rippled from her throat; her washing machine-stretched tank top had fallen so low that her entire orange, lacey bra showed proudly—her boobs showed proudly. "PERVERT!"

"YOU'RE-YOU'RE THE PERVERT FOR WEARING THAT!"

"NOO I WANTED TO CHANGE! REMEMBER? I SAID I NEEDED TO GET READY! BUT YOU KEPT INSISTING WE VIDEO CHAT RIGHT NOW!" she cried, turning away to pull her tank top back up.

"Yeah, yeah," he waved his hand, his cheeks were still a flaming red. "Try and blame this on me, pervert."

"I hate youuu!" she sobbed, with her arms crossing her chest. Though surprisingly, the _event_ was able to distract Lucy from the pain as she sat back down on her bed.

"I hate you too," he grumbled, looking very uncomfortable as he shifted on his bed.

Despite all humiliation of exposing her chest to him, she managed to speak calmly, "Say, Natsu?"

"Yeah?"

"I bet your heart is going _doki doki_ right now."

"LUCY!"

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****For those who don't know, _Doki doki_ is just the sound for heart beating in Japanese.****

****Hehe hope you all liked this chapter!****

****Lucy finally learned Natsu's last name.****

****And who does Natsu live with? :0****

****See you all next time!****

****And thank you for reading!****

****Have a great rest of the day!****

53. Chapter 53

"That was...That was..." Lucy sniffled, trying to grasp a hold of herself, but the tears continued to wreak havoc through her body.

"BEAUTIFULLL," Natsu sobbed grossly, finishing Lucy's sentence while he buried his face into the crook of his elbow to hide his steady stream of tears. "I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT LIFE IS ANYMOREEEE!"

"Me either," she wept, reaching for chimchar so she could cuddle with something for comfort. Natsu's warm scent managed to still linger on it, adding to the comforting effect.

"Gahhh! THIS IS WORSE THAN _MADOKA MAGICA_" he wailed. "SERIOUSLY, _WHAT IS LIFE?_"

"Worse in a...good way," she sniffed, desperately needing to blow her nose, but she lacked a tissue.

"THAT ENDING!" Natsu finally revealed his tear-stained, blubbing face. "UGHH SO—SO UGHHH—BUT IN A GOOD WAY!"

"THAT SCENE WITH YUI AND HINATA!" Lucy bawled, remembering it very clearly—how it gave her heart-wrenching fluffy feels. "I JUST CAN'T!"

"I KNOWW, I CAN'T FINISH MY SENTENCES EITHER!"

"THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, STUPID!" she wailed. "AND THE PART WHERE WE LEARNED ABOUT OTONASHI'S PAST!"

At the mention of Otonashi's name, Natsu let out a howling sob, "OTONASHI!"

They both sat there sobbing, with snot dripping from their noses and tears imitating waterfalls; neither of them looked very attractive and neither of them cared.

The precious silence of their sobs was broken when Natsu suddenly snapped, "SHUT UP, HAPPY! I AIN'T CRYING! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S CRYING!"

The salamander, who was lying on Natsu's shoulder, stared blankly back at him.

Natsu gasped, looking utterly appalled, "YOU'RE JUST A JERK!"

"I agree with Happy," Lucy commented blandly.

"LUCY!" Natsu whirled back to look at her. "THAT'S NOT NICE! AND, HAPPY!" he turned his attention back to Happy, "YOU'RE GOING BACK IN YOUR CAGE!" And then he vanished from the screen.

Lucy continued to cry as she said, "Can't believe...we just binge-watched...all 13 episodes of _Angel Beats!_"

"So glad we discovered it," Natsu commented, as he reappeared on the screen. He was no longer crying, though his face was still pretty blotchy and his bangs were plastered to his forehead, making him look rather disheveled.

"That soundtrack," she gushed with tears still spilling. She clutched chimchar even harder, as though it would stop her tears.

"You okay, Lucy?"

"Ye-Yeah," she gave a shaky thumbs up as she finally gained control over her tears.

Angel Beats! was a phenomenal anime. It held such a deep, fundamental meaning that broke Lucy to pieces. The plot, the characters, the love, the animation, the soundtrack, it was a perfect mixture for perfection itself.

"You sure?" he looked skeptical with the way his slanted eyes narrowed.

She nodded.

"Good, good!" he nodded back, drumming his fingers on his thigh.

Lucy watched the action with curiosity. His speed seemed to pick up like he was really antsy about something. And suddenly, Lucy felt dumb. Of course Natsu would be all antsy. He just spent the entire day, sitting down on the computer. He probably wanted to leave, but didn't know how to say goodbye...

"You know what?" she said, rubbing her teary eyes, "I'm pretty tired. Would it be alright if I hang up?"

"Yeah! That works out perfectly!" he said, looking relieved as he exhaled. "I promised my brother I would go to this dumb thing with him. And if I don't leave now my brother will send one of his dumb groupies to come get me."

A million thoughts ran through Lucy like an Olympic runner, all stemming from the same root that said, "_Brother_?" Lucy gaped at the cheeky boy. "You have a _brother_?"

"Uhhh yeah?" his head tilted in confusion. "You didn't know?"

"OF COURSE I DIDN'T KNOW!" she snapped and all the tears she had shed for _Angel Beats!_ had evaporated thanks to her fiery anger. "YOU NEVER MENTIONED YOU HAD A BROTHER!"

"Oh," he scratched his head before cheekily smiling, "Well I have a brother!"

She rolled her eyes and then said, "But I thought you were all by yourself after your adoptive father died!" she flinched at her words, mentally cursing herself for being so casual with about his dead father.

"I was," he simply answered. "But about a year ago, I was walking to the market and some guy shouted, '_Natsu_?' And I turned around and I see some random dude starin' at me and then he says my name again and starts crying."

"Uhh?" Lucy frowned, not quite understanding his story.

"And then he tries hugging me and tells me he's my brother and how he thought I was dead."

"..."

"And then he offered me a place to live and now here I am! Living with my brother. He's a bit weird—like super weird—like he makes you look normal by comparison. He's sorta like a Satanist or something... And he has a bunch of cults and they worship him and everything. And he likes to call himself Zer—"

"WAIT A SECOND!" Lucy stopped him. "Let me get this straight. Some random stranger comes up to you and tells you he is your brother and you go live with him. No questions asked?"

"Well he knew my name!" Natsu exclaimed with annoyance, as though that made everything alright. "And he's rich! Why would I question some rich dude claiming to be my brother?"

"Wow, you are really something else," she shook her head, unable to comprehend this whole outrageous story.

"It's sorta like I'm living on my own still," he said rather quietly, ignoring Lucy's comment. "I don't see much of him. He's usually out wandering somewhere for like days at a time. His followers stay here to cook and clean, but still it's pretty lonely." Then he beamed, "That's why I got Happy!"

"Well I guess you're sort of like my Happy," Lucy mused more to herself.

"Hmm?" he cocked his head to the side, waiting for her to continue.

"I was so lonely in real life," she elaborated, playing with the ends of her hair, unable to look at him, "and I didn't even realize how lonely I was in my online life as well. But then I met you..." She paused to breathe before continuing, clasping her hands firmly together, "Don't get me wrong, I had friends, like Levy and the others in our squad, but I wasn't close to them. And when I close my eyes and try to think about my life before you, it feels lonely."

His silence was unsettling, but Lucy did her best to ignore that squirming feeling that settled in the pit of her stomach.

"So thank you, Natsu," she smiled, finally meeting his dark abyss eyes. "Thank you for being my first real friend."

Natsu gave her an eye-squinting, fanged tooth smile that melted her heart. "I should be saying that to you, Lucy!"

"Really?" she blinked.

"Don't sound so surprised," he muttered.

"Sorry! It's just that... I thought—"

"I didn't have any internet friends before you—well there was Lisanna, but my friendship with her was nowhere near comparable to ours... And everyone else I talked to either put me down all the time or treated me like I was some super cool person, who was too cool to talk to."

Lucy blushed, knowing exactly which category she had once belonged to.

"Even in real life, I kinda ditched my friends. I don't hang out with them like used to. I don't want to hang out with them," he stated. "They're so boring."

"Natsu..."

"So thank you, Lucy," he said softly, "for being my first real friend." His eyes suddenly widened. "Ahh shit! I really have to go!"

And then he abruptly hung up.

Lucy sat there thinking quietly for a good few minutes.

She called him her friend.

He called her his friend.

"Well this is going nowhere..." she said with her shoulders sulking.

"Nattssssuuu~," Mira typed into the group chat, "mind telling us who exactly you _like-like_?"

"Yeah, c'mon, Natsu," Cana wrote. "Spill."

"Natsu like-likes someone?!" Levy asked.

"Do we even have to ask?" Gray questioned. "I think it's pretty obvious."

"But it's more fun to make him say it," Erza explained.

"Who am I to disagree with Erza?" Gray replied. "OI, ASSHOLE, ANSWER THE DAMN QUESTION ALREADY!"

Lucy knew Natsu wasn't going to answer anytime soon since he had only just hung up. Her heart was in turmoil, like a stormy sea... If he really liked-liked her, then why hasn't he asked her out? "Someone help me," she prayed into her palms.

And her prayers were answered in the form of a video chat request.

****XOXO****

The video chat loaded quickly, revealing a boy with unruly, spiked black hair that managed to cover one of his dark eyes today. "Gray?"

"Heya, Lucy," he gave a slight wave, though Lucy didn't notice because her gaze had drifted down to his chest.

"No shirt today, I see," she beamed as sweat dripped down her forehead.

"I already lost five of them within the last hour," he shrugged. "So what would be the point of putting another one on?"

"Ahh," she nodded, scratching her forehead as she silently thanked whomever was responsible for her not having a stripping habit. "I see... So uh what's up?"

"Just wanted to see how you were doing after Flame Brain confessed he like-likes you."

"He told you?!"

"Nope," Gray smirked, leaning back in his seat while Lucy wanted to go jump off a cliff for falling for his bluff. "So

Natsu finally confessed after that whole name-drawing incident?" he asked, referring to when Lucy accidentally sent Natsu her notes with Natsu's name doodled all over.

"No," she pouted, rubbing her left forearm. "I confessed first."

"_Again_?!" Gray gawked, with his only visible eye turning oval. "I mean I know your first time wasn't an actual confession, but I thought he woulda done _something_ ...But kudos to you for making the first official move."

She flushed at his praise and said, sounding all flustered, "Well he was being super sweet and I was kinda drugged so it just slipped out!"

"Drugged?" he gawped, his cheeks reddening by the minute, "I didn't know you—"

"I DON'T DO DRUGS!" she cried out, horrified by how bad her last statement must have sounded. "IT WAS MEDICATION FOR MY APPENDICITIS!" And then she went on to reiterate all that had transpired the past few days.

"So now what?" Gray asked.

"Hmm?"

"Are you and Natsu like...ya know? _Dating_?"

She felt as though he just doused her in boiling hot water with the way she reacted and not to mention, how hot and sweaty she felt all of sudden. "_Da-Dating_?"

"Yeah, like boyfriend and girlfriend?" he asked, crossing his arms over his bare icy, pale chest.

"Well—you see—"

"You guys aren't boyfriend and girlfriend," he deadpanned, seeing right through her.

She guiltily hung her head, "No—Well, actually, I don't _know_ ..."

"How do you not know if you're dating someone?" Gray inquired incredulously.

"He never asked me out!" she cried. "And he hasn't brought it up since!"

"Idiot," he grumbled under his breath, while clenching his fist. "Well how come you haven't brought it up?"

Her face was on fire at this point, "BECAUSE THAT'S SO EMBARRASSING TO ASK SOMEONE IF WE'RE DATING!"

"Gah, Lucy!" he flinched at her outburst.

"I've thought about sending him an anonymous ask!" she mentioned. "BUT I WOULD FEEL SO PATHETIC!"

"You guys are both pathetic, in my opinion," he muttered.

"OH!" the gold flakes in Lucy's brown eyes shone brightly. "I JUST THOUGHT OF AN AMAZING IDEA!"

"And what could that possibly be?" he asked, looking a bit hesitant.

****XOXOX****

He couldn't believe he actually agreed to this...

He really wanted to say _no_ , but the way she was looking at him...

Gray strolled the halls at school, keeping his hands firmly in his pants pockets.

He had no idea where to find the bastard, but suddenly he overheard, "Oh my God! Did you hear what happened? _Mest-sensei bit another student!_ And the student apparently punched him!"

"Well that's a good place to look," Gray muttered quietly, finding his way to the science classroom where Mest-sensei taught.

"Oiiii, he bit me and wouldn't let go!" he could hear an annoyingly high voice exclaim as he rounded the corner. "What was I supposed to do?!"

Target spotted.

"We will deal with your punishment in just a minute!" A snippy-voiced teacher snapped. A smile broke onto Gray's face as he watched the boy stomp his foot on the ground in an angry manner.

"Really? Punching a teacher, Natsu?" Gray asked, leaning against a locker that was right behind the said boy. "You can't be _that_ stupid..."

"WAH!" Natsu jumped a few feet before glaring, "THE HELL?! GRAY! WHY ARE YOU CREEPIN' UP ON ME LIKE THAT?!"

"Oi, do you gotta be so loud?" Gray glowered. "Anyway, I was looking for you."

Natsu's unnaturally slanted eyes narrowed, "Why would you be looking for me?"

"Well because," Gray looked away from Natsu's piercing stare. Was he really going to do this? "I wanted to... _talk _."

"Alright, so let's talk," Natsu uncaringly shrugged.

"I was just thinking..." he said, licking his very chapped lips, due to him always being around ice, "you know that anonymous ask you answered the other day?"

"Which one?" Natsu asked, his eyes darting to the side as though he were trying to remember.

"The one where you said you _like-like_ someone," he clarified.

"What about it?"

"Well you never answered us in the group chat about who the person you like-like is," Gray went on, beating around the bush. Why is this so awkward?_ he wondered, as sweat began to dampen his black bangs.

"I know," Natsu haughtily smirked.

Gray couldn't let Natsu know that Lucy sent him since she begged him not to tell, so with a deep breath he said, "Well I think I have an idea who that person is ..." He removed his hands from his uniform pockets. "I mean I know Mira and the others always tease it," he put his hands back into his pockets, "And well I think that person might like-like you back...but they might be scared because—"

"Gray..." Natsu put a tight smile on his face as he cut him off. "I-I'm flattered you like me, but I'm not interested in you like that—hell, I would never be interested in you _like that_ because I kinda hate you. And I know everyone gets annoying shipping us together and all, but they're only jokes—at least I _think_ they are...It gets hard to tell some times..." Natsu paused, scratching his ear. "Anyways, I hope we can remain friends- _rivals_ without _this_," he gestured between them, "coming between us."

Gray blinked, _What is he going on about_?

And then it hit him like a block of ice. "WHAT THE HELL!?" he exclaimed, his eyes bulging out from his sockets. "I'M NOT HITTING ON YOU, YOU DUMBASS! I'M JUST TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHO YOU LIKE!"

"YEAH LIKE I'M GONNA BELIEVE THAT! 'CUZ WHY THE HELL ARE YOU SO INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT WHO I LIKE?!"

Well Gray wasn't going to snitch on Lucy at this point so it was time for plan B. "BECAUSE I THINK YOU LIKE LUCY!"

"WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING?!"

"BE-BECAUSE I LIKE LUCY!"

"Heh?" Natsu froze in place, his jaw hanging open.

Gray gritted his teeth as he looked away, "I wanted to know if you liked her because—because I want to...ask her... _out_."

All the color drained from Natsu's face, as he frantically asked, "What about Juvia?!"

"What about Juvia?" Gray forced himself to shrug as though he were indifferent.

"Don't you like her?! Aren't you meeting up with her at Comic Con?" Natsu looked desperate at this point, almost like he was begging. But what was he begging for?

"Pshhh who cares about Juvia," Gray's gut twisted as he tried to sound nonchalant. "I like Lucy. Always have..."

Natsu's teeth clenched and his eyes were unwavering.

"Anyway," Gray tugged awkwardly on his collar, feeling oddly warm for once. "Just wanted to know if you liked her because then I would back off." He started to walk off, but not without calling over his shoulder. "I'm going to ask her out tonight probably."

Idiot! Gray's mind screamed. Why wasn't Natsu charging at him or anything?! Does he really not like Lucy _that way?_

His chest ached at the thought of breaking the news to her.

****XOXOX****

Natsu stood still for a good thirty seconds trying to comprehend what had just happened.

Gray likes Lucy.

Gray's going to ask Lucy out.

There was no way Lucy would say yes to Gray, right? His hammering heart seemed to disagree. Why didn't he just answer Gray? Well knew why he didn't—why he _couldn't_.

Natsu was so shocked by the conversation that he lost all ability to talk. Also, he was the type of person who kept his inner most private thoughts locked away tightly in his heart. To speak those thoughts—that was something Natsu was incapable of doing.

But he had to make himself capable in order to stop Gray...

"GRRRAYYYY!" he was just about to charge after the icy bastard, but a hand gripped his shoulder, halting his movements. "Huh?"

"Natsu Dragneel, your detention starts now!"

Natsu's eyes grew panicky. "NOO! WAIT! GIMME A FEW MINUTES!"

"Detention waits for no one. Come with me!"

"SHIT—GRAY!"

"No cursing!"

"DAMN IT!"

"That's a curse too."

"NO IT'S NOT!"

****XOXOX****

Natsu paced and paced around his room as he waited for Lucy to pick up the video chat.

"Why isn't she answering, Happy!?" he whined in frustration at the salamander who sitting on his laptop. His stomach clenched. What if Gray was asking her out _right now_?

Looks like the hole in his wall was going to have a friend...

His _Skype_ made a noise.

"Can't video chat right now. What's up?"

"LUCY!" he messaged back. "DID YOU TALK TO GRAY AT ALL TODAY?!"

"Yeah? Why"

His blood ran cold, "DID HE ASK YOU ANYTHING?!"

"No?" she replied. "Why?"

"GOOD!" he breathed in relief.

"You're being weird," she commented, causing Natsu to laugh despite his panic.

"He didn't ask her out, Happy! But now I gotta think of something...Something that will make me look better than t

hat stupid guy in case he does ask her out..."

His eyes searched around his room, gazing past his autographed Haru drawing and right over his Comic Con ticket that was on his dresser and then over his—He glanced back at his ticket and gasped.

"Happy, I just thought of the most awesomest plan ever!" he exclaimed with a grin creeping onto his face as he explained his foolproof plan.

Happy took a couple of steps back.

"NO, IT'S NOT A BAD IDEA, HAPPY!" Natsu snapped.

Happy stared.

"PSHH WHO ASKED YOU ANYWAY!"

"Call me when you're ready to video chat!" was the last thing he messaged before grabbing his ticket and dashing out of his room.

****XOXOX****

Lucy sat in her bed, debating whether she should ask Natsu to video chat. He seemed pretty eager to chat, but she didn't think she could handle seeing him.

Gray hadn't messaged her all day. So she took that as a bad sign. Maybe Natsu meant _like-like_ as some sort of _best friends_ kind of thing. No, that couldn't be it... Natsu definitely knew what _like-like_ meant that night when she was in the hospital.

"Maybe he's not ready for the next level...Am I even ready?" she asked herself.

She slowly inhaled and exhaled before she called him and Natsu picked up the second after.

He wore a huge grin on his face that seemed to reach his eyes, "Yo, Lucy!"

"Hi, Natsu," she blushed as her heartrate immediately sky rocketed.

"Okay, so I was looking at my Comic Con ticket," he held up a piece of paper to the screen, "and you'll never guess what I found stuck to it."

"What?" she asked, unsure of where he was going with this.

"A SECOND TICKET!" he holds up another piece of paper with his other hand. "TWO _TICKETS_, LUCY! _I HAVE _TWO COMIC CON TICKETS_"

"What?" her eyes rounded with disbelief as she stared at the tickets in his hands. How could the ticketing place make a mistake like that? Or did Natsu accidentally buy two?

"So what do you say?" he beamed, looking at her expectantly.

"What?" that seemed to be the only word in her vocabulary.

"Will you go to Comic Con with me?" his smile widened.

Her heart stopped working. "Wait, you're giving it to me?" she gasped, not quite comprehending the situation.

"Jeez, Lucy," Natsu teased, rolling his eyes, "you can be so slow sometimes. Yes, I'm giving you the ticket."

A squeak escaped her lips, "Are you serious?! OH MY—NATSU!" she cupped a hand over her mouth as tears of joy speckled in her vision. "I LOV—" she froze, terrified at what almost slipped out of her mouth. But the terror vanished quickly since Natsu didn't seem to notice. Swallowing, she hastily corrected herself. "TH-THANK YOU!"

"No problem, Lucy," he saluted as his mind reeled back to what he thought she had almost said...

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Eep! This is like the first non-filler chapter in like such a long time!****

****WAHH THREE DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEWS!****

****AND LUCY HAS A COMIC CON TICKET!?! ;) ****

****MUAHAHA THANK YOU FOR READING!****

****Oh I keep forgetting to mention, I pretty much completely changed the Comic Con process because how it really works is too annoying to explain.****

****Thank you all so much! You have all been so sweet and patient with dealing with my filler chapters :)****

****So I hope this chapter turned out alright!****

****Now I have a test to study for -_-****

****Good luck to those who have tests also!****

54. Chapter 54

****So after almost 6 months of writing on this website, I have finally reached over a thousand followers! Thank you all so much! I'm permanently screaming over this!****

****Hope you all like this chapter extra long chapter :)****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"So glad I stopped wearing headphones while talking to you..." Natsu sweated, struggling to keep his smile on his face with Lucy audaciously screaming her head off. "Just when I think you can't get any weirder..."

Lucy was going to Comic Con—_no, she was going to meet her friends._

Was this real life?

She reached behind and grabbed her _Fairy Tail_ guild mark pillow, pressed it to her mouth, and screamed against it

.

"Oi, is this what you mean when you talk about screaming into your pillow?"

But instead of answering the perplexed looking boy, Lucy hung up on him and instantly went to the group chat. She needed to share the news otherwise she was going to explode. Thus she initiated a group video session.

Natsu picked up first and stated firmly, "It's rude to hang up on people."

"Debatable," Lucy winked.

"Not really," he grumbled, combing a hand through his pink ruffles as he averted his gaze.

Levy appeared next, wearing her blue, pixie-like hair tied up in a bun, sitting on some type of fancy couch with an elegant-looking, fine-polished bookshelf standing behind her, making Lucy wonder if she was at the library or if this was another part of the girl's bedroom. "Hi, Lucy! Hi, Natsu!"

"H!" Lucy waved.

"Yo, _Mira_" Natsu waved with a condescending smirk on his face.

"Seriously?!" Levy exclaimed with her brown eyes gleaming with disbelief. "After all this time? Ughhh!" the tiny girl slapped her forehead, "I'm not normally violent, but honestly I kind of want to hurt you..."

Lucy laughed at that, trying to imagine Levy hurtling herself at the cheeky boy.

"I'm only kidding, Levy!" Natsu gave her his trademark, eye squinting grin. Even though it wasn't directed at Lucy, it still managed to make her stomach feel weird.

"I doubt he's kidding," A deep, dry voice muttered. "I mean he _is_ an idiot, after all."

"And you're a nudist," Natsu's dark eyes leered. "Can't you put a shirt on?"

"Oi, shut it, Flame Queen," Gray glared with his one visible eye. "I was working on one of my ice sculptures."

"Who the hell works on an ice sculpture while shirtless?" he asked as though that were the stupidest thing he had ever heard.

"How else am I supposed to work on an ice sculpture?" Gray asked as though _that_ was the stupidest question ever asked.

"My, My! They're flirting already?!" Mira arrived in her beautiful glory. Her silvery hair framed her face perfectly making it look as though the moon permanently shined upon her. Unlike last time, Mira had her bangs tied up. "Hi, everyone!"

"More like arguing to me," Erza said scornfully as she polished a very pointy-looking sword, with her scarlet hair falling gracefully over one of her eyes just like Gray's hair.

"Nahhh," Cana said, sloshing her beer mug in her hand. "Definitely flirting."

"More like neither," the boys muttered, looking awkwardly away from the screen.

"Anyway," Cana said, steering the conversation away, "You couldn't have called a few minutes later, Lucy? We were just getting to the good part!"

"Good part of what?" Lucy's brows furrowed downwards.

"Haru x Musica smut," she gleamed and then leaned forwards as though she were about to spill a juicy secret and confessed, "I found this _really_ hot fanfic—"

"Hence why I was working on my ice sculpture," Gray quickly interrupted, looking very disgruntled. "They wouldn't shut up about in the group chat..."

Erza looked calm, though to Lucy's astonishment, she could make a big of pink on the girl's cheeks. Mira smiled innocently while Levy wiggled about, while holding a heavy blush on her cheeks.

"There's just something disturbing about Haru and Musica getting together..." Gray continued with a shudder, making Lucy wonder if he was shuddering from the idea of Haru x Musica smut or if he was cold from being shirtless.

"Yeah," Natsu shuddered in agreement. "Maybe it's 'cuz I keep picturing it as me and you..."

"Same," Gray tugged at his black locks, as though it would rip the thought out of his head.

Canan let out a loud snort before bending forwards, allowing her shiny brown hair to cascade around her face as she chuckled away.

"Oh my!" Mira squeaked, her blue eyes glistened like the setting sun over the ocean.

"What?" Gray and Natsu simultaneously asked with their eyes narrowing.

"Well this is certainly interesting development..." Erza mused, running a finger down the hilt of her sword.

"Every time I think Gratsu is over," Mira smirked, "it comes right back."

Lucy and Levy ducked their heads down as they shamefully giggled, fully understanding what was going on.

"Cut the crappppp," Natsu groaned, wearing an absurdly adorable pout on his face that made Lucy laugh even harder.

Levy, however, had mercy as she explained, "You guys were imagining each other in a smut fic together."

Instinctively, Natsu and Gray went to protest, with their right index fingers raised, but Levy's words sunk in quickly, causing them to freeze up like one of Gray's ice sculptures, with their mouths gapping slightly and a blush ever-growing on their faces. Everyone else was toppled over with laughter.

"You-You guys are mean perverts!" Natsu scornfully choked.

"Why are we even video chatting?" Gray muttered, looking away from the screen.

"Oh right!" Giddiness overtook Lucy, making her feel fervently buzzed and shaky, "I called you all here because..." She for a dramatic effect, before squealing, "I'M GOING TO COMIC CON!"

"WHAT?!" Everyone, minus Natsu—who looked rather proud, gasped with their jaws brazenly hanging open, imitating a broken hinge.

"NATSU GOT ME A TICKET TO COMIC CON!" she gushed, her face heating up like she was drunk on happiness.

"_NATSU_?!" they gawked, all looking even more incredulous than prior.

"Yup!" Natsu beamed, showing off his sharp canines.

"Oh my gosh, Lucy!" Levy screeched, nearly jumping out of her seat. "I'm so happy for you! We're finally going to meet!"

"I know!"

"This means I get to squeeze Lucy's boobs sooner than I thought..." Cana gasped to herself.

Lucy blanched, "Seriously, Cana?"

"What?" she asked innocently. "I just need to know how big they are...unless you wanna take your top off—"

"NO WAY!" Lucy flushed, her arms hastily covered her chest.

"So wait, _Natsu_ got you a ticket?" Gray looked the most surprised, making Lucy wonder what did go on between him and Natsu when she set him on that mission earlier.

Natsu slammed his hands on his desk and taunted, "HAH! IN YOUR FACE, GRAY!"

Why is he rubbing it in to Gray? Lucy's face scrunched up, not quite understanding the situation.

"Why is it in my face?" Gray frowned, looking as puzzled as Lucy.

"How did you manage to find another ticket?" Mira asked, tilting her head to the right.

"What?" Natsu blinked stupidly.

"Yeah," Erza said, folding her arms together, "how did you manage to find another ticket?"

"He could have bought it from private sellers," Levy suggested, looking a bit confused.

"They were damn expensive the last time I checked," Gray mentioned, putting a finger to his cheek.

"Maybe he stole it," Cana winked, before taking a sip of her beer.

"Where the hell could I steal one from?" Natsu rhetorically asked, throwing his palms up.

"Then where did you get the ticket, Ash Head?" Gray challenged, leaning back in his seat, which revealed a delicate looking sculpture of a pretty girl in the background. She sort of resembled the last sculpture he did of _DropOfRain_.

"They accidentally sent me two," Natsu shrugged, stretching his arms out to leisurely crack them.

"They sent you two?!" Mira sat up on her purple bed. "How could they make a mistake like that?"

"I dunno!" Natsu threw his arms up out of agitation.

"That doesn't sound very likely..." Levy murmured, looking unconvinced.

"I can't picture them making a mistake like that," Erza said, looking as skeptical as Levy.

"Why are you guys givin' me a hard time over this?!" Natsu glared, his knuckles turning white. "You didn't question Levy when she got her ticket!"

And Natsu had a point there, in Lucy's opinion. Why were they giving him the third degree over this? It's not like he would lie about having an extra ticket.

"Uhh," Levy smiled tensely, "can we leave me out of this?"

"Because we don't know anything about Gajeel," Cana started.

"And your point?" Natsu looked impatient as he bit the inside of his cheek.

"We know a lot about _you_," Gray finished.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Natsu scowled.

Gray's eyes darkened as he said, "I know exactly what you did _," Natsu._ "

Natsu's scowl didn't waver in the slightest as he met Gray's piercing stare head on.

" _What did Natsu do_?" Mira whispered, looking very intrigued.

" _Dunno_," Cana whispered back, then she chugged the rest of her beer.

Gray jumped out of his seat and announced, "HE ACCIDENTALLY BOUGHT _TWO TICKETS_!"

"What?!" Everyone, including Lucy, sucked in a breath.

"That actually makes sense..." Lucy said lowly. It was like a lightbulb went off in her head. How could she actually believe that Natsu was accidentally sent two tickets?

"How do you accidentally buy two tickets?" Levy wondered.

"Well this is Natsu we are talking about," Erza answered as though that made all the sense in the world and everyone seemed to nod in union.

"THE HELL IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!" Natsu cried, his face flaring up.

"What do you think it means, you dope?" Gray sneered as he unbuttoned his jeans.

"Gray, your pants," Levy pointed out, but Gray wasn't listening as he kicked them off, showing off parts of his icy blue boxers.

"I'M NOT THAT STUPID TO ACCIDENTALLY BUY TWO TICKETS!" Natsu roared, standing up.

"BUT YOU'RE STUPID ENOUGH TO PUNCH A TEACHER!" Gray roared back.

"You punched a teacher?!" Lucy ogled, wondering how violent he is. Punching his wall...punching teachers...

Natsu sweated as he exclaimed, "I ONLY PUNCHED HIM 'CUZ HE _BIT ME_!" He pointed an accusing finger at his head.

"YOUR TEACHER _BIT YOU_?!" her jaw smacked her head. How was she supposed to believe that?

"Oi," Gray glared, "you _know_ Mest-sensei _needs to know_."

"What does Mest-sensei need to know?" Levy inquired with her face matching everyone else's horrified expressions.

"I'm scared to find out," Lucy shivered, not liking the fact that Gray didn't deny Natsu's statement.

Natsu bashed his face against his desk and before lifting it back up, "He was walkin' 'round the classroom in the middle of his lecture and then he just stops in front of my desk and says, ' _I NEED TO KNOW!' " _

"But what does he _need to know_?" Levy asked again.

But Natsu ignored her and went on with his story, "Next thing I know, MY HEAD'S IN HIS DAMN MOUTH! SO OF COURSE I PUNCHED THE BASTARD!"

Everyone's eyes shifted around as though they were trying to figure out how to react to the story.

And then Lucy laughed, breaking the stunned silence. A teacher biting a student in the middle of class? Well that was just creepy, but a teacher biting _Natsu_, now that was utterly ridiculous. She fell over onto her side, not even caring about the pain from her still-sore stomach.

"Luccyyyyy!" Natsu glowered with his eyes turning impossibly darker than his natural shade. "I'll take back my ticket if you don't stop laughing!"

" _Natsu!" _ Erza seethed, raising her sword pointed towards the screen in a very menacing manner. "You _punched a teacher_?! THAT WAS VERY DISRESPECTFUL!"

"OI! IT WAS VERY DISRESPECTFUL FOR HIM TO BIT ME IN THE FIRST PLACE!"

"BUT HE _NEEDED TO KNOW_!" Erza stabbed her sword forcibly down on her desk, piercing through the wood. Everyone in the chat jumped up in pure terror, as though Erza could hurt them through the screen.

"I DON'T CARE IF HE NEEDED TO KNOW!" Natsu wailed, throwing his head back.

" _I still don't get what he needed to know_ ," Levy murmured.

" _Same_ ," Lucy murmured back while wiping away the tears from laughing so much.

Natsu plopped back down in his chair, pulling his legs up in a crisscrossed style. "Anyways, it doesn't matter where or how I got an extra ticket." His eyes looking dangerously sharp and Lucy found herself ensnared by them, as though he were talking to her directly. "All that matters is that Lucy's smiling."

Her breath caught in her throat.

"And if Lucy's smiling, then I'm smiling!" A blindingly bright smile spread upon his lips, making Lucy's heart go berserk.

"Aww," Mira cooed, placing her hand over her mouth. "When he says stuff like this, he makes it so hard to ship Gratsu!"

"I know!" Cana exclaimed, looking moved by Natsu's heartfelt words.

"Sorry, Natsu," Erza smiled gently. "You're right. All that matters is that Lucy gets to meet us."

Erza's words worked like a trigger because suddenly Lucy was squealing like crazy. "I'M GOING TO COMIC CON!"

And everyone else joined in Lucy's cheers.

"Have you started thinking about your cosplay yet?!" Levy asked.

The words hit Lucy like a brick as she screamed, "WAHHH I GET TO COSPLAY?! OHMYGOSH! WHO SHOULD I BE?! MAYBE I'LL BE JULIA—THE REQUIP MAGE!"

"Uhh..." Erza frowned, pulling her sword out of her desk.

"But all that armor might look ridiculous on me...MAYBE I'LL BE THE TAKEOVER MAGE!" Lucy gushed, picturing herself covered in demon-like veiny stuff. "OR THE SOLID-SCRIPT MAGE?"

Mira and Levy both sweated, "Don't you think it would be a good idea for you to be Elie—"

"I KNOW!" Lucy gasped, sitting up straighter. "I'LL BE THE WATER MAGE— _REINA_!"

"Errr..." Gray awkwardly coughed. "Actually Juvia is going as her...Since, you know, I'm going as Musica..."

"Hmmm?" Natsu blinked at Gray, "Thought you said didn't like Juvia?"

"When did I say that?" he scoffed.

"Earlier when you—"

"Dunno what you're talking 'bout," Gray said coolly, leaving Natsu looking puzzled, but that puzzled look vanished, replaced by raging anger, "WAIT A SECOND—"

"ORRR MAYBE I'LL COSPLAY AS A GENDER BENT HARU!"

"NO WAY!" Natsu raised a fist. "And 'sides, you don't have a choice who you're gonna be!"

"I don't?" she cocked her head to the side.

Natsu devilishly smirked, "Well since we co-own a salamander named Happy together, it's only right for you to cosplay as Elie!"

"Doesn't that technically make me _Celia_ since she and Haru hatched Happy from an egg?"

"THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANTTTT!" Natsu groaned, and then he calmly said, "I meant we're a team so it just wouldn't be right without you bein' Elie. It's like the idea of goin' to Comic Con without you. Just doesn't feel right..."

"Natsu..." she absentmindedly twisted her hair around her finger as her heart painfully pulsed. How was he so good with words?

"Aww! He's asking her to cosplay with her!" Mira cheered, but Lucy was too hypnotized by Natsu's blazingly warm eyes.

"So like I said," he smiled, "you haveta be Elie."

"Okay," she smiled back.

XOXOX

* * *

Celia is a Rave Master who I made equal to Lisanna

YAYY! THEY'RE COSPLAYING TOGETHER!

And Happy Birthday to the person who asked for an extra fluffy chapter for their birthday! Sorry it's not extra fluffy, but I hope you liked the fluff!

And for those who don't already know and are interested: I wrote two OneShots recently, _ **Tattoos of the Soul** _ **and** _ **Closet Snogging.** _

AND OKAY THAT LAST MANGA CHAPTER WAS INSANE, CAN WE ALL AGREE UPON THAT?!

Thank you for reading!

Have a happy and lovely day, cuties!

55. Chapter 55

Sorry for the delay, I'm sick and I have vertigo so it's kinda hard to write when everything's just lopsided lol :')

But anyway, enjoy this terrible chapter *cries because this is just terrible and I feel like I need to post something otherwise you guys will hate me*

* * *

XOXOX

Going back to school after almost two full weeks without it was a nightmare for Lucy. She had missed so much work that there was no way she would be able to catch up. And _of course_ all her teachers expect her to be caught up by tomorrow, giving her tons and tons of missed work. It turned out her father had only brought her home two days' worth of homework...

To make matters worse, no one asked her how she was feeling and no one even seemed to notice she was gone. She tried her hardest not to care because of her innate hatred for her fellow classmates, but alas, she cared. It felt like her existence didn't matter and that was like a stab to the heart. And what made the day even worse was that the _Skype_ app had malfunctioned, leaving her completely alone.

So during her lunch break in the library, Lucy had vented out her pain in a bitter oneshot and managed to post it before the bell rang, leaving her 2000ish followers to revel in her misery.

But now she was home, on her bedroom floor to be exact, staring at her math homework like it were some foreign language—which it might as well have been with the strange arrangements of letters.

Skype was idling in the background as everyone did their homework together, and by everyone, it was only Levy, Erza, and Gray who were online. All diligently working—well Gray was playing on his 3DS and oddly enough, the background music of whatever game he was playing was pretty relaxing.

Or it would have been, if Lucy weren't so stressed out...

"Okay so all I have to do is sum everything up and then divide it by the total and then square it—no I have to _minus_ it by the mean and _then_ I square it...ARGGHH WHY ISN'T THIS WORKING OUT?!" she wailed, chucking her pitiful textbook at her dresser. The noise startled poor Plue, who ran over to Lucy in a panic.

She comfortingly petted him, "What am I going to do, Plue?"

The lizard flicked its tongue out.

"Thinking about Comic Con isn't going to get this homework done," she huffed, pulling her phone out to go on _Tumblr._ "I need a break..."

"Lucy's talking to herself again?" a voice broke through her frazzled mess of a mind—a voice that made her heart and her body leap in surprise as she whirled around to Natsu smirking through the screen.

"Yupp," Gray, Erza, and Levy said dryly, keeping their gazes concentrated on the tasks they were doing.

"Was not!" Lucy's face warmed as she indignantly puffed out her chest.

"Not surprised," Natsu shrugged, dismissing Lucy's comment as he pulled out a notebook.

"I was talking to Plue!" she insisted, pointing at the lounging lizard.

"Sure, sure," he playfully retorted causing a scowl to dance upon her face. But he wasn't looking, instead, he was working on his own homework.

She went back to her phone and scrolled down her activity. She and saw a purplely-pink box which indicated she was tagged in something.

It was vibrantly striking drawing of Haru cupping Elie's face as he leaned in to kiss her underneath the moonlight with a caption that read, " _CelestialMage,_ you seem down today with that oneshot you posted! Have some Haru x Elie to cheer you up!"

A small smile manage to pop up on her face weary face.

"Thank you so much, Wendy! This is amazing!"

"You're feeling down?" _DragonSlayer_ reblogged right after. Lucy raised a brow at the webcam, but Natsu's gaze was focused downwards.

"Not anymore," she replied back, "thanks to Wendy!" Though that was a lie. Sure the drawing cheered her up, but she was still very upset as she eyed her horrendous math homework.

"Glad you like it ^_^," Wendy wrote back.

"Juvia is glad _SkyMagicDragon_ cheered Love Rival #2 up and not Gray-sama," _DropsOfRain_ added in.

Lucy's eye twitched just as Gray sneezed.

"Though," Juvia continued, "Juvia thinks Love Rival #1 should be the one who cheers Love Rival #2 up."

She sputtered as a brilliant rosy blush bloomed on her face. Her eyes fell on Natsu, who looked a bit disgruntled, causing her heart to twinge.

"Loke thinks he should be the one who cheers Love Rival #2 up," _LokeTheLion_ chimed in.

"Does my beautiful waifu need a selfie of yours truly?"

"...No thanks," she blanched.

"No need to be bashful," Loke replied, "I'll post one in a second, bae. By the way, what's your _Skype_? You forgot to give it to me the last time I asked."

Lucy snorted, _right I 'forgot_' "Actually I didn't forget and please don't post another selfie..."

Loke's only reply was a selfie of him in a black suit with a maroon tie. He pointed a hand at his heart, "A selfie for the keeper of my heart~."

"I still think you look like a cat," Natsu commented and Lucy had to admit, Loke did look like a feline with the way his hair pointed up like cat ears. She found herself laughing in no time.

Natsu shot her an amused look while Erza on the other hand, looked furious. " _Quiet_."

Everyone flinched and Lucy hastily muttered out, "Sor—"

" _Shhhh_."

" _Eep!_" Lucy diligently went back to work, but that was a lie since she had no idea what she was doing.

Out of almost two weeks work of homework, Lucy couldn't even get past question number one... "Ughhh!" She pulled at the roots of her hair. Tears prickled her vision. She was on the verge of a mental breakdown. "I can't do this..." she muttered as a stray tear dripped down onto her sheet of paper.

"What's wrong, Lucy?" Natsu asked and suddenly all eyes were on her.

"I can't figure out my math homework," she confessed to the chat, forcing her tears to recede. "I missed too much of school."

"Ooh, this is why I never miss school." Levy winced. "What are you going to do?"

"Cry," she confessed, doing her best to keep her eyes dry.

"When I finish all my homework," Levy said with sympathy, "I could try to help you."

"Noo," Lucy put her hand up, feeling bashful, "I couldn't ask you to do that. I'm a lost cause."

"Pshh no you're not," Natsu chimed in, grinning, "I'll help you."

"I think she needs someone with a brain," Gray sighed, lowering his 3DS. "Maybe I can help?"

Natsu pointed a finger at the screen, "I thought you said she needed someone with a brain?"

"So you're admitting you don't have one then?" Gray sneered, looking awfully cocky with a smug grin plastered on his lips.

"Heh?" Natsu blinked, looking thrown off.

"You didn't deny my statement," Gray elucidated.

"You didn't deny mine either," Natsu pointed out.

"I— _shit_," Gray muttered under his breath, snapping his finger.

"AHAAHAH LOOKS LIKE YOUR SKULL IS JUST AN EMPTY ICE SHELL!"

"AND YOUR SKULL IS JUST A CRADLE FOR MELTED BRAIN TISSUE!"

"This is going nowhere," Lucy exhaled, pinching the skin between her eyebrows.

"Right?" Levy copied her motion.

"I could always help you, Lucy," Erza offered, looking very confident with a reassuring smile on her face. "No one ever fails with me as their tutor," she boasted. "Though there was this one kid...but I _knocked_ some sense into him."

Everyone in the chat cringed with fear.

"No-No thanks, Erza!" Lucy tightly smiled, placing her hands up in a frantic manner. "Natsu offered first. So it would be rude if I took you over him..."

Levy raised a shy hand and sheepishly commented, "Actually I offered first."

"I think she just wants private time with Natsu," Cana suggestively winked.

"You think?" Levy awed with big bug eyes.

"That's not it!" Lucy flushed, shamefully knowing very well that, that was exactly _it_.

"Cana," Natsu said, looking confused as he tilted his head slightly, "when did you get here?"

"I was always here," she shrugged.

No one bothered to question her any further.

"So you want Natsu to tutor you, Lucy?" Levy asked.

"Aha well anyone except Erza will do," Lucy cupped her cheek as she nervously smiled.

"Is it because I never gave you feedback on your smut?" Erza asked with a slight pout.

"No—Wait, what?"

"I thought it was lovely, Lucy," her voice grew tender. "It's just that Natsu told us not to say anything about it because it would make you feel uncomfortable."

It was like Lucy's mind imploded; Erza, the Queen of Smut, thought her smut was lovely. "You-you liked my smut?"

"Yes, Lucy," Erza nodded, her one visible eye gave off a look of warmth.

And Lucy pinched herself just to make sure she wasn't dreaming and she dreamily breathed, "Senpai noticed me..."

"What?"

"N-Nothing!"

"We all liked it," Cana added in with a laugh. "It was so _hot_ , which is pretty surprising since _you're_ the one who wrote it, but I guess I always knew you had it in ya..."

"Thanks? I think..." Lucy's brows furrowed as she tried not to dwell too long on what Cana said, but then something struck her. "Wait a second! You and Erza read my smut fic?!"

"I did too," Levy added, looking hesitant.

"And so did Mira," Erza mentioned.

"Oi, how come I haven't read it?" Gray asked and his words set off a bell inside Lucy's head.

Yesterday before Lucy told them about Comic Con, they mentioned they were reading Haru x Musica smut so Gray, coincidentally, wouldn't have been interested, which means.... "SO THAT YAOI SMUT YOU GUYS WERE READING YESTERDAY WAS ACTUALLY _MY FANFIC?!_"

Cana licked her lips and beamed, "Yup!"

And all the blood in her body slowly drained as though there were leeches feasting off of her. They all read her smut ... but how? The only other person who had a copy of her smut was... "NAATSSUU! I'M GOING TO HURT YOU WHEN WE MEET IN PERSON!"

"AHH YOU GUYS WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO TELL HER THAT!" Natsu chastised.

"AND YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO SEND IT TO ANYONE!" Lucy wailed with her face flushing tomato red from embarrassment.

"So do I get to read it now since the whole squad got to?" Gray asked as he tossed his shirt off.

"NO WAY!" Natsu and Lucy both snapped.

"No fair," Gray brooded, going back to his game.

"Anyway, Cana and I would still like to give you a few pointers, Lucy," Erza piped up and then she dragged her finger across the screen like she was using it to keep her place while she read something. "The part where you wrote, " _ She let out a sensual, wonton moan _." It should be _wanton_ not _wonton_. A _wonton_ is a—"

Just when Lucy thought her face couldn't get any redder... "I KNOW WHAT A _WONTON_ IS! IT WAS JUST A TYPO!"

"Also," Erza continued on as though Lucy hadn't said anything, "the scene where Elie grabbed Haru's—"

"NATSU, I SWEAR I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!" Lucy cried as she smashed her face against the floor.

"Seriously," Gray said, looking aggravated as he glared at the screen, "let me read it!"

"Nahh," Natsu lazily smirked.

Cana joined in the critiquing, "Oh what about the part where—"

"I'M HANGING UP!"

"What about tutoring?" Levy asked.

"I DON'T WANT ANY OF YOU TO TUTOR ME!" And with that said, Lucy hung up and then fell flat on her back. "Why does the universe hate me today?"

She forced herself back up onto her knees as she started up her homework process, which involved _actually_ reading the math textbook—which was like reading death.

She did her best to apply it to her homework, but still, she couldn't figure it out. Tears leaked and snot dripped from her nose as she hugged her knees to her chest. "I'm such a failure..."

She punched a frustrated fist at it just as her _Skype_ rang.

Natsu was calling her.

Quickly wiping her tears away, Lucy picked up the video chat. "What do you want, Natsu?" she asked, keeping her gaze away from the screen so that he couldn't see her puffy-red, tear-stained face.

"I feel sorta bad..." he cheekily admitted. "I'll help ya with your homework. I'm not as stupid as everyone thinks I am..."

Her head shot back to the screen, forgetting all about her appearance, "I don't think you're stupid."

He gave her a wide, eye-squinting grin, "Thank—you're crying?" he faltered, looking horrified as his eyes grew round. "GAHH NOW I FEEL EVEN WORSE! I'M SORRY FOR SENDING EVERYONE YOUR SMUT FIC! BUT THEY WOULDN'T STOP BOTHERING ME!"

"I'm not crying over that," Lucy frowned.

"I'M—You're not?"

"Nope," she shook her head.

"Then why are you crying?" he questioned, returning her frown. "Is it 'cuz you had a bad day like what Wendy said?"

"Kinda," she admitted, her shoulders sinking. "I'm crying because I can't figure out my math homework and my teacher expects me to understand everything by tomorrow and then there's a test in two days and I'm so stressed out! And I still have so much work in all my other classes. I don't know what I'm going to do!" Tears started dribble down her cheek.

"Ahh well lucky for you I'm here to help," Natsu beamed. "Now send me your homework." She did as he asked. "Mind if we screen share?" he asked.

"Go ahead."

"Yosh!"

And her screen became his, which was only just a blank drawing pad and then he began to draw out her problem. He talked and drew everything out, step-by-step, going through each problem at an easy pace for Lucy to grasp.

His voice was calm, yet carefree and she found herself falling for him more and more. Chills ran up and down her arms every time he would say her name to check if she were still there or if she had understood what he had just said.

He never once grew impatient whenever Lucy would screw up a problem that she tried on her own and he would give her a big cheer when she solved something right.

And before either of them knew it, they had finished all the problems she had been assigned.

"I really don't know what to say," she started, "but thank you so much, Natsu." Her chest swelled with ever-growing warmth.

"Anytime, Lucy!" he cheekily grinned and then his grin morphed into a scowl as he lectured, "You shouldn't let school get to you like that. It ain't worth crying over."

"I know," she shamefully dropped her head. "Today was just a bad day...No one cared that I was gone for almost two weeks...No one even asked me how I was feeling...Instead, I get dumped with homework and make up tests." And then Lucy looked back at the screen and smiled at Natsu's unreadable expression, "I'm so lucky I have friends like you who offered to help me!"

Natsu smiled back and said, "I'm really glad I beat Gray in helping you!"

"You seem extra competitive with Gray these days," she mused as she carried her laptop onto her bed. "Something happen?" She tucked herself in, cuddling with Natsu's chimchar.

Natsu looked away from the screen as he said, "I don't know if I should tell you this, but Gray confessed something to me yesterday..."

"What did he confess?" Lucy could feel her blood thinning. Gray wouldn't have told Natsu about the mission she sent him on, would he?

"Well at first I thought he was tryin' to ask me out 'cuz he was bein' all weird."

"You can't be serious!"

"You shoulda seen him!" Natsu insisted. "Anyways, it turns out he wasn't—"

"Wow, shocker," Lucy sarcastically gasped.

"—but the acquisition freaked him out so he told me everything."

"WHAT?!" Lucy popped up to a sitting position. " _GRAY TOLD YOU _?!" _Natsu knows?!_

Natsu sat up straighter as he wailed, "WAIT! YOU ALREADY KNOW?!"

"It's all my fault!" Lucy pulled her blanket up to cover her mouth. "I—"

"It's not your fault that Gray likes you," he interrupted, looking surprisingly serious.

"No it—HE _WHAT _?"

"I think he was joking though 'cuz who would like a weirdo like you?" Natsu said, rubbing his chin. His words stung Lucy right in the heart. "And he's cosplaying with Juvia for Comic Con so it wouldn't make sense for him to like you unless you rejected him."

"Ahaha!" Lucy rubbed the back of her head, ruffling up her blonde locks. "Of course Gray was joking because, like you said, who would like a weirdo like me?"

"I didn't mean it like that," he grumbled, rubbing his nose. "I meant it takes a special someone to like a weirdo..." He scratched the back of his neck, as his cheeks turned pink, "Ahh I'm not sure if I'm supposed to say this," Natsu's voice grew deep matching the deep depths of his eyes, "but I really, really like you, Lucy."

She sucked in a breath. Unsure how to respond. So Natsu still likes her..."Wh-What's with you all of a sudden?" she stammered, breaking eye contact for a mere second.

"No-Nothing's with me!" he glowered, "Why are you making this awkward?!"

"I'm not making anything awkward!"

"YES YOU AREEE!" he left his laptop for a few seconds and came back with a black pillow with a red guild mark on it.

"No I'm not!"

He shoved the pillow against his mouth, muffling out, "I'VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFOREE!"

"Done what?"

" _THIS_!"

"I'm not following..."

He lowered the pillow and leered, "'Course you're not."

"What's that supposed to mean?" she sweated.

His features grew serious, causing her heart to race by the sudden change in mood. "Lucy, I—" he smashed the pillow back against his face. "—I CAN'T DO THIS!"

"Can't do _what_?" Her heart was pounding like hammer as she anticipated his answer.

He dropped the pillow to the floor, staring at Lucy with an unwavering, harsh eyes. Lucy bit her lip and then he cried out, "UGHHH!" covering his eyes with his hands, "MY HEART'S DOING THAT SHOUJO STUFF AGAIN!"

"Doki doki?" she blurted out without thinking.

And just like that, Natsu hung up.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Wahh wonder what Natsu was trying to ask Lucy at the end ;)****

****Thank you so much for reading!****

****Hope something great happens to you today!****

56. Chapter 56

****HAPPY OCTOBER! Hehe my birthday month :')****

****I'm still feeling sick, so I got bored and wrote another chapter...hope you all don't mind!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"WAITTTT!" Lucy cried at her blank computer screen. "WHAT WAS HE TRYING TO SAY?!" She ran her fingers through her bangs, unsticking them from her sweaty forehead. "I NEED TO KNOWW! AHH NOW I SOUND LIKE THAT CRAZY TEACHER, MEST!"

She clicked the video camera button and frantically typed out, "NATSU, I'M GONNA KEEP CALLING UNTIL YOU PICK UP!"

No response.

"I'M SERIOUS!" she continued writing. "I KNOW YOU'RE THERE!"

Still nothing.

"ANSWER!"

And then he answered.

She breathed out in relief as she waited for him to load, but the words just rushed out, "I'M SORRY FOR MAKING FUN OF YOU! CAN YOU PLEASE JUST SAY WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO SAY?! I PROMISE I WON'T BRING UP DOKI DOKI EVER A-gain...?" Lucy went rigid as she gawked at the face that appeared on the screen.

It wasn't Natsu.

"Doki doki?" A sickly pale boy with fringy, black hair that rivaled Gray's, was staring right back at her with very dark eyes. He looked rather perplexed with the way he was squinting at her.

"Uh..." she said in stupor, awkwardly gaping.

If she hadn't noticed his mouth moving she would have missed him asking, "What's _doki doki_?"

"It's umm a sound that your uhh heart makes..."

"Oh?" he placed a hand over his clothed chest to feel his own heartbeat.

She bit her lip, as she mentally debated her next words, "Umm is Natsu there by chance?"

"Natsu?" he looked startled. "Oh he's on his way to the emergency room, mentioned something about rabies?"

"RABIES?!" Lucy shrieked, her brown eyes doubled in size. Did he get bit by something within those five minutes he had hung up? She wouldn't be surprised actually...

"Yeah," the boy nodded, pulling out Natsu's desk chair as he delicately sat down in it. "He wasn't making much sense. Said something about his teacher giving him rabies and said that's why he is acting strange."

"HE'S BLAMING HIS STRANGENESS ON MEST-SENSEI BITING HIM?!" she gasped, placing her hands flat on her floor to emphasize her astonishment.

"His teacher really did bite him?" the boy looked stunned with the way his eyebrows pulled upwards, hiding beneath his dark bangs.

"Yes—well I think..." her eyes darted to the side, still not quite believing the story. She looked back at the amused b

oy and timidly smiled, "I don't mean to be rude, but uh who are you?"

"Oh, my apologies," the boy chuckled, making his face look seemingly ageless, "I'm Natsu's brother, _Zeref_."

She felt like her eyes were going to pop out of her head as she screeched, "EHHHH?! _ZEREF?!_ AS IN _FAIRY TAIL ZEREF_?!"

"_Fairy Tail_? That's the manga Natsu's obsessed with, right?" the boy, Zeref, said, placing his index on his bottom lip.

"Er—Yes, but wait—Your name's _Zeref_?!"

"Yes," he nodded. "And you are _Lucy_ I gather?"

"Y-Yes," her heart skipped a couple of beats. How did he know her name? Does that mean... "How did you know? Does Natsu," she nervously twirled her hair, "...talk about me?"

"It says your name on the screen," he said innocently, pointing at something on his screen, which Lucy presumed was her name. "Though Natsu has brought you up a couple of times..." he mused, puckering his lips.

"Good things I hope," she laughed, scratching the back of her head as she wondered what Natsu could have possibly said about her. What if Natsu confided to Zeref about his crush on her? She felt heat rush throughout her body as if someone had turned on a hot water tap.

"He just talks about how weird you are."

Lucy nearly face planted on her floor, "...Why am I not surprised?"

"So back to _doki doki,_ " Zeref said, looking deep in thought, "is it—"

"SO IT TURNS OUT I DON'T HAVE RABIES, ZEREF!" a voice roared in the distance. "ZEREF?" the voice sounded closer, "WHERE ARE YOU—YOU'RE IN MY— _LUCY_!?" Natsu appeared behind Zeref looking aghast.

Zeref slowly turned around, "Hello, Natsu. Glad to hear you don't have rabies."

"_My Lucy_?" Lucy flushed as she raised a brow, trying to look cool, but failing rather miserably, "Since when am I _your Lucy_?"

"THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!" Natsu's cheeks reddened as he pointed at her and then he turned his gaze back to Zeref. "YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED IN HERE! AND WHY THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING TO LUCY?!"

"I only came in because your computer wouldn't stop ringing," Zeref reasoned. "And Lucy seemed pretty persistent to talk to you so I answered."

Lucy looked away, just as Natsu's eyes darted over to her..

"What were you guys even talking about?" Natsu begrudgingly asked with an annoyed expression drawn on his face.

"Doki doki," Zeref answered.

Natsu fell face-first onto the floor with a loud _boom_ echoing through Lucy's speakers.

"Natsu?" his brother called, peering down at the floor.

"GET OUT OF MY ROOM ALREADY!" Natsu flared as he shot back up, pointing his thumb over his shoulder at his door.

"But—"

"_Out!_"

"I—"

"_OUT!_"

And Zeref got up, waving silently a quick sheepish goodbye before exiting Natsu's room, leaving Lucy all alone with a seething Natsu.

"YOU TOLD MY BROTHER ABOUT _DOKI DOKI_?!" Natsu bellowed, pulling at the ends of his hair. "WHAT KIND OF PERSON DOES THAT?!"

"IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!" Lucy sobbed. "I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU WHO PICKED UP!"

"Yeah, yeah," Natsu sighed, rubbing his nose as he took a seat where Zeref once sat. "Sure you thought it was me."

"I did!" she insisted and then said, "By the way, why does your brother have the same name as the dark mage in _Fairy Tail_?"

"The hell am I supposed to know?" he scoffed, crossing his arms. "I didn't name him."

"O-Okay."

"So why were you calling me?"

She glowered, not liking his tone, "You hung up without saying 'goodbye.' That's rude, you know!"

"I had to," he grumbled, though his dark, piercing eyes grew soft. "I felt all weird...Thought for sure Mest-sensei gave me rabies or somethin'."

She itched her eyebrow and shook her head at Natsu's absurdity, "You're ridiculous."

"Am not!" he indignantly protested.

"So what was it that you were going to say?" she asked, biting her lip as her heart thumped with nervous energy.

"Ah _that_ ..."

"Yes, _that._"

"Look, Lucy," his voice grew tender as he laced his fingers together, "you know how I feel about you and I think you still like me too..."

"I do," she sighed out, suddenly feeling breathless and dizzy.

She watched him gulp before he continued, "So I think..." he fidgeted around in his seat, "we should...you know..." He urged for her to grasp what he was saying.

"Know what?"

He choked before shouting, "SERIOUSLY?! YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME SAY IT?!"

"Say what?" she furrowed. She really didn't want to make any assumptions...

"UGHHH!" he smacked his forehead. "This is like the story of the tortoise and the hare!"

"How?!"

"Well you see you're the tortoise 'cuz you're so damn slow and I'm the hare 'cuz he's awesome!"

"The hare loses though," she frowned, not quite sure why he was bring up a fable.

"THEY HAVE A REMATCH LATER AND THE HARE WINS!"

"THAT'S NOT HOW THE STORY—WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING? WE AREN'T EVEN RACING!"

"Luccyyy," he groaned, slumping lowly in his seat. "How is it possible for someone to be so stupid?"

"HEY!"

"Arg I'm no good with words," he murmured, ducking his head.

"I'll say..." she glowered, still bitter from his _stupid_ comment.

"Oi! Give me a break! I've never felt this way before!" he hissed with his face flushing. "Ahh I never thought I _could_ _feel_ this way for someone..."

"Feel what way?"

"I dunno! Just-Just answer my question already!"

"You never asked a question!"

"LUCYYY!" Natsu moaned, "I REALLY DON'T LIKE YOU!"

"But you just said you did," she smirked.

"I changed my mind," he huffed.

"Oh?" she coyly grinned, licking her lips. "So does that mean you _love me_?"

Natsu bolted out of his seat, "N-NO WAY! GAHH I WAS JUST TRYIN' TO ASK YOU TO BE MY GIRLFRIEND! BUT NOO OF COURSE YOU GO AND RUIN EVERYTHING! YOU KNOW WHAT, I DON'T EVEN WANT YOU TO BE MY GIRLFRIEND ANYMORE!"

"GOOD!" she stood tall on her knees. "BECAUSE I WOULDN'T HAVE SAID YES ANYWAY!"

"GOOD!" he sat back down, looking defeated, "Grr Happy was right..."

"Huh?"

"He warned me that this would happen..."

"What would happen?"

"That I would fall for you," he gritted. "NOW HE'S GONNA GET ALL BIG-HEADED WHEN I TELL HIM THAT!"

"Ahh well I can't blame you for falling for me," Lucy teased, tossing her hair over her shoulder. "I am a ten out of ten."

"Are you?" Natsu squinted his eyes and tilted his head a bit. "I don't see it..."

"RUDE!"

"Nah you're just sensitive," he cheekily grinned.

She gloated, "At least Loke seems to think the opposite...I'm gonna give him my _Skype._"

"Funny you mentioned him 'cuz I just added him to the group chat," Natsu smirked.

"Thank you," she stuck her nose up.

"Don't mention it."

And then they both hung up.

****XOXOX****

"Hi, everyone!" Lucy joined the group chat's voice chat, placing her laptop back on her desk because sitting on her bedroom floor was starting to get uncomfortable. She hoped they would be able to cool her off after her heated conversation with Natsu.

"Yo," Natsu grunted, joining the chat right after her, ruining any chance of her anger vanishing.

"How suspicious," Cana mused. "Lucy and Natsu both show up at the same time..."

"Bet they were confessing their love for each other," Mira squealed followed by the sound of hands clasping together.

"NO WAY!" Natsu and Lucy roared.

"Bet Natsu was asking her out," Gray's voice dropped in.

"LIKE HELL!" Natsu growled, "I WOULDN'T ASK LUCY OUT EVEN IF SHE WERE THE LAST PERSON LEFT ON EARTH!"

"AND I WOULD SAY YES TO A ROCK BEFORE I'D SAY YES TO NATSU!" Lucy growled out back.

"I WOULD ASK GRAY OUT OVER YOU!"

"I WOULD SAY YES TO GRAY OVER YOU!"

"Can we leave me out of this?" Gray sounded disgruntled. "I feel like they're insulting me..."

"I think they are," Cana murmured.

"Eeks," Mira's voice shook from the tension.

"GRAY," Natsu snapped, "GO OUT WITH ME!"

"GRAY," Lucy snapped, "I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU!"

"I don't want to go out with either of you..."

"Wonder what happened with those two..." Erza pondered.

"NOTHING HAPPENED!" they both answered.

"So uhh there's a new member!" Levy's voice said, trying to change the subject. "Loke? Is your mic working yet?"

"Oh yeah," Gray said. "Why did we add Loke?"

"BECAUSE LOLU'S CANON!" Lucy haughtily announced.

"We have always been canon, right, Waifu?" a foreign, charmingly-slick voice joined the chat.

Lucy hesitated her response, "Err right!"

"OH MY!" Mira gasped. "SO WE FINALLY HAVE A COUPLE ON THE CHAT! THIS IS SO CUTE!"

"Yup!" Lucy grinned, wishing she could see Natsu's face.

"Erza!" Mira sounded so giddy. "Invite Jellal to join!"

"No," Erza said.

"So why are you two so hostile towards each other?" Levy asked with blatant curiosity.

"Sexual frustration," Cana sneered.

"Natsu couldn't win Lucy's heart from me," Loke said slyly.

"I hate Lucy," Natsu stated.

"I hate Natsu," Lucy stated back.

"So does this mean Lucy gets her Comic Con ticket revoked?" Gray inquired.

Lucy froze.

She had no idea how serious this dumb fight was, but Natsu wouldn't be that petty would he?"

"Do you even need to ask?" Natsu scoffed.

And Lucy hung up.

He wasn't giving her the ticket...

Her heart shattered into a million infinite pieces and as though her heart were a dam, the second it cracked her tears had cascaded down her face, leaving glossy trails in its place.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Ehh I wasn't going to end it here, but lots of you want angst, so who am I to ignore the requests of my readers? :)****

****AND YAY! NEW EDITION TO THE CHAT LOL!****

****And the little ZerLu moment is dedicated to Aimee,** _ **Skydrill (** _ **because she likes sinning).****

****Thank you for reading and you all made me smile so much from the last chapter! Thank you so so so so so much!****

****And thank you so much to** _ **to-the-blue** _ **for the cute fan art!****

****Hope you all have a nice weekend!****

57. Chapter 57

****HII! GUESS WHO'S NO LONGER SICK?! THAT WOULD BE ME! Turned out my cold turned into an infection :0 but yay im cured now!****

****And anyway, thanks to all you guys sending me your birthdays, we ended up starting the birthday wars 2015! Ts k tsk, sinners :p****

****And to those who asked, my birthday's on the 24** **th** **:')****

****Anyway, please enjoy this chapter!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Do you even need to ask?" Natsu scoffed. "Of course not! Just cuz she annoys the hell outta me doesn't mean—"

"She hung up," Mira interrupted.

"—I would—WHAT?" Natsu gaped at his screen as a chill as cold as ice seared through his flesh and right to his bone. And sure enough, Lucy's name was no longer there on the call. "DAMN IT! NOW SHE THINKS I WOULD REVOKE HER TICKET!" He slammed a fiery fist against his desk. "GRAY, THIS ALL YOUR FAULT!"

"_MY FAULT_?!" the accused boy gasped, sounding appalled, "HOW IS THIS _MY FAULT_? I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU TWO WERE REALLY FIGHTING!"

"I DIDN'T KNOW EITHER!" Natsu cried as he fought the urge to smack his head against the desk. "WELL I MEAN WE WERE ANNOYED AT EACH OTHER, BUT I DIDN'T MEAN FOR IT TO GO _THIS_ FAR!"

"Why were you and Lucy annoyed at each other, Natsu?" Mira sullenly asked. "It breaks my heart to see my OTP fighting..."

"Obviously Natsu did something stupid," Gray sneered. "Oi, I thought you shipped LuLo—or is it LoLu?" he puzzled. "Ahh fuck this, I thought you shipped Loke and Lucy?"

"I ship everyone with everyone," Mira said happily, "but NaLu is the OTP."

"So what stupid thing did you do, Natsu?" Levy asked, diverting the conversation away from Mira. Her voice held a bit of bitter venom to it.

"I didn't do anything stupid!" Natsu denied. "I was just trying to—"

"Ahh," Loke interrupted. "I know what stupid thing he did was. Natsu, you were trying to ask my waifu out, but my waifu rejected you—with grace—and now you're all bitter."

"THERE WASN'T A REJECTION! And what grace?" Natsu muttered as he laid his burning head down against the cool surface of his desk. Why did he stupidly add Loke to the group chat? Oh right, to annoy Lucy because she hates flirty boys, which probably explained why she liked him out of all people.

His heart stuttered, just like it always did whenever he thought about her confession in the hospital. It beat the doodle confession when he first realized she might like him. That only left him confused and on edge with uncertainty.

And then before...finally working up the courage to ask her out, only to have Lucy spaz out on him..."Lucy ain't the least bit graceful."

"True," they all mutually agreed, leaving Natsu with a satisfied smirk.

"So if there wasn't a rejection," Cana articulated, "maybe it was a _break up_?"

"A break up?!" everyone awed just as Natsu's body smacked the floor. _What the?_

"But they aren't even going out!" Levy argued.

"That's what they _wanted us to think_," Cana purred. "I'll bet they've been secretly dating for months. I mean why else would Lucy send him smut? She was probably trying to spice up the relationship."

"Ooh that makes sense actually," Levy commented.

"THAT'S NOT IT!" Natsu cried, bolting up from the floor, clumsily.

Gray chimed in sounding bored and frigid. "Knowing them, they probably broke up before they even started dating."

"THAT'S—" Natsu froze. Is _that_ what had happened? His mind was on the fritz. How could he and Lucy have broken up without actually dating?

"Good point," Erza agreed. "Only Natsu and Lucy would break up before they start dating."

"GRRR, QUIT MESSING 'ROUND WITH ME!"

"So why were you and Lucy annoyed at each other?" Erza said, sounding surprisingly gentle as if she were trying to coax the answer out of him.

"Well I tried to—" he froze up again. Did he really want to tell the group that he had attempted to ask Lucy out, but she wasn't understanding and somehow they ended up in a fight? "It ain't anyone's business."

"Damnn," Cana's voice complained. "Well at least go apologize since you won't tell us anything."

"I don't have anything to apologize for!" he exclaimed as he thought back to what had conspired between him and Lucy. All he could see was Lucy hanging up before he finished his sentence. "It's her fault for hanging up before I finished talking."

"I feel like there was more to the fight other than the ticket comment," Loke suggested. "My waifu doesn't act irrational for no reason."

That snapped something raw inside Natsu. How could Loke say that? How could he act like he knew Lucy? It felt like flames were jetting out from him as he screamed, "HOW THE HELL WOULD YOU KNOW THAT? YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HER!"

"I—"

"Lucy's just as irrational as she is rational! Don't go saying she's not. AND QUIT CALLING HER YOUR WAIFU! SHE AIN'T YOUR WAIFU AND SHE NEVER WILL BE!"

"I think Natsu wants Lucy to be his waifu," Levy inquired.

"Ooh you think?" Erza asked.

"I don't want her to be my waifu!" he spat.

"Ughh," Gray groaned, "if you're not going to apologize, at least tell her you're not taking away her ticket, dumb shit!"

"OH RIGHT!" Natsu exclaimed, forgetting all about that key aspect.

"LUCY."

"LUCY."

"LUCY."

"LUCYYYYYY!"

Natsu messaged over and over again, but she didn't respond. His stomach tangled into painful knots, almost like he swallowed a thorny vine that kept twisting around in his gut.

"Does Lucy forgive you yet?" Mira asked.

"She's not responding," he sighed into his palms.

"Lemme try something," Cana said as she typed into the chat, "Lucy, come backkkk. We miss you!"

"We really do!" Mira wrote back.

And suddenly, "Is Natsu still there?"

Natsu's heart thudded heavily as he stared dumbly at Lucy's message.

"Don't worry waifu," Loke joined in. "Your husbando is still here!"

"No one cares!" Natsu impatiently wrote as a tick mark graced his forehead. Then he added, "Yeah I'm still here."

"Then I'm not coming back until you're offline."

"Well the jokes on you 'cuz I ain't ever going offline," Natsu stubbornly teased.

"Natsu," Cana said out loud. "Log off so Lucy can talk to us again."

"Oi! Why are you guys taking her side! You're supposed to be helping me!"

"We like her better than you," Cana carelessly stated.

"I'll take care of this for ya, Lucy," Gray wrote.

And suddenly the chat vanished.

"What the?" Natsu blinked a couple of times, clicking around on his screen.

Realization hit him as if were a punching bag. "ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!" he fumed, running over to Happy's tank, banging on the glass. "THEY KICKED ME OUT OF THE CHAT, HAPPY! OI, IT'S NOT ALL MY FAULT! LUCY'S PARTIALLY AT BLAME!"

The salamander turned to face the opposite direction.

"HAPPYYYY, STOPPP!"

A message rang on his laptop.

"Heh?" he looked over it, his heart was racing, expecting to see Lucy, but instead, it was Erza.

"Look, Natsu," the message said, "I don't know what the circumstances are surrounding the fight between you and Lucy, but if it is about dating then maybe you guys aren't ready to date."

Natsu choked, slamming his laptop shut.

That hadn't been what he was expecting...

****XOXOX****

It was like a breath of fresh air for Lucy to have Natsu out of the chat.

How could he do this? she wept into her pillow.

God, she wished she could back to only liking anime boys and obsessing over her ships. At least they could never break her heart like this—well unless one half of the ship died or something, but she didn't want to think about that at the moment.

"Who even cares if he takes the ticket away from me? Not like I want to go with a jerk like that..." she stared at the Pokemon plush he had given her and with sour contempt, she chucked it across the room.

"Why am I so emotional right now?" she wondered, lying on her stomach. She shouldn't be crying so much over this. "He's not worth crying over!" Suddenly, the tears were gone and her anger at Natsu was just boiling inside her like a cauldron of water. She felt like a piranha, ready to snap at him.

She was out for his blood.

But she wouldn't give Natsu the satisfaction of her talking to him, so instead, taking a very, very, _very_ deep and calming breath, she joined the voice chat.

"Hi, everyone," she spoke quietly.

"LUCY!" Levy squealed. "YOU'RE BACK!"

"Knew it was a great idea to kick that bastard out," Gray haughtily laughed.

"So, Lucy," Cana said in a slippery voice, "tell us why you and Natsu are mad at each other."

"He—he..." What was she supposed to say? Natsu tried to ask her out, but then backed out for some reason? And then he made fun of her... That pissed her off... "He was being mean! Kept making fun of me!"

"That's it?!" Cana gasped. " _That's_ the whole reason you're pissed at him? Because he was _being mean_?"

"Yes?" she cringed.

"My waifu is very delicate in nature," Loke applauded. "Like a beautiful rose petal—"

She wanted to gag at his sickly flirty words, "LOKE, SHUT UP!"

"Ooh I like it when you scream my name," he laughed. "But let's save that for when it's just us two, okay?"

Lucy inhaled quickly. Her eyes and mouth gapping in blatant horror.

"Soo kinky," Cana sniggered.

"Oi, Loke," Gray spoke up, sounding a bit disturbed, "don't you think that was a bit too much?"

"Not at all," he replied. "I'm used to many girls screaming my name in public—but I prefer that stuff in the—"

"OKAY THAT'S IT!" Lucy seethed and just like that, Loke was out of the chat.

"Damnnn, Lucy," Cana whistled. "You're a bit on edge today."

"She really is," Erza observed.

"Am not!" she snapped.

"Maybe Natsu was innocent in all this after all..." Levy mused.

"Poor Natsu," Mira's voice fell.

"Yeah, I'm starting to think that also," Erza concurred.

"EHHH?" Lucy's brown eyes tripled in size. "HOW COULD YOU GUYS SAY THAT?!"

"Because you're PMS-ing," Cana barked. "Someone's time of the month I presume?"

"I think this is my cue to leave," Gray muttered quietly before exiting the voice chat.

"WHATTTTT?!" Lucy's blood felt like it was on fire with rage. "CANA! THAT IS SO NOT IT!"

"Well when is your time of the month, Lucy?" Mira asked, sounding as serene as the cool ocean.

Lucy's eyes darted to the date on the right hand corner of her screen, "It's in a couple of—" her face burned with dire embarrassment. "OH MY GOSH! I AM PMS-ING!"

The girls all broke down in a fit of giggles.

"Well it doesn't matter if I'm PMS-ing! Natsu's still mean!" and then Lucy hung up. Ready to die from humiliation.

****XOXOX****

It was nearly 3 AM as Lucy's father gently opened her door. "Lucy, someone's on the phone for you."

"Huh?" she quickly paused her anime and then looked over her shoulder to see her father standing at her door with his phone outstretched in his hand.

"Who is it?" she asked, gazing curiously at the phone.

"A very annoying boy who won't let me sleep until he talks to you," her dad grumbled, looking much ticked off as his lips drew thin. "Why are you still up anyway? It is a school night, young lady!"

"I don't want to speak to him," Lucy simply said, "And I'm watching anime. Tell him I'm finishing up the last episode of _Yamda-kun_ without him."

"He heard you," her father said. "What's that? Err okay...I'll tell her you said...Lucy, Natsu says he will read aloud to you if you write him unless you go talk to him."

"WAHHH!? NO—I—"

"I would love to hear it. You never let me read your writings. What is 'smut' anyway?" Jude inquired, scratching his blonde hair. "Ah well genre doesn't matter right? I'm sure I'll love it no matter what!"

"HE SAID _FLUFF_ NOT _SMUT_!" Lucy yelped as she hurdled off her bed and whisked the phone from her father's hand. "I'LL TALK TO YOU! DAD—GET OUT!"

"Finallyyy," Natsu breathed.

A whole day since she last heard his voice and all it took was him to speak one word to have her crumbling to her knees as she melted against the phone.

"Lucy, I—"

"YOU CALLED MY DAD ON ME?!" she raged in disbelief.

"I had to," he said. "You left with me with no other choice!"

"Well now you're talking to me. So what do you want?" she said, feeling as salty as the Dead Sea.

"I kinda need you to reblog this post I made," he spoke with such ease that one would never have thought they were in a fight.

"Seriously?" she sputtered. He had to be messing with her...

"Yup," he sheepishly laughed. "It's not getting any notes."

"Oh poor you," she sassed sardonically as she went onto his blog. Blazing in bright flames on his theme was still his infamous _I LOVE LUCY_. She did her best to ignore the jolt in her heart as she read his most recent text post.

"I have an extra ticket to Comic Con! Message me if you wanna go. Requirements: must be a weirdo with big tits."

"BIG TITS?" she exclaimed, her jaw smacking her comforter.

"Cana told me to add that in," he said nonchalantly, as if he saw nothing wrong with that _requirement_.

"You're—"

"I wanted to add 'must own an iguana,' but everyone told me that would be too specific... "

"Natsu..."

"—But that's the thing...I want to be specific..."

"Na—"

"Go to Comic Con with me," his voice came out whispery like the wind.

"You still want to go with me?" she asked, feeling shy as she buried herself under her covers to shield herself from his answer.

"Of course I do, you weirdo!" he exclaimed. "I can't believe you would even think I would take your ticket away! Just makes you even weirder in my opinion."

"I'm sorry I overreacted!" she sheepishly pressed her face against her mattress. "It's just that...I'm kinda...ahhh I'm just..."

"I can't understand when you talk like this," he joked. "Just say it!"

"I CAN'TTTTT!" she cried. "IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING!"

"Now you have to tell me," he mischievously cackled. "Otherwise maybe I will take away your ticket..."

"I'M HORMONAL OKAY?!" she cried out.

"EHHH?" he cried back. "DOES THAT MEAN YOU'RE LIKE H—"

"NOO!" she wanted to drop dead right then and there. Of course Natsu would mistake her for saying she's..."I MEANT I'M PMS-ING!"

"P-M-What-ing?" he sounded lost.

"_This is nothing to be ashamed about, Lucy,_ she pepped herself. "I'm just kind of...emotional right now because I'm getting my—it's almost my time of the uhh...month..."

"Time of the month?" Natsu reiterated. "What does that even—oh. OH! UHHHH ahahah right! 'Cuz that's what happens to girls. So uhhh we are cool again?"

"We are cool again," she smiled, her face very much inflamed. "Sorry for taking it out on you...Like getting you kicked out of the chat and ignoring you for a while..."

"I deserved it," Natsu chuckled.

"No you didn't," she frowned. "Well maybe a little..."

"OI!"

"It's true!"

"Tch," he grunted. "So can I join the group chat again?"

"Ahh I'll add you back right now!" she blushed, remembering he was no longer in it.

"Remind me to kick Loke out," he grumbled.

"I already did that," Lucy giggled, remembering that Loke was the last victim of her relentless rage.

"YOU DID?!" Natsu bellowed with joy. "YUSHHH! WAY TO GO, LUCY!" She sheepishly laughed at his praise. "What did that bastard do to deserve the Lucy Boot?"

"He was being... _Loke_," she sweated as she remembered the perverted comment.

"Gotcha," he laughed.

Lucy grinned to herself as a yawn escaped her lips.

"Tired?" he asked.

"Well it's 3 AM," she pointed out. "Think I should say goodnight."

"Don't," he said quickly.

"Huh?"

"Stay up with me."

"But there's school tomorrow," she flushed at his ridiculous request.

"Who cares?" Natsu scoffed. "'Sides I'm mad at you for watching the last episode of _Yamada-kun_ without me. Ultimate betrayal!"

"I didn't get very far!" she said in defense.

"Good," he chuckled, "'cuz you get to stay up watching it with me."

Hugging a pillow to her chest, Lucy giggled, "Alright, but let's switch to _Skype_."

"Fine by me!"

And together they watched the last episode, though somehow, they both managed to doze off before it had ended.

XOXOX

* * *

Hehe Loke got booted from the chat ^_^

I hope I did this chapter justice.

And just for hypes sake! The Comic Con chapter is around the corner :D

Thank you all so much for reading!

Enjoy the day!

58. Chapter 58

"Ughhhh," Gray groaned to the group via video chat, on the following Friday evening, "Why the hell did you add Flame Dork back in, Lucy?"

"OII, WHAT DID YOU CALL ME, ICE DORK?!" Natsu roared with his pupils slitting like a snake—like a _dragon_.

Gray raised a sly brow as he coolly replied, "The same thing you just called me except with the word _flame_ , you stupid copycat."

"I ain't a copycat!" Natsu pouted, sulking at the webcam which made Lucy's heart soften. "I'm a copy _dragon_."

A tiny giggle left her mouth and she didn't miss the way Natsu's face lightened for a split second, until Gray started talking again.

"Pffttt, you wish," Gray sniggered and then with a lazy toss of his hand, "You're just a copy _loser_."

"AM NOT!" Natsu exclaimed, raising a shaking fist.

"Oh really?" the icy boy smirked. "Why don't send screenshots of our follower count. "It's been a while."

"Heh you're on!" Natsu smirked back, a glint of trickery flashed in his eyes.

"Let's go, Gray!" Mira cheered with a dazzling smile. "Let's go, Natsu! Do your best, guys!"

"I really don't think you should be cheering them on," Lucy grimaced as she watched with curious brown eyes as Natsu and Gray both sent screenshots of their follower counts.

Natsu's loaded first, 5,550. "Beat that, Ice Loser!"

"Ha! Already did, Flame Loser," Gray laughed as his picture revealed 5,700 followers.

"Congrats, Gray!" Mira beamed. "And you did great, Natsu!"

"WHAT THE HELL?!" Natsu's jaw shamelessly smacked his desk. "HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?!"

"Well you haven't been on much lately," Levy commented. "And you haven't made any edits."

"I've just been busy!" Natsu whined as he folded his arms across his chest.

"Busy chasing after Lucy," Cana whispered loudly, effectively making Lucy's face tint red, while the rest of the chat laughed. Natsu, however, wasn't amused as he looked away from the screen.

Suddenly, a black and blue salamander dashed onto Natsu's screen, climbing onto the boys arm. "Happy, they're all being mean to me— _again_!"

"Hey," Levy protested with contortion, "I haven't said or done anything! I've been working on my homework."

"I wasn't being mean either," Mira frowned. "I was rooting for the both of you!"

"And I couldn't care less what you guys are all arguing about," Cana commented. "I'm busy reading this yuri manga I found."

"Liars! You all just made fun of me!" Natsu argued, "And 'sides, none of you guys—except for Lucy—added me back into the chat," he glowered, his eyes looking black like a smoldering inferno. " _And_ you all said you like her better and took her side without knowing the whole story!"

Lucy's heart sunk like ship. She had no idea Natsu was hurting over that. She really thought he would let it roll right off his back, but then again, she would have been still upset if the chat had kicked her out also. "There were no sides to take," she meekly added. "We were both in the wrong."

"We're sorry, Natsu," Mira, Levy, and Erza said, bowing their heads in shame.

"I'm not," Gray smirked as he stood up and began to unbutton his pants. "In fact, I'd do it again." He shimmied out of it, revealing a pair of dark blue boxers before he took a seat again.

"Gray, don't forget to take your shirt off also," Cana causally stated and without further ado, Gray threw his shirt onto the floor.

"Hah! He actually listened!" Cana whooped, punching the air.

"Tch, not if I kick you out first!" Natsu scoffed to Gray, not paying attention to Cana.

"NOO I'LL KICK YOU OUT FIRST!"

"PSHH IMMA KICK YOU OUT FIRST—"

And suddenly Natsu and Gray were no longer on the screen.

"Who kicked them—" Lucy's eyes dropped to the chat and read, _Erza removed Natsu from the chat_ and _Erza removed Gray from the chat._ "I should have known..."

"They were giving me a headache," Erza stated, pinching the skin between her eyebrows.

"LUCY," a new chat message appeared from Natsu, "ADD ME BACK IN THE CHAT!"

Then she got another message, this time from Gray, "Lucy, could you uh add me back into the chat?"

"WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE ME?!" she cried, flailing her arms helplessly.

"What has to be you?" Levy asked, looking at Lucy with big, quizzical eyes.

"Gah the boys want me to add them back," Lucy mumbled as she did as they asked.

"Thank you, Lucy," Gray said gratefully as he rejoined the video chat.

"Thanks, Lucy!" Natsu cheekily grinned as he rejoined right after.

"_Lucy_", Erza looked a mixture of betrayed and furious as she whipped out a sword from behind her chair and stabbed it at her webcam, causing Lucy to squeak with fear, "How could you—"

"Let's-Let's just drop the fighting!" Levy intervened, holding her hands up as a sign of peace.

"Anyways—ACK!" Natsu bolted out of his seat, looking ridiculous as he felt around his chest.

Gray gawked at the boy's odd behavior, "What is he—"

"HAPPY," Natsu bellowed. "GET OUT OF MY SHIRT!"

"Some things never change," Lucy happily sighed as familiar warmth flooded into her chest as she watched Natsu frantically feel himself up.

"Oh my gosh!" Mira giggled.

"Happy's in his shirt?" Erza blinked in utter bemusement.

"I CAN'T GET HIM OUT!" Natsu whined as he danced around with his squirms. "GAHH THAT-THAT TICKLES!" he broke down laughing.

Lucy rested her head on her arms, which were folded on her desk. Her eyes were half opened as she fell into a hypnotic trance thanks to his musical laughter.

"TAKE YOUR SHIRT OFF!" Cana urged, suddenly interested in the conversation with a hungry, but smug look on her face.

Lucy's head popped back up so fast, she felt a bit disorientated.

"Please don't," Gray muttered just as Natsu took Cana's oh so generous advice, grasping from the center of his shirt, he pulled it over his head and chucked it at the floor.

Lucy's jaw swung open, "NA-NATSU! DON'T COPY GRAY!" She bashfully blushed. Even though it had been way too long since she had last seen him shirtless—which was when he set his arm on fire, he was still fit as ever as her eyes slowly took him in, trailing down from his chest down the indentations of his abs, briefly wondering what they would feel like—

"I'M NOT!" Natsu's high voice snapped her out of her daze. He was clutching Happy in his right hand.

"HAH! TOLD YOU, YOU'RE A COPY _CAT—_ I MEAN COPY _LOSER_" Gray boasted. "First you copy my insult, next you copy my stripping habit. Tsk. Tsk."

"Pshhh I think it's you who's copying me," Natsu grinned, looking confident in his answer.

"How?!" Gray gaped.

"Great now two shirtless people..." Levy murmured, her eyes darting from side to side, which Lucy presumed meant she was looking from Gray to Natsu.

"How indecent," Erza looked disgusted as her face scrunched up.

"Oh my God," Cana awed, her mouth practically drooling. "First Gray listened to me and now Natsu?!...Maybe I have some sort of power... LUCY, TAKE YOUR SHIRT OFF!"

"NO WAY!"

"Aww shucks," Cana snapped her fingers and then she licked her lips, "Well damnnnn, Natsu, now I know why Lucy's so obsessed with you."

"Heh?" Natsu furrowed as his gaze returned to the screen his dark eyes slowly shifted over from one person to the next and Lucy just had this hunch he was looking directly at her. She squirmed in her seat, trying not to let Natsu's void expression get the best of her, but it was too late for that considering her face matched the color of an open wound, so she shoved her gaze downwards.

"CANA!" Lucy chastised, "DON'T SAY STUFF LIKE THAT!"

"Why not?" Cana pouted. "It's the truth, isn't?"

"N-NO WAY!"

"So, Lucy!" Levy jumped in, "Decide what you are going to wear to Comic Con?"

"Ohh not yet," Lucy answered.

"YOU HAVEN'T?!" Everyone gasped.

Lucy flinched at everyone's startled reaction, "EEP! Is that bad?"

"Lucy, it's about three weeks away!" Mira said, looking a bit apprehensive with the way her forehead wrinkled up. "How do you not have anything planned?!"

"I don't know! It just escaped my mind!" Lucy cried and everyone gasped again, causing her to drag her hair across her mouth to seal off anymore stupidity that might come out of her mouth.

"Go in that sexy maid costume Elie wears!" Cana suggested.

"Wear that blue skirt outfit with the strip top that Elie wore when we first saw her!" Levy offered.

"Ooh go in that Celestial Spirit World dress Elie wore in the Oracion Seis Arc—the one where Virgo dresses her and Haru in matching outfits! Oh, Natsu, make sure you wear the matching outfit!"

"So many options," Lucy pouted, slumping her head down onto her desk. Her head ached with stress. Sudden anxiety filtered into her. Three weeks?! Three weeks to plan a cosplay that people have planned for months?! How was she supposed to come up with any of those outfits on such short notice? "WAHH I CAN'T DO THIS! NATSU, YOU CAN TAKE BACK YOUR TICKET!"

"Don't stress so much over this," Natsu said, comforting her with a docile tone. "It's really not a big deal."

"Of course it's a big deal!" Erza countered. "Cosplaying is the ultimate thing to do at a con!"

"Pfft," Natsu waved her off. "Who cares? All that matters is that we all get to hang out with each other, right?"

The entire squad's expressions all softened as they said back, "Right!"

"Even Happy agrees!" Natsu beamed, holding out his salamander proudly.

"Oi," Gray said, scratching his right eyebrow, "Your lizard—"

"_Salamander_," Natsu seethed.

"—looks a lot like Acknologia, don't you all think?"

"THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING...a...bout..." Natsu trailed off as he gaze traveled over Happy's blue rings on the contrasting black skin, slowly dawning on him.

The chat grew awkwardly silent.

"GAHHH DAMN IT, GRAY!"

And Natsu kicked himself out of the chat.

But Gray added him back in and began the unrelenting teasing.

****XOXOX****

"So I think I decided on my cosplay outfit!" Lucy revealed to Natsu later on in the evening. "It's going to be—"

"I don't really care," Natsu groaned as he furiously tapped the buttons on his _DS._

"Well I originally wanted a belly shirt," Lucy continued on like Natsu hadn't said anything, "but my stomachs ruined thanks to my scar. Just looks ugly..."

That got Natsu's attention as he slowly lowered his Gameboy. "What are you talking about?"

"The scar from my appendectomy," Lucy frowned, lightly rubbing the scar-area. "Hope it fades away eventually..."

"Lemme see it," he said.

"No!" she shrunk back, looking horrified.

"C'monnn," Natsu moaned, putting his _DS_ down on his bed. "Just show me it!"

"No way! It's really ugly and disgusting," she bit her lip.

"Who cares?" Natsu deadpanned, itching his still-bandaged arm.

"Well...well then show me what's underneath your bandaged arm if you don't care about scars!"

"Fine," he shrugged, gripping the edge of the bandage, but his hand stilled just as a devilish grin graced his face and an unknown glint sparked in his eyes, "I'll show you mine _if_ you show me yours."

"F-Fine," her voice shook, accepting his challenge. Her hands hastily traveled to her waist, grasping the hem of her shirt and slowly began to lift it up.

The way Natsu was looking at her made her feel unnerved. Like every part of her body was burning with some unknown inferno that made her feel this sense of contradiction. The urge to stop, but a stronger urge to keep _going_.

But she stopped, leaving her shirt to rest mid ribcage.

Natsu's eyes narrowed and he leaned in close. A laugh escaped his lips, " _That's_ what you're worried about?! It's so _tiny_!"

"It's not _that_ tiny!" she said feeling indignant, it was like the length and of her pinky...maybe a bit smaller than that...and thinner...

"I can hardly see it," he smirked. "And I have good eye sight."

"It looks bigger in person!" she argued, her hands tightening her clutch on the shirt.

"Surree it does," he said resting his arms behind his head.

"It's trueee!" she moaned with a pout.

"Guess you'll just have to show me in person then," though he appeared playful, there was something about the look in his eyes and the tone of his voice that hinted something else—something electrifying.

"Na-Natsu," she stammered, placing a hand over her racing heart.

"Yeah?" he cheekily grinned, looking innocent.

Breathing in slowly, she glowered, "Show me yours then!"

"Fine," he shrugged, peeling off his white, tattered bandage. He rubbed a hand over his arm before holding it up for her to see.

Her eyes carefully scrutinized his lightly tanned arm, noticing that it was now paler than the rest of his arm, but that was it. "Nothing?!"

"Huh?"

"THERE'S NOTHING THERE?!" she exclaimed. "WHY THE HELL WERE YOU WEARING A BANDAGE FOR SO LONG IF NOTHING IS THERE?! OMGOSH, DON'T TELL ME YOU REALLY ARE A WEEB!?"

"WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!" Natsu hollered, sticking his arm even closer to the webcam, "IT'S ALL CALLUSY!"

"Yeah surrreee it is," she winked.

"LUCYY!" a vein irksomely throbbed on his forehead. "IT'S TRUEEE!"

"Guess you'll just have to see me in person then," she tried to sound as playful as he did, but her own voice turned raspy—almost like she were trying to flirt.

"Gah," he choked out, his face suddenly flushed up as he ran a hand through his messy hair. "Lucy, I've been wanting to—"

"LUCYYY!" her bedroom door smacked open, interrupting whatever Natsu was going to say.

"DAD?!" she sobbed. "WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BARGE IN?!"

"Because," he said, "I wanted to play with Plue."

"SERIOUSLY?!" she gaped at her grinning father. "Fine! Go take him!"

"I think we should move his cage to the living room," he stated as he pulled Plue out from his cage. "He's not only your pet, you know."

"But I'm the one who paid for him," Lucy sweat dropped.

"Well carry on," Jude said. "Good to see you, Natsu!"

"Likewise," Natsu grumbled, looking as though he meant the complete opposite of likewise.

"Oh!" Lucy gasped, "Dad!"

"Yes?" he froze at the threshold.

"Natsu got me a ticket to go to Comic Con," she informed him. "Is it alright if I go?"

"Go?" her father blinked, placing Plue onto the floor. "Go as in _go meet Natsu in person_?"

"Err...yes?" she squeaked, not liking the way his eyes darkened.

"Lucy," her father's voice grew stricter. "I have allowed you to keep talking to that boy, but I cannot allow you to go meet up with him! What kind of father would I be if I let my daughter go meet up with some creepy pervert from the internet?"

"Dad—"

"Lucy," he said, "I'm sorry. But this is my final decision." And then he left, taking Plue with him.

Uncomfortable silence lingered like a heavy cloud. Natsu shifted awkwardly in his seat, "Ahh, Lucy—"

"I don't want to talk about it," she said briskly.

"Okay," he nodded, looking understanding her pain.

But to his surprise, her eyes turned fierce and determined as she stated, "It doesn't matter what he says. I'm going no matter what."

Natsu grinned, "Good 'cuz that saves me the trouble of coming up with a kidnapping scheme."

"Then I would never be able to, I mean like you could ever come up with an elaborate kidnapping scheme," she teased.

"OIII!" Natsu growled. "I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW IMMA NINJA!" Making chopping motions with his hand, he said, " _NIN, NIN_!"

"Sure, sure," she snickered and then said, "I should probably go. Still have to finish my reading assignment."

"Yeah I still have homework to do also," he said, rubbing the back of his neck.

"Bye."

"And it doesn't matter by the way," he said.

"What doesn't?" her mouse circled around the hang up button as she tilted her head to the left.

"The scar," he clarified. "It doesn't matter if it was the length of your entire stomach or not. It wouldn't make you look ugly. Nothing could ever make you look ugly."

She looked away as her cheeks glowing with warmth, "Thanks."

"AHH don't take that as a complement! I was just stating a fact! You're always mistaking facts for compliments." he grumbled, blushing back.

"Whatever you say," she giggled.

"You're so annoying," he mumbled before hanging up.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hehe Natsu's a dork and yay I finally gave Comic Con a date!****

****And omg that last chapter of the manga! Ahh I'm so curious what's going to happen next! It's going to be a painful wait sighhhh****

****Thank you again for being so kind!****

****Happy Monday/Tuesday or whenever you read this!****

59. Chapter 59

****Okay so good news, everyone! It turned out that the whole story repost threat was only just a threat and no one actually did anything!****

****But please do not say I was overreacting. If someone threatens to steal your work, you take it seriously. Do not let someone get away with it.****

****Unfortunately my writing motivation sorta dwindled thanks to it and thanks to the immense amount of hate I have been receiving.****

****But what's better than writing to gain back that motivation, right?****

****AND ALL I WANT TO SAY IS THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR THE SUPPORT! YOU ARE AMAZING AND THE FACT THAT SO MANY OF YOU HELPED ME! I LOVE YOU ALL SO MUCH! AND THANK YOU!****

****And let the never ending story continue ^_~****

* * *

****XOXOX****

With the weeks slowly going by, Lucy begged and begged for her father to let her go to Comic Con, but alas, he continued to refuse. It got to the point where her father avoided her or used Plue as a defensive weapon "PLUE! SICK

HER!" And with each plea, gradually growing more desperate, Lucy settled for the only thing she could think of...

"There's a school field trip to Crocus. Can I go?" she said, hoping the beads of sweat rolling off her forehead or the way she was gnawing on the insides of her cheek wouldn't give her away her elaborate lie.

"Oh thank God!" he placed his newspaper in his lap and then whipped his brow. "Thought for sure this would be about Comic Con again."

"Ahah," Lucy's sweat felt like rain as it poured down her face and back. "Nope. You said no and no means no! So can I go?"

"That's the spirit!" he grinned, looking proud at his daughter. "And of course you can!" And then he reached down and held out his bat I'll even lend you my trusty bat to ward off any bad people you may run into!"

"Gee...thanks..." Lucy said stiffly.

****XOXOX****

Almost a week and a half went by and Lucy hadn't heard much from Natsu. He was too busy on his blog posting a new, crazy edit almost three times a day. Lucy figured he was just focusing on his blog so he could get his followers back up and beat Gray—speaking of which, Natsu would only write in the group only to fight with Gray or post his new edit.

Though every time Lucy tried messaging him, he would give her brisk answers and sometimes he wouldn't even reply.

But she didn't let that bother her because he liked her. And something about that fact made his strange behavior permissible and made her heart clench with excitement—_except_ Lucy was upset despite her happy thoughts.

So mustering up as much courage as possible, which felt odd. It was like when they first started talking to each other. How Lucy nearly fangirled every time. "Hey," Lucy sent Natsu an ask, "could we maybe video chat?"

She gripped her blanket so tightly that her knuckles turned white as she anxiously awaited Natsu's response.

"Sure! But only for a little," he had replied and then he sent her a video request.

"Yo, Lucy!" he goofily grinned, but he looked unfocused as his eyes shifted around and his lips looked thin, showing intense concentration that left her with the strong impression that he had hid her chat screen.

Her heart wilted like a fragile flower lacking attention from the sun as she shyly said while biting one of her well-manicured finger nails, "Hi, Natsu. How have you been?"

"Fine. So what did you want?" he asked, looking even less involved in the conversation as he narrowed his black orbs making him look miles away from the conversation.

"Oh uh," she felt dumbstruck by his directness. "I...I...ummm..." Why did she call him again?

"C'mon, Lucy," he said gruffly with his jaw clenching, "I don't have all day."

His voice was like a winter chill, replacing all the blood in her body with ice as she torpidly repeated, "Oh you don't have all day?"

"Nope," he said briskly, continuing to keep his attention on whatever he was doing—probably drawing something.

"Well you haven't _had_ all week either," she carelessly commented with an acidic tone.

She watched as his nose gave a little twitch of annoyance as he asked, "What's with you?"

"What's with me?!" Driven by heated anger, her ever-clammy hands curled into fists and she hotly admitted. "I-I miss you, stupid!"

And it was like Natsu really did forget they were video chatting as raw emotion poured onto his face. His head shot up and his jaw gaped along with his widening eyes, "What?"

"I miss you," her head hung low, feeling as though she had just confessed to murder.

"Tch I haven't gone anywhere, weirdo."

"You hardly reply to my messages!"

"I always reply!" he glowered then, in a muffled voice, he added, "Eventually." His tone was annoyed, but his expression contrasted greatly; looking guilty with the way his eyebrows arched and his head bowed with a frown casted shamefully upon his lips.

"Yeah well...I still miss you," she admitted once more as she sullenly fiddled with a loose thread on her pleated skirt. It was amazing how much his presence made a difference in her life. Not being able to talk to him, it was like going days without water. A dry hell.

Natsu's head sank even lower.

"What's with the long face?" she teased.

Natsu's head popped back with his slanted eyes looking narrow and his nose was twitching. "Heh?"

"Wahh?" Lucy lightly cupped her cheek out of pity, "You really did forget we were video chatting?"

"WHATT?!" Natsu's eyes looked like golf balls as he frantically clicked around. "HOW COME I DIDN'T KNOW THIS?!"

"See what I mean?" she said with a halfhearted smile plastered on her face.

"Huh?" his features tensed up a bit.

"You've been ignoring me."

"Not on purpose!" he argued with his nostrils flaring out, "I just wanna beat Gray!"

Lucy's eyes rolled with choleric heat. _Of course this leads back to Gray._ "Who cares—GAHH! NOO!" she lurched forwards with her hands flying over to her gut. Out of all times, it chooses now?

Natsu's head jolted back up as a look of panic washed over his face, "LUCY! WHAT'S WRONG?"

"Damn it!" she cursed, pressing her eyes shut. "The painkillers...must have...worn...off."

"YOU'RE STILL ON PAINKILLERS?!" Natsu looked surprised. Veins stuck out all over his arms and face reminding Lucy of bulging tree roots. "WHAT'S WRONG? IS IT YOUR APPENDIX AGAIN?—WAIT! YOUR APPENDIX IS GONE, ISN'T IT? GAHH IS IT YOUR GALLBLADDER? OR—OR AHH WHAT'S WRONG?!"

"Nooo," she moaned, shaking her head. "Worse."

"WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE WORSE THAN YOUR GALLBLADDER EXPLODING?!" he cried. "YOU'RE NOT DYING, ARE YOU?"

"Cramps," she sniffled as she buried herself under the covers. Why was her period so painful this month? Was it from the added stress of Natsu now in her life?

"SHIT! _CRAMPS_?!" Natsu bellowed, smashing both hands to the sides of his head. "ANYTHING BUT _THAT_—Wait, _cramps_?" his face drew a blank.

"Yeah," she gritted, feeling like her insides wanted to become outsides.

"So errr what does that mean exactly?" he asked while he dumbly scratched his forehead.

"I got my period," she admitted, not caring how blunt she sounded.

First he looked bemused with the way his forehead creased, but like a lightbulb going off in his brain, he tightly said, "Ahh you're horny again."

"_HORMONAL_!" she hysterically screeched. "I SAID I WAS _HORMONAL_!"

"Yeah, yeah," Natsu said looking jaded.

"You're cruel," Lucy sniffled wishing so badly she could vanish—or the damn cramps would vanish as she keeled over again. She would take the appendicitis pain over this any day. Well that was a bit of an exaggeration, but it hurt so much. She really needed to take something to dull the pain—her teeth gritted—maybe a knife to her—

A loud thud jerked her from her thoughts. She glanced up to see Natsu's fist clenched on his desk, so tightly that his knuckles looked ghostly.

"Na—"

"_I hate this_," he growled in such a threatening way it made Lucy flinch.

"Hate what?" she asked, swallowing as her brown orbs met his blazing glare head on.

Taking in the fear on Lucy's face, Natsu's harsh expression soften considerably and elaborated, "I hate being on the other side of the screen."

Her breathing stopped as Natsu continued, "Lucy, I want you to be—"

But then the group chat interrupted with Cana demanding everyone to video chat and just like that, the moment had been ruined because Natsu, with an aloof grin, shrugged and hung up.

"DAMN IT, CANA!" Lucy sprawled onto her bed and suddenly her cramps came back. "OWWW!"

****XOXOX****

Oddly enough, Natsu _didn't_ join the group video chat after he hung up and the chat turned out to be a bust. Everyone was busy minding their own business so Lucy did the same; working on her new multichapter fanfic since she hadn't written anything in what felt like eons.

She bit her lip with intense concentration as she typed, _Leaning in close behind her, he carefully pulled away a lock

of her hair to reveal her ear. She could feel his warm breath caress her, and as he spoke, his lips lightly brushed her right ear, _ " _That_ I promise you."

"Whatcha doing, Lucy?" Cana's voice boomed in demolishing all of Lucy's concentration like a tower of cards.

"Writing," Lucy answered acutely, switching back to the video chat screen.

"Something dirty?" Cana asked, wagging her pointed eyebrow.

"NO WAY!"

"But that face you were making—"

"I'M WRITING ABOUT HARU AND ELIE DYING FROM SOME KIND OF DEADLY BACTERIUM!" Lucy exclaimed. "HOW IS THAT DIRTY?!"

"Whoa," Cana's brown eyes turned circular, "that's surprisingly depressing." Lucy could feel her eye starting twitch as the girl continued babbling. "I mean usually you write disgusting fluffy, shoujo crap."

"Is that really how people perceive my writing?" Lucy blanched.

Before anyone could respond, a fiery voice _finally_ burned in, "GAHH ALL THESE GIRLS KEEP SENDING ME THEIR DAMN MEASUREMENTS!" And Natsu appeared on the screen looking a bit disgruntled with the way his hair looked spikier and messier than usual like he ran his hands through it several times.

"Why the fuck would girls be sending you that?" Gray keenly asked.

But Natsu wasn't listening as he wailed, "EVEN CANA SENT ME HERS!"

"Well you said you wanted a girl with big tits," Cana winked. "Just wanted to know if I made the cut."

"Why do girls keep sending you that?" Levy inquired, titling her head the right.

"Yeah," Mira asked, "Don't they know you're in Lucy's harem?"

"I still have a harem?" Lucy questioned with sweat dripping down her neck.

"Of course," Mira squealed gleefully.

"Can go back to why girls are sending Fire Princess their measurements," Gray asked, glaring at the screen with his eyebrows drawn inward and his arms folded careless over his surprisingly clothed chest.

"I—" Natsu began, but Gray interrupted, "Actually I don't care." Then the icy boy picked up his _3DS_ and flipped it open with a carefree attitude.

Natsu, however, resumed talking, "'Cuz I was tryin' to get Lucy to go to Comic Con with me again."

"What does that have to do with measurements?" Levy asked, looking aghast with her eyes wavering.

"Natsu posted on his blog that he a spare ticket and that he would give it to someone with 'big tits,'" Lucy reiterated with a bit of harshness in her voice. She couldn't help but feel a bit irritated at the thought of other girls sending Natsu that kind of information. It's not like she was insecure about her looks, but what if others girls were _bigger_?

Stupid, Lucy! She mentally slapped herself. Now she just felt pathetic.

"Ahh," the blue hair girl nodded her head with clear understanding, "now the 'big tits' part makes sense."

"Right?" Cana laughed.

Lucy's jaw smacked her desk, feeling very appalled, "HOW DOES THAT MAKE ANY SENSE?!" But the two girls doubled over with roars of laughter instead of giving Lucy an answer so she cried in frustration, "YOU GUYS ARE MEAN!"

"Lucy, you're overacting."

"It's 'cuz she's horny," Natsu informed them with a straight face and everyone fell to the floor and then he too, fell over, but from laughter as opposed to shock.

"NATSU!" Lucy cried with her heart beating erratically. "YOU AREN'T FUNNY! HE'S LYING! I'M JUST ON MY PERIOD, OKAY?!"

"WAHH!" Mira brightened as she sat back in her chair. "You're on your period now also?! YAY! CYCLE BUDDIE S!"

"Yay," Lucy sweated, wishing she could die.

Gray looked very uncomfortable with his face burning a very bright pink.

Levy looked bewildered and Erza stuttered, "I-I didn't know you and Natsu were so opened...Natsu I apologize for what I said the other day. It was out of line."

"Hell yeah it was," Natsu grumbled, looking a bit flustered as he ran a hand through his hair. "GAHHHHH _ERZA? WHHHYYYYYY!?" he smacked his head over and over again as if to delete what Erza did from his mind.

"I wanted to join in the fun," Erza said simply. "What's wrong with knowing my measurements?"

But Natsu was still too busy freaking out to answer.

"What would Jellal say if he knew you were sending other guys your measurements?" Lucy lectured with a disapproving frown on her lips.

"Lucy's just jealous," Cana leered.

"Am not!" Lucy growled.

"Jellal's open to anything," Erza shrugged while everyone else, minus Natsu, gaped shamelessly at her.

Natsu, however, cried out, "I KEEP THINKING SOMEONE'S GIVIN' ME PRAISE OR SOMETHING WHEN I GET A NOTIFICATION, BUT NOO IT'S JUST MORE BOOBS!"

"Well that's what you get for not _properly_ asking Lucy out," Gray murmured, keeping his droopy eyes trained on his game.

"Oi! I wasn't asking her out!" Natsu angrily argued.

"You weren't?" the words were just above a whisper, leaving Lucy's mouth without any conscious awareness.

"NO! I-I mean yes? Err no?" Natsu looked lost as his eyes desperately searched the chat as if the others would give

him the right answer, but alas, all they did was snigger at his helplessness.

"Good," Lucy gleamed, as she casually sent an ask to one of her favorite blogs, "because then I would have had to respectfully decline your invitation."

"Well in that case..." Natsu laughed, looking greatly relieved that she made light of the conversation, but the relief was only brief as his features turned hot with anger, "Ughhh another ask—" then he choked, "L-LUCY!" His face turned a nice, heated shade of red with his eyes the widest they have ever been.

"What's wrong?" she teased as she nonchalantly rested her hands behind her head to stick out her ample chest and she knew Natsu's eyes were exactly where she wanted them.

"Looks like Natsu's the horny one now," Cana jeered as she stretched her hands out to crack her knuckles.

And that was how everyone got kicked out of the chat compliments to Natsu.

And Comic Con was only about a week away.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR READING! SORRY FOR MISTAKES!****

****It's my birthday so I don't really have time to edit :0****

****But anyway, hope you all liked it!****

60. Chapter 60: Love Fest Omake

****Soooo this is just a lil' something in honor of love fest ^_~****

****Most of you probably already read this on tumblr.****

****Rated: T+ for brief nudity :D****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Plue," Lucy glowered at her lizard who was causally creeping closer to her laptop. "Stop trying to walk on my laptop! You're going to break it!" Plue paused, "Good boy!" and as if to mock her, the iguana stuck out its tongue and continued on walking. "SERIOUSLY?! WAHH I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS!" she grasped her towel tightly around her freshly showered body and quickly shoved her laptop further away from Plue.

With a heavy sigh, she waltzed over to her wardrobe to pick out something comfy to wear to bed.

Her towel dropped to the floor as she browsed through looking for one of her old t-shirts she particularly loved, but alas, she couldn't find it.

She bent over, rummaging through the chaotic mess of fallen shirts and skirts. "How do they always manage to fall off their hangers?" she muttered, blowing hot air out of her mouth that ruffled up her dank bangs. "Now where is it—YES! FOUND IT!" She stood up, holding out her subtle _Fairy Tail_ t-shirt that was really just a plain black v-neck

with a pink _Fairy Tail_ guild mark on the right shoulder. She excitedly whirled around and beamed, "Look, Plue! I found my old—Eh?"

She blinked.

Not because Plue had disobeyed her and was leisurely lounging on her laptop, but because _Skype_ was on video chat mode with Natsu blatantly gawking with at her with his eyes bugging out and his mouth shamelessly hanging open like a broken hinge.

"Natsu?" she cocked her head to the right in bemusement and pouted, "Why are you looking at me like that?"

His cheeks were now a heated shade of red as he glared at her with his mouth bitterly moving to form words, but strangely no sound came out.

"I can't hear you," she said, crossing her room to get closer to the laptop. "Plue must have hit the _mute_ button." And Lucy couldn't help but notice each step she took closer caused Natsu's left eye to twitch and his face to flame up even more so.

"What's with you?" she exasperated as she leaned forwards into the cam. She unmuted the screen and observed Natsu's eyes nearly popping out of their sockets. "And you say I'm the weird one? Honestly," she disdainfully shook her head. Natsu was _clearly_ the peculiar one. No doubt about it—

"LUCY, WHY THE HELL ARE YOU _NAKED_?!"

"WAHHHH?!" she looked down and a bloodcurdling scream ripped out of her lungs, giving off the impression that she was about to be brutally murdered.

Natsu leaned forwards with his pink bangs sticking a bit to his glistening forehead as he leered, "Have you been video chatting Gray recently?"

She ignored his question and wailed, "STOP LOOKING!" covering her bare breasts with her arms.

"Cuz you clearly mastered his stripping habit," he said, ignoring her request as he continued to look and he even had the audacity to scoff, "Tch, perverted exhibitionist."

"NOOO!" she cried with her eyes sealed shut in a desperate attempt to hide from the mortifying situation. "IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! PLUE ACCIDENTALLY HIT THE CALL BUTTON WHILE I WAS CHANGING!"

And before Natsu could utter a reply, a new voice joined the party, "Why are you guys video chatting so late—Oh my!" Lucy squinted one eye open, just enough to take in the deathly-black haired boy who was standing right behind Natsu, who was seated at his desk. The boy quickly turned his back to the webcam and ran a hand through his dark, shimmery hair, "Natsu, I had no idea you and Lucy were... _intimately_ involved."

"WE'RE NOT!" they cried out in horror with veins throbbing all over.

And Natsu bolted out of his seat and proclaimed, "LUCY'S TURNED INTO A MEGA PERVERT!"

"I AM NOT A MEGA PERVERT!" her hands balled into fist by her hip. "YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KEEPS STARING!"

And true to her words, Natsu was still ogling at her.

"ZEREFE, DO SOMETHING!" she hysterically pleaded.

"Well...If you don't want him to look, why not hang up or leave the camera view?" Zeref inquired, peeking back at the screen from over his shoulder.

"Heh?" she squeaked as the wheels in her head slowly processed what Zeref had just suggested. _Hang up? Leave the screen?_ Her hands flew to her cheeks as she bellowed, "WAHHHH HOW AM I SO STUPID!?" She pulled Plue away from her laptop and hastily slammed it shut and before her laptop went into sleep mode, Lucy could hear Natsu say, "OII! QUIT LOOKING AT HER, YOU PERV!"

Her heart gave a tiny jolt, but she pushed past the sudden elated feeling and screamed, "PLUE, THIS WAS ALL YOUR FAULT!"

Then her phone chimed. It was from Cana via _Skype_ that read, "So Lucy, rumor has it you let Natsu see you naked ^_~."

"NATSUUUU!"

61. Chapter 61

****Thank you all so much for the birthday wishes! You are so sweet!****

****And also, thank you all so much for 5k reviews! I never got a chance to thank you all, so thank you! Started writing as form of therapy for my depression. I never thought anyone would ever read my stuff. And now every time I get a message telling me how happy my writing makes someone or how it made someone laugh, it makes me all teary eyed because I love making people happy.****

****And at times when I find myself losing my motivation or spiraling back into my depression, I get a message like that reminding me that it's worth it.****

****So thank you again.****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

The morning sun kissed Lucy awake before her alarm even had a chance. "Tomorrow's the day," she hummed.

Tomorrow was Comic Con.

Was this real life? She was going to meet her friends _tomorrow_? No longer restricted to a square, 2D frame. She will be able to touch and to feel and to—her hand crossed over her chest. Cana was definitely going to go for the boob grab—especially after finding out about Natsu saw her naked first.

Despite Natsu seeing her naked, despite the group chats relentless teasing over it and despite her new ship with Zeref, _ZerLu_ (after the others found out that he too had seen Lucy naked), she felt... _happy._

Not to mention her new fanfic turned out to be a success with everyone demanding more. Though it wouldn't have been nearly as popular if it weren't for Natsu reblogging it, blowing up her notes like a pipe bomb. It was quite astounding to see, reminding Lucy of the first time Natsu had reblogged something from her and how much she fangirled over it—over _him_.

An embarrassed blush traversed onto her face. If he ever found out she would be mortified. Mortified to the point of death.

Death by Humiliation.

They really had come a long way since then. Lucy was no longer Natsu's fangirl, but instead, a friend—err _more-than-friend_.

She placed a hand over her stuttering heart.

How could she have fallen for someone over the internet? How could someone have fallen for her back?

But that wasn't her main focus at the moment.

Grabbing her phone from her bedside table, she immediately went to her _Tumblr_ and announced, "COMIC CON IS TOMORROW!"

And _LokeTheLion_ was the first to reply, "Waifu, the fates had made it so that we could meet~ Assuming you'll be Elie and I, her trusty Celestial Spirit, Leo, we will make the most magnificent cosplaying couple."

Her nose crinkled as she muttered out loud, "He's going tomorrow also?"

"Oi, cat-guy is cosplaying as a cat?!" Natsu joined the conversation. "WAHAH THAT'S PERFECT!"

"I'm not cosplaying as a cat!" Loke argued.

"So what you're saying is that you are a cat?" Natsu questioned.

"STOP CALLING ME A CAT!"

"Neko then?"

And that made Lucy burst with laughter.

"Waifu," Loke continued on, ignoring Natsu, "I best wear sunglasses tomorrow because your beauty will be blinding ~"

"Quit using the '~'," Natsu wrote. "It's annoying and quit calling Lucy your 'waifu.'"

"Jealously is unattractive, _DragonSlayer_ ~"

"Pshh like I'm jealous over a dumb neko~"

"Ghihi, you're one to talk," _BlackSteelGajeel_ commented. "Who would be jealous over a dumb _salamander?_"

"GRRR I DON'T LOOK LIKE A SALAMANDER!"

"Yes you do~" Loke chimed in.

"^^ Agreed," _IceMakeMagic_ decided to add.

"ALL OF YOU CAN GO FIGHT ME TOMORROW!"

And Lucy pinched the skin between her eyes brows, shaking her head in a shameful style. How could she have fallen for such a hothead?

"LUCY!" a message appeared on her _Skype_.

"TOMORROW"

"WE"

"WILL"

"FINALLY"

"MEET!"

Each message appeared on a new line and with each new line, Lucy's smile grew and grew. "OMGOSH LEVY! I K NOW!" she eagerly wrote back.

"After all these months!" Levy typed. "I can't believe this! I'm so glad I decided to befriend you!"

"Hehe I'm glad too," Lucy said with a warmth bubbling in her stomach. She was finally going to meet her first _Tumblr_ friend. The person her took her out of her comfort shell, opening the strange door of the internet world.

"I was so nervous," Levy confided, "when I first messaged you. I fell so hard for your writing and then I saw you were into similar animes as me. Ahh I couldn't resist talking to you!"

"I'm really glad you did," Lucy messaged back. "I don't know how I could have survived without having you to fangirl with." And that was the truth. She was so lonely— _so_ unbelievably lonely_. Having no one to share her anime love with. Having her ex-friends humiliate people who liked it. They made her feel like some kind of bizarre freak. Like an anomaly.

But after meeting Levy, her life changed for the best. She had someone she could bond with, talk about anime with.

For the first time Lucy was able to be Lucy.

"Same, Lucy. So I want to thank you for being one of my first friends. Gahh can't believe we will get to meet everyone... It's so surreal. Bet you're beyond excited to meet _DragonSlayer_ hehe."

Lucy blushed a bit, "I'm beyond excited to meet everyone to be honest."

And that too, was the absolute truth.

****XOXOX****

"Happy Comic Con Eve!" Lucy wished, during her late night video session with Natsu.

"Lucy," Natsu said, keenly eyeing the way she hugged the chimchar plushie, "I know what the first thing I'm gonna do when I see you."

"_Please don't say boob grab_," she chanted to herself with sweat trickling down her forehead. After Cana's declaration, Lucy was seriously considering Erza's cosplay of the infamous Requip Mage to have a nice armored plate to cover her breasts, but alas, she was supposed to Elie.

With a very straight, intense expression, Natsu said, "I'm gonna sniff you."

She automatically crossed her arms over her chest, "NOOO! DON'T TOUCH—WHAT?"

"I'm gonna sniff you," a wide, toothy grin broke out on his face once solemn face with his slanted eyes lighting up like

ke the sun.

"What-Why?" she flushed, pulling her knees up to her chest, while idly toying with the plushie.

His bright grin faded away, replaced by a sudden disgruntled expression as he sat up straighter on his unmade bed, blocking Lucy's view of a random _Fairy Tail_ poster he had hanging up. He crossed his arms and jutted his bottom lip, "Becauseee you got to smell me from my chimchar that you stole from me."

She could feel her eye start to twitch as she rested her chin on knees, "I stole chimchar—even though we never met—and I never been to your house or anything?"

"Yup," he grunted, nodding his head in vigorous determination. "So now you have my scent and I've been dying to know yours for so long now."

She unconsciously brought the Pokémon up her nose and took in the still, lingering, but sadly fading scent of a comforting fire, reminding her of the fireplace in her old house. She could remember Christmas morning, the stockings hanging over the fireplace. It was back when her mother was alive. How happy she was... "Still smells like warmth."

Natsu tangled an aggravated hand in his mess of pink hair while cheeks matched the color of a cherry, "Still don't know what that means."

She giggled at his bemusement, reveling in his cute expression—the way his head sunk slightly and the way his eyes narrowed. "If you had to guess," she flicked her tongue over her slightly chapped lips and clasped her hands together, "what do you _think_ I smell like?"

He answered without hesitation, "Like a weirdo."

Lucy's eye twitched again, "Thanks?"

"Well it's the only explanation I can come up with to why you have no friends."

"EHH?" Newfound fury stormed into her. Was he trying to insult her? Because he was doing a great job at it.

"You probably smell weird 'cuz why else would you be interested..." he shook his head and then smiled cheekily, "Yeah, you definitely smell weird."

Her heart ached at Natsu's unfinished sentence. Why else she be interested in _what_? As much as she wanted to push, she decided it was best not to. "Well guess you'll find out tomorrow," Lucy nonchalantly shrugged, stretching her arms out to crack her shoulders. _Tomorrow_, her heart flipped over.

An impish smirk played onto his lips as he languidly said, "Yup, less than 12 hours until I get to experience your weirdness in person."

Her heart raced along with Natsu's words. Only 12 hours...She wrinkled her nose and scoffed, "You're the weird one. I mean saying you're gonna _sniff me?_"

His face contorted, "What's wrong with sniffing?"

"SNIFFING IS WEIRD, OKAY?!" she crossly spat while heated blood filtered into her cheeks. How could he think sniffing was normal? Clearly he's the real weirdo.

He raised an amused brow, "And Cana grabbing your boobs isn't?"

"THAT'S WEIRD TOO!" Lucy yelped with her arms flailing all around like a wriggling worm. _He's missing my p

oint completely_ , she inwardly cried.

"So what would be the "normal" thing to do?" Natsu asked, using air quotes while Lucy rolled her eyes and mouthed _dork_ to him. He countered her insult with an _oh-so-innocent_ grin.

"Uhh w-well," she stumbled over her words. What exactly was the _normal_ thing to do? Her chocolate eyes desperately searched around her room, hoping to land on something to give her a vital clue—and she found something; a book cover of two people— "A handshake!"

Natsu's mouth dropped a little in astonishment before he snorted, "A _handshake_? After several months of talking and stuff, you want me to _shake your hand?_" "

"Ahh..." she awkwardly scratched her forehead, her face faltering at a rapid pace. Why did a handshake suddenly sound so lame?

And Natsu lost it. He fell flat on his bed and cackled like crazy, rolling from side-to-side, "A-A _handshake_! WAH AHAHA!"

Her face burned like a candlewick. She gritted her teeth and huffed out, "Stop laughing at me!"

"H-Hand sh-sh-shake!"

Feeling irked by his incessant laughs, Lucy growled out, "M-Maybe it's just an excuse to hold your hand!"

That shut him up.

Within a matter of seconds, he was sitting tall with a blank look on his face, "Err what?"

"EEP! N-Nothing!" Lucy squeaked, smacking a hand over her gushing lips. How could she say that? _Why_ did she even _think_ that?

She and Natsu...holding hands...

Her heart couldn't handle it.

"Well I ain't shakin' any hands," Natsu coolly said, rubbing his right bicep rigorously and deflating Lucy's heart a bit .

"Good. I didn't want to feel your nasty, calloused hands anyway," she playfully sneered, carelessly tossing her hand up.

"Ahhh well in that case," he licked his lips and stretched his long, toned arms behind his back. A dark, conniving look gleamed in his blazing eyes, "I'll make it my personal mission to never let your hand go."

Her heart fluttered wildly.

How could he say something like that in such a causal tone? In fact, he looked rather _proud_ of his 'witty' comeback with his cocky, lopsided grin. "Natsu," she breathed out softly, trying her best to ignore the shakiness in her hands as she tied them together in her lap. "I think you'll accomplish your mission..."

His eyes grew a bit circular, overtly surprised by Lucy's words—or maybe he was surprised by his own words. He recovered quickly, with an arrogant smirk, "'Course I will. No way would I pass up the chance to annoy you."

"Good," she gave him a sincere smile, which he returned by tenfold.

Her stomach coiled, urging her that maybe, just maybe, she wanted to do something else besides a 'handshake.'

He sat up a bit straighter, "So what time are ya coming to Crocus? I wanna plan it so I get there before you."

"Going to leave my house at seven so hopefully I get there around nine—otherwise Erza might kill me..." her body gave a unintentional shiver as a warning.

"Hope Ice Princess wakes up on time. We're goin' together," he said grimly, like it were some kind of death sentence .

"Aww show cute," Lucy snickered.

His eyes flashed like angry lightning bolts, "Oi, he's annoying! Did you see how he hijacked this ask I answered?!"

"No," she shook her head side-to-side. "I'll go look now."

She typed in his `_URL_` and watched as the flames from his theme exploded all over her screen. And she could see t he `_I LOVE LUCY_` still merrily dancing within the deadly infernos. Her heart sped up at bit.

But then she was briefly reminded of how he changed his `_URL_` from `_HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_` back to `_DragonSlayer_` and her face faltered a bit and then it faltered a bit more when she read the ask he was talking about.

"Everyone knows C `_elestialMage_` only befriended you for your popularity."

Natsu answered, "Oiii, I'll have you know that it was `_me_` who befriended Lucy! Unless she had this well-thought out plan to trick me into following her `_first_` —and we all know Lucy ain't that clever."

"Your confidence in my intelligence is really inspiring," Lucy sarcastically stated with her eyes narrowing at the chee ky boy. "And I was the one to talk to you first," she decisively added, remembering that it was `_she_` who sent him the first message when he was asking for requests.

"Yeah, but I wanted you to," he insisted. "And `_I` was the one `_` kept messaging you. Quit defending your hater!"

"I'm not!" she flushed, "I was just trying to be honest!"

"I am too!"

And Lucy decided to keep on reading, seeing that Gray had commented on Natsu's post, "Did you just write, `_YOU_` followed `_LUCY_` first?"

"That's what I wrote, dumb icicle," Natsu retorted.

"SO THAT MEANS I WON!" was Gray's response.

"What are talking about?" Natsu asked.

"`_YOU FOLLOWED SOMEONE FIRST_`!" Gray reiterated. "WHICH I MEANS I WIN THE BET! I HAVE THE MOST FOLLOWERS WITHOUT FOLLOWING SOMEONE FIRST!"

"DAMN IT!" Natsu wrote. "I TAKE IT BACK! LUCY FOLLOWED ME FIRST AND SHE'S DEFINITELY USING ME! YOU WERE RIGHT, ANON! HOW DID I NOT REALIZE THIS?!"

"NATSU!" Lucy lividly screamed, giving him an incredulous look with her palms upturned in the air, "SERIOUSL

Y?" but the boy only gave her a shrug.

"Too late, Fire Ball," Gray jeered. "I win."

"GAHHH, TIME FOR A NEW BET THEN!"

"Nahhh."

"C'MON! I'M GONNA BEAT YOU THIS TIME!"

"Because you don't have any other crushes who won't follow you first?"

"GRRRAYYYY, FIGHT ME!"

"Speaking of which," Gray persisted, "how does it feel to know Lucy followed _me_ before she followed _you_?"

"Juvia followed Gray-sama before following Love Rival #1 also," _DropsOfRain_ added.

"QUIT GANGING UP ON ME!"

"I feel like ganging up on you too," Lucy muttered, rubbing the bottom of her nose.

"OII—" Natsu started, but Lucy quickly cut in with her eyes glued to the time, "Well I better go. Otherwise I won't be able to wake up tomorrow."

"Grr fine," he glowered, plopping against his pillow. "G'night, Lucy." And then he grinned, "See you tomorrow."

"See you tomorrow, Natsu," she found herself grinning back.

And she knew she wouldn't get an ounce of sleep that night as her mind refused to be quiet and her heart refused to decelerate.

She was going to meet everyone at last.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Hmm wonder what the next chapter will be ^_~****

****I would like to thank my waifu, Nanakoblaze for the amazing art she made for this story!****

****Nanakoblaze . tumblr post/ 131280486475/fan-cover-for-virtual-flames-so-i-told-you-guys****

****(Delete the spaces or you could go look on my tumblr on my _Fanart for My Stories_ link) ****

****And the ZerLu ship is dedicated to my shinki, Zuzu, Aimee (Skydrill).****

****Thank you all for reading and I hope you all have a lovely weekend!****

62. Chapter 62

****Hi, everyone! Sorry for not updating regularly this past week. I've been busy and stressed with school ;w;****

****Plus I kinda died from the Christmas Omake :'D and omg the Noragami Serial Killer OVA destroyed me. RIP.****

****But to make up for it, I made this chapter extra long :0 (OVER 7000 WORDS! I have never written so much in my entire fanfic writing life)****

****And thank you all so much for all the support and kind messages! They seriously make me so happy especially during this time of stress. I love you all so much!****

****I hope you all like this :)****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Lucy couldn't sleep a wink that night, staring at her digital clock's neon green numbers, 3:02. Shoving a pillow over her mouth, she sobbed, "Ughhh, you have got to be kidding meee."

She sat up, flickering on her bedside lamp. Was there a point to sleeping at this point?

Less than 9 hours until they meet...Less than 4 hours until she lied to her dad about where she was going. Does he really believe her lie—that she has a school field trip? What if he changes his mind? Her heart wouldn't be able to take it that's for sure.

With these daunting thoughts, Lucy really couldn't fall back asleep. So instead she pulled _Skype_ up on her phone and read through the previous group chat messages—which were just Gray and Natsu arguing for the past few hours, while she was asleep, over Natsu following her first and how Gray had been the winner for months now—until Erz told them _nicely_ to stop.

Lucy bit her lip as she grinned at the luminescent screen. Natsu lost all because of her and that made her feel all warm and fuzzy and kind of made her want to scream into a pillow, but she refrained from doing so because the last thing she needed was her father storming in with his bat...

There were other messages too of Mira teasing Levy over meeting Gajeel and of course Levy's replies were all flustered and Lucy couldn't help but giggle at it—until her blood ran cold as a chilling thought—no, _memory_, flooded into her mind. It was something Levy had said a few weeks back, _"What if he thinks I look like a little kid?"_

The girl was nervous over what Gajeel would think of her when they meet. And now all Lucy could think was what if Natsu didn't like the way she looked in person?

"Gahhhh, now is so not the time to be insecure!" she panicked to herself and it wasn't like Lucy really had anything to be insecure about. She knew she was beautiful, but what if Natsu—

Speaking of the devil, Natsu sent her private message that read, "TELL GRAY THAT YOU FOLLOWED ME FIRST!"

She giggled, no longer feeling upset as she shook her head out of bewilderment. Did he really think Gray would believe her at this point? But with a shrug, she figured she had nothing better to do at 3 am besides message Gray. So she replied back to Natsu, "Fine, fine," and then messaged Gray, "Natsu wants me to tell you that I followed him first."

She was surprised to see Gray typing back right away. "And did you really follow Natsu first?"

"Nope," she sniggered, shoving her blanket off, feeling a bit warm. What would be the point in denying it? Nothing was more fun than Natsu being teased.

"He really is an idiot," he sent back.

"Yeah," she laughed.

"Gonna give him hell over this," he typed. "That's for sure."

"Muahaha good! Can't wait to see that."

"Oi, you really are a sadist." Gray said right after, causing Lucy to choke as she frantically typed like her life depended on it, "AM NOT!"

"I'm only kidding!"

"Of course you are," she let out a long, tired sigh, rubbing her suddenly-tired eyes.

"...Kinda."

A vein ticked on her left temple. "HEY!"

"Anyway," he wrote, quickly—and smartly—changing the subject to avoid her wrath, "can't believe we will finally meet tomorrow. Feels so surreal."

She rolled onto her stomach, kicking her feet in the air, "Yeah. If it weren't for my anxiety, I wouldn't believe it."

"Huh? You're anxious about tomorrow?"

She gnawed lightly on her lip, "Well aren't you?"

"Psh no," was his reply. "What's there to be anxious or nervous about? We've been friends for months now."

Gray did have a good point, but still, Lucy was beyond nervous and it was kind of indescribable to describe to someone who's not feeling the same way. "Yeah but I don't know...What about meeting Juvia? Aren't you nervous about that?"

Gray started to type and then it vanished, then it started to type again, but it vanished once more, and then he finally typed, "No way."

But his hesitance said it all.

Then he sent another message, "Lemme guess, this is about Assflame, isn't it?"

"Maybe." Her body felt a zillion degrees hotter. She could feel her hair starting to stick to the back of her neck. She grabbed a hair tie off her nightstand and quickly twisted her hair up into a sloppy bun.

"What's there to be nervous about? You guys spend every waking minute talking to each other, don't you? And you guys admitted your feelings for one another sooo...?"

Lucy's face darkened as she reluctantly replied, "What if he doesn't like me in person? What if he doesn't like my appearance or something?"

"Do you really think that asshole cares about appearances? And he's seen you naked. I think he's got a pretty good idea on your appearance. If anything, you might not like Natsu's appearance. I mean he is _short,_ ya know."

"Thanks, Gray."

But Gray's words of comfort did little to calm the ache in her chest.

"You're awake?!" Natsu messaged her before she could lock her phone. "Oii, what did you tell Gray? He's even cockier than before!"

Lucy sent him a screenshot.

"WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?! Ugh now tomorrow's going to be hell!"

"Or you could say _tartaros_," Lucy cackled, feeling herself grow loopier as the numbers on the clock slowly crept on.

"..." he wrote. "I think that was not only the _lamest_ thing you have ever said, but also the _weebest,_ Dork."

"But you like that about me," she persuaded, curling onto her side with her phone tightly clasped in her hands.

"Unfortunately."

And even through the fog of her sleepy eyes, he still managed to make her stomach knot up.

"Anyways, why are you still up?" he continued to message, not waiting for a response.

"Can't sleep," she admitted. "I'm too nervous about tomorrow."

"Nervous about what?" Natsu questioned, reminding her of Gray's response. "Meeting all of us tomorrow?"

"Yeah," she typed, feeling shamefully embarrassed. Why was it easier to type that to Gray?

"Why?"

"I don't know why...Guess I'm nervous about what everyone will think of me..." Though really she meant Natsu, but how could she just admit that to him? She sighed, sulking her head against her knees after pulling them against her chest.

And suddenly her phone rang—well _Skype_ rang—and Lucy picked up.

"Lucy," Natsu's voice came through. "I think you're a weirdo and after we meet in person, I will still think you're a weirdo. So I don't get what you're worried about."

"Natsu..." her vision blurred up thanks to her heartfelt tears. How was Natsu able to cheer her up just by calling her weird?

"Are you crying?"

"EHHH?" Lucy glanced back at the phone and saw Natsu watching her with curious, yet concerned eyes. "WE'RE VIDEO CHATTING?!"

"YOU DIDN'T KNOW?!"

"Gahhh go away," she sobbed, pulling her covers over herself. "I'm not descent!"

"What do you mean?" he grumbled and then stated. "You're wearing clothes this time."

Her face heavily blushed under the covers. "My hair..." She did not want to be seen wearing an ugly, messy bun like that

"What about it? Eh whatever... You're just being your weird self again," he lightly chuckled.

And suddenly Lucy realized Gray was right; Natsu really doesn't care about her appearance. He liked her for who she is, not what she looked like.

She pulled the covers back off of her to peek at him.

"Anyway, I won't be able to text you on the train ride," Natsu said, looking a bit greenish as he clutched his hand over his mouth.

"A-are you getting _motion sick_ just by _talking about it_?!" she gasped, nearly dropping her phone. "How pathetic!"

"Don't be meannn," he moaned, his head sagging downwards on his bed. "Uck...I don't wanna talk...'bout this...any...more."

"Ahh fine," she laughed out a yawn, tucking herself back into bed, closing her eyes, allowing sleep to consume her without saying goodnight or hanging up.

****XOXOX****

Thanks to Natsu, Lucy did manage to get at least a good few hours of sleep. But the morning...She was a bit of a _train wreck_. How was she going to leave the house dressed in her cosplay?

After long and hard thought, Lucy had ordered online the outfit Elie had worn in the _Fairy Tail_ movie, showing off her belly proudly—thanks to Natsu's confidence boost a while back about her scar. She was ridiculous over it. It was so minuscule—barely even a scratch.

There was no way her dad would let her leave the house in this, right?

But it was worth a shot...

He was sitting in the kitchen, reading the newspaper with Plue curled up by his feet. She tried to tiptoe past him, but she banged her hip against the wall and slipped out a curse.

"Lucy?" he placed his paper down. "Are you al— _What are you wearing_?!"

"Dad!" she winced, rubbing her sore waist. She tensely smiled at him, "Morning! I'm heading out to the train station now! See you a bit later!"

"Wait a minute. I repeat, _what are you wearing_?_"

"Ahah this?" she nervously laughed, dropping her head to look at her body. "Well uhh since it's Comic Con today, my teacher thought it would be a good idea for us to dress up also..."

What a terrible lie...

She wanted to slap herself so badly.

There was no way in hell he would ever believe her.

"Oh!" her father's face brightened. "That makes sense!"

She blinked, " _It does_?! I mean—of course it does!" She bit her tongue in hopes that it would inhibit her from blurting something stupid out.

"Now, Lucy," he stood up, grabbing his trusty steel bat that was resting on the table. "I think you should take this." He held the bat out before her, laying it flat in both of his palms like it were his precious baby.

"Uhh no thanks..."

"Take it."

"No!"

" _Lucy_!"

" _Dad_!"

"It will protect you from any weirdos out there!"

"Right now you're the weirdo!" she yelped. "I'm not using a metal bat on someone!" Her father's face fell greatly. She gritted her teeth, "Don't look so down..." and then she cheerfully added, "I'll be fine! Don't worry about me!"

"But I have to worry about you," he said with a sad smile. "You're my pride and joy."

"Dad..."

"Even though you're going for school purposes, make sure you have a great time," he said, pulling her into a hug.

"Thanks, dad," she hugged him back with her stomach coiling like a snake with guilt.

How could she lie like that?

****XOXOX****

The train was packed with a couple of cosplayers here and there and just regular commuters as well. She was glad her cosplay was normal enough to pass off as—well _normal._

The train ride itself wasn't so bad at all.

Gray had sent tons and tons of photos of a poor motion sick Natsu. There was one of him hunched over, clutching his stomach. Then there was another of him lying across the seat with his face bulging in a green shade. And another of him on the floor.

All of which seemed to calm Lucy's nerves down, giving her a good laugh—to the point where she teared up and a few people on the quiet train stared at her making her feel weird even though _they_ were dressed in the most ridiculous—yet awesome—cosplays of Naruto and Fullmetal Alchemist.

As the train neared the Crocus Station, Natsu messaged into the chat, "Where the hell is everyone? I don't wanna be alone any longer with this stupid stripper."

"Oi, this 'stupid stripper' just dealt with your nasty ass motion sickness for the entire train ride!" Gray replied right after. "It's _me_ who doesn't want to be alone with _you_ any longer."

"OII WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?" Natsu typed back. "YOU WERE RUDE AND KEPT TAKING PICTURES OF ME AND YOU EVEN PUSHED ME OFF THE SEAT!"

"I was trying to capture your true self," Gray commented just as Cana wrote, "Can't you guys just like fight in person? You're just wasting our phone batteries with this nonsense."

And the boys were quiet right after that.

The train came to a screeching halt. Lucy unsteadily got to her feet, making her way to the exit. With each step she took, her heart pounded louder and louder and louder. The blood in her head felt like it was slowly draining, her legs felt all weird and jellylike, tempting her to grip onto the old, splintery wooden, train wall.

She stared out the window of the door, waiting for it to open, nervously adjusting her pigtails.

The door automatically opened in a painfully slow style. Her stomach twisted in ways that made her question whether she was going to puke. Taking a big gulp of air, she forced her gelatin-like legs to move out the door, but a person dressed as a Pokémon trainer shoved past her followed by a squad of superheroes, shoving her off the train, causing her to stumble to the floor.

Her face burned bright red like a dying star out of both anger and embarrassment. She hastily straightened up, silently praying Natsu and anyone else she knew didn't see her fall.

And her prayers were answered because she didn't see a pink haired boy anywhere in sight.

And her heart anxiously thudded against her chest as her eyes swept through the area and she began to search for the exit. The group agreed to meet up by the Crocus Fountain since the train state was too big for everyone to go searching around.

Lucy could feel her anxiety picking up as strangers rushed past her, bumping her all around. "He-Hey!" she angrily waved a fist, "Watch where you're going!" Maybe she should have brought her father's bat after all to whack her way through the crowd...

She made it outside alive and marveled at the sight around her. Hundreds of people, all dressed up in outlandish clothing—fellow Comic Con people. People dressed up as Sailor Senshi, there was a squad of Soul Eater people, and people dressed up from things she didn't even recognize.

She was in heaven.

And somehow with all the ogling, Lucy managed to find the big fountain in the center of the city. She searched around and wonder where Natsu and Gray were. They had to be here somewhere—

"SLANTY EYES!"

"DROOPY EYES!"

"HARU WANNABE!"

"MUSICA WANNABE!"

"Please don't tell me that's..." Sweat poured down her forehead as she gingerly turned around and gasped.

Both boys were pulling at each other's cheeks and yanking on their hair, completely unaware of the disturbance they were causing to the world around them.

"ICY ASS!"

"FIRE ASS!"

A dark shadow swept over her features, "... You have got to be kidding me."

As though he heard her, Natsu's head whipped in her direction.

His eyes were harsh thanks his fight with Gray, catching her off guard as they met her widening stare. His disgruntled look quickly began to thaw while Gray lifted his head up and asked, "What are you staring at—OoOF!" And Gray crumpled to the floor.

Natsu quickly straightened up, adjusting the scaly Haru-scarf around his neck, allowing Lucy to take in his appearance. His clothes slightly disheveled—he was wearing Haru's long overcoat and puffy pants—and his cherry-pink hair was all ruffled due to the fight Lucy presumed.

He looked almost the same as he did on screen—he was bit paler in person and his hair was darker.

Was this real life? Was Lucy really standing in front of Natsu—the boy she's _in-lov—like_ with?

Nope.

Had to be a dream.

A toothy smile that managed to quicken her heart, broke out onto his lips as he gave a causal wave, "Yo, Lucy!" Though despite the causal wave, his cheeks looked a bit pinker than before.

And she could have died in that minute alone.

He said her name _in person._

His voice sounded slightly different, not by much, but it was maybe deeper in person?

She found herself shyly waving back with a warm blush touching her cheeks. "Hi, Natsu."

"Hey, Lucy," Gray called from the floor, brushing off his jeans as he stood up. Then he looked back at Lucy with his cool eyes looking her up and down. "Nice cosplay," he nodded in approval, shoving his hands into his pocket.

"Thanks," she blushed harder, sheepishly tying her arms behind her back as she took in Gray's appearance, which was just him—shirtless—wearing jeans with the _Fairy Tail_ emblem over his chest and the Muscia necklace hanging proudly around his neck.

"Yeah," Natsu nodded in agreement, crossing his arms over his chest, with a slight head tilt. "I like it! Thought for sure you were gonna go with Elie's first outfit, but I'm glad you didn't."

She could only stare blankly.

Was she really having a conversation with Natsu _in person_?

He opened his mouth to say something else when suddenly a force knocked right into Lucy. Emitting a quick scream as she stumbled back a couple of feet with a small girl hugging her. "LUCY! YOU'RE REAL!"

Recognizing the light voice, Lucy squealed out, "WAHH, LEVY!" and wrapped her arms around her.

Levy pulled back a bit, and smiled so brightly, Lucy swore she was blinded for a moment.

Levy's shoulder-length blue hair looked brighter in person possibly due to the contrasting orange headband as it framed her heart-shaped face. Her orange dress was almost identical to the actual Solid Script mage she was cosplaying as and Lucy couldn't help but think she looked beautiful—and not to mention, adorable also.

"Lucy, you look so pretty!" the girl marveled as she broke away from the hug, her brown eyes darting up and down. "And your cosplay! It looks so real—like you're Elie in real life!"

Lucy smiled, feeling very pleased with herself. "Thanks, but you're one to talk! You look exactly like the infamous Solid Script mage!"

"No way, but thanks!" Levy's cheeks turned pink.

The boys strolled over to them. Natsu moved right next to Lucy, standing so close, she could feel heat radiating off of him. Her pulse quickened as she itched onto her right forearm, trying to act natural.

Levy looked between the two boys and squealed with a tiny jump, "GRAY! NATSU!"

Gray chuckled out a, "Hey!" while Natsu, cheekily greeted, "Yo, Mira!"

And Levy nearly face planted onto the floor, but Gray reached out in time to catch her. Lucy turned sharply to face Natsu, placing her hands sternly on her hips and raised a pointed brow, "Seriously?"

"What? I was only joking," he beamed innocently. "I know she's Levy. Just had to do it for old times' sake." And Lucy burst out laughing, thinking back to all those times Natsu would call Levy _Mira_ over the internet and how upset Levy would get.

And Natsu sucked in a breath, only loud enough for Lucy to hear. She straightened up, leaning her head to the right and asked, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing... Just the first time I heard you laugh in person," he muttered more to himself, pursing his lips, looking consumed by his thoughts.

Lucy bit her lips in response, unsure of what to make of his reaction and before she could mull over it any further, fist slammed against Natsu's jaw causing Lucy to jump back with a squeak.

"Can't you stop being stupid, Assflame?" Gray glowered with his fist still clenched.

"Pfft can't you punch a bit harder, Frostbite?" Natsu gleamed, licking his mocking lips as he gently massaged his jaw. "Felt like you hit me with a pillow."

"Hah well if I punch like a pillow," he smirked, coolly stretching his arms over his head, "then that must mean you punch like a feather."

"You wish!" Natsu barked out a haughty laugh.

"Why would I wish for something that's already true?" the dark haired boy questioned, throwing his palms up in fake wonder.

And a flaming fist rocked into Gray's cheek, stumbling him back a bit. "Hah, how's that for a feather?"

"Why you—" Gray growled before charging at Natsu for another big brawl in the middle of the city. "Oh my God,"

Levy gasped, cupping one hand over her surprised mouth while her other grabbed onto Lucy's forearm. "My first time witnessing a Natsu and Gray fight in person."

"And it definitely won't be your last," Lucy murmured, backing away a bit as they started to tumble closer to her and Levy.

"NATSU! GRAY!" a deadly voice cut in. "That better not be fighting I see!" Everyone whirled around to see a beautifully frightening girl basking in the glorious rays of the morning star that shimmered off her armor and gave her edge sword a divine glow as her scarlet hair blew along with the gentle breeze.

"Erza?!" Both boys gasped, causing all eyes to be back on them and Lucy and Levy sputtered at the sight:

Natsu and Gray—joined in a _hug._

Lucy's jaw hung unabashedly open, unable to comprehend the power Erza had over the two boys and bitterly huffed over the fact that Gray got to hug Natsu before she did.

Stupid gratsu.

"N-No fighting here!" Gray stammered, cold sweat drizzling down his face like a rain shower. "We loath—I mean _I love_ each other!"

"W-What he said," Natsu choked, hugging Gray so tightly that his muscles bulged in his tight jacket sleeve.

Erza shook her head up and down seeming satisfied with their answers and a squeal of pure delight rippled between the ever growing group. "GRATSU AND LELU! MY OTPS ARE CANON!"

They all grinned at one another and said, "Mira!" shooting their heads in the direction of her voice and a scream tore out of all their throats as they all jumped back, huddling together as they feared the demon that stood before them.

With her white hair sticking up like the Bride of Frankenstein and her scary-pale face make up that was topped with a long jagged line starting from her forehead, trailing down to her cheek, and the scaly hands and the very revealing, open-down-the-middle red bodice, stood Mirajane who looked more terrifying than the Requip Mage who was now trembling as she joined in Natsu and Gray's hug, while Levy and Lucy hugged each other right next to them.

But the smile on the girl's face contrasted greatly with the Satan Soul cosplay, making her look oddly stunning.

"Mi-Mira!" Lucy stuttered as she disengaged herself from Levy and slowly the shock faded. "You look amazing!"

"Thank you, Lucy!" the girl gleamed proudly. "I spent so much time putting this together. I'm really proud of how it turned out! And you look amazing yourself!" Her brilliant blue eyes shifted all around, "You all look amazing! Don't they, Lisanna?"

And that's when everyone noticed another girl standing near there. A smaller one with similar silvery hair like Mira's but a lot shorter and the same deep blue eyes. She had on cat ears and had claws on her hands, looking like the Animal Soul mage.

"Yeah," Lisanna smiled, "your friends really went all out!"

"Lisanna?!" Natsu exclaimed with a goofy grin crossing his face as he shoved Gray and Erza away.

"Natsu?!" the girl exclaimed back, her features widening. Natsu quickly dashed over to the girl and Lucy hastily looked away, pretending to pick at a loose thread on her skirt while she wondered if they going to hug before she had a chance to also?

A hand squeezed her shoulder and Lucy looked up to see Erza smiling softly at her with her red hair covering one of her caring eyes, "Don't look so down. He can hardly take his eyes off of you."

Lucy felt a jolt from her heart, thanks to Erza's words. "Erza..." she smiled back with her cheeks flushing in minor embarrassment.

"And here I thought nothing could outshine the brightness of the sun," a new, suave voice joined the meet up. "But I guess I was wrong..."

"Please don't let it be Loke," Lucy pleaded as she slowly looked to her right and sure enough, a fancy looking bloke with wild orange hair and cool sunglasses dressed in a suit came prancing towards her. "Anndddd it's Loke," she glumly sighed, smacking her forehead.

"Waifu," he flashed her a shiny grin, before snatching Lucy's hand in his soft, cool palm, "your photos don't do you any justice. You are more stunning than any star in the entire universe."

"OIII!" a voice roared and then a fiery fist connected with Loke's unsuspecting face, " _that's mine! Hands off!" _ Natsu appeared with a glowering scowl on his face before seizing Lucy's hand in his rough, heated palm.

Sparks ignited from the simple touch, traveling up her arm, emitting goosebumps along the way just as her heart became erratic.

Her eyes ogled at his hand connected to hers and trekked up his arm to see his steaming face. Though his anger was very apparent, his hold on her hand was rather delicate, as though he were afraid she was going to break.

"Oh my God!" Lisanna made her way over, her blue eyes looked huge as she gawked at the two of them holding hands. "Natsu is actually holding hands with a _girl_?"

"Eh?" Natsu's eyes narrowed at her. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"The Natsu I knew would never hold hands with a girl," she laughed with the sun glinting in her eyes. "In fact, he never thought twice about girls and thought relationships were dumb. _Remember?_"

"Oi, stop sayin' stuff," Natsu mumbled, looking away as he attempted to hide his rosy cheeks in his scarf.

"Natsu's lucysexual," Mira explained with happy smirk.

"Ohhhh," Lisanna said with newfound understanding lighting up her features like a light bulb. "That makes sense!"

"How?" Lucy questioned in bewilderment while her heart swelled with warmth in response to the information Lisanna had relayed. Natsu would never hold hands with a girl? She looked back down at their interlocked hands and sparks once again ignited all over.

"...the hell?" Natsu sweat-dropped with his jaw clenched.

"Anyway," Gray sneered, breaking away from the conversation he was having with Levy. "Since when did you own Lucy's hand, asshole?"

Natsu cockily smirked, raising their interlocking hands, "Since she said she didn't wanna feel my nasty, calloused hands. Now I'm gonna hold her hand all day to make her suffer."

"C-Cute," Erza stammered, her face resembling a glass of pink lemonade.

"Well then I might as well join in too," Gray shrugged, grabbing Lucy's other hand. She let out a gasp as an icy shock overcame her. "SO COLD!"

"Yeah," Gray smugly grinned. "Now you get to enjoy my cold hands all day because this is mine," he raised her hand up a bit.

Her cheeks turned pink as she looked between the hostile boys.

This looked wrong, Lucy shuddered.

"Don't copy me," Natsu grimaced, looking very displeased at Gray.

Suddenly a towering presence appeared behind Lucy and hands snaked out from the gaps in the spaces that formed from Lucy's outstretched arms, wrapping around her torso and grasping firmly on her breasts and gave a very firm squeeze. "And these are mine!"

Lucy yelped and the boys just stared blankly at the hands squeezing her breasts while Levy cried out, "Cana!"

"I should have guessed," Lucy muttered dryly.

"LUCY, THEY'RE SO BIG!" Cana cried, shoving her face in the crook of Lucy's neck as she nuzzled their cheeks. "Better than what I imagined. So soft..."

And both boys broke into a fit of choking, awkward coughs while Lucy died of mortification before giving a fleeting attempt to Erza, "Erza, save meee!"

But Erza only doubled over with laughter along with everyone else.

"As you can see," Mira loudly-whispered to Lisanna, "Lucy has a harem so poor Natsu is always trying to be noticed, but fails every time."

"Aww," Lisanna cooed, a sadness appeared in her eyes, "that's heartbreaking!"

"I don't have a harem!" Lucy sobbed, trying to break away from everyone.

"OH THIS REMINDS ME!" Natsu blurted out, leaning his face uncomfortably close to Lucy's. If she could have jumped back, she would have, but the other two had her unintentionally restrained.

"What?" Cana asked, releasing her hold finally. "You wanna feel her boobs too?"

"More like he wants to kiss her," Levy averted her eyes.

Natsu's face was only a few inches away. His eyes were dark with determination as he continued to lean in closer. And that's when Lucy realized something. She had always thought his eyes were just black, but now she could see flecks of green in them. His warm breath fanned over her features just as his pink bangs tickled Lucy's forehead.

Her respiratory system malfunctioned.

"This is getting too weird for me," Gray commented, letting go of Lucy's hand.

Her eyes were triple the size as she remained petrified, unsure of how to react. He moved his head lower to the crevice of her neck and then she heard it—

—A loud _sniff_.

Then another.

And another.

"Say, Mira-nee," Lisanna whispered. "Is he-Is he _sniffing her_?"

"Uhh..." Even Mira, the hardcore shipper, was at a loss for words over the sight.

"What the hell?" Gray gaped, racking his hand through his raven-locks.

"HAH!" Natsu bolted upwards. "HAD A FEELING YOU WOULD SMELL LIKE _LIGHT_."

And everyone nearly toppled to the floor, while Lucy furrowed at him, "Light? What does light even smell like?!" Does light even have a scent?

"What does warmth smell like?" Natsu devilishly challenged.

Of course he would give her a cryptic scent label out of revenge. So she answered, "Like you," only loud enough for him to hear.

He stiffened, before scoffing, "Tch."

"Now that we are all here," Levy said, "we should take pictures!"

"YESS!" The girls cheered at the same time the boys gloomily went, "Ughhh."

"I'll take them for you guys," Lisanna happily offered, pulling out her phone.

"Waifu, let's take our first selfie together," Loke said, coming back to reality after recovering from Natsu's punch. He grabbed Lucy's left wrist and held his phone up, ready to snap a picture.

"How many times do I have to tell you to quit callin' her your damn waifu, you creepy cat cosplayer?!" Natsu seethed and Lucy could picture smoke flooding from his ears.

"I'm not cosplaying a cat!"

"Oh right, you're a _neko cosplayer_."

Loke threw his head back and smacked his forehead, "Not this again."

"You know what. I'll settle this once and for all." Cana interrupted, walking between the three of them, pulling a flask out of her purse. She took a big sip and then turned to face Lucy and said with the most serious expression ever, "Lucy, be my waifu."

"Pffttt, Lucy will never agree to—" Loke started, but Lucy intercepted with a huge grin on her face, "Okay."

And Lucy finally got a chance to observe Cana's cosplay.

It was simple yet perfect, wearing a blue bra—though Cana _insisted_ it was a _bikini top_, but Lucy knew for a fact that it wasn't because she may have tried on that same bra in one of her recent shopping escapades—and capris and her brown hair, wavy, yet elegant and the flask really added to it.

"Yes!" Cana punched the air.

"My heart," Loke dramatically clutched a hand over the left side of his chest. "It will never be the same."

And then he stumbled away, chasing after some girl dressed like a fluffy sheep—probably an Aries cosplayer.

"HE'S GONE!" Lisanna cheered, holding up her phone, "let's celebrate by taking pictures!"

And everyone gathered together in front of the fancy fountain, cheering about Loke's departure. Natsu let go of Lucy's hand so he could wrap his arm around the back of her neck, pulling her against his chest, giving her a chance to breathe in his scent of warmth and fire.

A shy, yet thrilled smile made its way onto her lips as she circled an arm around his waist and placed the other against his hard chest as she laughed along with everyone else.

"Perfect!" Lisanna gleamed, snapping the tons of pictures as different angles.

And suddenly it became a photoshoot—actually a selfie war was more like it. Everyone was just photobombing each other or making goofy faces.

The girls did a girl-only photoset while the boys wrestled in the background. Lucy took tons of photos with Levy alone and then Cana stole Lucy for a bit, doing the tongue face together while Cana flaunted her flask.

Natsu picked Lucy up, much to her chagrin. A series of shrieks erupted from her as she frantically squirmed in his arms while Natsu maniacally laughed.

Mira took advantage, taking as many photos as possible. Lucy's face felt like it was on fire as she buried it into the nape of Natsu's neck, feeling the softness of his scarf as it tickled her nose. Her heart was beating so fast and she swore she could feel his going just as fast.

She lifted her head up, close to his ear and said, "Say, Natsu."

"Yeah, Lucy?" he beamed.

"I think your heart's going doki doki."

And without warning, he dropped her, allowing her butt to painfully kiss the concrete.

"Oh my!" Mira gasped, placing a clawed finger to her lip. "Are you okay, Lucy?"

"Oww!" she rubbed her sore butt. "I guess." She whipped her head up to meet Natsu's furiously blushing face. "What the hell, Natsu?!"

His expression quickly changed to an obnoxious one as he lazily said, "You were too heavy."

"Rude!" she tried to sound angry, but she failed as she let out a small laugh.

Her heart was swelling with so much warmth and joy. Was this what it felt like to have actual friends? Was this what she had been missing out on her entire life?

"So now you guys got to see how short Natsu is," Gray sneered with a mischievous, icy smile.

"YOU'RE ONLY LIKE 3 INCHES TALLER!" Natsu argued, shoving his face into Gray's.

And it was true, Natsu was shorter than Gray and he had been shorter than Loke also, but Lucy didn't care because N

atsu was the perfect height for her.

"Cana's taller than you," Gray smirked. "And Erza might be also."

"So what?!" Natsu glowered, before reaching into his pocket to pull out his vibrating phone. "One sec," he said holding a finger up to Gray, who rolled his eyes while Natsu answered. "Yo...Oi it ain't my fault Happy likes to climb on people's faces!...It ain't my fault he escapes all the time either!...Yeah, yeah, whatever you say, _Maid Geer._" _ He laughed before hanging up.

Everyone was staring blankly.

"What?" Natsu asked, glowering at everyone's awed-expressions.

"Did he say—" Levy started.

"— _Maid Geer_?" Lucy finished.

"What the hell?" Gray blinked and then shuddered, "I don't even wanna picture that."

"So like...Maid Geer—but as a maid?" Cana asked, scratching her chin.

"Yep," Natsu nodded. "One of my brother's super devoted worshipper and maid—but he doesn't like it when I call him that."

"Gee I wonder why he wouldn't like to be called that," Lucy muttered under her breath.

"So is your brother just a big role player?" Levy inquired as she struggled to make sense of all this.

"Sounds like it," Lucy murmured.

"And he called you because your Acnologia-lizard named Happy escaped?" Gray asked with a snide.

"HE'S A SALAMANDER! AND HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ACNO—!"

"Oh my God!" a voice screamed, cutting off Natsu. They all looked over and there stood a random, but adorable-looking young girl with long, pink—that was darker than Natsu's—hair suddenly approached the goofy group of teens. "You guys look amazing in your _Fairy Tail_ cosplays! Can I take photo?!"

"Sure!" They all agreed. Lucy's happiness level spiked through the roof. She had always dreamed of having an amazing enough cosplay that people would ask to take photos of her after spending many nights envying over those on _Tumblr_ who got to live out that dream.

"Thank you!" the girl squealed, clapping her hands. "Okay can I have Elie and Musica gazing into each other's eyes, looking all lovey dovey?"

"Uhhh..." Lucy and Gray said in stupor while Natsu's jaw swung open in shock.

"Please!" the girl begged with puppy dog eyes. "They're my OTP!"

"Uh sure!" they agreed, unable to deny the girl her simple request.

Gray moved in front of Lucy and took her hands into his own. They were surprisingly warmer than earlier, making Lucy feel a bit more relaxed—or maybe more on edge?

His dark blueish, black eyes gazed into hers.

A blush coated both of their cheeks.

Lucy's lips parted slightly and all she could think for a moment was that Gray really was good looking...

"Soo cute!" the girl swooned with hearts in her eyes after she snapped her photos. "You guys have so much chemistry. Are you two dating?!"

"LIKE HELL THEY ARE!" Natsu roared with flaming eyes as he struggled in the chokehold Erza had him in. "ERZA, LET GO OF ME ALREADY!"

"Na-Natsu..." Lucy's eyes bugged

"Gah that idiot," Gray mumbled in disdain, letting go of Lucy's hands.

"Let the girl take her photos, Natsu!" Erza commended, tightening her hold.

"But they took a bunch already!"

Erza raised her sword up to his throat and Natsu gulped, immediately going silent.

"So are you two dating?!" The girl asked again, but Lucy and Gray were saved from an answer. "Chelia!" Another girl appeared, tripping over her own two feet and almost crashing to the floor if it hadn't been for the original girl, Chelia, catching her just in time. The other girl then said, "There you are! I've been looking all over for you! Don't run off like that!"

The new girl looked just as adorable with long blue hair in pigtails and was wearing a green, scaly dress reminding Lucy of the Sky Dragon Slayer and then it clicked in her head, "Wendy?!"

"Huh?" both girls turned towards Lucy. The blue haired girl's brown eyes widened, "_CelestialMage_?!"

"Yep!"

And Lucy was tackled into her second hug that day. "It's so nice to meet you! Your cosplay looks beautiful!"

"Likewise!" Lucy laughed, patting the top of the small girl's head.

Wendy pulled back and sheepishly pulled out her phone, "Would it be okay if I took pictures of you with Haru—I mean _DragonSlayer_ since you two are my OTP?"

And Lucy became frozen solid.

Did Wendy mean Haru and Elie were her OTP or did she mean Lucy and Natsu? Lucy hoped it was the former because the latter was just awkward since Natsu has still yet to ask Lucy out...

"Uhhh," Now Natsu was in a blank stupor and all his anger from before was gone as Erza released her hold on him and gave him a push towards Lucy.

"Please!"

"Err alright," he scratched at his head as he stumbled over to the frozen Lucy. He grabbed her hands, engulfing them in his abnormal warmth, leading her away from Gray so that they could stand with the flower-like fountain centered behind them.

His face looked tight and his eyes were narrowed as he forcefully gazed into her eyes which, in return, were just bulging.

And let's not forget the giant gap between them...

"Can they look any more awkward?" Cana scoffed, holding out her silvery flask. "Do you guys wanna loosen up?"

"Stop that!" Levy slapped the flask down.

Erza thrust her sword outwards, "Natsu, Lucy! You better look in love right this second _or else._ "

"A-AYE!" they jumped closer and Natsu hastily leaned his head down like he had done earlier when he had sniffed her, not close enough for his bangs to touch her again, but close enough for her to feel the soothing warmth of his breath.

And it was like the world around them had disappeared. They were no longer in the center of the blooming city of Crocus, but rather on their own, isolated planet.

"Ahh, so _those two_ are the ones who are dating," Chelia's voice blew into her ear like a small breeze, but Lucy didn't react; she was under a spell. The spell Natsu's hypnotizing dark eyes had cast upon her and he too seemed to be under it as well with how she noticed his breathing had hitched.

"Ahh my shipper heart. Lisanna, hold me!" Mira gasped, hugging her sister—though it looked kind of funny with her looking like a menacing demon.

"So prefect," Wendy cried and then she bashfully asked, "Could-Could you two maybe...do the forehead scene?"

"Course," Natsu murmured, not giving Lucy a chance to react before he kneeled to the ground and stared at her, waiting.

Lucy shakily squatted, folding onto her knees, allowing the cool ground to lick against her heated, exposed skin. Natsu leaned in close with his eyes pressed shut and a tender smile on his face. One hand grabbed hers while the other gently caressed the top of her head, pushing her closer.

For a brief second she thought they were going to kiss—completely forgetting that they were only imitating a scene—but Natsu halted the second their foreheads met.

And Lucy wondered how Elie felt in this moment. Was it this tumultuous rush of nervous energy and happiness? A feeling of absolute trust and truth?

Well whatever it was, Lucy knew she never wanted this to end. She closed her eyes briefly, taking in a deep breath before allowing herself to relax into it.

"Whoaaa," Levy's voice could be heard in the distance. "They actually look like professional actors..."

"Y-Yeah," Erza agreed, completely mesmerized by all of this.

"Okay! I got it! Thank you both so much!" Wendy said, bowing her head gratefully, before locking hands with Chelia.

And as quickly as it began, it was over as Natsu slowly opened his eyes and he leaned back a bit. He offered a small smile as he took in Lucy's flustered appearance. He tugged on her left pigtail and teased, "Cute hair style."

She pouted, disregarding the stuttering in her heart as she whacked his hand away, "Stopp!"

He laughed before standing up, offering Lucy his hand, but she ignored it deciding to stay on the floor. So he whined, "Oiii why are you getting offended? It was a compliment!"

Her head shot up to meet his bothered face. She raised a questionable-yet-smug brow at him. Did he really just—"Oh my gosh!"

"What?" he grunted with an annoyed scowl.

"You just admitted to giving me a compliment!"

He raised his index finger up in protest with his pink brows furrowing inwards, "I—!"

She stood up, trapping her face between her palms, "Wahh you _think_ I'm cute—no longer 'just a fact!'" She couldn't help but gush. How many times had Natsu given Lucy a compliment, but covered it up by claiming it was only a fact?

Too many, that's for sure.

Natsu let out a sputtering noise along with some strange hand gestures, as though he would find some sort of loophole out the mess he had cornered himself in.

"Heh, looks like you messed up," Gray sniggered, lethargically cracking his knuckles.

"GRAY, FIGHT ME!"

And Lucy knew that this was the start of a beautiful day.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****YAYY THEY FINALLY MET! Thank you all so much for sticking by me for 62 chapters waiting patiently for this!****

****I apologize for any typos—my eyes have gone blurry as I tried to reread all of this ;o;****

****Hehe the next few chapters are going to be fun to write :D****

****Thank you to my shinki, _Skydrill_ for letting me use her trashy Maid Geer****

****And special thanks to tumblr user:** _**ikityan02**_ ****for drawing me really cute art!******

Ikityan02. tumblr post/ 132797509497/i-finally-got-myself-to-finish-it-after-reading****

****As always, thank you for reading and I hope this chapter wasn't too disappointing ;-;****

*****Hugs* enjoy the weekend!****

63. Chapter 63: Zervis Omake

****AHH CRYING PLEASE DON'T KILL ME!****

****I've been hella busy with school this week now that the semester is ending so I haven't had time to write! But I'll try to get a real chapter up around Wednesday!****

****AND OMG WE HIT 6K REVIEWS? WHAT EVEN? HOW? I'M JUST ADSAFASDFADS THANK YOU? SF ADSFSA****

****SOBS this chapter is Zervis only.****

****Once again please don't hate me ;w;****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Zeref wasn't one to use social media per se, but somehow, he ended up with 20k followers on his _Tumblr_ account called, _Zeref_ , due to him having no idea what _Tumblr_ meant when it said URL, so the boy simply put in his name.

Hell, he didn't even know how to use Tumblr, though he saw his beloved brother using the strange website all the time—to talk to that weird loud girl he seems to be obsessed with.

But somehow through Zeref's plans of grandeur and him talking about his plans to buy a country, he ended up with a strange following of people who bend to every one of his commands.

Everyone seemed to think he was some kind of extreme role player—or at least that is what Natsu would tell him, though he no idea what a role player is...

Though Zeref seemed to have this one peculiar problem...every time he would follow someone, he or she's account would get deactivated, so his dash was rather lonely.

Was this how _Tumblr_ was supposed to be?

That didn't seem right...Natsu made it seem _friendly_ and fun—or maybe that's because his brother is simply in love?

Somehow, through all this confusion, Zeref _actually_ made a friend—not just a _follower_.

Her name was Mavis.

FairyHeart was her URL, it was something so sweet and so simple, that Zeref _wanted_ to follow her_ , but due to the weird curse on his account, he knew he couldn't. But that didn't stop him from checking out her blog. It was designed almost like a garden, full of life, sunshine, and most importantly _love_. Flowers and fairies danced all around in a mesmerizing way. And written in delicate script was her blog title, "Do fairies have tails?"

And Zeref found himself wondering the very same thing.

Mavis seemed to be loved by all, from what Zeref observed from afar. With tons of asks praising her and her blog, but he too was praised like such. But there was one thing that he envied; her friendships. She had a galore of friends that made him realize how different he was from the rest of the world.

People worshipped him, but no one bothered to befriend him.

What a lonely life, indeed and that was how Zeref preferred it to be. That way he can't accidentally delete someone's

blog.

Then one day he received an anonymous ask that read, "How many blogs do you follow?"

Zeref truthfully answered, "Zero."

And that was the beginning of something new.

A new ask appeared in his box—an ask from _FairyHeart._ "Isn't it rather lonely following zero blogs?"

Zeref considered the question. Did it matter if he were lonely? He couldn't risk following blogs without causing other users the pain for restarting. So he answered her privately with a sad smile on his face, "It's for the best."

Her reply was almost instant "How could it be for the best? You must be so bored without having anything to look at on your dash!"

"Trust me," he typed slowly and carefully, "everyone is better off if I don't follow them."

And suddenly a chat box appeared on the bottom right corner, "I don't think so."

That too was from Mavis.

With slight hesitation, Zeref gingerly typed back, "Excuse me?"

"I don't think people are better off without you following them! I've only been following you for such a short amount of time, but I can tell you are a genuinely sweet person."

A great warmth touched his heart like the soft kiss of the sun's rays. No one had ever said such kind words to him before. He swallowed tightly, "You don't understand."

"What don't I understand?"

His face darkened and all that warmth he had felt only a few moments before had vanished like a heavy cloud drifting in front of the sun, "Every time I go to follow someone, their blog gets deactivated."

"...You can't be serious?"

"But I am."

"Have you tried deleting your blog and starting a new one?"

Zeref solemnly wrote, "I have tried several times. Always ends the same."

"Have you tried contacting staff?!"

"They told me not to follow people."

Zeref waited patiently, absentmindedly playing around with the beads on his abacus, wondering if Mavis would respond. Well there wasn't much to say at this point. He simply was incapable of following other blogs and had accepted it at this point.

He was just about to log off when suddenly she replied.

"I'm so sorry..."

His dark eyes widened. She pitied him? Zeref couldn't recall a time any had ever expressed such sympathies. His heart thumped loudly. Mavis was wrong. _She's_ the one who's a _genuinely sweet person._ His eyes blurred. "Don't be."

"But you're so lonely."

"No I'm not," he earnestly decided. "The fact that I was able to converse with you like this has brought me more joy than I could remember in quiet sometime. Thank you, Mavis."

"Zeref..."

"But..." His eyes grew darker and gloomier as he continued typing, "At the same time, I am fearful that a sweet and innocent blog like yours could be deleted in a matter of seconds if my finger were to flip and click the follow button. " He painfully gulped and with tight fingers, he proceeded, "I don't want any more blogs getting deleted. I think it would be best if you never messaged me again."

"Well I have to disagree with you," Mavis wrote, "because I can tell we are going to be great friends!"

"Eh?" he averted to himself. She wanted to be his friend? He cautiously messaged back, "Friends?"

"Yes?"

"But my curse?"

"So don't follow me. We can still message like this and we can tag each other in posts!"

And for the first time in a very, very long time, Zeref smiled _an actual smile._

****XOXOX****

The weeks Zeref spent talking to Mavis were the best weeks in his entire life—besides finding his long lost brother, Natsu, wandering on the streets of Magnolia. Mavis was like a breath of fresh air. So full of life...Even though Zeref had no idea what she looked like, he _knew_ she was beautiful.

"Zeref," Mavis one day messaged him. "Something happened..."

"What? Are you okay?" his heart felt heavy in his chest like someone dropped a weight on it.

"That curse you have..." she slowly typed. "I think I may have contracted it..."

And he was positive that his heart had shattered into a million pieces, chipping into shards of ice chips. How was this possible? There was no way this curse was spreadable, right? "What do you mean?"

"I followed my friend's girlfriend, but then...HER BLOG WAS DELETED AND I WENT TO GO CHECK ON OTHER BLOGS I RECENTLY FOLLOWED AND THEY WERE DELETED ALSO! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, ZEREF!"

His stomach churned for the worse as an immense wave of guilt submerged him. His curse had spread to her. Not being one for violence, he surprisingly punched his black-painted desk with a trembling fist. _Why?_ "I'm so sorry. I was afraid this would happen...I bring nothing but bad luck."

"This isn't your fault," she stated. "It's whatever weird virus is in the system. I unfollowed you because I was scared it would deactivate your blog and I wouldn't be able to live with that."

"Mavis..." his heart stuttered at the words. "I can't forgive myself for this...I should just delete for good. Bad things always happen when I'm around."

"I won't forgive you if you delete! These past few weeks we started talking have made me so happy! You're so kind and I wouldn't trade your friendship for anything else in the world! You're not alone in this, Zeref. We will find a cure to this together!"

"Your words..." tears dribbled down his cheek. "No one's ever said such kind things to me before."

"I don't believe that," she countered.

"Mavis, I want to—" His eager hands clicked `_send_` too quickly before he could finish typing, but Mavis seemed to know what he was saying since she completed his message with her own, "—follow you."

His pale hands trembled as timidly asked, "Together?"

"Together."

And licking his lips, clicked the dreadful `_follow_` button on Mavis' blog and it quickly switched to `_unfollow_`. He nearly choked, silently praying to any deity listening, `_please let it work_` as he clicked refresh and white page blinded his dark eyes.

It felt like eons passed as Zeref waited for the screen to load.

His breathing had halted. Sweat was soaking his black bangs, making them stick uncomfortably to his forehead.

And finally it loaded.

"The blog you are looking for no longer exists."

His jaw hung open and his vision became blurred. A cold, sickening feeling traveled down his spine, causing him to tremble like there was an earthquake.

Mavis' beautiful, jovial blog no longer existed.

And just like her blog, Zeref himself, no longer wanted to exist.

His nose clogged up as he sniffled and wept over the loss of his friend. His watering eyes, he headed over to `_settings_` to go delete his blog once and for all.

But there was a message in his inbox.

A part of him wanted to ignore it and delete without ever looking back, but another part said `_open it_`.

And he did just that.

Inside was an anonymous message: "Hehe looks like your curse may have been stronger. Anyway, I wanted to give you my `_Skype_` so we can keep messaging! `_MavisTheFairy_` is my username. Talk to you soon, Zeref!"

Zeref dried his eyes and let out a choking laugh of disbelief.

Looks like his friendship with Mavis is far from over, in fact, it has only just begun.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thank you so much for reading and I don't say it enough, but I am so thankful and grateful for all of you.****

****And thank you for always being so supportive and once again, sorry this isn't Comic Con chapter ;o;****

****I wish you all luck with your finals or tests or just life in general!****

64. Chapter 64

****MERRY CHRISTMAS!****

****Wish I could have given a better chapter, but I really wanted to post one since I felt bad not posting in a while since I have been so busy with my finals! But now they're over and I aced them all! :)****

****Anyway, THIS STORY HIT 2K FOLLOWERS?! THANK YOU? OMG!****

****And special thanks to my waifu from tumblr, _**Lindako7**_ for making me a Virtual Flames tank top as a Christmas present! If you wanna see it:****

****_missyplatina .tumblr post/135219672095/i-would-just-like-to-say-thank-you-to-my-beautiful_****

****I hope you are all doing okay and that this chapter isn't as bad as I think it is!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

It was only a short while after Natsu and Gray's fight—which ended rather painfully with special thanks to Erza and the hilt of her sword—did Natsu decide to bug the hell out of Lucy. "Natsuuu," she moaned, jumping up and down. "Just gimme back my phone!"

"No way!" he laughed, raising his arm up so that her phone was just out of reach so out of blind rage, she rammed in to him, but Natsu was too quick because he shouted out, "Gray! Catch!" before plummeting to the floor in front of the giant fountain with Lucy lying on his chest. Her face landed in the crook of his neck, allowing her to inhale her favorite scent of Natsu.

But she didn't let that distract her as quickly sat up and whined, "Nooooo," smacking the boy's chest. "You jerk!" But Natsu only sniggered at her dismay, making no move to get her off of him.

Lucy quickly clambered off of Natsu and straightened up, ready to attack Gray who was already playing on her phone. She bit her lip hard. "G-Give it back!"

"Is that your mom?" Gray asked, ignoring her request as his droopy eyes bounced from the phone to Lucy back to the phone.

"Yeah," she nodded, rubbing her forearm, which felt a little sore probably due to her hard impact on Natsu's stony body.

"Whoaa you two look so much alike!" Levy exclaimed, standing on top of the fountain ledge so she could see the phone from Gray's high grip.

"Oi, they really do," Natsu agreed, looking over Gray's shoulders with an intrigued smile present on his lips.

"Both so pretty," Mira gleamed, her kind eyes and soft voice touched Lucy's heart. Her mother was the definition of beautiful and to be compared to her was almost like a dream come true. Or maybe it was just a beautiful lie, but either way, Lucy felt a great deal of warmth fill her chest.

"Both have such big tits," Cana laughed, elbowing Lucy—painfully—in the gut. "Glad you got some good genes in ya, Lucy!"

Lucy rubbed the spot Cana had hit and glowered, "Quit talking about my boobs!" But Cana snickered, offering Lucy an unapologetic smile.

"So if you inherited all your looks from your mom," Gray said keenly, rubbing his chin with his thumb and index finger for the effect, "then what did you inherit from your old man?"

What did she inherit from her father? Well she actually wasn't so sure about that. Maybe it was his work ethic? He's a very hard worker and that was something Lucy could relate to—well before she got distracted by her internet life that is...

Lucy tried to speak, but then Natsu swooped in, taking her phone from Gray and said, "His mustache obviously."

"W-WHAT?" Lucy sputtered, her eyes popping out in a mix of horror and anger while Gray blinked in astonishment and said, "You think?!"

Lucy exhaled loudly as she took a seat on the stony fountain ledge. This was absolutely ridiculous. _Inheriting her father's mustache_? She shivered at the thought.

"Course," the boy shrugged with ease, lazily tossing Lucy her phone back, but she hadn't been expecting that and nearly dropped it into the fountain as her hands fumbled to catch it.

The near death of her phone and the absurdity of the conversation struck a chord inside Lucy. With veins protruding out all over her forehead, she bellowed out, "THEN WHERE THE HELL IS MY MUSTACHE NOW IF YOU REALLY THINK THAT?!"

Natsu plopped down next to her, sitting pretzel style as his eyes searched her face. Lucy had to fight the urge to move away, not feeling comfortable with the scrutiny, not to mention her personal space felt invaded. It was almost like he really had Haru's fire power because Lucy started to perspire under his burning, intensive gaze and closeness of his face.

He lifted his hand up and gave a feathery touch to her cheek and as an automatic response, Lucy helplessly leaned in to the touch. Natsu's eyes widened slightly at her action before they drifted down to her lips and then his hand slowly trailed from her cheek over to the skin between her top lip and nose.

She could no longer breathe, nearly positive that all the air in the universe had disappeared as Natsu traced his finger down to her chin, leaving a burning trail in its wake. He circled it back up to her top lip. His eyes met hers again with dilated pupils and all she could hear was her heart pounding in her ears.

It was like no one else existed except for them, like they were under the spotlight of a stage performance, unable to make out the rest of the world.

Natsu's face suddenly pulled in closer and Lucy gasped, jerking her head back out nerves. "You shave it off every day probably," he cheekily grinned, utterly ruining the enchanting moment.

Lucy burned scarlet, slapping his hand away, "Stop!" Her heart beating at least a thousand miles per second.

For a moment there, she had thought he was going to kiss her.

Gray thoughtfully nodded, thrusting his hands into his pockets and said along with everyone else, "Makes sense."

"HOW DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?!"

"Well you're not denying it," Erza stated, suddenly appearing besides them.

"Oi, where did you go?" Gray inquired, tapping on his lip.

"I DON'T HAVE A MUSTACHE!" Lucy cried out. Annoying online and annoying in real life...

"Neither does Natsu," Gray jeered, patting Natsu roughly on the back.

Natsu's eye twitched as he jerked away from Gray, "The hell is that supposed to mean?"

"I think you know exactly what that means," Gray said back.

"OI! I—"

"_Knock it off!_" Erza barked out, before smoothing out her long, scarlet hair. "I was getting Jellal so you guys can all finally meet him," Erza said, answering Gray's previous question with an out of place blush on her face.

"Ohmygosh!" Mira squealed, grasping Lucy's arm with her clawed fingernails. "We get to see Jerza in action!"

"Ahh!" Lucy winced, "Mira...Your claws!" But Mira was too busy searching around to hear her.

"Uhh, ahah, Erza?" Levy moved next to Lucy, scratching her forehead. "Where is he?"

"Right here," Erza said proudly, pointing to the spot next to her.

An empty spot.

Lucy and everyone else ogled blankly as Erza turned her head to the side and said, "Jellal, these are my—" A choking noise escaped her from her lips as she frantically searched around, "JELLAL?!"

Erza immediately stormed off, hunting for her boyfriend while everyone else shuddered in trepidation and preoccupation of what the scarlet haired huntress was going to do to him when she finds him.

****XOXOX****

Meanwhile at Lucy's house, Jude could hear her noisy laptop ringing. "Who could that be?" he wondered. Glancing at the screen, he read, "Natsu is calling."

"Seriously?" Jude rolled his eyes, clicking the answer button. "Now listen here, Natsu, my daughter—you're not Natsu," he gasped, staring back at a strange looking boy with dark eyes and ghostly pale skin.

"No, I'm not," the boy spoke softly, neatly folding his hands together.

Jude brows furrowed inwards in bemusement. "Then why did the computer say _Natsu is calling_?"

The bizarre boy shrugged, "Possibly because I am on his account."

"Err..." Jude scratched his forehead, taking a seat on Lucy's desk chair. Did this boy hack Natsu's account? Last thing he needed was his daughter talking to _another stranger_ thinking it was Natsu _._ "Who are you exactly?"

"Zeref Dragneel," the boy said with a thin smile. "Natsu's brother."

"His brother?" Jude pondered, tapping the corner of his lip, trying to remember if Lucy ever mentioned Natsu having a brother, but he couldn't recall. Well that's interesting. Natsu having a brother... Suddenly, Jude's eyes bulged out, "WAIT THERE ARE TWO OF YOU?!"

Zeref simply nodded and then asked, "Is Lucy around?" His eyes searched around the screen, probably trying to see past Jude's bulky frame.

"No, she's—"

"—At Comic Con," Zeref interjected. "I forgot all about that."

"She's not at—"

"—Aren't these pictures cute?" The boy held his phone up to the screen. Tears lidded his black eyes making them glisten like a pool of tar.

Why was he tearing up? Jude silently wondered as he narrowed his eyes, leaning in close to the screen. He could make out a picture of Natsu holding a frantic Lucy in his arms. Natsu's smile was so bright and warm, Jude was sure it could melt ice—hell, it was melting the ice in his _own_ heart. And the way his daughter was clutching onto the boy for dear life... His heart felt heavy. It was worse than he had thought. They really had fallen for each other...

"I'm so happy for Natsu. To be in love and to have a working _Tumblr_ ...He's very lucky."

"Damn it," Jude chuckled disdainfully. "I knew something was a bit off with her 'school field trip' story."

"Her story?" Zeref questioned, cocking his head to the side, allowing his bangs to loosely fall along with the tilt. "You mean her smut fic? Natsu told me all about it! Well not personally—but I heard him screaming about it. I think he liked it! Though I wonder what smut is..."

Jude's expression lightened up. Nothing was more precious than talking about his daughter's accomplishments. "Oh I heard about her smut fic too! Apparently it was very cute and sweet! My daughter has quite the talent!"

"We must read it sometime then!"

"Yes, we must!" Then Jude's eye twitched. Something wasn't quite right... "Wait a second... Why were you calling my daughter?" His eyes widened the second Zeref's lifeless cheeks tinted a nice rosy red. "Don't tell me you're in love with her too! Listen here! I have a bat and I'm not afraid to use it!"

"In love with her? No, I would never try to steal Natsu's girlfr—"

Jude bolted up from his seat and smacked his hands together, "SO THEN YOU'RE AFTER GRAY, AREN'T YOU?!"

"Gray?"

"I KNEW IT! Grayef? Zeray?" Jude questioned aloud, trying to pull out his inner shipper.

"What are you—"

"Ehh ship names don't matter," Jude muttered, waving a careless hand at the webcam. "Anyway, you can have him I guess. But it might cause complication between you and Natsu's relationship...I think he and Gray had a thing at one point. Though I'm a bit confused on the whole matter..."

"Natsu dated Gray?" Zeref repeated in wonder, his eyes looking up to the right. "Well I can't say I'm surprised. I was more surprised to find out he was interested in a girl if we are to be completely honest."

"You don't say!" Jude grinned, suddenly interested in talking to the boy.

"Yes, you see..."

And that was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

****XOXOX****

After the whole phone fiasco, Lucy and the others, minus Erza who was still on the search for Jellal decided to grab a bite to eat. Though Lucy was afraid the line to get in would be too long, but they all assured her that Erza had a foolproof plan to cut the line.

With that said, Lucy slid in first, feeling more comfortable on the inside with her bare thigh pressed against the cool wall so that there was enough room for other people to squeeze in. Natsu slid in after, pressing his thigh flat against hers. Tingly sensations coursed through her like liquid fire.

Levy slid in right after, leaving a fine amount of space for Natsu to move away from Lucy due to the girl being so small. But Natsu didn't move, rather he kept his abnormally warm leg flushed against Lucy's leaving her heart a fluttering mess.

Lucy shyly glanced up at him through her dark lashes. He looked relaxed as ever as he scowled at Gray who sat across from Levy—well maybe relaxed wasn't the right term per se, but either way, he didn't look bothered. Hell, maybe he didn't even notice that his leg was touching hers.

She let out a defeated sigh of disappointment. Why was she so worked up about their legs touching?

"What's wrong, Lucy?" Mira asked as she trailed her clawed finger nail around the rim of her water glass.

"What?" Lucy squeaked, fiddling her bendy straw as she gave a mousy sideways glance towards Natsu whose attention was now focused on her. Her cheeks warmed as she forced her gaze back towards the demon and nervously said, "Uh nothing! Nothing's wrong!"

"Okay," Mira smiled sweetly—looking very contradictive with her cosplay—though Lucy could sense the girl didn't buy her lie and risking another peek at Natsu, he seemed equally skeptical.

Conversations carried on, more like teasing at Gray about what he's going to do when he meets Juvia. Gray argued he wasn't going to do anything, telling everyone to shut up, but from the deep shade of red on his cheeks, Lucy could tell he was most definitely looking forward to their grand meet up.

Though she was too distracted to join in on the teasing.

Instead, she was busy watching Natsu absently drummed his fingers on his thigh.

She wanted to hold his hand. What happened to him never letting go of her hand today? She bit her lip, reaching her left hand out, then dropping it back in her lap.

How was she supposed to just hold his hand?

But she really wanted to...

She started out slowly, resting her hand lightly on Natsu's hard knee. His body jerked slightly at the touch and she watched as his eyes shot downwards, looking directly at her foreign hand on his leg.

She felt unnerved as she tried to keep a natural air as she trailed her fingers up and across his thigh. Natsu gulped, but returned back to the conversation, coughing out a loud, obnoxious laugh along with a nasty snide at Gray.

And then Lucy's hand found his, which was no longer drumming like it had been. She snaked her fingers through it, keeping her grip light. But to her upmost surprise, Natsu sealed their hands together all while keeping his attention focused on the argument he and Gray were having.

The newfound redness in Natsu's cheeks didn't go unnoticed by Lucy, leaving her to silently wonder if it was from his heated fight with Gray or if it was from the handholding. Either way, she hoped for the latter as she reveled in the feel of Natsu's warm hands wrapped around hers, resting them firmly on his lap.

Maybe it was the little things such as that, that made Lucy fall even harder for the boy.

"You're the biggest loser out there," Gray sneered at Natsu. "You lost the damn competition months ago and didn't admit up to it!"

"So wait," Lucy said, finally deciding to join in a conversation. "Who followed whom first?"

Both boys froze for a split second before Natsu gave Lucy's hand a warning squeeze just as an arrogant smile took over Gray's face.

"That's a good question," Levy conceded, looking rather intrigued with rounded eyes.

"Yeah, Natsu," Gray sneered, "was it you or me who followed first?"

"Er..." Natsu hesitated, his face looking pale as his eyes peeled in discomfort. "...Well..."

"We're waitingggg," Cana coerced in a sing-song voice, resting her chin on her hands.

"I..." he swallowed before mushing out in a messy mumble, "followed Gray first," followed by slamming his head on the table with a shuddering bang.

Laughter bubbled out of everyone, while Lucy awkwardly patted Natsu's rigid back, "There, there..."

"I was his _senpai_," Gray boasted through his laughter, "back when he tried to befriend me and get me to follow back. Isn't that right, _Natsu_?"

"Like hell you're right," Natsu's head flew up in outrage. "Why don't you tell them why you ended up following me back?!" Lucy could feel Natsu's hand clench in hers.

"How did you end up following Natsu back?" Mira questioned, looking a bit thrilled by the newfound information.

For a moment there, Gray was speechless before he stammered out, "I-I don't remember. So what's everyone getting to eat? I'm thinking of frozen—"

"Not so fast!" Natsu cut in with his own arrogant grin. "Tell them, Gray. Why did you follow me back?"

"I-I thought he was... _alright_ for a second..."

"HAH!" Natsu cackled smugly while Gray looked like he were contemplating murder.

"Ahhh!" Mira couldn't contain her happy squeals. "So you two were friends at one point?!"

"Kinda," Natsu grumbled, ruffling his hair.

"I guess," Gray mumbled, ruffling his own hair as well.

"So Gratsu has always been canon!" Mira concluded.

"LIKE HELL!"

And just as the poor waiter came to take their order, Natsu and Gray wrestling each other on top of the table.

"E-Excuse m-e!" The waiter stammered with his body shaking. "N-No fighting inside! I'll have to ask you t-to l-leav-e!"

But the poor waiter was ignored.

"I'll call security!"

"SHUT UP!" Gray and Natsu roared together, punching the poor man in the jaw.

"AHHHH SERIOUSLY?!" Lucy cried out with her hands clamped over her cheeks while the others tried to sink into the booth, as if they were hoping they would become invisible from the embarrassing scene...

And that was how Lucy and everyone got banned from one of the most popular diners in all of Crocus.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Thank you again for reading! Sorry again for the delay. And for those interested I wrote a few oneshots which can be found on my profile that I forgot to shamelessly self-promote:****

****A kinky NaLu cooking fic, a NaLu Christmas fluff fic, a Gruvia kissing-in-the-rain fic, and a Gruvia and somewhat-NaLu fic.****

****Once again, MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS! Hope you all have a happy and healthy winter break.****

****Any fun plans for it?! :)****

65. Chapter 65

****So I sprained my finger so excuse me for this awful chapter because I can barely type lol****

****Whelps anyway, HAPPY NEW YEAR! Hope 2016 brings you all lots and lots of joy and happiness and fluff!****

****GUESS WHAT?! THIS STORY IS ALMOST 8 MONTHS OLD! Hard to believe it's already been so long! Thanks for sticking by me :) It really means a lot!****

****ANDDD this story is officially the most followed story out of all the Fairy Tail fanfics! Thanks to it being so long haha so THANK YOU AGAIN!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Gray should have expected that punching a waiter would get him and everyone kicked out. Why did he and Natsu even have to go at each other? Oh right, because neither of them wanted to random the brief friendship they had once held.

Besides, that today wasn't supposed to be about them since they already live near each other. It was supposed to be about meeting everyone and being together as friends and of course Juvia—not that Gray cared about meeting her. Nope, not even a little bit.

Well if he did care, it was only because they were cosplaying together and Musica needs his Reina counterpart—not for any other reason, just to complete the cosplay.

Or that's what he told himself.

But none of that mattered right now because Erza was waiting right outside the diner for them. It was like she could sense trouble from a mile away, creeping Gray out a bit.

"Oh!" Erza jumped at the sight of them with a blushing smile. "You guys already finished eating?"

"Well...uh..." Gray nervously started to unbutton his jeans, looking at the others for help, but Natsu was too busy tugging on Lucy's pigtails while she swatted him away as she tried to pay attention to the conversation on hand and—

"Well anyway," Erza said, bringing Gray's attention back to her. Her face was tinted pink as she bashfully tied her hands behind her back and tittered back and forth on her feet, all while becoming a stuttering mess. "I-I wo-would like y-you all to meet my b-b-boyfriend Je-Jellal."

And just like before, everyone stared blankly, unsure where exactly they were supposed to be looking because there was no one standing beside Erza, or anywhere near her for that matter.

"Jellal," Erza turned to her side, with feigned bravery, "I would like you to meet— **_OH NOT AGAIN! WHERE IS JELLAL?!_**" The fearsome woman had roared like a lion, causing everyone to helplessly take a step back.

"Oi, do you think he actually exists?" Natsu murmured to Gray.

"Idiot!" Gray hissed back, his eyes bugging in alarm. "Don't say stuff that will get us killed!"

"**_JELLAALLL!_**" Erza stormed off in a fury, raging radiating off in heated waves.

"At least we didn't have to explain to her that we got kicked out of the diner..." Levy chuckled nervously, rubbing her neck, trying to lighten the mood.

"Yeah," Gray stiffly nodded, "and we—" Suddenly, Lucy cried out, "GRAY, YOUR PANTS!"

"Huh?" the boy froze, looking down at his bare legs, clad only in his navy blue boxers. "WHAT THE HELL?!" He anxiously searched around looking for his discarded jeans, feeling too exposed for comfort since he already wasn't wearing a shirt. Stupid stripping habit. How does this always happen?

"Seriously, Gray?" Cana glowered her purple eyes at him, shaking her head in distaste, "there are children around!"

"_ Seriously?! You're _ lecturing _ me?! _ " Gray awed in wonder. "What happen to your usual Gray-take-off-your-cl othes-attitude?!"

"It's inappropriate," Cana shrugged. "There's a time and place for that stuff, ya know?"

"Oi, oi..."

"Pervert," Natsu sneered, satisfyingly crossing his arms over his chest, clearly enjoying Gray's embarrassment from lack of clothing.

"Oi, shut it!" Gray growled, raising a shaking fist at the cosplay-dragonslayer. Then he turned towards Lucy, who blushing like crazy at the mere sight of him. Maybe she never seen a boy dressed in only boxers before? "Say, Lucy, can I borrow your clothes?"

"ARE YOU REALLY ASKING ME THAT?!"

And suddenly there were big whooping cheers and shouts and even whistles too as Gray tensely turned around. He choked on his spit, gazing at a huge crowd surrounding him and his friends with their phones raised and angled directly at him.

"THAT WAS AMAZING!"

"So in-character hnnghhh!"

"It's like he's the real Muscia!"

"I want a picture with him!"

"I want his autograph!"

Voice after voice after voice threw out compliments, leaving Gray a blushing mess. _What the hell?_ He scratched his ear. Were they talking about _him_?

"Aww!" some random girl moaned, lowering her phone with a pout on her lips. "I missed it! Could you strip again?"

"OF COURSE NOT!" he bellowed at the absurdity of the question. _Strip again?_ He didn't even know where his pants were to do that again. "Shit! My ticket!"

"What's wrong, Gray?" Mira asked with her expression of concern looking out of place on her cosplay.

"My ticket was in the pocket of my jeans! And I have no idea where my jeans are!"

"Well I'm pretty sure you were wearing them like five minutes ago," Cana said and then pursed her lips in reconsideration, "but then again, I am drunk."

"Thanks for the help," he seethed through gritted teeth.

"Anytime, bud!" Cana laughed, clearly glad to be of _some_ use.

"Don't worry, Gray!" Levy pepped. "We will find your pants!"

"Yeah," Lucy nodded in agreement, "let's all search!" Then she tugged on Natsu's hand, "C'mon, Natsu."

"Ughh do I have to? It's more fun watching him panic!"

"_Natsu!_"

"Fine, fine," he scowled and then slyly grinned, "I have an idea...YOO," Natsu called out to the crowd, hands cupping his mouth to help amplify his voice. "HELP US FIND THIS STRIPPING BASTARD'S PANTS IF YA WANNA WATCH HIM STRIP AGAIN!"

"_NATSU!_" Gray glared, but the boy only smirked as the crowd roared with delight, all dropping their heads in search of the missing jeans.

And somehow through the mass chaos, a small voice sounding like the gentle chime of bell blew into his ear.

"Gray-sama...?"

"That voice..." Gray quickly inhaled, turning his head sharply to the right.

It was like the sun was a spotlight, dazzling down, creating an angelic halo around a beautifully thin-yet-curvey girl wearing a cute Russian-style hat and long blue dress slit up the leg. She was gazing at him with the biggest blue eyes he had ever seen. The girl was pale but her cheeks—they had a nice brush of pink on them.

His heart rate increased immensely within seconds. "J-Juvia?"

"Gray-sama...Gray-sama is so dedicated to his cosplay!" she squealed, hugging something to her chest. He squinted his eyes to get a better look and gasped. It was his jeans! "Juvia should strip too!"

"My jeans!" he raced over to the girl, "Thanks, uh..._Juvia._"

Juvia gasped, clutching the jeans even tighter to her chest. "G-Gray-sama is standing right in front of Juvia...and he said her name_in person_." Her face flushed a darker shade of pink and looked like she were about to pass out. But there was no way she would actually faint—"Oi, oi! Juvia!" He placed his hands on her thin shoulders to steady her. "Get a hold of yourself!"

"YAY HE FOUND HIS JEANS!"

"MUSICA-COSPLAYER, PUT THEM ON AND STRIP AGAIN!"

"HE'S SO HOT!"

"STRIP, STRIP, STRIP!"

And Juvia tensed up in Gray's arms, her eyes turning sharp like daggers at the crowd around them. "_Love rivals_!"

"Calm down!" Gray grumbled, trying to look annoyed, but he failed as a smile broke out upon his lips and he ended up laughing. The whole thing felt so odd...It was like how everything played out online, everything blowing out of proportion, Juvia declaring everyone her love rival, Gray stripping...Was this really real life?

"Gray-sama's laughing!" the girl swooned. "Juvia is so happy!"

"IT'S A COUPLES COSPLAY! MUSICA AND REINA! CAN WE GET PICTURES OF YOU TWO?!"

And it was like déjà vu of Lucy and Natsu, Gray snorted. But he was more than happy to do it..."STRIP TOGETHER!"

"NO WAY!" Gray screamed, taking back his previous thoughts. The hell was wrong with this pervy crowd?

"JUVIA IS READY!" Juvia exclaimed, getting ready to pull off her dress, but Gray pinned her arms down to her side. His heart beating so fast, he thought it would give out for a second. The girl's breath hitched and her cheeks warmed just like his own, surprised by his action.

Meanwhile, the others watched from afar and Lucy was surprised to see how into this _Natsu_ was. He had this approving grin on his lips, letting her know that Natsu shipped Gruvia along with everyone else and that he really does care about Gray after all.

****XOXOX****

Eventually Erza did find out what had happened at _her favorite diner_ to _her favorite waiter_, after they found her near the giant fountain, located close to the con, still without Jellal, unable to find him. Natsu had ended up with a punch to the face—probably because Erza took out her Jellal frustrations on him—and Lucy was told that he was her responsibility, while Gray was caught in Erza's chokehold, because Erza was extra angry at him for his perverse-stripping behavior with Juvia stumbling from behind, begging Erza to be more gentle on him.

Natsu looked entirely peeved as he rubbed his sore cheek with his free hand. So peeved in fact, he snapped at Lucy, "Does your hand have to be so sweaty?"

"Is not!"

"Is too!"

"W-Well I told you I have sweaty hands back when I was in the hospital!" Lucy argued. Natsu's face tinted as he let out a grunt, letting her know he remembered, "And my hand especially sweats a lot when I'm nervous," she muttered with a painfully embarrassed expression. Talking about her sweaty hands was something she certainly never thought would occur on their first day meeting...

Natsu's face softened as he echoed, "Nervous?"

Lucy didn't say anything.

"The same thing you were nervous about last night?"

"I-I don't know...maybe," she admitted as she dropped his hand, watching it carelessly fall back against his side. Tying her own hands behind her back, she continued, "It-It feels almost like a dream." And that was the truth. Never in a million years did Lucy think she would get to _hang out_ with the people she spent all her time chatting with online. Gnawing on her bottom lip, she finally let her heart speak. "...I'm afraid I'll wake up."

A chuckle rippled from Natsu's throat, "Well that's just stupid. You ain't sleeping. And if you were, I'd be bothering you 'til ya wake up."

"Hey!" she scowled. That was something Lucy hated; being laughed at, but that didn't bother her too much because he did manage to cheer her up somehow. "Thank you, Natsu," she grinned with a smile that touched her brown eyes.

He stared at her for a moment looking quite shocked—maybe he wasn't expecting her to be so forgiving on that. He returned a grin of equal strength back, managing to make her heart melt like chocolate over a flame. "Don't get so weird on me," he murmured, his face blazing bright red as he turned away from her and in a very low, mumbling voice, Lucy thought she heard him say, "You ain't the only one feelin' like this..."

"Natsu?"

His brows furrowed as his eyes darted downwards, "Oi, why did you let go of my hand?" He seized hold of her wrist

"I thought you didn't want to hold a sweaty hand—"

"I never said that," he grumbled, puffing out his chest. "'sides I—"

"NATSU-SAN!"

"Heh—ACK!"

Suddenly Natsu's hand was torn out of Lucy's, she turned around, grumbling, "Wha—EHH?!" Her eyes bugging at the sight. There was some strange blond boy was hugging Natsu to death—literally.

"Natsu-san, I can't believe I'm actually meeting you!" the boy enthused with a smile so bright, it nearly blinded Lucy

Natsu let out a groaning sound as he pushed the boy off of him, but the boy managed to keep his hands locked on Natsu's shoulders. "Who the hell are you?!"

"Sting!" the boy giddily introduced.

"Who?" Natsu grunted, his eyes dangerously narrowed.

But Sting didn't seem to notice. "I run the twin dragon slaying blog with my buddy Rogue—who's somewhere—" the blond called Sting, released Natsu as he peered around looking for his friend. Natsu, however, took this moment to put some space between them. "—looking for Gajeel-san!"

Her gaze immediately flung to her short friend who was already blushing as she mumbled out, "G-Gajeel?" Completely unaware that Lucy had been listening.

Lucy sniggered and leaned in closely to Levy's ear, "Guess you'll be meeting him soon. Hmmm?" And giggled quietly.

"Lucy!" Levy flushed even harder. Tugging on her bottom lip, she mumbled, "Well we were supposed to meet inside the con..."

Lucy smirked, rubbing her hands together. "Can't wait for Mira to tease the hell out of you two!"

While Levy buried her reddening face into the palms of her hand.

"Gajeel-kun?" Juvia said, turning towards the girls, her eyes huge with curiosity. "You two know him?"

"I don't," Lucy said and then mockingly grinned, "but _Levy_ does."

"Levy?!" Juvia looked like a mixture of surprise and joy as she looked at the tiny girl, "You're Levy?! Wahh! Juvia has heard so much about you!"

"Y-You have?" Levy flushed, giving Lucy a quick, panicky sideways glance.

"How do you know Gajeel?" Lucy inquired, trying to think of a time she had seen them talk on _Tumblr._ Well, they both did comment on her selfie of her and her iguana...

"Gajeel-kun is Juvia's best friend!" the girl gleefully revealed and she pursed her plump lips. "Gajeel-kun was right! You do look like shrimp!"

"HEY!" Levy cried out, looking mortified. "HE TOLD YOU I LOOK LIKE A SHRIMP?! When I find that iron jerk —"

"Oi, blondie!" Sting called out to Lucy, holding out his cellphone with one arm, while the other was wrapped around Natsu's shoulder—who looked very uncomfortable to say the least. However, Lucy hated to be called _blondie_ and glowered at him, but he seemed oblivious to her glare. "Could you take a picture of me 'n Natsu-san?!"

"Uhh sure?" Lucy sweated, taking the phone so she could capture the most awkward photo ever. "So how do you know Natsu exactly?"

"He is goals," Sting gladly answered. "His edits and colorings...Natsu is my senpai!"

"Aww!" Lucy giggled, enjoying the way Natsu looked away in semi-mortification. "How cute! I could already feel the ship. Stingsu? Or maybe—"

"Lucy!" Natsu frothed with heated cheeks. "Are ya done takin' the photo already?!"

"Yep!"

He jerked away from Sting and Sting took his phone back and turned towards Natsu and brightly beamed, "Thank you so much, Natsu-san! It was such an honor to meet you!"

And Natsu's annoyance melted away by the light in Sting's eyes. He gave a huge, toothy grin that made Lucy's heart practically turn to goo. "Pshh why are you thanking me? I'm the one who should be thanking you! 'Cuz now I know I have another great friend."

And the two of them began to talk as Lucy watched from afar, enjoying the way Natsu's face was illuminated in the sunlight, like he were some kind of shining prince, though she knew better than to think of him as a prince, trying to picture his expression as he probably go off about how he's really a dragon.

He caught her staring and gave her a quick, heart-flipping grin, before returning his focus back to Sting.

"So you and Natsu seem to be doing well," Mira observed, her blue eyes sharp with thrill.

But before Lucy could answer, Juvia exclaimed, "Gajeel-kun!"

And both Lucy and Mira gasped, both hastily turning their gaze to an awestricken Levy.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****YAY! GRAY AND JUVIA MET!****

****I hope I made that scene alright for you Gruvia fans ;w;****

****AND WHERE THE HELL IS JELLAL?!****

****Well I hope 2016 brings all of you tons and tons of joy and NaLu!****

****I wrote two new oneshots! One is a NaLu New Years fic and the other is a Gruvia fic****

****And thank you for reading for being so supportive! *HUGS TIGHTLY*****

66. Chapter 66

****As always, THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR BEING SO KIND AND SUPPORTIVE! Seriously it means the world to me. Thank you for giving me the will to write with all the stress that's been going on :)****

****And btws, the "Where's Jellal" thing is a joke in the fandom that I'm spoofing for those who were confused about it!****

****So I read this book series these past few days that was in present tense and guess who stupidly wrote this chapter is present tense and then had to go back and correct it :)****

****SO SORRY FOR MISTAKES LIKE ALWAYS!****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

"Gajeel?" Levy flushed, staring shamelessly at the boy in front of her.

"Hmm?" A tall boy with long, unruly hair stepped away from a pesky, shadowy boy, who Lucy assumed was Rogue, judging by Sting's reaction, to go gawk at the tiny girl. He wore a snazzy white suit and had a guitar strapped around his shoulder.

His red eyes narrowed in and Lucy jumped back a bit, rushing over to Natsu for slight protection or maybe it was for support, nonetheless, she just wanted to be near him.

"Oii," Gajeel said, his voice sounded rough. "I'm lookin' for a girl that looks like a shrimp—kinda like you... 'bout ye a-high," he held his hand up to Levy's small height, with a huge, mocking grin spread out across his face.

Levy's face immediately burned a furious shade of pink and for the first time, Lucy wondered if she was going to see her cute, normally easy-going friend, explode. "Gajeel! You're not funny!"

She used her small fists of fury to bang against the menacing boy's chest, while he cackled with tears brimming his eyes. "Y-You shoulda seen your face! Damn, you really are a shrimp!" And then he patted Levy's head, which oddly put out Levy's fiery fuse, leaving an embarrassing blush in its wake.

"Tch, whatever," she scoffed, crossing her tiny. "Say, I thought you were gonna go with his casual look!" she fretted, eyeing Gajeel's strange white tux, which was an interesting outfit choice, Lucy had to admit. Normally the iron dragonslayer cosplayers would wear the more menacing outfits, not the jazz suit.

"Well to be fair, I didn't know you were gonna cosplay as a shrimp," Gajeel smirked, leaning in closely and Lucy was nearly positive Levy was internally fighting the urge to step back as she watched the small girl's feet waver. "Oh wait, yer not cosplayin' as a shrimp, you actually _are a shrimp._ My bad."

"Gajeel!" Levy huffed, her cheeks puffing out in a way that actually reminded Lucy of a shrimp as well—or maybe more like a puffer fish?

"Anyway, I decided to wear this 'cuz I dress in the other attire all the time. I wanted to wear something I don't normally wear." He shrugged and then eyed her carefully.

"That makes sense, I guess," she murmured with her lips pursed.

"You look cute," Gajeel tossed out before _gihi-ing_ at Levy's flustered thanks.

"Gajeel?" Natsu's brows furrowed while he thoughtfully tapped his finger against the corner of his lip, "Sounds kind a familiar—wait is he that asshole who keeps calling me a salamander?" Suddenly anger flashed in Natsu's dark eyes like a storming sea of ink. Shaking a fist into the air, he shouted, "OI, I'M A DRAGON, YOU BASTARD! HAPPY'S THE SALAMANDER!"

And just as he was about to charge, Lucy cried out, "Natsu! No!" and did the only thing she could think of; she threw herself at him, wrapping her arms around the boy's torso, hugging her front against his back. "Don't you dare interrupt them!"

"Butttt—"

"_Natsu_," she squeezed even tighter and noticed he was no longer resisting. Instead, she felt something warm touch over her hands and pressed down lightly, the same warmth that she had the pleasure of holding for the past hour.

He turned his head back just enough to catch Lucy's flushed expression before he chuckled lowly, "'Bout time you hugged me."

"Ehh?"

"Well after Sting's random ambush, I was startin' to think everybody in the entire world would hug me before you did."

"I was going to hug you when we first met," she whispered against the back of his neck, enjoying the way goosebumps started to form on him. "But you were too busy with _Gray._ Hmm maybe Mira was right about Gratsu after all ..."

"Oi, I was gonna hug you if it weren't for Levy! So maybe Mira was also right about you two after all."

"Hey! I—"

"Anyways," he said, squeezing her hands as he slowly unraveled them from his waist, "you should really stop tryin' to imitate the manga, Lucy."

"It was an accident!" she fussed, feeling heat swell up in her cheeks. She didn't mean to—it just sort of... _happened_—

"Well then let's make our own moment," he said, turning so he could face her. There was a fire in his eyes that she had never seen before and it made her blood feel like magma, burning through her veins.

"How do you suppose we do that?" she asked, surprised by how husky her voice had sounded.

He grinned at her with a devious glint in his eyes like the twinkle of a star in the black sky of his eyes. "Well there is one thing I could think of that Haru and Elie _haven't_ done yet..."

A small gasp escaped her lips. There was no way he was talking about a _kiss_ was he? Well it wasn't like he was leaning in or anything. He kind of was just staring at her, maybe trying to gauge her reaction? Her tongue felt dry and awkwardly thick in her mouth as she lamely attempted to formulate words, but she was saved from doing so—though maybe _saved_ wasn't the right word per se...

"Oh look! A salamander is tryin' to kiss a bunny, gihihi."

"Gajeel," Levy's voice groaned, "I told you not to interrupt them!"

"Hah, nice job failing at tryin' to sound cool, Assflame," Gray's cold voice sneered.

"Juvia wishes Gray-sama would make his own moment with her," Juvia's voice wistfully sighed.

"Gahh don't say stuff like that!" Gray cried out, all while Natsu completely tensed up and Lucy could feel the anticipation of another fight, making her eyebrow brim with sweat.

"I wasn't interrupting them," Gajeel said to Levy. "I was just narrating the nature documentary I'm shooting. Not every day you see a reptile falling for a bunny."

"Right?" Gray said, snickering.

And that was all it took for Natsu to go off charging with nearly flaming fists, "SALAMANDERS AREN'T REPTILES! THEY'RE AMPHIBIANS!"

And Lucy mortifyingly face palmed as she watched all three boys duke it out.

****XOXOX****

To say Erza was angry was an ultimate understatement.

She was so mad, in fact, she took away the privilege of cutting the line from them all. Though Lucy still had no idea how Erza was able to even offer them a line cut, but according to Natsu, Erza was just planning on pulling her sword at the ticket collectors which made a lot of sense. but nonetheless, Erza had ditched them.

So as punishment, Erza told everyone to go wait on line, which was probably one of the longest lines Lucy ever had the pleasure of waiting on and it made her so angry since they were there early enough that they could have gotten a good spot on line.

"Cheer up, Lucy," Natsu said, sitting rather comfortably on the concrete floor while the others joined his lead. "The line goes quickly."

"This is all your fault," she grumbled, plopping down right next to him.

"Oi, it's important to educate the ignorant minds who think salamanders are reptiles!"

"Yes, _so important,_ " she muttered in resentment.

Suddenly Natsu dusted a finger across Lucy's bare stomach, she jolted away, but his touch remained. "W-What are you...?"

"That's the scar from your appendix thing?" he asked mindlessly, while his black, speckled eyes held a bit of urgency.

Her mind felt hazy, almost like she were drugged, as she watched Natsu trace his finger ever so lightly, leaving goosebumps along the way, "Uhh wha—yeah."

"Probably will sound weird, but," he said, finally meeting Lucy's wide-staring gaze with oddly hooded eyes, "but I'm glad you got that scar."

Her heart thudded wildly, "Why?"

He gave her a half-grin that burned away the breath from her lungs, "Because we—"

"Ugh," Cana scoffed, butting in before Natsu could finish his sentence. Lucy could feel her heart snap with both anger and disappointment. Why couldn't Cana let him finish talking? "Can't you guys hold off on the sexual tension until after we split up?"

Lucy scooted back, causing Natsu's hand to fall back to his lap. "T-There isn't any sexual tension!" Though she couldn't help but place her hand over her frantic heart.

"Sure, sure," Cana sniggered, eyeing them both meticulously before gulping down the last of her beer and muttering something about finding a man so she can get laid, but Lucy didn't pay much attention because she moved over to Levy to save her from Gajeel's unrelenting teases.

****XOXOX****

After what felt like eons, but was probably an hour at most, they were finally almost at the entrance. Lucy's blood hummed with nervous energy. This was it. She was finally going to enter Comic Con. It felt so surreal how her dream was finally coming true—to go to Comic Con with her friends in a cute cosplay. It was all too perfect.

And maybe _too perfect_ was the key term because... "Oi, Lucy," Natsu said just as everyone was getting their ticket to show the ticket collector. He grasped her wrist, "I need to talk to you."

"Can't it wait until we are inside," she asked, not wanting to waste another minute since they already lost so much time thanks to the long, demonic line.

"Yeah...about that..." Natsu sheepishly laughed, pulling Lucy to the side to avoid Gray's curious eyes. Lucy stumbled a bit, but his grip kept her from falling.

"Natsu, what are you doing?" she hissed, feeling a blush creeping on.

"I don't have a spare ticket for you."

She stared blankly at him. _I don't have a spare ticket for you_, the words echoed inside her empty brain. No spare ticket? That would mean she couldn't go in and her dreams of going to Comic Con would be crushed—and _Natsu is very well aware of that_.

She burst out laughing. Leave it to Natsu to try to pull off such a lame joke at a time like this. "N-Nice try, Natsu. L-Like I'm that gullible!"

"Err..." he tugged nervously on his scarf, loosening its hold on his neck. "Lucy..."

And suddenly her heart began to race with panic. It had to be a joke, right? But why wasn't he laughing along with her? And without helping it, more laughter came out of her mouth because if she wasn't laughing, she was pretty sure she was about to start crying. _Why wasn't he laughing?_

"I lied to get you to go," he continued, squirming in his spot.

And just like that, Lucy felt her heart snap in half. _He's lying!_ She desperately convinced herself, gripping Natsu by his shoulders, clearly surprising him because he let out a gasp and nearly stumbled back. "B-But I saw two tickets!"

"I just made a copy of the original!"

"S-So now what? You're going to go in and I'm just going home?" she asked, feeling a panic attack start to arise. She couldn't be left out in the city by herself. She barely knew directions. Where was the train station anyway?

"Of course," he deviously laughed—until Lucy struck him in the face with the flat of her hand and yelled, "JERK!" She wanted to cry right then and there. How could he do this to her? The feeling actually reminded her of when he got weird on her after he saw his name doodles on her homework. Actual heartbreak.

She turned sharply on the ball of her foot, not wanting to stay a second longer for fear of him seeing her cry.

"Owww! I was only joking!" his hand engulfed her wrist in the matter of seconds. She could feel his abnormal body heat radiating against her bare skin of her lower back. "Do ya really think I would leave you alone?!"

"But you don't have another ticket," she said, unwillingly turning to face him and the second she met his eyes, she felt her heart break some more.

"Have a little more faith in me," he smiled, shaking his head and to Lucy's utter astonishment, his cheeks had flared up, "I'm not going inside, stupid."

"Wh-What?"

"I only brought my ticket in case you didn't show up," he said simply. "But you did."

She stared at the grinning boy and couldn't help but dumbly ask, "B-But what about Comic Con?"

"Pshh what about it?" he smirked. "AnimeCon is where it's really at. I'll make sure to buy two tickets for it—or maybe I should make you buy 'em since I just wasted all my money today...But technically it was Zeref's money—Oh I know! I'll just make Zeref buy us the tickets! Wahaha it's perfect!"

"Natsu," her heart ached as she gave him a timid smile. It felt wrong to make him miss this. After all, she remembered how excited he had been when he made his post about his ticket... "You should go in. I can't let you miss Comic Con for me..."

"Ahh well if you insist," he shrugged, wrapping his Haru-scarf around his head, covering his face.

She jolted, with her eyes squinting at the peculiar behavior. "What are you—"

He pulled his ticket out from his baggy pants pocket and waved, "See ya in a bit, Lucy!"

"Wait what?" she watched as he walked over to the door and showed the ticket to the ticket collector and then he went inside, not before giving Lucy a cheeky wave. "HE REALLY WENT IN?!"

Sure Lucy gave him that whole spiel about going in, but she didn't mean it. It was like when you offer someone food and you secretly hope they say no. Her hands curled into fists. She was left alone in this giant city.

What was she even supposed to do?

Well maybe a little shopping wouldn't hurt...but shopping isn't nearly as fun if you don't have a friend with you.

She sighed, her shoulders sulking along with her frown.

Well at least she got to hangout with them all temporarily and Cana finally got to squeeze her boobs—which Lucy both rolled her eyes and smiled at. It felt nice to have a close friend with inside jokes like that, the things she had been missing out on. But now it was over and she was forced to face the truth that was once again, all alone.

She could feel a prickling sensation in her eyes— _no,_ she curled her hands into a fist. She wasn't going to cry over this. How pathetic that would make her feel. And Natsu—she wasn't sure how she would be able to look at him after this stunt.

Suddenly alarms went off, causing Lucy to startle and through her blurry eyes, she could make out some person—whose face was completely covered, except for the eyes—making a mad dash right at her, followed by a bunch of people dressed in a security outfit chasing the person.

"What the...?" she squinted, making out a familiar pair of slanted, dark eyes that seemed to be grinning at her. "N-No way," she choked, her eyes nearly bulging from their sockets and before she could even process anything, wet hands that made her squeal in surprise latched onto her wrist and dragged her along like she were a ragdoll.

She nervously glanced behind her and took note of all the angry guards that seemed to be running after them. "N-Natsu?! What did you do?!"

But instead of answering, Natsu made a sharp turn, causing Lucy to stagger quite a bit, down a side block and pulled her into a mini alleyway.

She gasped for breath, hunching over with her hands on her knees, not used to running that much in her entire life especially in her slightly heeled boots. She glanced up at him and watched as he unraveled his scarf from his face and tossed into a huge dumpster that was near them. "Wh-what are you—EEP!"

"Shhh!" he clamped his hand over her mouth and pinned her against the cool brick wall of some building with the warmth of his body flushed against her.

Her heart felt so erratic, maybe it was from the rush of the run or maybe it was from Natsu touching her like this, but either way, it felt like it was going to implode and Lucy was okay with that.

"Where did that monster go?!"

"I thought I saw him turn down here!"

"Yeah! Me too!"

Natsu quickly ducked his head down, allowing his pink bangs to tickle her forehead and his nose to brush against hers as he pressed his lips against the back of his hand, which was still covering her mouth and to any onlooker, it looked as though they were kissing.

And time felt like it had stopped as she stared into his mischievous eyes in bewilderment with nothing but the warm scent of flames wafting around her.

Lucy understood why Natsu did this the second the guards swept past them without so much as a second look and none even muttered something along the lines of young love.

And even though they weren't really kissing, she still felt an electrifying warmth spread from her lips to the spine of her back.

Natsu finally pulled back, sensing that the guards were finally gone and let out a loud chuckling sigh. "Damn that was close!"

For a moment, it felt like her brain had melted because Lucy couldn't seem to think of a single thing to say, but somehow it did seem to solidify as she wailed, "W-What was that?!"

"Me in ninja mode!" he crazily grinned and then, making chopping motions with his hands, he said, "Nin, nin!"

"I think your ninja mode could use a bit more training," she blanched. What kind of ninja gets caught and chased like that? Clearly he failed Ninja 101.

His forehead creased in irritation, "Whatchu talkin' 'bout?"

"Ninja's aren't supposed to get caught, stupid!" she exclaimed, bopping him on the head, earning an annoyed glare from him. "What the hell was that anyway? Why were alarms going off? Why were you chased out of Comic Con?"

"Heh, that?" he smirked, lazily resting his hands behind his head. "I lit one of my matches near the fire sprinklers so that they'd go off."

"You _what?! _"

"I lit one of my—"

"WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT!?" she bellowed, grabbing the dragonslayer-cosplayer by the shoulders, shaking him back and forth.

"L-Lucy! S-Stopppp," he moaned, his eyes lolling to the back of his head. "M-Motion...sick..."

"You can't get motion sick from this!" she argued, but stopped her incessant shaking anyway as she quietly added, "...I think."

Natsu placed his hand on the brick wall to steady himself and Lucy awkwardly coughed and asked, "So uhh why exactly did you want to set off the fire sprinklers?"

That got Natsu grinning again. "Well Ice Princess and Metal Brains were getting' on my nerves earlier so I thought about how funny it would be if the sprinklers went off and soaked them and since I had a ticket 'nd all, I figured might as well go in for a second and you wanted me to go so badly so..." he shrugged.

"Err right..." she nervously shuffled her feet, scratching her forehead.

"You shoulda seen the look on everyone's faces!" he wheezed, clutching his stomach. "No one saw it comin'! Good thing I got out before Erza saw me...She looked ready to murder someone...Anyways," he said, pulling something out of his pocket, "got you somethin'."

And in his hand was a dainty black, string bracelet—the type where you had to pull at the two strings on the end to make it tighter and it had a pink _Fairy Tail_ guildmark on the center of it.

He grabbed Lucy's hand and slid the bracelet onto her thin wrist, allowing his warm fingers to linger a second longer than necessary before dropping his hands, leaving a lasting tingling sensation on her skin.

"Natsu," she breathed in deeply, tightening her new bracelet. "This was so—" She paused, eyeing Natsu's suspicious smile before realization struck, "—you stole this, didn't you?"

"Pshhh," he scoffed, turning his head slightly, "like I would ever steal somethin'."

And for a brief moment, she thought back to her stolen manga edit before deadpanning, "You did steal it!"

"Oi!" he put his hands up in defense. "If no one saw me steal it then did I really steal it?"

"Yes!" she snapped, looking at him in complete awe. "Yes you did!"

"Well I didn't have time to pay for it," he said with his brows furrowing. "Otherwise I woulda gotten caught."

Instead of arguing, Lucy let out a small giggle, shaking her head at the ridiculousness. "Thanks, Natsu. So what do we do now?"

"Anything we want," he grinned, outstretching his hand with a slight blush on his cheeks. "Let's go on an adventure, Lucy."

She eyed the hand, feeling her eyes, once again, start to burn with fresh tears—but this time they were tears of happiness as she felt her broken heart magnetically pull itself back together.

Who needs Comic Con anyway? She gave him the biggest smile she could muster, she took his hand. "Okay!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Pffftttt and most of you thought Lucy would get to go to Comic Con. Yeah right :D****

****Next chapter I suppose we can say is their first date!****

****And anyway, I was thinking of naming my chapters, but I'm lazy and was wondering if any of you wanted to help come up with names? I'll give credit to the namer if anyone is interested :)****

****AND OMG THE NEW FT CHAPTER! ANYONE ELSE AN EMOTIONAL MESS RIGHT NOW?****

****Thank you all so much for reading! Have a happy Monday!****

67. Chapter 67

****It's funny how many of you called that whole her-not-going-to-ComicCon-thing a plot twist because I didn't even think of it that way since I had this planned since I started writing this story ahahah.****

****So this part of the story is actually turning out longer than I had expected O.o so please enjoy these next few chapters!****

****And please do not try the stuff you read in this chapter at home, thanks!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

There was something completely different about being alone with Natsu and that set Lucy's nerves on fire. And her heart—it just wouldn't stop with its nonsensical jolting pulse—almost like she was near an electric fence that she kept accidentally bumping against, getting shocked with each brush of realization that she was alone with Natsu.

"I can't believe you actually did that," she said in reference to Natsu's ComicCon stunt, following him along the cobblestone path to a secluded, vibrant park because he wanted to be absolutely sure no one was following them.

Lucy didn't mind at all. The park was beautiful and lusciously green with splashes of pinks, blues, reds, yellows, and purples with special thanks to all the blooming flowers. There was also the lovely songs of the birds pleasantly chirping and the floral scent in the air. Spring was by far the best time of the year to go to a park like this.

He plopped down on an elegant stone bench, wiping the sweat from his brow with the back of his hand. "That was fun!"

Lucy sat down next to him, feeling the cold stone tickle her bare thighs, making her squirm a bit. She left a bit of an awkward gap between her and Natsu, but she didn't pay much thought to it as she laughed. "Yeah, it was." Never in her life did she think she would find herself running from security that's for sure.

"So why do you have matches on you anyway? Aren't lighters more convenient?" she asked, leering at him with suspicion. "You're not a smoker, are you?"

"Of course not!" he snapped, looking very insulted as he thinned out his lips.

"Well why _do you_ have them then?" she continued to push. It wasn't normal for someone to walk around with matches on them, was it?

He licked his lips bringing Lucy's full, undivided attention to them, with her brown eyes following its crescent curvature. They were a light shade of red and looked slightly chapped. And strange thoughts popped into her mind. What would it have been like if Natsu had kissed her back in the alley? Would his lips feel soft? Or would they be rough like his personality?

Her face flared up—almost distracting her from the words that tumbled out of Natsu. "I brought matches to light my hand on fire."

"..."

"Wanna see?"

"What— _What are you doing?!"_ she cried, watching Natsu dab his right hand in a tiny container of oil that he had pulled out of his baggy pockets.

He pulled out a match right after and handed it to Lucy. "Wanna do the honors?"

"Uhh," she said in a blank stupor. This had certainly escalated rather quickly... "You want me to light your hand on fire?"

"Never mind," he said as his patience ran thin. He struck the match against the striking pad and it took all of three tries for it to ignite in a small, blazing glory and Lucy let out a gasp, jumping a few inches away from him, keeping her eyes trained on the flame.

He chuckled like a maniac as he touched the flame onto his callused palm, all while Lucy's breathing seemed to have stopped. Sure she had watched Natsu set himself on fire before, but she knew how well that had ended... Her stomach clenched and her teeth ground together out of fear.

He's actually insane.

He shook out the match as he jumped to his feet and held his hand out proudly. "Fire Dragon's Iron Fist!"

And Lucy's jaw hung open, staring from the fire in his hand to the devilish smile plastered on his lips. Though, to be honest, it was more like he was holding a fiery orb rather than him using Haru's fire attack.

"Ehh not exactly," she teased as she did her best not to sound impressed, but she still found herself taking pictures of the goofy boy to savor this moment forever. "You need your whole fist to be engulfed by the flame."

His brows knitted as he eyed her thoughtfully, before clenching his fist to extinguish the fire. "You want me to set m

y entire hand on fire?" He sat back down next to Lucy, considerably closer than before.

"What?! No! That's not what—"

"Ohh so you want me to light your hand on fire then?"

"WHEN DID I SAY THAT?!" she recoiled, hugging her hands to her chest.

"C'mon," he said, prying her right hand away from her chest, "it's only fire! Nothin' to be scared about."

"That's exactly why I am scared!" she exclaimed, feeling flustered as sweat began to trickle down the back of her neck. Who in their right mind would set their hand on fire?! She could picture it now...Her in the hospital with her dad locking her up in the mental ward...Yep that's exactly what would happen...Or worse, the group chat would be calling her the pyro now.

"What?" he said, giving her a half grin, while looking at her with a strange shine in his eyes. He flipped her hand over in his, keeping his heated thumb pressed firmly against the palm of her hand. "Don't you trust me?"

"Yes, but this has nothing to do with trust!" she exasperated, though she made no move to pull her hand back. Was it wrong that she did want to try it? She bit her lip. Natsu really was a bad influence on her... "I'm so going to regret this...but fine!"

"Yush!" He dabbed her open palm with the same strange, oily substance that he had used before. It was like ice to the skin, making her hand tremble—or maybe it was the fear of being set on fire that made her quiver like this.

Natsu's hold tightened. "Relax, Lucy," he spoke gently in a hushed voice. "I've done this tons of times."

"Yeah and if I correctly recall," she said, trying to sound playful, but the shaking in her voice ruined it, "the last time you did this, you burnt your arm and had it bandaged for weeks!"

"And if I remember correctly," Natsu said with a rueful smirk, "you laughed at my pain. So clearly you don't think it's that big of a deal to get burned." He shrugged.

"I don't want to do this anymore!" she shrieked, attempting to pull her hand back, but Natsu wouldn't let her.

"I'm just joking!" he said, trying to calm her. "I'm not gonna let you get hurt! Look at me!" And she did, not realizing that she had been avoiding eye contact. The second their eyes met, his flashed with an earnestness that made her stomach clench. "I'll never let you get hurt, Lucy. Trust me."

She swallowed, but nodded, selling her hand off to his flames.

All it took was one strike of the match to make the stick ignite. He allowed the flame to glow between them as his eyes returned to hers, waiting to see if she held any signs of regret, but she gave him her best smile to reassure him to go on and he did—he kissed the flame to her hand and she gasped.

It was a strange sensation to have a flame dancing on your hand. It was like a tickling warmth that made her feel powerful like the entire world was in her control.

Natsu lifted her hand up and thrust it out, shouting, "Lucy Fire!"

And Lucy giggled as the fire on her hand grew hotter and hotter with each laugh while Natsu pulled out his phone to take pictures of her. "How does it feel?" he asked, looking excited.

"It feels amazing," she breathed out, unable to believe the scene in front of her, but the heat was starting to feel real

y, _really_ hot. She flailed her hand, "but it's starting to feel uncomfortable. How do I put it out?!"

"Ahh don't do that..." Natsu seized hold of her wrist, scooting even closer to her so that his leg was against hers. "Al l you have to do it smother it."

He carefully encased his hand around hers so that his fingers were caressing her own, and then he slowly curled her fingers inward to snuff out the flame. "See?" he said, lacing his fingers through hers as the heat remained in her hand

"Natsu..." Her voice felt airy as she met his eyes that flickered darkly. Her heart slammed against her chest as if she were still running from the guards from ComicCon. The air felt tense with the lingering scent of the fire that was once on her hand.

Natsu leaned his head down, and Lucy's heart seemed to pause with every moment. His breath tickled her nose as he reached his other hand that wasn't locked with hers to cradle the back of her neck, eliciting a strange chill that made her feel more alive than ever before.

His lips were just inches from hers...

Then...

She ducked her head and stupidly exclaimed, "Look how pretty that flower is!" And she hopped off the bench to run over to a deep indigo flower with fuchsia tips that seemingly captured her attention, but really it was the only flower she saw in her brief moment of pure panic.

She could hear Natsu let out a small choking noise, but she couldn't look at him. Not after what she had just done; dodging his kiss.

What was wrong with her? Wasn't that what she wanted only a few moments ago? To feel Natsu's lips against her own? To give her first kiss to the boy she had fallen so hard for...and it was the perfect moment too.

Too bad she had lamely panicked and her heart pounded harshly against her chest to let her know how stupid she was and how she probably just ruined the entire day...

But she wasn't ready for it. It was hard for Lucy to explain, but it didn't feel right. It was like there was this small little throb in her gut that told her _not yet_.

So trying her best to ignore the obvious awkward tension in the air, she called out, glancing over her shoulder, "It smells as pretty as it looks!"

"G-Good to know..." Natsu stammered, looking beyond lost with his face as red as the carnation that was sitting nearby. He stiffly got up and moved next to her, keeping his hands tightly tucked in to his pants pockets.

"Ohh! This is the famous flower garden of Crocus, right?"

"Hmm? Yeah," he grunted, refusing to look at her.

"Then that means they have sakura trees here and since it's spring that means they'll be blooming! I always wanted to go see them!" She turned towards Natsu, grabbing his muscular forearm, "Can we go see them?!"

He nearly stumbled back at her sudden forwardness, his face was still tight and a bit twisted from her rejection. "But don't you have to pay to go?"

"Please, please, please!" she begged, clasping her hands together. "It's like a weeb's dream to see one in person! And

since you lied to me about ComicCon, you kinda owe me." She evilly smirked.

He gaped at her for a moment, probably trying to calculate a way out of this, but then shook his head, finally thawing out of the awkwardness. "Alright! Let's go! And then we have to get food after 'cuz I'm starving!"

"Sounds good to me." She beamed.

Maybe she hadn't ruined the day after all.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Lucy rejected Natsu's kiss :0 awksss****

****Hehe does this make me a troll? :D****

****AND THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING SO KIND AND SUPPORTIVE! SERIOUSLY YOU ARE THE BEST!***

****Thanks for reading and happy Monday! (hmm I seem to be updating on Monday's a lot lately O.o Weirddd)****

68. Chapter 68

****So I most definitely enjoyed and laughed and smiled at all of your reactions and RIP to all of you who chucked your phones at the wall, there were quite a few of you :D****

****And sorry again for the delay! I'm really bad at planning so like I write out an entire chapter and then I realize that I don't want to post that one just yet and then I have to write out a whole new chapter and this just keeps happening lately O.o****

****But at least the next chapter is already written for the most part!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Of course after the whole almost-kiss ordeal, the group chat started spamming their phones with messages while the duo waited on the ticket line for the Crocus Botanical Gardens.

First it was Levy asking where Lucy and Natsu went. Then Mira asked if anyone saw them come in. Cana, in response, made a teasing remark about how they were probably making out in some kind of kinky closet because she saw Natsu whisking Lucy away. Erza made a threat at Natsu saying if he disrespected Lucy at all, she would flay him. And lastly, Gray. He made a snide comment that if Lucy were smart, she would dodge the kiss.

And this left Natsu and Lucy in a rather awkward state of avoiding eye contact and Lucy figured it also led to Natsu's hostility towards the poor man who worked at the stub booth.

"ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!" Natsu bellowed. "HOW CAN YOU CHARGE THAT MUCH JUST TO SEE STUPID PLANTS?!"

"N-Natsu!" Lucy face-palmed, pretending, yet failing, not to notice all the glowering faces of the people behind them on line. Why did he have to make such a scene? It was bad enough as it was that they were dressed in weird attire,

which already brought attention upon them.

"Oii, I know! You're only charging that much to rip off the tourists!" he continued, balling his fist up. Anger management was certainly something Lucy would have to work on with him. "So HAH! I ain't a tourist!"

"And your point?" the teller asked, his brown eyebrow raised just as the pit in Lucy's stomach continued to grow.

"Cut the price in half."

"I will double the price for you if ya don't shaddup," the teller said with a carefree shrug and Lucy figured it was best not to challenge the guy.

"That won't be necessary!" she said, quickly interjecting. She turned sharply towards Natsu and hissed, " _Now go pay_!"

But, alas, he stood there glaring at the teller like some kind of angry guard dog, so Lucy gave him a _courteous_ elbow-to-the-gut and with a scornful look, Natsu jerked out his wallet and smacked the cash onto the counter with his aura seeping with bitter reluctance.

"Wahh thank you, Natsu!" Lucy squealed and the teller grinned at Natsu as he handed out two tickets. "See? Isn't it worth the price to see your girlfriend smile like that?"

Natsu let out an unintelligible grunt, snatching the tickets from his hand, all while Lucy blushed furiously over the fact that Natsu didn't bother to deny the 'girlfriend' comment.

And the second they crossed the threshold of the garden gate, Natsu clutched his wallet to his chest and sobbed, "I-It hurts!"

"Oh shut up," Lucy said with a huge smile brightening up her face.

"You could see tons of flowers out on the street," he muttered sourly. "Don't see why you have to make me pay to go see more."

"Becauseeee they have exotic plants here! Andddd the Sakura trees!" she gushed, grinning like a small child at a bakery.

"So basically we are at a zoo for plants?" he mumbled, lagging behind while Lucy continued to babble, "Imagine what they look like in person!—Oooh look at that tree!" she awed, pointing to a tall tree, eagerly squeezing his hand with her growing excitement.

"Yay a tree...Not like we could walk outside our house and see one. Nope, instead we must pay a ridiculous tourist fee," Natsu droned. Seriously, he couldn't see what the big deal was, but he had to admit, it felt like he was in some kind of enchanted forest and he was a sucker for nature, it's just that he didn't like the idea of _paying_ to see it.

"GAHH!" And suddenly a sharp pain sprung from his left calf and it took Natsu only a second to realize Lucy had kicked him. "Lucy! What the hell?"

"You don't have to be such a downer!" she huffed, looking ready to kick him again and Natsu took an uneasy step back just a precaution. "Looking at trees could be fun! See look, this is an oak tree!" She waved her hands at a tree like she were showing him some kind of grand prize to a contest.

"And?"

"And in Pokémon, who happens to be the professor of the Kanto region?"

"Professor Oak!" Natsu answered like he were on a gameshow.

"Okay good!" Lucy grinned, clapping her hands together. "Now in the Johto region, who's the professor?"

"Elm."

"Hoenn?"

"Birch—Oi, Lucy, why are you testing my knowledge on Poke—"

"Sinnoh?"

"Why—?"

"_Sinnoh_" she interrupted with more force, her normally kind eyes turned cold and unforgiving, causing Natsu to jump back in fear. Maybe Erza wasn't the only scary one in their group of friends after all...

"Err—Rowan..."

"Unova?"

"Juniper."

"And lastly, Kalos?"

"Sycamore."

"Correct!"

"Do I qualify as a Pokémon Master now?" he teased, giving Lucy a crooked grin that seemed to give away both his amusement and confusion. Why was she talking about Pokémon when only moments ago she was kicking him? What a weird girl...

"Not at all," she said, her eyes flickering with joy at his disgruntled annoyance, "but anyway, what do all the professors' names have in common?"

Well that was a dumb question, Natsu scoffed. "They're all names of trees—Wait a second!" Suddenly excitement thrived in his black eyes like tiny stars in the night sky. Maybe this Plant Zoo could be fun after all!

"Let's go search for the tree versions of the professors!" And he whisked Lucy towards the giant oak tree, pulling his phone out for pictures. "Wahaha! A Tree ComicCon!"

And Lucy chuckled mischievously, happy to see that her plan had worked.

****XOXOX****

"Finally! Sakura trees!" Lucy exclaimed, almost like a dog wagging its tail, she pointed her finger to a field of cherry-pink trees. It was like a reward after spending almost an hour running throughout the botanical garden for all the professors in tree form because Natsu became very obsessed with the task.

Though after he found all the trees, he no longer wanted to be there. He just wanted to eat and they were miles away from any food. He clutched a hand over his stomach. Not even a vending machine...

He trailed sluggishly behind Lucy, who was tugging him over to the trees and then came to an abrupt halt, releasing Natsu's hand as she ran under the trees with their petals shedding slightly due to the light breeze.

"Wahh they're so pretty!"

And Natsu glanced up and even his jaw dropped a bit. "Whoaaa..." It was like a dazzling array of pink and white that suddenly made him forget all about his hungry stomach. Hell, it even made him forget who he was for a moment.

He glanced over at Lucy and she was beyond absorbed by the beauty of the trees and Natsu found it to be funny. Her beauty equally matched the trees. It was like she belonged here with the way the petals danced around her blonde hair that blew loosely in her pigtails—though he had a strong desire to untie her hair. She was like living art.

And finally he was glad that he paid for this—to be able to see her smile like she was.

So the stub booth guy was right. It really was worth the money to see Lucy smile—though there was the girlfriend phrase mentioned and Natsu still had no clue what to think of that especially since she did reject his kiss not too long ago.

There goes his first-ever kiss attempt. He could just picture it now, Gray somehow finding out and making jokes about it for the rest of his life because the stupid boy was petty like that.

He sighed, his eyes resting back on Lucy, who was busy taking pictures of the trees. How could things be so complicated and yet so easy whenever he was with her?

To be honest, he didn't care that Lucy rejected his kiss—well at first the shock of it stung kind of like the time he fell in the snow last winter when he was wearing shorts because no one warned him that it had snowed. But he was over the rejection—of course Gray's annoying comment was like rubbing salt to the wound, but he was fine now. He wasn't even sure what came over him to even try it.

Kissing wasn't something he'd ever had the urge to do before. He couldn't even fathom why someone would want to press their lips to someone else's. But then of course, that all changed after he met Lucy. The more he got to know her, the more he began to wonder what it would be like. Would it be like how she described it in her writing with sparks and fireworks? Would her lips feel as soft as they looked? Would it be like in his dreams?

Natsu did his best to ignore those thoughts because it wasn't like he would ever get to kiss her over the internet. But now they were in person and the way she had looked with his fire in her palm, something just came over him. Maybe he was a pyromaniac after all...

Then again, that may have been his first attempt, but it was his fifth time wanting to kiss her thus far.

But still, even if he did want to try it, kissing didn't matter to him. If Lucy never wanted to kiss him, he was fine with it. Being near her and being able to make her laugh was enough for him and—

"I can't explain it, but I'm glad it was you."

"Huh?" he said, breaking out of his thoughts to see Lucy gazing at him with heavy lidded eyes, making his mouth feel rather dry like whenever he did one of his fire eating tricks.

"I used to beg my dad to come and take me here, but he was always too busy and now I'm glad that he always was. I don't think I would have appreciated this."

"Why not?" he asked, scratching his forehead. Why was she saying such weird stuff?

"Because," she said, turning her back to him so she could gaze up at the cherry-colored, fluffy tree that made her blo

nde hair seem radiant, "it's like my world is in color when I'm with you."

As if Lucy's words were some kind of trigger, Natsu could feel his heart contract in his chest. He stared at her backside, eyeing the curvature of her bare lower back that showed off her back dimples and he couldn't help but find the insignificant feature to be endearing.

"It's like...everything was so dull and insignificant before I met you. So dry and lifeless...and then slowly things began to change. Things became more detailed...I gained more courage to take control in my life."

It was like she was reading into his soul. This was exactly how he felt, not that he would ever admit something like that to anyone. His life sucked before he met her. He didn't care much about anything besides beating Gray and video games—and Happy of course. Hell, his life at school was practically black and white. People blended into the background, never worth describing or taking note of.

But now things have changed.

Lucy was always on his mind. He found himself looking at things differently. Like in school, for instance, he would observe fellow classmates and wonder which type would be Lucy. Would she be studious type? Would she be the one on her phone the entire time? But he would push those silly thoughts away because no one was like Lucy.

She whirled around, her blonde hair sloshing like golden waves as she turned about face. Her brown eyes shone in the sunlight like honey and for some reason, Natsu felt his breath catch. "And it's like even the most insignificant conversation we have is the most significant memory I have. Thank you, Natsu."

And the smile she gave him was a smile that could probably melt one of Gray's ice sculptures within seconds.

"Tch why are you thanking me?" he asked, fighting a losing battle with the blush that was threatening to paint his cheeks the same shade as the cherry blossoms.

"For giving my life color."

Correction, the smile that she was giving him now would vaporize Gray's sculptures and could probably melt the entire Arctic—along with his heart, which was currently going crazy in his chest. Another dumb shoujo moment? he inwardly thought. Standing under a Sakura tree with his heart going doki doki? What has his life come to?

To his utmost surprise, suddenly he found himself laughing. Maybe it was the weirdly lifelike shoujo moment or maybe it was the sudden seriousness of the conversation, but there was one thing that always stayed consistent. "You're always so weird."

"Hey!"

"I should be the one saying all that stuff to you."

"Natsu..."

And somehow the two of them ended up sitting quietly, leaning against the trunk of one of the Sakura trees, without saying a word.

"Hey, Natsu...?"

"Yeah, Lucy?"

"I have to confess something...I really don't like looking at plants like this, I mean, besides the Sakura trees."

"I KNEW IT! WAIT WHY'D YOU MAKE ME GO THROUGH THIS TORTURE THEN?!"

"Because you look cute when you're annoyed!"

His heart gave a small jump. She called him _cute_. Was _cute_ a good thing? Well it had made Lucy really happy when he had accidentally called her it, but for some reason, he could totally see Gray mocking him over this. Thus, Natsu decided _cute_ was not a term he would like to be called. And now it was time to call Lucy a term she probably wouldn't want to be called back. "Sadist!"

"Don't call me that!" she moaned in minor aggravation. "I was only kidding! I just felt bad making you spend all that money just for us to see this one tree so I wanted us to get the most out of it!"

"Ehh well this one tree I think was worth it."

"Why do you think that?"

"Because it made you smile and Lucy should always be smiling," he said, shrugging nonchalantly.

And Lucy bit her lip, leaning closer to him and Natsu gulped at her sudden movements. His eyes falling to her lips like they had earlier. Her voice sounded breathy, making his body tighten up. "You know what else would make me smile?"

"What?" he asked, his voice coming out rougher than he intended.

"If you give me a piggyback ride out of here."

"LIKE HELL I WILL!"

"But my feet hurt from all the walking!"

"It's your own fault!" Natsu argued with his arms flailing all around, but the pout she gave him made him curse everything in the entire universe as he relented. "Fine! On one condition," he snickered, eyeing her golden hair.

"Okay what—Heyy why are you touching my hair—WHY DID YOU JUST UNTIE MY PIGTAILS?! IT TOOK ME FOREVER TO MAKE THEM EVEN!"

But Natsu only grinned as he watched her hair fall in cascades along with the falling cherry blossom petals. And once again, Natsu could feel his heartrate picking up like in a shoujo manga.

"Now we can go! C'mon." He crouched down just enough for Lucy to jump on and when she did, he let out a loud grunting noise and Lucy hissed in his ear, " _One comment about my weight and I'll end you_."

"A-Aye."

****XOXOX****

"You c-can't be serious," Lucy choked, her mouth and her wallet feeling unexpectedly dry.

"Whaff?" Natsu asked looking at her innocently, mid-bite of a roll from the bread basket.

Did he really not see anything wrong with this? "Y-You ordered the _whole right side of the menu!_"

He swallowed and shrugged. "Yeah and..."

"Do you have any idea how much this is going to cost me?!"

"Hmmm," he said, a deliberately devious grin crossed his face, "probably as much as lookin' at flowers. What do you think?"

"So cruel." She shivered, feeling her soul leave her body. She would definitely have to get a job after this because how would she explain the money loss to her dad when she was supposed to be on a school trip?

A parade of waiters arrived and set down the array of food from salads to soups, pastas to steak, fish to chicken, literally everything. Her face burned brightly, feeling the eyes of fellow eaters watching them, probably wondering who in their right mind would order this much food.

"Don't complain!" Natsu grinned, his tongue licking his lips as he picked up a fork in his right hand and knife in his left. "Just dig in!"

"I don't want to," she ugly cried, but her stomach rumbled and since she was paying for it, she figured it was only right for her to eat some of it.

But her only problem was that she had no idea where to start. She glanced up at Natsu, who was just shoveling the food into his mouth, leaving Lucy to wonder how he was so thin.

Eventually Lucy sampled everything, but decided to stick to the pasta. "So what do you wanna do after this?" She glanced out the window, noticing a few evil-looking gray clouds and she couldn't help but think about how lucky they were to see the Sakura trees in the sunlight.

"Look at those clouds! Do you think it's gonna rain? Maybe we should stay in doors? What do you think? But I wanted to check out the Crocus zoo so maybe we should try and do that before it does shower—but there are so many cool museums that I wanna go to! Do you think we—"

Natsu paused, gulping down his mouthful of water, leering at her. "You talk too much."

"I do not!"

"Why do we have to plan what we do?"

"Because I wanna have time to do everything!"

"Then we will just have to come back another day," he easily said before resuming his meal.

But Lucy couldn't go back to eating. "Natsu... There won't be another day because I'm officially broke!" She glowered with pure contempt.

"Yeah, yeah," Natsu said, carelessly waving her off as he eyed her plate of pasta like it were a pot of gold. "You gonna finish that?"

"What? No...Go ahead," she sighed, dropping her fork onto the table.

"You don't eat much," he mused, before inhaling all of her pasta. "How boring," he deadpanned.

"That's because I didn't have a chance," Lucy gritted, clenching her jaw at the sight of all the empty dishes. How was that even possible? Was he even human? And as the wait staff came by to clear away the empty plates, Lucy quickly asked— begged— for the check before they could ask if they wanted dessert. "And don't call me boring! Mr. I-Don't-Like-Nature!"

"Oiii!" he said, glaring up at her with knives as eyes. "I do like nature! I just don't like payin' for something I can see for free!"

"Right, right," she said purposely dry with the only purpose of getting under Natsu's skin. "You're cheap. I get it."

"Am not!"

"Are too!"

"Am not!"

She raised a challenging brow. "Then prove it!"

"Hah!" Natsu chuckled darkly. "Like I'd fall for that. The meals still on you."

"Damn it!" She snapped her fingers, upset that her plan to get Natsu to pay utterly failed and of course the waiter came and dropped the check onto the table.

All Lucy could do was put her credit card in the check, not looking at the bill because if she didn't know the price, then how badly could it really be?

"What the?" Natsu said, his face twisting up like a messed up Rubik's cube as the waiter returned to give back Lucy's credit card. She looked at him with befuddlement, waiting for him to go on as she put her card back into her wallet. "Zeref just texted me that he really likes your dad."

"EHHH?" That had to be one of the last things she would have ever expected Natsu to say. "H-How does your brother know my dad?!"

"Who even knows..." Natsu said, sweat beading his pink brow. "It makes sense that they would get along though... They're both outta their minds."

"True." She sighed. Was there even a point in trying to figure out how fate allowed her dad and Zeref to chat? But something struck a chord inside her chest. _Outta their minds?_ "You know," she said, her brows furrowed inward as she twirled the straw in her glass of water, "my dad wasn't always like this."

Natsu shoved his phone back into his pocket, giving Lucy a look of full undivided attention, not even picking at the scrapes from their meal.

"He used to be kind of cold, and-and awful and terrible and I hated him so much—or I told myself that I did, but I don't think I was ever actually capable of that kind of hatred."

"Wait, wait wait—Are we talkin' 'bout the same old guy who comes running into your room with a bat to see if you're okay?" He offered her a tiny grin, probably searching for any signs of teasing.

"Hard to believe, right? But then when my mom died he sort of...lost his mind. And now he's who he is today." Her head dropped to her lap. Why would she bring up something so morbid at a time like this?

Suddenly a hand patted the top of her head. "I'm not really good at these kind of talks, but at least something good came out of something bad. You get to have a relationship with your dad."

"Yeah, you're right." She smiled sadly, feeling her heart twist up in a mix of grief and pain.

"What are your mom like?"

"She was the best," she said, her face suddenly coming to life like it always did when she thought of her mom. "So calm and graceful...Everyone loved her. She always knew the right things to say when I was upset and..."

And Lucy wasn't sure how long she went on raving about her mom and Natsu remained focused and interested the entire time. Something that was rare to see these days. People always ask questions but never care about the answers. Always asking to be polite or to be nosey, but with Natsu it was different.

He asked because he cared and for Lucy, that was enough to make her want to share everything with him and she wanted him to share everything with her—if he wanted to, that is. So she asked him, "What about your dad? What was he like?"

"He was awesome! Really funny and smart too—He taught me so much—especially since I used to be homeschooled. He always made whatever I wanted for dinner and he let me stay up as late! And one time he surprised me—"

And Lucy was sure it was only a couple of minutes Natsu had talked about his dad, but when they checked back on the time, a whole hour had gone by and Lucy wasn't the least bit bored. Natsu was a great story teller for someone who claimed to be bad with words. He used a lot of gestures to aid his words and the smile he wore on his face—everything just seemed to drive Lucy deeper and deeper into his tales.

He was like summer; so warm and passionate and full of energy. Such a mundane moment, but she never wanted it to end.

And neither of them even cared that the waiters were trying to kick them out.

****XOXOX****

Eventually they did leave the restaurant, but the conversation certainly didn't die out as they wandered aimlessly through the capital city. Passing by merchants and bakeries and of course more flowers since this was the Flower City after all.

"So if my dad never died then I would have never read Fairy Tail and then I would have never met you. It's sorta funny how fate works."

"It really is," Lucy said, though it sounded terrible and she secretly hoped fate would have brought them together whether or not his dad died or not. "And then you wouldn't have that huge blog you run with all your adoring followers," she joked.

Natsu snorted, rubbing the back of his neck. "Yeah...about that..."

Lucy eyed him suspiciously. "What? Don't tell me you've been lying about your follower amount this entire time."

"Nah I haven't lied about that...but if you think about it, there are barely a thousand people in the Fairy Tail fandom. Didn't you ever wonder how the hell I even have over a thousand?"

"Uhh..." Lucy frowned. To be honest, the thought never crossed her mind. "Well you post other stuff besides Fairy Tail. So I guess multifandom blogs?"

"Yeah, but that's not it."

"Do I even want to know the truth?" she muttered, feeling the back of her neck start to dampen with anticipation.

"I posted a picture of my brother after he got out of our pool and tagged it as NSFW and other stuff along those lines and the next thing I knew, I had all these porn blogs following me."

"ALL YOUR FOLLOWERS ARE PORN BLOGS?!"

"Not all of them!" Natsu glared, looking a bit insulted. "Only like 2,000 of them! The rest are just anime and gaming people! I swear!"

"You exploited your brother just to gain followers! You're terrible..." she cried, shaking her head at the disturbing facts.

"I only did it once and 'cuz Gray was posting his shirtless selfies for the same reason—err at least that's what I thought until I realized he had a stripping habit... Anyways, it was weird I even gained any followers from posting my brother. I mean he doesn't have any abs, but I guess people are just suckers for wet, shirtless guys." He shrugged. "I also got tons of messages asking if I do modeling or would model for them because they thought I was him. Almost said yes too because the money sounded so good."

"You're so pathetic," she moaned, resting her head in her palm. "So now can we talk about what we wanna do next?" she asked, walking with her hands tied behind her back as she secretly prayed it didn't involve her spending more money.

"Hmm." Lucy watched as Natsu's eyes swooped around the city until they landed on the docks. "Let's go on a boat ride! My treat!"

She gasped. How could she have forgotten about the boat ride in the Crocus Lake? It was one of the top romantic things to do in the city and when Lucy was younger, she used to dream about her perfect prince, from the fairytales her mother would read to her, going on one of the gondolas with her.

It felt like a dream come true. "Ah really?!"

"Course!" He grinned with a smile that made her body feel electrified.

It was a cute little gondola and Lucy happily walked on, using the rower to help steady herself before sitting on the red plush seat. Natsu followed suit, sitting next to her and once again, his lack of personal space was evident as he threw his arm around her shoulders with his hand just falling short of her breast, making Lucy's heart race nervously. Though to be honest, Lucy couldn't tell if he was doing it to be romantic or to just stretch his arm.

But it all went downhill the second the boat left the dock.

"Hey, Natsu, are you okay? You look a little green..."

"M-Motion...s-sick..."

"WAHHH! I COMPLETELY FORGOT YOU HAVE MOTION SICKNESS! WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU GET ON A BOAT THEN, YOU DUMMY!"

"D-Do you...have to be s-so loud? Blerrgg."

"IF YOU PUKE ON ME, I'M SO GOING TO TOSS YOU INTO THE WATER!"

"So...mean..."

"YOU'RE THE MEAN ONE! SOMEONE GET ME OFF THIS BOAT!"

XOXOX

* * *

****Sorry, sorry, sorry for this chapter! I think you will all like the next one though!****

****Thank you for reading! And thank you for the 2k favorites! Can't believe 2k of you actually like this story O.o sd fdfda****

****Have a lovely day!****

69. Chapter 69

****Happy Valentine's Day!****

****Whether you're alone or have someone special to spend today with, this story is here for you ^_^****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

After the boating incident, which Natsu, to his misfortune, had forgotten about his motion sickness, he nearly threw up all the food he had ingested earlier, but thankfully he was able to keep it down as he dragged Lucy along to different touristy sights.

But strangely enough, it felt like Natsu was different and Lucy couldn't put her finger on what exactly was different. He laughed and smiled a lot, but it lacked something... Maybe it was the eye crinkle? But if he lacked the eye crinkle then that would mean he wasn't really smiling, right? Her heart felt heavy like an anchor, sinking her down the cold depths of reality.

She toyed anxiously with the Fairy Tail bracelet he had stolen— given to her. Why was Natsu forcing a smile?

"Natsu," she asked, feeling strings tug at her heart, "is something wrong?"

He cocked his head to the side, giving her a funny look. "No? Why do you ask?"

"Uh n-no reason," she said, feeling unconvinced as she bashfully averted her gaze with her heart twisting in her chest.

"I think I took you to everywhere you wanted to go—besides the boring museums. Let's rest here for a bit." He hoisted himself up onto the stone fence, thick enough to sit comfortably on. It was the fence bordered the city, overlooking mysterious nature trails that led to who knows where.

"Everywhere I wanted to go?" she mumbled as she pulled herself up the wall after him. The view was striking to her senses. A lush green hillside decorated with old, wise trees reminding Lucy of an enchanted forest. She felt this innate urge to go explore, but her feet threatened to cry if she even dared to take another step.

"Yeah, you kept ranting on and on while we were eating about what you wanted to do."

She felt touched. Natsu went out of his way to make sure she got what she wanted. And then a pang of regret rang inside her chest like bell. How selfish was she to never ask what Natsu wanted to do? "Is there anything you want to do?"

"I just wanna relax." He sighed, pulling out his phone and Lucy did the same. There weren't any messages from the group chat though Lucy did receive an individual message from Levy asking her how her alone time with Natsu was going, which made Lucy feel boiling hot like someone doused her in boiling hot water.

"Everyone's posting 'bout how soaked they are!" Natsu deviously chortled, scrolling through his phone. "The ultimate prank pulled off by Ninja Natsu!"

Lucy scoffed. "You aren't anywhere close to a ninja."

"Don't be rude," he playfully chastised. "Hah! Mira uploaded a pic of Gray covering Juvia with his body from the water sprinklers! Look how stupid his face look!"

All it took was one glance before Lucy keeled over with drunk laughter. Gray looked so serious, almost as if he were taking a bullet for Juvia with the way he held her against his bare chest, like she were the most important thing in the entire world. Suddenly her laughing died out as she wondered what it would be like to be that important to someone.

But the thought brushed away fast. "L-Lucy!" Natsu snorted, his eyes shining with giddy tears. "Y-Ya gotta see this one!"

And Lucy _died of laughter_, like legit, she fell onto her back, striking the stone pavement harshly, unable to breathe as painful vibrations shook her body and water dribbled out of her tear ducts and Natsu joined her, dying in his own fit of laughs.

It was a photo of Gajeel—using Levy as an umbrella—more like a _human shield—_ to protect himself from getting wet. He had the girl raised over his head and there were slightly blurry motions of Levy trying to squirm out of his grasp.

"P-Poor Levy!" Lucy laughed as she sat back up, allowing her legs to dangle on the ledge.

"I still love hearing you laugh." Natsu happily sighed once he sobered up. He carefully pulled his legs in so he could sit pretzel style, facing Lucy.

Lucy ducked her head down, trying to cover her ever-growing blush. "S-So what made you want to set off the smoke detectors?" she asked lamely.

"I wanted you to be happy you weren't inside, otherwise you woulda gotten soaked," he answered indifferently before lazily scrolling through his phone and Lucy couldn't help but smile at Natsu's surprisingly sweet gesture.

She went back to her phone out of habit, but found that there wasn't anything to look at really. Usually she would be waiting for a message from Natsu, but here he was, sitting right next to her on his own phone.

It was such an ordinary scene that an older person would be shaking their head and muttering something about kids and their attachment to technology.

But how wrong they were. Lucy didn't need the internet. She needed her friends. She needed _Natsu._ So she tucked her phone away because it just felt silly wasting time on it. She glanced back over at Natsu and suddenly found herself wondering what was on his phone. What kind of photos? Which apps? And well...for starters, what was his background?

"Can I see your phone?" she asked, anxiously tapping her two index fingers together.

"Err what for?" he asked, tilting his head to the right.

"Well ya know what they say," Lucy said, grinning slyly as she snatched the phone out of Natsu's loose hold—who looked quite annoyed, but made no effort to get it back—"the phone is the window to the soul."

His face twisted in all sorts of ways and Lucy could _literally see_ the wheels turning inside his mind as he tried to make sense of what she had just said. "Err, Lucy," he said crossly, "I know I ain't a writer or anything, but isn't it _the_ eyes are the window to the soul_?"

"Pshh maybe back in like the 1800s." She snorted, raising a brow. "But now it's the phone."

Natsu quickly tried to protest, but it was too late, she had unlocked his phone and her brown eyes doubled in size as she gasped, nearly dropping his phone down the steep hill in her awing shock.

His background was of a messy scrawl of doodles that looked eerily familiar and managed to make her heart stop. And why exactly did it look familiar? Maybe because it was Lucy's handwriting that wrote out Natsu's name with hearts all around it.

She was nearly positive that he had been majorly creeped out by her when he saw this a while... Especially with how he had behaved afterwards...

But here it was; the background of his phone.

She looked up at him with a newfound anxiety brewing like tea in her veins, meeting Natsu's uncomfortable gaze. "You made this your background?" she asked, holding his phone up to his face so he could see it.

"Well...yeah..." he mumbled as his hand fumbled to tug on the neck of his Haru-coat making him look sufficiently awkward.

"Why would you..." she trailed off, her face warming with a mix of mortification and something else. "I thought you found it to be creepy!"

"Creepy?" he echoed, looking bemused. "It was the first time anyone's ever did something like that for me...I mean I never thought I would ever be the kind of guy to make someone wanna draw his name on her notes..."

"But-But you acted all weird after it happened!" she exclaimed, pointing an accusing finger at him.

"Only 'cuz you acted weird first!" he exclaimed right back, his face and neck heating up as he wagged his finger back at her.

"No I didn't!"

"Yes you did!"

"No I didn't!"

"_Yes you did!_" he said with such urgency that Lucy actually recoiled. Had she really been the one to react weirdly? All she could remember was that Natsu avoided the topic like it were a plague. "You hung up on me before I could say anything and I didn't know what I was supposed to do _and_ I had a huge ass paper to write that night—remember? You bailed on me after offering to help? And then you left me with this huge headache on top of it all!"

"Well you were the one who wouldn't bring it up!" she fired back, cheeks aflame.

"What was I supposed to say?" he asked, looking a bit worn out as he wearily scratched his eyebrow. "That I never felt more relieved in my entire life?"

"Relieved?" she gasped.

"Well you said you liked someone and-and I tried not to think much 'bout it 'cuz it didn't matter if you liked me or n

ot—but argghh," he pulled at his hair in a way that reminded Lucy of herself whenever she got too frustrated, " _I really wanted it to be me!_ And then I saw that," he said, pointing to the background of his phone, "and _I knew_ , but ...your freak out kinda freaked me out...So I guess that means we both acted weird after it happened, huh?" He impishly smiled.

"Looks that way," Lucy said, smiling right back. Of course everything was all just one big mess of confusion and misunderstanding. But now it was obvious they both liked each other. So what were they? Friends? Something more? The state of superposition was just too much for Lucy. She needed something definite.

"Say, Natsu," Lucy said, staring off ahead—more like squinting due to the brightness of the setting sun. If there was one thing she could never understand, it was watching the sunset. Where was one supposed to look exactly because the entire field of vision was a bit too bright to look at?

"Yeah, Lucy?"

"What exactly are we?"

"Well I was thinkin' I could be your waifu," he said with a ghost of a smirk covering his lips.

Lucy stared at him for a moment, wondering if Natsu would realize his mistake, but alas, he didn't, and to his chagrin, she blatantly laughed at him with no reservation. And she couldn't help but find it cute the way his forehead began to crease with slight infuriation, which was something that was always hard to make out on video chat.

"Wouldn't that make you my _husbando_?" she questioned, winking at the boy.

And all Natsu did was blink. "Why would that make me your husbando?"

Lucy's face fell slightly. "Because you're a—never mind...Anyway, Cana's my waifu now," she informed him, remembering how Cana got Loke to shut up with all his waifu nonsense by properly asking Lucy to be hers, "and I'm very committed to her!"

"Damnn," Natsu tsked, "then I guess I'll just have to settle for _boyfriend_ then." He casually rested his hands behind his head while Lucy gasped.

He said it.

Boyfriend.

And Lucy was convinced the world had stopped moving for a moment and time had stood still—if it weren't for the birds chirping. She gawked at Natsu, waiting to see any signs of humor, but there was none.

He was serious.

It was almost like that moment Natsu had followed her on _Tumblr_. She felt silly thinking of the comparison, but the disbelief, the joyfulness, and the nervousness that burned down to her very being reminded her of the moment that started this all. She just wanted to go scream into her pillow and let out all this raw emotion.

How long had she dreamt that he would use that _word_ with her?

But what if this was a dream? So she did the only rational thing she could think of; she pinched herself. And it _hurt_.

"Did you just pinch yourself?" Natsu quipped.

"No way," she quickly denied, ignoring the heat that was spreading down the back of her neck. "So if you're settling for _boyfriend_, then I guess I'll have to settle for _girlfriend_."

"Fine by me," he sighed, feigning exasperation, eliciting a giggle from Lucy. He gave her a timid smile. "I wanted to ask you to be my girlfriend for a while now, especially after you told me you liked me when you were in the hospital...but then I was thinkin' maybe I should wait until we meet first. I mean you don't really know a person until you meet them, right?"

"Right," she agreed, because it made sense, but she felt kind of stupid since the thought never crossed her mind. "So you didn't want to ask me out because you weren't sure if you would like me in person?"

"No!" he said quickly, his eyes flashing with earnestness. "I wasn't sure if _you_ would like _me_ so I wanted to wait until we met in person—and spent the day together before I roped you into a relationship you might not want."

You already had me roped into this, she wanted to say, but she couldn't seem to find her voice. It was like she were encased in marble, unable to move or speak.

"You still have a chance to change your mind." Bitterly laughing, he said, "I mean who wants a long distance relationship with a guy who has severe motion sickness?"

And in that moment, Lucy could feel her heart breaking for him out of empathy. It made sense why he got awkward after the boating incidence. He thought it would make Lucy lose interest in him. "I do."

"What?"

"I want a long distance relationship with a guy who has severe motion sickness," she said, inwardly surprised that her voice didn't waver at all.

He looked at her like he were seeing light for the first time. Eyes wide with wonder and amazement. And Lucy stared back at him with determination as she continued, "No that's not right...I want a relationship with _you_ and if you just happen to have motion sickness then so be it." She shrugged. "And I don't care if you can't come visit me because of it. I'll make all the trips if I must."

He chuckled quietly. "I'll try to suffer through all the motion sickness because you're worth it, Lucy."

"Natsu?"

He grasped a hold of her hands so suddenly that she inhaled quickly. "I never felt this way before," he said, looking her straight in the eye with his deep with longing passion. "I didn't think I _could_ feel like this...You're literally _all I think about_." His hold on her wrists tightened and she could feel her throat do the same. "It's not normal how much I think about you. Even before I realized I liked you I was constantly on your blog, constantly askin' the group chat if you were on..."

He laughed without humor. "I can't even pinpoint the exact moment I realized," he said more to himself with his eyes darting to the left corner.

"The feelings likewise," she confessed, feeling beyond exposed, like she had revealed her bare chest to him—again. Something about confessing the deep feelings that she had been harboring all this time was like ripping a chunk off her body. She was completely helpless in his grasp. "I'm always on your blog! Probably more than I should be...And I-I fangirled...over you...a lot in the beginning!"

"You _what_?"

"Don't make me say it again!" she snapped, pulling her hands out of his hold so she could cross her arms over her chest.

est all while her neck heated up.

And Natsu doubled over, laughing so hard. "Y-You _fangirled_ o-over me?!"

"It was before I realized what a dork you were!" she exclaimed, feeling so flustered that she wished she hadn't had said anything.

"I ain't a dork!"

"You're right, you're actually just a _weeb._ "

"Oii, you're so mean..."

"Am not!" She huffed with her nose high in the air.

"Are too!"

And while they laughed and continued to tease one another, there was something that had been nagging at Lucy like a tickle in her throat that she needed to cough out. Why did Natsu change his _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_ URL back to his regular one after they had confessed to one another? It left such an ambiguous wound in her gut that she needed to know. "Natsu, can I ask you something?" She swallowed, keeping her eyes focused on her clenched fists.

He let out a loud, exaggerated sigh, "I suppose." But Lucy knew he was smirking.

Her heart fumbled around like a football in the rain with self-doubts. Maybe this was a bad idea. Especially after all they had confessed..."Why did you change your URL from _HopelesslyInLoveWithLucy_ back to _DragonSlayer_ after we— _I_ confessed to you?"

"What?" Natsu jolted as if Lucy had smacked him in the face. He clearly wasn't expecting that...

"Ahah never mind!" she quickly said, covering up her dumb question with a nervous laughter. Judging by the sudden paleness of his face, there was no doubt in her mind that it was a bad idea. "So uhh would you want to—"

As though he hadn't realized she had been talking, he distractedly said, "I changed it because it felt weird. At the time we had just confessed we _liked_ each other and then there was my URL that says _in love_...Besides, I missed my old URL." He gave her a huge grin, showing off his sharp incisors.

And Lucy gaped at him. After all she had learned, it turned out that Natsu overthinks everything just as much as she does.

"Look, Lucy, I really like you and as you can see, I'm amazing at messing things up," he said, leaning his head in closely as his hand gently caressed her cheek, creating sparks of heat at the sudden contact.

"I'm amazing at messing things up too," she said, her heart racing as she leaned into his warm touch.

Natsu slowly tilted her chin upwards. "So maybe we should mess up together?"

"Okay."

And their words were sealed with a kiss.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****And finally a kiss!****

****Guess that means the story shall be coming to an end soon, which some of you have been waiting forever for aha h :')****

****Thank you all so much for sticking with me after so many chapters. I know there are tons of better writers and stories out there and the fact that some of you choose to read and review this one means a lot to me.****

****Hope this chapter turned out alright ;w,****

****Happy Valentine's Day! Hehe anyone wanna be my valentine? :')****

70. Chapter 70

****Hi, readers or should I say YOU CRUEL PERVERTS! SERIOUSLYY NEARLY ALL OF YOU MADE A 69 JOKE!****

*****SOBS* I tried so hard to make the kiss not happen in chapter 69 lmao and Valentine's Day was also a big coincidence. I had the chapter written and was like ehh guess I should just post it on vday ^ _ ^;;;****

****So I guess it was just one of those strange moments where the stars pervertedly aligned~****

****Ahem, anyway, the real 69 stuff happens in this chapter ^ _ ~ kidding, kidding :')****

****Enjoy, cuties cuz this chapter is fluff trash ^^****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Kissing was a strange phenomenon to say the least. The beginnings were cute and awkward, accidentally bumping noses—or maybe that was on purpose? Either way, it sent a burning thrill of both nervousness and anticipation throughout her body, reminding Lucy of a rollercoaster—with the long, torturous climb to the top, right before the drop. And her stomach clenched the moment his lips touched hers.

His lips were warm and gentle like the spring air that hung around them, caressing her lips in such an unfamiliar way. It wasn't necessarily _sparks_ or _fireworks_ as most would describe, but it did feel like her heart was going to explode or something like that. It was beating so fast like one of her video games, when she's low on life and about to die and the game makes that frantically rapid beeping noise as her only warning.

And as if Natsu's lips were the extra life she needed, she seized his face between her hands to pull him harshly against her, adding much needed pressure to the kiss. But thanks to that added pressure, Natsu ended up falling forwards, cementing his hand onto stone wall that they sat upon in order to catch himself before he fell on top of Lucy.

He had let out a noise of surprise, but didn't break away from the sudden roughness. Instead, he increased the force by pulling Lucy onto his lap. Her heart jolted at the sudden intimacy of their position. Never did she think that she would ever straddle a boy's waist. Her sudden gasp at the very thought gave Natsu the opportunity to deepen the kiss, allowing their lips to interlock and mingle like smoke to a fire.

It was like nothing in the world mattered except for the strangely addicting noises that Natsu would make each time Lucy sucked on his lower lip and a part of her wondered if she were making any noises as well, but the frenzy was too strong for her to maintain any thoughts besides how plush his lips were and how good his hands felt knotted in her

r hair.

The need for air boiled inside her, creating a burning in her lungs as she tore away from the kiss and sharply breathed in the fresh, spring air.

Natsu seemed to be in the same breathless state as her, panting like crazy as he, with his eyes still closed, rested his lightly damp forehead against hers.

Through his erratic pants, he muttered something so quietly that Lucy was surprised she had even heard it. "Now I get why people do this."

She could feel the blood rushing to her cheeks as she thought silently, *_Me too._* He slowly opened his eyes, meeting Lucy's wide staring eyes. She squeaked, quickly averting her eyes.

Suddenly she was hyperaware of everything; the way he was gazing at her, how frazzled her hair had become, the soft fabric of Natsu's pants against her bare thighs—with another squeak, Lucy clambered off of his lap, her heart rapidly pulsing with embarrassment.

She never felt *_this_* shy in her entire life. It was like someone tossed her out into the snow of the Northern Continent without even coat for protection. Vulnerable and self-conscious.

"Lucy..." Natsu said so suddenly and lowly. She tensed at first and then with timid eyes, she looked back over at him and sucked in a breath at the sudden seriousness in his expression as his dark eyes took in her face.

"Y-Yeah?"

"Your hair is all messy," Natsu cheekily grinned, reaching out to ruffle her hair to add to its supposed mess.

"Stoppp," she moaned with a slight pout, ducking to get away. "It's your fault!"

"I know," he said with a haughty tone and with a dangerous glint in his eyes, he added, "And your swollen lips are my fault too."

Her eyes bugged out for a split second before she shoved her face into her hands and groaned, "I hate youu!" All while Natsu roared with laughter with his amusement clearly feeding off of Lucy's embarrassment like a bloodsucking leech.

In the middle of Natsu's laughs, he received a message from Gray informing him that the express train leaves within an hour.

And suddenly reality dawned on them.

Neither them had realized the time or anything. ComicCon was over by now and everyone had wanted to say goodbye to them, but they were too *_busy_* to even notice their buzzing phones—which, of course, Lucy felt majorly guilty over, but Natsu didn't seem to care.

Nonetheless, it was time to leave.

****XOXOX****

With special thanks to Natsu's prior teasing, Lucy made sure to get her payback, making the boy give her a piggyback ride all the way back to the train station. With great disdain and a lot of complaining, Natsu gave in to her piggyback ride, leaving Lucy with a huge smile on her face—not before yanking on Natsu's spikey hair the second he made a weight comment.

Unfortunately, they arrived too late to the train station—for Lucy, that is. Her train had already departed and wasn't coming back for at least another hour and half.

Natsu's, however, was still there and threatening to leave in 5 minutes.

"Well I guess this is goodbye," Lucy said as she slid off of Natsu's toned back. She stretched her arms out, feeling th at instant relief when she felt them crack.

"Hmm?" Natsu looked at her with a curious gaze as he stretched his back. "You don't want me to wait for your train with you?"

"Well it's just that this is the express train," she explained, pointing to the shabby-looking train that was being board ed. "The next train for you isn't an express one, which means longer train ride, ergo, longer motion sickness."

And Natsu cupped a hand over his mouth, gagging and Lucy choked back a gasp. "You, know that's really pathetic y ou get motion sick just by thinking about it..."

"D-Don't be m-mean..."

"I'm never mean!" she lightly argued. "Just get on the train." She ordered, pushing the boy towards the train doors.

"Fine, fine." He turned around before stepping onto the train and offered Lucy an easygoing look. "See ya, Lucy." A nd he boarded the train.

And before Natsu's train departed, Lucy ran off, doing her best to fight the burning sensation in her eyes. She didn't want him to see her crying—hell, she didn't want anyone to see her crying. So she took in a deep breath, in attempts to calm herself down.

She slumped down onto the floor of the station as she idly waited for her train. Today was a fairytale, a fairytale that was now over.

But what was she supposed to do now for an hour and a half? She felt so empty without Natsu by her side. She was s poiled with his presence all day and it wasn't like she took him for granted or anything, it's just that she wasn't ready for this sudden cold, hollowness.

She groaned, hugging her knees to her chest. How could she possibly feel like this? He only left a few minutes ago a nd yet..."I miss him already."

"Strange because I was thinking the same thing," said a voice that ignited every single cell in her body.

Lucy jumped, looking up to see Natsu grinning down at her. "N-Natsu? B-But the train?"

He impishly grinned down at her. "Now what kind of boyfriend would I be if I left my girlfriend alone in a train stati on?"

Her mouth fell open as she tried to think of something to say, but nothing came out. It was like she was under the sp ell of the fuzzy warmth his words had cast upon her.

Natsu plopped down next to her, bumping his arm against hers, creating a fluttering sensation in the pit of her stoma ch.

"Besides," he said nonchalantly, "I kinda wanted to do this one more time."

Lucy's face scrunched up in bemusement as Natsu's hand cupped her cheek. "Do wha—mmph." Her words cut off as his lips pressed against hers and finally she understood what a _chaste kiss_ meant. Something so short yet filled with such a tenderness and passion that made her crave more, but Natsu pulled back.

And Lucy didn't miss the way his cheeks glowed red as he tried to play it off like the kiss wasn't a big deal. Then he randomly started in on a story about how Gray stripped in front of the school principle last week and Lucy found herself giggling along to it as she slid her hand into his, reveling in the feel of his abnormal body heat.

She was sure going to miss this...

****XOXOX****

Eventually Natsu's story telling seemed to put Lucy to sleep as her head suddenly lolled against his shoulder. He chuckled silently, poking the girl's cheek. "Oii, don't fall asleep, you weirdo. Your train will be here any minute."

But Lucy did not budge and Natsu sighed, doing his best to ignore how cute she looked as he wistfully traced her smooth palm with his index finger, trying to memorize every inch of it. It was amazing how pristine her palms were compared to his, which were rough and scarred with burns. "You better not drool on me..."

Her train soon arrived at the same time as Natsu's and he shook the girl until she awoke. She sort of reminded him of a cat as she swiped away his hand and gave a soft meow of yawn.

He watched with amusement as her face reddened with realization that she had fallen asleep on him and Natsu couldn't help but tease her about how she drooled all over him—even though she didn't—as he walked her over to her train.

And before Lucy hopped on it, she surprised Natsu, tackling him into a bear-tight hug, making him stagger a few steps back as he regained balance. She didn't say anything and Natsu didn't say anything either as he carefully wrapped his arms back around her.

Natsu welcomed the silence, ignoring all the buzzing bodies of people, who zoomed around them to board the train as he focused on Lucy and her pretty scent and the sound of her small breaths and the warmth of her body—and parting away from that was the hardest thing he ever had to do.

As Natsu took a seat on his own train, he could already feel the motion sickness starting to kick in.

It was going to be a long ride...

A small girl they had met earlier—Wendy was it?—turned took a seat next to him and exclaimed, "Natsu?! I didn't know you lived on this side of the country! Does Lucy live close by? Ooh probably not since she's on the other train...I'm sorry! Do you mind if I ask how long you two been dating?"

"Oh we just—err a couple of months now," he murmured in a daze, gazing at Lucy's train through the window. With an ever-growing grin, he repeated with more oomph, "Yeah, a couple months."

"Aww that's adorable—ARE YOU OKAY?"

"BLERGG!"

****XOXOX****

The train ride home was just what Lucy needed. Nice and silent, allowing her to relive her memories of today's events as she scrolled through the photos on her phone. A part of her felt bad that she didn't get to hang out with Levy and others for long, but another part of her was just too happy.

She nearly hugged her phone to her chest at each sight of Natsu. She blushed, her crush on the boy ran too deep like a cut to the bone. Then she froze. Was it still considered a crush if he's her boyfriend?

Boyfriend ... She bit her lip, remembering how gentle, yet forceful his mouthful felt against hers...or how he cradled her face in his calloused hands, or how warm he felt during their final hug. She hugged her arms to her chest in a last attempt to hold on to his lingering warmth.

She couldn't wait to see him again.

But when would she?

Sacrificing about 6-7 hours of her day for traveling back and forth to visit him? Suddenly the thought sounded like a nightmare.

And that lingering warmth blew out.

****XOXOX****

"So how was your _school trip?" _her father _causally_ greeted the second Lucy shuffled through her front door, though his strange tone went unnoticed by Lucy.

Ignoring the heavy feeling inside her heart, she smiled at her dad, who was sitting at their kitchen table, reading the newspaper with Plue lounging on the floor near his feet. "It was fun!"

"Really?" He peered up at her with a knowing smirk. "So what did you do exactly?"

She averted her gaze, picking at her hands to play off her lie. "Oh we went to the..." and strangely enough, Lucy's voice died in her throat. Her eyes suddenly grew wide as she stared blankly at her hands— _hands that had touched Natsu_. And who knows when she would get to touch him again.

"What was that?" her father astutely asked with his right eyebrow raised.

But Lucy's mind was elsewhere as she continued to stare at her pale palms. When would she get to feel his warmth?

Her hands trembled.

"We—" And just like glass, Lucy's voice shattered as she fell onto her hands and knees with tears flooding out of her eyes. They weren't the loud, obnoxious sobs, they were the painfully silent ones where you can't breathe and your body just quivers like crazy as you fight off the suffocation by gasping for a single breath.

"Lucy?! Are you alright?" He bolted out of his seat and helplessly stared down at his daughter. "Lucy..." And from her dad's voice, she realized _he knew everything._

Somehow, she was able to pick herself up from her kitchen floor and run into her room. She threw herself onto her bed and shoved her teary face against her pillow, and screamed.

And it wasn't the fangirl scream that she had wanted to do earlier.

It was a scream of agony.

Because love hurts.

****XOXOX****

* * *

Did the kiss scene turn out okay? I'm awful at writing them tbh :0

WOO CHAPTER 70 IS DONEE! I kinda wanna go for a 100 chapters. Anyone interested?

And aww Lucy's crying ;o; rippp.

Maybe it's because **I watched this anime where my NOTP became canon and now** _ **everything hurts** _ **. Nahh, just kidding. Had this planned for a while ^ _ ^**

Thank you all for reading!

And thank you always for the supportive reviews!

71. Chapter 71

I wanted to update sooner but I had an ear infection and like literally couldn't hear out of my ear and ya know, ears are really important in the writing process ^ _ ^

And also having depression sucks and kills all motivation :')

* * *

XOXOX

Despite crying herself to sleep, Lucy actually woke up feeling sort of refreshed. It was like all her worries from last night didn't exist anymore. A part of her wondered if it was all just a dream. Meeting Natsu, becoming his girlfriend.

It felt too good to be true.

She was almost scared to go online and find out that it _really_ was a dream after all _.

Although she felt _mentally_ refreshed, she also felt kind of sick. Her throat was kind of sore and her body ached a bit. And her mind immediately jumped to the worst case scenario.

Mono, the kissing disease.

There was no way she had mono, right? It wasn't like Natsu could have possibly given it to her—and suddenly her mind flashed back to the feeling of Natsu's surprisingly gentle lips against hers and how his rough hands caressed her cheek with such a lightness that only feather was capable of. She flushed.

Then again, it wasn't dubbed the 'kissing disease' for nothing...

Her face paled as she immediately whipped out her phone, ready to google 'mono symptoms' but got distracted when her finger, out of habit, clicked on the _Tumblr_ app.

All over her dash were posts about how the sprinklers went off at ComicCon. Some people posted pictures of their make up all smeared to the point where they looked like dank, sad clowns. Others were angry at the merch getting all soggy. Some actually enjoyed the surprise shower.

And there was one photo of the mastermind behind it all. A photo of the back of Natsu's head as he ducked and cove

red and Lucy snorted. _Stupid Natsu._

Feeling compelled, she refreshed her activity feed only to see that she was tagged in a frenzy of posts.

Most of the tags were from Mira and Levy with pictures they took with Lucy. Wendy also had tagged her in a few posts. One was of Lucy and Natsu reenacting the manga and her heart nearly burst. She lightly traced a finger over Natsu pressing his forehead against her.

The way Natsu was looking at her made her heart start to race. Even in the candid photos, Natsu gave Lucy this adorable look, a look she must have missed or was too oblivious to notice. It was a look that made her heart want to swell and burst. Did he always look at her like that? And suddenly Erza's words from yesterday drifted into her ears, _He can hardly take his eyes off of you._

Lucy smiled softly, feeling her eyes start to prickle with fresh tears. _It is I who can hardly take my eyes off of you_ ...

If it weren't for her name being tagged in these pictures, Lucy could have sworn these cosplay photos weren't her.

This girl was so happy and beautiful and so _Elie._ And Lucy felt _jealous of herself._ This version of herself was lucky, forever frozen in time with Natsu—Not that Lucy wanted to be frozen in time with her forehead pressed against Natsu's, it's just that she wanted to be with him—right now—not living far away. But she had to be grateful that Natsu really was just a train ride away—which sort of made the distance seem smaller. She couldn't even begin to imagine what it would be like if he lived an ocean away.

Going back to Wendy's photos, the girl had even posted a picture of just her and Lucy with a caption that made Lucy blush. " _CelestialMage,_ I'm so happy I got to meet you! You are so beautiful and sweet and your cosplay was absolute perfection!"

"As expected from my waifu~" Loke was the first to comment on it, but Lucy didn't pay much attention to him because her eyes darted down to the comment that followed.

"As expected from my girlfriend~" Natsu had written.

It really wasn't a dream... Her heart sang with warmth.

It was officially out there.

She was Natsu's girlfriend and Natsu was her boyfriend.

" _LokeTheLion_ , oii, she's my waifu. Paws off." _Carddimage_ wrote. " _DragonSlayer. ABOUT FREAKEN' TIME!_ Wait, you are _actually_ serious, right? Because if you're not, YOU'RE A DUMB ASS! _" _

"Of course I'm serious!" Natsu had replied. "Who in their right mind would make up a lie about dating a weirdo like her?"

"Why do I feel insulted?" Lucy grimaced, shaking her head in distaste.

"And this is how you become single~" Gray had commented, clearly reading Natsu's words as an insult as well. "And also, I'm sure those _very attractive_ photos I took of you on the train will help lead to your impending break up."

"WHY IS GRAY-SAMA CALLING _DRAGONSLAYER ' _VERY ATTRACTIVE'?" Juvia had frantically typed. "Is this the famous _boy love_ I've heard so much about?"

"I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT!" Gray wrote back.

"It sure came out like that," Cana had stated. "Kinda hot to be honest."

"I was being sarcastic!" Gray insisted. "Go look at the photos! He looks like gross dead log!"

Lucy did as Gray had said, she went to his blog and nearly toppled over laughing at the pictures of Motion-Sick Natsu. There were more pictures than Gray had posted in the chat the day before. Pictures of Natsu with his head out the window, looking like a dog on its way to the vet. _Poor thing._

Lucy returned back to her dash to continue reading the spam of conversations. How did she miss so much in her short time of sleeping?

"Oii, who are you calling a dead log, Ice Trash?" Natsu asked.

"Aren't all logs dead?" Levy inquired, making Lucy cackle aloud. Levy of course would ask such an irrelevant question.

"Shrimp, best to butt out of this," Gajeel joined in.

"Wahhh why is Gray-sama trying to make Natsu single?" Juvia asked.

"I'm not trying to make him single! He's doing it all on his own!"

"I'm not doing anything!" Natsu argued. "I haven't even talked to her today!"

"What if Love Rival #1 and #2 try to make Gray-sama join their orgy?" Juvia asked.

"LIKE HELL I'M JOINING THEIR ORGY!"

"LIKE HELL WOULD I LET HIM JOIN OUR ORGY!"

"Can I join the orgy?" both Cana and Loke asked.

Lucy's brows knitted together as she regretfully asked, "What is this talk about an orgy?" She could feel her sweat dampening her old sleep top. _Shit_, she cursed, was that another sign of mono? Random sweating? But then again, she always sweats... _Wahh I'm turning paranoid._

"Waifu!" Again, both Cana and Loke wrote that at the same time after Lucy hit the refresh key.

"Oii, what did I say about calling her waifu?!" Cana asked, but Loke ignored her and wrote, "Waifu, your graceful charm was greatly missed."

"Wish I could say the same for you..." Lucy blanched as she sent her message.

"Lucy," was all Natsu wrote and for some unknown reason, it made her heart start to race. Why did he only type her name? He didn't even add a punctuation mark to complete it. Swallowing, Lucy tried to reblog to comment back, but an error showed up, indicating Natsu had deleted his post.

Refreshing, all she saw was a message from Erza. "All of you need to have some more respect for your fellow bloggers. Spamming our dash this early in the morning! Shame on all of you! And poor Wendy gets all these notifications. Tsk."

Everybody immediately apologized afterwards, knowing better than to leave Erza in her angry state.

And Lucy's heart fumbled around as she thought of Natsu. She wanted to talk to him so badly, but she felt so shy. But why was she shy? It was only Natsu. If she could spend the entire day with him yesterday, then that means she could easily message him _hi._

"Yes, you can do this, Lucy!" she pepped talked, her fingers playing around the _Skype_ app. "But first I should take a shower..."

It's wasn't like she was procrastinating or anything, right?

****XOXOX****

After much self-debate in the shower, Lucy opted to join her _Skype_ group's voice call—which she had to admit, was as pretty relieved that they weren't video chatting because she wasn't sure how she would react to seeing Natsu.

Her stomach coiled with nervous butterflies as she clicked the phone button. To be honest, she wasn't sure how she would react to hearing his voice either, but both her fortune and misfortune, Natsu wasn't on call yet anyway.

"Hi, everyone!" she tried to say, but her voice was overpowered by Gray, who said, "Look, I told you! It wasn't what it looked like! I was just tryin' to protect her from the fire sprinklers and then she _attacked me with her mouth_!"

Lucy nearly choked at the boy's words. _Attacked_ with her _mouth_? "Oh my God! Gray and Juvia kissed?!"

"Lucy—go away," Gray groaned just as Cana laughed out, "Well judging from the pictures Mira took, it didn't seem like an attack."

"To me," Erza said, "it seemed like _you_ were the one who attacked _her_ with _your_ mouth."

"Gahh, Erza!" Gray groaned, followed by a loud smacking noise, leaving Lucy with a burning suspicion that he smacked his head against his desk. "Not you too!"

"I have to agree with her," Levy lightheartedly said.

"That's rich comin' from you." Gray scoffed.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Levy fumed.

"Well you and Gajeel disappeared for a bit. Makes me wonder what you two were up to..."

"Wahh! We weren't up to anything! I swear!" Levy panicked and Lucy _knew_ Levy's face was that beautiful shade of mortification.

"If ya say so, Levy," Cana teased and Levy let out a deep groan of agony, giving Lucy the impression she was pulling on her blue hair.

"My, my, things sure have escalated," Mira said tightly. "Oh hi, Lucy!"

"Hi," Lucy said, her voice croaking a bit due to the soreness in her throat.

"Ooh you don't sound too good. Are you sick?"

"I—"

"Hey, everyone," Natsu's voice suddenly cut in and Lucy instantly stiffened and her face immediately flushed, probably matching the color of Levy's right about now. _Why am I reacting like this_?

"Natsu!" Her voice came out nervously high pitched. She placed a hand over heart, _my heart is racing_ ...

"Lucy!" Natsu said, imitating her high voice, which only served to increase her heart rate as well as embarrass her. "So what are we talking about?"

"How Gray attacked Juvia with his mouth and Levy and Gajeel went off alone together to do who knows what," Mira said brightly.

"I told you! _She attacked me!_" Gray insisted just as Levy claimed, "It's not like that! What about Natsu and Lucy?!"

And Lucy shrank back on her bed. _Way to throw us under the bus, Levy_.

"Come to think of it," Erza said suddenly, "Natsu and Lucy were missing _for the entire con._"

"That's 'cuz we didn't go," Natsu said, his voice sounded a bit scratchy.

"How come?" Mira said gently just as Natsu let out an ear-splitting sneeze. "Aww are you sick also?"

"Also?" Natsu questioned, ignoring Mira's _how come_. "Who else is sick?"

"Lucy." Cana sniggered. "That's a bit suspicious."

"I KNEW IT! SHE GOT ME SICK! Owwww, my throaattt," Natsu moaned.

"Yessss," Gray gratefully sighed. "He can't shout for once!"

"Fight me, Gray," Natsu said, though his voice lacked his usual oomph and enthusiasm.

"How did I get you sick?!" Lucy exclaimed, feeling incredulous. It wasn't like she sneezed or coughed the entire time, hell, she felt amazing yesterday. "I was perfectly healthy! Obviously you're the one who got me sick!"

"I haven't been sick in years, Lucy. _YEARS!_"

"But I wasn't sick!"

"That wasn't very nice, Lucy," Mira sullenly said, which only served to aid in Lucy's frustration.

"But I—"

"How did she get you sick?" Levy asked, her voice feigned innocence making Lucy want to spontaneously combust to avoid this conversation.

"Ohohoh, do you really have to ask, Levy?" Cana slyly quipped. "Say, Lucy, was he any good?"

"Wh—?!"

"How the hell did you jump to that conclusion?!" Gray asked, baffled.

"Well they are boyfriend and girlfriend now," Cana said as a matter of fact.

"Oh righttt," Gray said, sounding unconvinced. "Still find that hard to believe."

"Hey—!" Natsu growled.

"_Wait, what?_" Mira gasped.

"You didn't know?" Erza choked. "Natsu said so on _Tumblr_. So sweet for him to make such a formal declaration."

And Lucy felt her skin burn up as she buried her face into the pillow, scared to hear Mira's reaction, and strangely enough, Lucy never did get to hear it.

"So did anyone ever actually meet Jellal?" Natsu asked, quickly averting the attention away from him and Lucy. "Like does he actually exist?"

"What's that supposed to mean?" Erza asked in a voice that made Lucy want to duck and cover.

"Idiot!" Gray hissed while Mira said, "I met Jellal! He and Erza look really cute together!"

And somehow it turned into another Natsu vs. Gray name-calling fight, so naturally, Lucy zoned out and decided to read some of her _Skype_ messages which were from Natsu.

Doing her best to ignore the strange twisty feeling in her heart, she read, "Yoo, guess what! I only puked once on the ride home! Isn't that amazing? Maybe this means I'll grow immune to motion sickness!"

"Lucy?"

"There's no way you're asleep right now."

"It's like eight p.m."

"Maybe you got kidnapped?"

"But who would kidnap a weirdo like you?"

"Unless they didn't know you were weird..."

"But they prob figured it out the second you started talking so maybe you are asleep after all."

She rolled her eyes as she did her best to ignore that warm fuzzy feeling her chest. Her fingers shook like crazy as she carefully typed back, "Dummy, I don't think you can grow immune to motion sickness!"

"You're so mean, Lucy," Even though he was busy telling Gray to shove something up his ass, Natsu replied back instantly and for some reason, his immediate reply made her heart skip a beat.

"You're the mean one! '_But who would kidnap a weirdo like you_'? See? MEAN!"

"I'm not mean, just honest."

"And worried," she typed with a snicker.

"Worried? What do you mean?"

"Well you were worried I got kidnapped for a second there. I mean before you realized that I was too weird to get kidnapped." She blanched.

"I wasn't worried. I was just curious. Happy was the one who was worried though. You know he's always such a wor

rywart." Natsu wrote with persistence.

"Right, right." Lucy gleamed, enjoying the familiar retort they had going on.

"HE DID THAT ANNOYING THING AGAIN. YOU KNOW, WHERE HE CLIMBS INSIDE MY SHIRT! DRENCHING ME WITH HIS COLD, DAMP BODY AND WOULDN'T LEAVE UNTIL I MESSAGED YOU!"

"LOL," was the only thing Lucy could think to type back as she hunched over, wheezing with laughter.

Then Natsu sent a picture of the slippery demon himself, sitting proudly on top of Natsu's bed. "You know what," Lucy wrote. "I can't stop seeing Acnologia when I look at him."

Between the conversation Gray was having with Mira about Laxus (which Mira innocently claimed she had no idea what Gray was talking about), Lucy heard Natsu audibly gasp on the call, before typing out, "YOU'RE TERRIBLE!"

And Lucy, once more, fell under the spell of laughter, but froze up when she read Natsu's message. "Hnnngg I miss your laugh in person."

Her breathing stopped.

She forgot that he could hear her from the call that was still going on.

"I miss you in person."

"Lucy—" she heard him say, but he didn't get to finish his sentence because right at that moment, her bedroom door creaked open and she slammed her laptop shut. "Dad?!"

"So do I need to beat up that Natsu fellow?" her father suddenly appeared behind her.

"What? No!" she said guiltily, knowing that her dad probably misinterpreted her tears from last night.

"He called last night...Wanted to make sure you got home safely—though he told me not to tell you he called. My bad." Jude winked.

And her heart did a somersault. She really did make Natsu worry when she didn't answer his messages. Both embarrassment and happiness overwhelmed her.

She felt her stomach twist up, what if her dad told Natsu she was crying?

"So is there anything you want to tell me before I start jumping to conclusions?"

"I—I...We are dating—me and Natsu..." she said, her body felt about million degrees hotter than ever before. "Y-You didn't tell him that I was crying, did you?"

"No, I didn't," he said with a frown, indicating that he wasn't pleased with himself. "I don't get involved in teen love."

Lucy rolled her eyes. How ironic coming from him—the man who shipped her with Gray at one point. And suddenly Lucy felt compelled to say, "We aren't in love!"

"Of course not." Jude smirked, then briskly, he clapped his hands together and said, "So let's get a few things straight. You did not have a school trip yesterday, correct?"

"Correct," she said gloomily, suddenly feeling lightheaded. There was no way this conversation was going to end well. Maybe if she were lucky she would pass out from the mono she might have... _Does mono even make people pass out_? Man, did she really want to look up those symptoms...

"You went to Comic Con despite me saying no, correct?"

"Incorrect," she said, a smirk twitching on the corner of her lips, but she knew better than to actually smirk because that would only make her father angrier.

"Lucy!" he said sternly, his eyes flaring with a blend of rage and disappointment. "No more lying! I saw pictures from Zeref!"

"I took pictures with people _who_ were going to Comic Con," she said decisively, licking her cracking lips as she did her best to fight back her smile. "But _I_ didn't go. Wait—Why were you talking to Natsu's brother?"

"It doesn't matter why I was talking to him. That Zeref is very nice fellow," Jude said thoughtfully. "Did you know he _also_ thought Natsu was gay at one point as well?"

"What?"

"Never mind that. So where _did you go_ if you weren't at Comic Con?"

Damn, she mentally scolded herself. She should have seen that coming. Her heart throbbed fretfully and heat instantly flooded into her cheeks and neck. Her fingers grasped tightly onto her blanket as if it were going to provide her some kind of support. "I-I went on a date with Natsu."

So embarrassing to say that to her dad.

"Well...this is unexpected, yet kind of expected," her father mumbled, rubbing his head. "But nonetheless, you still lied. And I feel the need to punish you."

"What?" Lucy snorted. _Punish?_ She couldn't recall a time she had ever been reprimanded. But then again, Lucy never disobeyed her father like this—well except that time she bought Plue...

But still this felt outright absurd.

"Well your actions have consequences. So let's see...No laptop or phone for a week? Sound fair?"

"No! I need them for school!"

"You can just use my work computer in my office if you need the internet for homework."

"But!"

"_No buts!_"

Her first official day of dating Natsu and she wasn't even allowed to talk to him _for an entire week._ "Dad, please don't do this! I'll do anything else! Just not this!"

"Well there is _one other thing_ you could do instead of me confiscating your stuff..."

XOXOX

"LOKE?" Lucy shrieked.

"Looks like the stars aligned for us," Loke gleamed as he stepped inside her bedroom.

"You're-You're my neighbor's grandkid?!"

And that was her dad's had given her a proposition. If she hung out with her neighbor's grandkid, he would take back his punishment. Suddenly, she wished she was getting her phone taken away instead of having to spend the afternoon with this smooth-talking creep who was wearing a suit (Why was he wearing a suit?).

"Appears so. When my granddad said that Jude had a delightful daughter, who would have thought he really meant my ravishing waifu."

"_Loke_", she seethed.

"So this is your bedroom. Kinda boring," he said, peering at her blank walls. "Thought you would have a huge poster of me...Do you not see the selfies I've tagged you in?"

"Why would I hang a poster of you in my room?!" Lucy exclaimed. "I'm dating Natsu, you know..."

"Well I don't see a poster of Natsu on your wall either," he said tapping a thoughtful finger on his chin.

"Why would I have a poster of him—or of anyone for that matter?!"

"You know," he said, turning to face Lucy with a big smirk ever present on his smooth lips, "I wouldn't be surprised if Natsu had a poster of me in his room."

"I'm going to kill him." she muttered with gritted teeth as she fought the urge to use violence against him.

"Oh, don't kill Natsu for that. It can't be helped....No one can turn down my good looks," he said smugly, pushing his glasses up the bridge of his nose.

"Okay first of all, I was talking about killing you and second of all, Natsu thinks you look like a cat—"

"—Am I the first boy to be in your room?"

Lucy's eye twitched with aggravation. Why was he asking such a strange question? Why did it even matter if he was the first boy to hang out in her room? Actually, Loke was the first person _period._ She never invited her school friends over, not once. Scared that they would judge her manga collection...

She snickered quietly. She was so ridiculous, hiding who she was just so she could fit in. How pathetic. "Uhhh, well my dad and Plue have been in here a few times—and there was the guy who set up Plue's cage too," she said, biting her lip.

"I feel so honored," Loke said, placing a hand over his heart, his eyes glistening, "to be the first boy to be alone with you in your bedroom."

"You're so overdramatic!" she sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose. Why was he making such a big deal over this?

She felt this pain in her gut and thought why couldn't Natsu have been the first boy? She could feel her eyes start to swell. She chomped down on the inside of her cheek. Why was she getting so emotional over this? Stupid Loke, getting in her head like this.

Suddenly, her laptop started to ring and Loke chuckled. "Ahh the boyfriend's calling!" Lucy went stiff. Natsu was ca

ling her? Her heart accelerated. And before Lucy could stop him, Loke answered the call.

Natsu appeared on the screen with his hair looking neatly spiked and his eyes dark with an unreadable emotion. "Lucy, I've been—LOKE?" Natsu bellowed, nearly falling out of his seat. "WHAT THE HELL?"

"It's not what it looks like!" Lucy cried, looking flustered as she frantically waved her hands at the camera. Not only was it her first official day of having her boyfriend, who she hadn't had a chance to really talk one-on-one with yet, but now she has a boy in her room too. Great, just great.

"It's exactly what it looks like. The gods clearly ship us," he said, pushing his glasses up with a cheesy grin.

"_I swear I will break your glasses,"_ Lucy seethed, a dark aura that could make even the deadliest creature found in hell want to curl up into a ball and hide. But Loke looked unaffected.

"Then I guess that means the gods ship me 'nd Gray, but you don't see me caring!"

"No need to get so hostile Natsu, I've only taken your girlfriend's room virginity—"

"_You took her what?"_ Natsu gasped, slamming his hands flat on his desk, creating a vibration that only served to make Lucy _angrier._

"I'm the first boy to ever be alone with her in her _bedroom—"_

"That's it," she growled with her fists clenched. She reached over and _yanked_ Loke's glasses off his face and before the boy could even try to stop her, she snapped them in half like a twig—well more like a branch because it took a surprising amount of effort to hear the satisfying _snap_.

"M-My glasses!" Loke cried, cupping a hand over his mouth. "_My beautiful glasses!_"

And in the background, she could hear Natsu cackling like crazy and she felt this deep sense of pride that _she_ was the one to evoke that reaction from him.

"Want them back?" she asked innocently, holding out her hands that each held a half of the glasses.

"Y-You're _savage_!" Loke yelped, jumping a few feet back from her.

"Whatever," Lucy grumbled, conjoining the broken glasses halves up to her eyes and turning to face Natsu. "How do I look?"

"Like a weirdo in glasses."

"_Quit calling me weird!_" She glowered at the boy's cheeky, yet annoyingly cute smile—and then blinked.

"Can't help it," Natsu said, chuckling lowly. "If you're not weird, how else do you explain why you're dating me?"

Her breath caught in her throat as she gazed at him like he was one of the 7 Wonder of the World. Despite his words, Natsu was smiling a true smile, one with the cute eye wrinkles. "Natsu—I—"

She paused. How come she could see Natsu so clearly through Loke's lens? Shouldn't his face be sort of wonky thanks to the prescription? And she had 20-20 vision, which would mean...

"YOU WEAR FAKE GLASSES?! THAT'S SO LAME!"

And that was how Lucy got her phone and laptop taken away for a week.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****RIP Loke's glasses and thank you kaizelle for the idea of making Loke a neighbor ahaha ^^****

****Eep so many of you were like do 150 chapters instead and all I could think was omg 150 sorta like 151 original pokemon and then suddenly new pkmn game is announced? ITS LIKE FATE!****

****Ignore my nonsense lol****

****Real talk for those into pkmn: Pokemon Sun or Moon?****

****I really hope there's a dragon eeveelution hnnngg imagine?****

****And sorry again for posting late. It's just hard trying to write with depression because everything just feels like crap :/****

72. Chapter 72

****I feel like im married to this story~****

****The weathers been getting nicer here so my seasonal depression is sorta breaking up a bit which means my writers block is starting to break as well :D****

****Anyway, It's pretty much my accounts 1 year anniversary! So thank you all for giving me the courage to keep posting to be here a year later :)****

****And btw looks like only one of you is getting pkmn sun, the rest of you said moon ahaha. I'm personally going for sun most likely.****

****Enjoy the chapter~****

* * *

****XOXOX****

"Ughh, I can't find it!" Natsu groaned as he literally teared his room apart. Clothes from all his drawers were scattered. Papers from his desk flew around the room almost like snowflakes.

"Can't find what?" Gray's voice suddenly appeared. "And why did you force me to come over at 6 AM? And your brother is weird as fuck by the way... Gave me the chills when he let me in..."

"Lucy's address!" Natsu exclaimed, looking incredulous at his raven haired friend. How could Gray be so stupid?

"Oi, don't yell at me!" Gray scowled. "How was I supposed to know that's why you called me over?"

"Damn it!" Natsu slammed an iron fist against his desk. How could he have misplaced something like this? But that wasn't much of a surprise. Natsu was a pro at losing things. Though usually the things he lost weren't of great value, like homework for instance.

But this was different.

Man, did he really hate himself.

He felt as gloomy as the cloudy sky.

"Err where did you remember last seeing it?" Gray asked with slight hesitance, as though he were afraid to get scolded for asking another pointless question.

"If I knew that," Natsu said, a fire burning in the depths of his eyes, " _then I wouldn't be in this predicament, stupid! _ " Gray literally was the least helpful person in the whole wide world.

"Jeez," Gray muttered, combing his fingers through his black locks, "you really are a hot head... You gotta remember something!"

"All I remember is writing her address down and sending her a package!"

"You didn't happen to _only_ write her address down _on the label_ _for the package,_ right?" Gray asked with a dryness that rivaled a rock in a desert.

Natsu was about to make a rather unkind remark to the ice bastard, suggesting Gray to go do something anatomically impossible with a block of ice, but then he considered the question. When Natsu got Lucy's address, it was when he called for help because of her appendix. Then he went straight to the post office to mail her the package... he stiffened. "WAIT A MINUTE!"

"SERIOUSLY? YOU NEVER SAVED A COPY OF HER ADDRESS?"

It was like someone took a hammer to his heart. All he wanted was to hear Lucy's voice. Was that so much to ask for? It just wasn't fair that Lucy's dad was inadvertently punishing Natsu by taking away Lucy's internet privileges.

So if he couldn't talk to her online, then he sure as hell was going to talk to her person. What good was his plan now?

"I'M SO STUPID!" He bashed his head against the wall repeatedly, wailing, "Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!"

"Oi! Stop that! We already knew you were stupid so calm down!" Gray cried, roughly pulling Natsu away from his wall.

"GRAY, HIT ME!"

"NO!"

"Maybe we can search for Lucy's address online!" Natsu froze, hearing a new voice enter the picture. He whirled around to see Gray holding his phone with Skype open. Gray called Levy? Maybe that annoying guy wasn't so useless after all...

"Levy, you can do that?" Gray asked and while Natsu tensed, afraid that if he even moved an inch, he would lose his only chance of finding out Lucy's address.

"I think so...I just need her last name."

The room air in the room thickened and Natsu could hear his heart pounding in his ears. He swallowed, noticing Gray staring over at him with an expecting look, followed by Levy saying, "Soo?"

"Soo?" Natsu repeated and then let out a cry of pain as this throbbing sensation overcame his head. "What the? _Gra

y_?! I told you to hit me _before!_ Not now!"

"What's Lucy's last name, dumb ass?!" Gray growled, menacingly baring his teeth to show his lack of patience.

"Oh! It's—" Natsu halted. Lucy's last name... He had to know it, right? He heard once when her old man said it by accident. But why couldn't he remember it now? His face contorted with frustration and at that, Gray let out a pitiful moan. "Oh c'mon! You don't even know your girlfriend's _last name_?"

"I do know it! It's something, something, something..." He desperately searched through his memories as if it were photos in his phone. _What did that weirdo's dad say?_ Back when he thought Natsu was dating Gray... " _... -felias are not judgmental people!_ "

"FELIA!" Natsu exclaimed. "It's something- _felia_!?" His forehead creased. What was the first part? Was it a shape? "Maybe Starfelias? It was something girly like that..."

" _Starfelias_?" Gray questioned. "Lucy Starfelias?"

"That doesn't sound right," Natsu decided, aggressively scratching his head. Why was he blanking out? Well was that really a surprise? Natsu certainly wasn't known for having the best memory.

Actually, whenever he thought of Lucy, it was like the most meaningless moments were what took up space in his memories. Like all those times she fell asleep on him whenever they video chatted. In her half-awake state, she always let out cute little meows to acknowledge she heard him and it made would make his heart burn with unfamiliar warmth, electrifying his very being.

"I think it sounds fine," Gray said, shrugging. "Sorta suits her."

"No, I mean it sounds wrong—"

"Oi, isn't it a little rude of you to say that about your girlfriend's last name?"

"I MEANT IT'S NOT HER LAST NAME, FROST BITE!"

"Alright, alright!" Gray put his hands up. "Sheesh, you didn't have to scream at me."

Natsu's hands clenched at his sides, trying to fight off the urge to deck Gray in the face. Why was this guy so annoying?

"Say, Natsu," Levy spoke quietly, "it wouldn't happen to be _Heartfilias,_ would it?"

Suddenly the fog over his memories cleared just as the ray of sunlight peeked in through the clouds. "That's it!" Natsu jumped away from Gray. "How did you know that, Levy? Lucy told you her name before?"

"No, but—"

" _Heartfilias_?!" Gray choked, gawking at Natsu with a rapidly paling face. "Y-You're d-dating a-a _Heartfilias_? _What the hell_?"

Natsu leered at him. "Apparently. Why are you acting weird? Are Heartfilias's bad or somethin'?"

"They're one of the wealthiest and powerful families in all of Fiore!" Erza's voice suddenly appeared.

"You mean _were_," Cana's voice followed. "I heard they lost all their fortune."

"No that wasn't it," Erza insisted. "The Heartfilias became less business oriented after a death in the family—Oh..."

And Natsu was positive everyone flinched because he sure as hell did. Death was a touchy subject that he preferred to avoid. "Err will someone go look up her address for me?" He felt antsy, tapping his foot like crazy. He didn't care if Lucy was rich or not. To him, this discussion was a waste of time. Besides, it was just gossip. He would rather hear this from Lucy herself, not from a bunch of people who read about her family in the paper.

"I found her address!" Levy exclaimed. "I'll type it into the chat!"

Just as the last cloud in the sky broke away, Natsu felt a surge of warmth take over his body. He was going to see Lucy.

"Why do you want her address? Wait you can't be thinking of visiting her!" Gray sounded mildly panicked with his voice raising in pitch. Taking Natsu's silence as a _yes,_ Gray continued, "Dude! You might get her into more trouble!"

"That's what makes this all the more fun." Natsu slyly grinned and to his amazement, Gray grinned back. "Fine, guess I have to come with ya because someone has to help your sorry ass on and off the train."

"You guys aren't thinking of ditching school, are you?" Erza keenly asked. "Because that would be very foolish."

"Pshh no way."

"We would never."

The two boys shared a secret smile, Erza would never have to know.

****XOXOX****

Maybe allowing Gray to come along wasn't the best idea at all. Scratch that, it was a _dreadful_ idea. Not only did the icy boy take _more_ embarrassing photos of motion sick Natsu, he also made Natsu sit in the bumpiest train cart and talked about methods of transportation the entire time. Like one story was about a fishing trip Gray and Lyon went on together and how the water was so stormy and rocky that boat just wobbled back and forth and back and forth—Natsu cupped a hand over his mouth. It was like an uphill battle trying to keep the contents of his stomach inside.

But now Natsu was finally here. Lucy's house. And he couldn't believe it.

Her house was definitely not a mansion like the others made it sound like she would live in, but Natsu remembered that she had moved here back when her mother was on her deathbed. So maybe her old home was in fact a mansion, not that he really cared.

He quickly circled around the place, looking from window to window, hoping to find one that would push open and finally, he found one.

"Natsu, are you sure this is the right window?" Gray asked while Natsu shimmied his way in through the small gap he made.

"Nope, but it's the only one that will open!"

"What if her dad's home?"

"Too late now!" Natsu said, landing in a crouch on top of a soft bed. Before he even had a chance to take in an inch of her room, a heavy body landed right on top of him, slamming him flush against the plush bed. His nose was instantly flooded with a sweet, light scent that he recognized as Lucy's.

His heart _slammed_ against his ribs.

He was in _Lucy's room_. On _Lucy's bed_. Breathing in _Lucy's scent_. He felt like he was in heaven as long as he ignored the fact that Gray was crushing his back.

To Natsu's immediate relief, Gray slithered off of him, hopping onto the floor with a minor thud, allowing Natsu to finally sit back up, cracking his back in the process. Then he gazed down at the soft purple blankets that the late afternoon sun had lit up. Her bed was neatly made with a _familiar_ chimchar plush lying on the corner of her Fairy Tail pillow. Natsu grinned to himself at the thought of Lucy sleep with his plushie. He really was glad that he gave it to her, despite how often he teased her for it back.

Slowly, he glanced around the bedroom, starting from her neatly organized manga shelf to her desk that was cluttered with papers in somewhat neat piles. Natsu briefly wondered if it was homework or maybe a story she was outlining. Though Gray was intently reading it, so Natsu figured it was the latter.

Then he saw a ginormous cage and his eyes lit up like a little kid on Christmas morning. "Plue!"

He clambered off her bed, his feet hitting her soft carpet as he dashed over to the cage. And there he was, the lizard Natsu was jealous of—not that he would ever admit that to Lucy or anyone, but how could he not be envious watching Lucy cuddle with it all the time?

Jealousy aside, Natsu had to admit, Plue looked _cool—_ like a _mini dragon_ with its spikey back and proud stature. All that was missing were a pair of big wings. "Heya, Plue," he said, stroking the lizard's drooping neck.

"W-Whoa!" Gray stammered. "D-Do you think you should be touching that?"

"Why not?" Natsu asked, giving Gray a befuddling look. "Lucy's always cuddling with him."

"Er right," Gray mumbled. "So when does Lucy get home from school?"

"Probably any minute now," Natsu mused, his eyes shifting over to see Gray hunched down next to him, shirtless. His eye twitched. "Put your shirt back on, you exhibitionist!"

"What the?!" Gray jolted, frantically searching all around the room. "Damn it! Where did it go?"

"Gray!" Natsu gritted, his hands clenching as he moved away from Plue. "Her room's practically spotless," he pointed out. "It can't be that hard to find!"

"I know! But I don't see it anywhere!" Gray uttered anxiously, looking under and over Lucy's bed. He even glanced out the window. "It's not here!"

Natsu's eyes darted around and Gray was right. The shirt was nowhere in sight. _What the hell?_ "This is what I get for bringing a stripper along with me..." He moved over to Lucy's dresser, maybe Gray somehow chucked it into one of her drawers?

He pulled open the top drawer and found it filled with frilly underwear and bras. Heat flooded into his face as he reached in to grab a pink lacey thong. "Whoaaa." Stretching it from the sides, he held it up towards Gray. "How do you even wear this?!"

"Wha—Damn that looks painful." Gray shivered and Natsu had to agree with him on that. Did Lucy really wear stuff like this? The blush on his face darkened as the brief image flashed into his mind. The thought of Lucy wearing this was hot as hell...But now was not the time to be thinking of that.

Instead...

"I'll give ya a dollar to try it on." Natsu smirked, licking his lips.

"No way!"

"Two dollars?"

"Make it five and you got yourself a deal."

"No! two dollars take it or leave it!"

"Leave it then." Gray shrugged, grabbing the panty from Natsu's hand to shove it back into the drawer and attempted to close the drawer, but Natsu stopped him and pulled out a pretty lace red bra and grinned, hooking it over his navy t-shirt. "How do I look?"

"Not as good as me." Gray snickered, shoving on a pale blue one, with his arms tied behind his back. "How did ya get it to hook?"

"Dunno, it kinda just clicked in," Natsu said with a shrug, then went over to Lucy's mirror to check himself out.

"Got it!" Gray whooped, rushing over to the mirror as well and Natsu couldn't hold back his laughs because Gray looked so ridiculous with Lucy's bra cupped against his bare chest and Gray was cackling over at Natsu probably for the same reason.

"Dude, I don't think that's your shade," Gray teased, eyeing the red bra carefully.

"Pshhh and you think that color is your shade?" Natsu retorted, then pulling out his phone, he suggested, "Selfie time?!"

"Hell yeah."

The duo did their best girly poses. One where Gray had his hands on his hips and Natsu made the infamous 'duck face.'

And before they could take another photo, the sound of a door slamming startled them back into reality.

Natsu's hands instantly went to his back, tugging at the center of the bra. Unable to figure out how to unlatch it. "Oi, how do you get this off?"

"I-I don't know!" Gray gritted, clearly struggling as well. "If Lucy walks in and sees us like this..."

White hot panic blinded Natsu. Lucy would never let him live this down. She was petty like that. "THAT'S IT!" he screamed, tugging at the straps. "I'M GONNA RIP IT!"

"IDIOT!" Gray grabbed Natsu's arms, halting his crazy movements. "Do you know how expensive these are?! Lucy will murder us!"

"I don't care! It's makin' me feel claustrophobic!" Natsu struggled like crazy, trying to get out of Gray's grasp. "Let go—of me!"

"Stop it! I heard what she did to Loke's glasses! Now imagine what she will do to us!"

"I don't care!" And with all his might, Natsu shoved Gray back, knocking him into the underwear drawer at both the

right force and the right angle for it to practically explode.

Rainbows of colors rained around the like a petals of a Sakura tree, decorating the boys heads as an ear-splitting scream soon followed.

"_Shit_!"

****XOXOX****

Going almost two whole days without internet was pure torture for Lucy. Besides the fact that she couldn't talk to anyone, she suddenly found herself wanting to look things up all the time. Like what new animes were coming out this season? Who was the voice actor for Shinoa in Owari no Seraph? Just random things like that and it drove her crazy that she wasn't able to get answers to her questions.

But in honesty, it was _killing her_ not being able to talk to her friends. If anything, she truly learned never to lie to her dad again, that's for sure. It wasn't worth this empty feeling in her chest, which felt as empty as the blue sky without even a cloud in sight.

It made her angry. The sky should be as miserable as she felt.

She sighed, walking inside her house. At least she could busy herself rereading her Fairy Tail volumes... "Orrrrr maybe I could hack onto dad's—"

"_THAT'S IT! I'M GONNA RIP IT_!"

Lucy slapped a hand against her mouth to cover a scream. Her blood instantly ran cold. _There is someone in the house._ "I-I don't even have a phone!" Though stupidly, she completely forgot there was such a thing called a _house phone_ as she grabbed a hold of her father's bat, ready to take on whatever creepy pervert was waiting inside her room.

She tiptoed over to her room and pushed open her door, her heart hammering in her chest. She had the bat ready to swing when suddenly she screamed.

This was _not_ what she had been expecting.

Natsu and Gray—dressed in her bras—covered in her underwear. "WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING IN MY ROOM?!"

"L-Lucy!" Natsu suddenly bolted up straight, gazing at her in a way that screamed something undeniable. _He missed her._ "You're home!" Even with her anger, Natsu managed to make her heart flutter. She gulped, unable to continue with her plans of yelling.

"SHE'S GOT A BAT!" Gray cried, jumping behind Natsu for protection. "SHE'S GONNA SMASH US LIKE LOK E'S GLASSES!"

A burning vein throbbed all over her face. "Hey! I snapped his glasses in half with my hands!"

"Look at that ugly face she's making," Natsu shuddered.

"Don't call my face ugly!" Lucy blushed, tugging on the collar of her uniform, then reluctantly asked, "Why are you guys even here?!"

"Because," Natsu said, plucking off one of Lucy's thongs from his hair, "we were bored!"

Gray scoffed, placing his hands on his hips. "Natsu wouldn't stop crying how much he missed you."

"Was not!"

"Was too!"

"Was not!"

"Oh really?" Gray sneered. "What about this morning? You literally destroyed your room with tears in your eyes trying to find Lucy's address!"

"Oi! My room was already a mess, okay?" Natsu scowled, creating a heavy cloud of dark energy in the room.

And Lucy couldn't help but giggle. So Natsu really did miss her. Maybe even as much as she missed him... Was this what it meant to be boyfriend and girlfriend? She froze with a blush conquering her face as she shyly looked away from Natsu.

How was she supposed to act around him now?

"Lucy, could you help us take your bra off?" Gray asked awkwardly and Lucy conceded with a loud exhale, feeling awkward about touching his bare back. _Did he really have to strip in her room?_

Then she moved onto Natsu with a frown, unclasping her bra from his back, silently thankful at least he had his shirt on. Never did she imagine that _she_ would be the one taking the bra off her boyfriend. _At least he didn't rip it_, she sighed after inspecting the object. "Natsu, you should really tell a girl about your cross dressing habits _before_ you ask her out..."

Natsu muttered something incoherent with a blush dusting his cheeks, quickly turning his head away from her, an action that she could only describe as adorable.

"Yeah, Natsu, you should really warn people," Gray teased.

Speaking of which..."Gray, where's your shirt?" Lucy questioned.

"Oh, I lost it," he answered plainly. "That's what we were doing before you came in. Searching for my shirt."

"And you thought you lost it in my _underwear drawer_?"

"It was Natsu's idea!"

"It was worth a shot!" Natsu argued with an easygoing grin.

"You two are unbelievable..." Lucy muttered, touching a hand across her heated forehead. Of course this would happen to her.

"Anyway," Gray said, "can I borrow one of yours, Lucy?"

"NO!" she yelped, quivering at the thought of Gray wearing one of her tight tank tops. It just wouldn't look right.

"Can I go borrow one of your dad's then?" He got up, already heading towards her door and fear flashed into Lucy's eyes as she made shy eye contact with Natsu and she wasn't sure if it was her imagination, but Natsu looked just as afraid as well.

And at the same time, the couple shouted, "No!"

"Why not?" Gray's brows moved inwards.

"B-Because," Lucy stammered, I don't want to be alone with Natsu. Thought it completely escaped her mind that she would have had to go with Gray to get him the shirt seeing as Gray has never been to her before. She gave her boyfriend a sideways glance. Why did she feel so shy? Why did the thought of being alone with Natsu make it suddenly hard for her to breathe? She desperately pulled on her blonde hair, hoping for some form of clarity.

It had to be because they hadn't had a chance to talk about anything yet.

After all, a whole two days had went by since they last spoke...

"Fine." Gray exhaled loudly. "I'll just stay shirtless."

"You'd probably lose the new shirt anyways," Natsu commented, his cheeks still shaded a light pink that matched his hair.

Gray looked like he was about to protest, but then hung his head and said, "Probably."

Plue came crawling over to where they all were and Lucy scooped him up into her arms. "Have you two met yet?"

Natsu, who was now sitting on Lucy's bed, nodded rigorously. "Yep! Plue and I are buddies now!" he grinned, taking the lizard from her hands. "Looooook! He's like a dragon! _FIRE DRAGON'S ROARRR!_"

On cue, Plue opened its mouth and Lucy wheezed with laughter, clutching a hand over her lower belly, which seemed to encourage Natsu to continue. "_Fire Dragon's Iron Fist_" He gently pushed out Plue's clawed hand, grinning down at the lizard as Lucy continued laughing. Natsu cuddled him against his cheek. "He's so docile! Unlike that demon on Happy!"

"Maybe Happy takes after his owner." Lucy jested.

"Rudee!" He snubbed his nose in the air. "Oi, Gray, wanna hold him?"

"Not gonna hold anything with claws that sharp." Gray blanched. "I already have one scar on my face. Not risking another over a lizard."

"You have a scar?" Lucy inquired, her eyes narrowing at the boy's seemingly flawless face.

"Yeah," he said, pushing his bangs back, "right here."

And Lucy could just make out a sliver of a line on his forehead. "Ooh! It's pretty small!" She reached a finger out, trailing it down it. "How'd you get it?"

"Fist fight with Lyon," Gray said haughtily. "Should have seen the scar I gave him."

"I have scars too!" Natsu said loudly, startling Lucy and Gray. She looked over at Natsu to see him tugging off his shirt off, causing her to let out a squeal. "Why are you stripping?!"

"Yeah, pervert!" Gray snapped. "At least I strip by accident!"

The shirt landed on the bottom Lucy's feet, but she barely noticed as she gawked at Natsu's bare chest. Slightly paler compared to his arms, but very toned and it made her body temperature rise like metal in the sun. "I'm not stripping! I'm showing you my scar!" Then his hands went to his waist and he started to pull down his pants and even Gray let out a sputtering noise.

"N-Natsu! Stop!" Lucy dashed over to him with plans of yanking his hands away from his pants, but she didn't anticipate for Plue to be right there on the floor... So with an ungraceful yelp, Lucy tripped, latching onto Natsu for some sort of support, except Natsu was completely unprepared and toppled backwards, landing on top of her bed with Lucy sprawled on top of him, pinning his arms over his head.

Lucy was mortified to say the least as her round eyes met Natsu's equally round, shocked eyes. She wanted to look away so badly, but she couldn't. She was too stunned. Here she was, lying _on top of Natsu_ — _on her bed._

Her breathing hitched just as Natsu's face flooded with blood red coloring. She watched as his throat bobbed with a nervous gulp, making her feel oddly shaky like his nervousness was contagious. Or maybe it was _her_ nervousness that was contagious?

Quickly, she sat up, straddling Natsu's hips, feeling oddly helpless in this foreign situation. Luckily Natsu decided to talk, breaking her from her thoughts. "I wasn't taking my pants off!" he claimed. Was it Lucy's imagination or was his voice shaking? "I was just lowering them to show my scar!"

"O-Oh." Lucy's eyes dropped, trying to ignore his V-shape hip indentations, which she found herself somewhat drawn to. Then she saw it; a giant X was right above his hips. She winced, wondering what he could have possibly done to earn such a big scar. "Did you always have that?"

She let go of Natsu's left hand—which she forgot she had him pinned down still—and almost like a magnetic force, her hand was on top of his scar. He stiffened at the touch, but didn't make any move to stop her as she lightly traced it like she had done with Gray's.

It felt surprisingly smooth and heated—well actually his skin felt really hot in general—a trait she happened to love about him. He felt as muscular as he looked, whereas Lucy was soft and plush on her stomach, he was rigid like a rock, with only a slight softness to it, which she found to be endearing.

"Yeah, got it a few months back," he said absently as Lucy's hand began to drift away from the scar. She heard him suck in a breath as her hands traveled over to his abs, drawing small circles as she admired the grooves and the way he tensed up, then her hands wandered over to his hip indentations, which happened to be dangerously close to the edge of his pants, all while her heart slammed against her ribcage.

"I feel sufficiently awkward," Gray commented. "Can't you two do this lovey-dovey stuff _when_ _I'm not in the room_?"

An icy wave of embarrassment overcame Lucy, shaking her from the weird daze she was in. She desperately tried to scramble off of Natsu—but suddenly a voice spoke that made her freeze in place.

"_What is going on in here_?"

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Ohoho wonder whose voice that was ;)****

****And yayyyy Natsu and Gray bonding!****

****Made this chapter extra long for you! And kinda wrote it all at once so I hope it makes sense since my brain is officially dead!****

****And I hope you all had a lovely Easter if you celebrated and if you didn't, I still hope you had a lovely day :)****

73. Chapter 73

****HNNG THANK YOU ALL SO MUCHH! So glad some of you still are enjoying this story! Though I must confess I am cheating on this story with a new one :) muehehe****

****And also, updates will be slow for this month and next month because school is hard and my mental health is officially ruined. So please have patience with me. I am just trying my best to get through this semester alive.****

****Sorry if this chapter sucks.****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

For second, Lucy really thought nothing could have been worse than having her dad walk on this situation because how would one's father react to seeing two shirtless boys and a girl alone in a room together? With bras and panties as party favors. And, of course, Lucy was currently straddling one of said shirtless boys.

A father would probably drop dead from the shock of it all.

Except it wasn't her dad.

It was something— no—someone, much, much worse.

Probably Satan, himself, would have been better than the guest who, ahem , appeared.

But how could that person possibly be here?

Natsu stiffened beneath her, his brows pulling with confusion and bewilderment that probably matched Lucy's own expression and only aided in her growing panic.

"ERZA?!" Gray's voice pierced Lucy's heart, making her wince with actual pain.

"E-Erza?!" Natsu paled. He shoved Lucy off of him and screamed, "LUCY! WE TOLD YOU WE AREN'T INTO THIS KINDA STUFF!"

"Y-Yeah!" Gray stammered, nearly choking on his own spit as he tried to nonchalantly cross his arms over his bare chest. He nodded his head off in Natsu's direction. "What he said!"

"L-Lucy?" Erza gasped, her cheeks reddening. "I had no idea you were...into this!"

"W-What?!" Lucy's jaw smacked the floor. She laugh because there was no way anyone would possibly believe Natsu and Gray's ridiculous lie—except Erza wasn't laughing... "Y-You actually believe them?!"

"Nothing like a little skinship among friends, right?" Erza started tugging off her white blouse and Gray frantically grabbed onto her, pulling the shirt back down, yelling at her to stop.

"S-She's the one actually into this?!" Lucy cried to Natsu, who looked rather disturbed as he helped Lucy off the bed. Lucy couldn't help but smile at the fact that he didn't let go of her hand afterward.

"Erza! We were kidding! It's really not what it looks like!" Gray said with apprehensiveness.

"Not what it looks like?!" Erza looked almost demonic with her eyes glowing from the setting sun. "Why is she getting mad?" Natsu whispered to Lucy, while Erza ranted. "There are bras and panties all over the floor, you and Natsu are shirtless, and, Lucy, you were getting it on with Natsu! And worst of all! I do not see any condoms! Safe sex is _very_ important!"

"Why is she suddenly angry?" Natsu whispered to Gray, who whispered back, "Wasn't she all for this a few seconds ago?"

"I wasn't getting it on with Natsu!" Lucy wailed, her body temperature was rising by each millisecond. "And they raided my panty drawer and threw it everywhere! I swear I had nothing to do with this!"

"We weren't raiding your drawer!" Natsu denied. "We were looking for Gray's shirt!"

"In my panty drawer?!"

"It seemed like a good idea at the time!"

"I still can't find my shirt by the way," Gray commented. "Guess I'll have to take Natsu's." The boy squatted to the floor, grabbing Natsu's plain t-shirt and before Natsu could fight for his shirt back, Gray shrugged it on. "Uck it smells like idiot."

"Gray! Gimme back my shirt!" Natsu charged at Gray, trying to yank the shirt off of him, but Gray put up a good fight, squirming like worm to get away from Natsu.

"Natsu! Let—Let go!"

"No! You're just going to lose it!"

Somehow, through their pathetic wrestling match, they managed to knock over Lucy's entire manga collection and shoved everything off her dresser. "Wahh! My room! Erza, make them stop!"

"It would be my pleasure." Erza cracked her knuckles and advised Lucy, "You might want to look away. _NATSU! GRAY! _KNOCK IT OFF! _"

And suddenly Lucy heard a meow of pain and looked just in time to see Natsu rubbing his reddening forehead. "What am I supposed to wear then?"

"Dunno. Ain't my problem," Gray coolly remarked. "Maybe next time you shouldn't strip."

That seemed to only add fuel to Natsu's fire. Red faced, Natsu barked, "Oi, don't you start lecturing me! You stripped _first_!"

"I stripped by accident! You stripped on purpose, dumb ass!"

"I was only tryin' to show off my scar!"

"Your dumb hip scar doesn't compare to my cool face scar." Gray sneered, pointing to his forehead.

Natsu scowled, flipping him off. Then he turned to Lucy and said, "Oi, Lucy, can I borrow your shirt?"

"NO!"

Natsu recoiled. "So mean..."

"You guys are the mean ones!" Lucy said, recoiling as well.

"Gray," Erza said in a scary-calm voice, "where did your new shirt go?"

"What? DAMN IT!" And true to Erza's question, Gray was utterly shirtless and Natsu's shirt was nowhere in sight. "Where'd it go?!"

"Grayyyy! You lost my shirt?!" Natsu cried, cupping his cheeks. "I told all of you this would happen!"

"Why does this stuff always happen to me?" Gray groaned, slapping a tired hand over his face.

"Why does this stuff have to happen at my house?" Lucy sobbed to herself.

"I don't understand where it could have vanished to," Erza pondered, looking all around the room, but alas, the shirt was nowhere in sight.

"You owe me a new shirt!" Natsu spat. "Lucyyyy, please gimme a shirrtt. Boyfriends and girlfriends are supposed to lend each other shirts!"

Erza blinked. "So that's why you lent yours to Gray?"

"What?! Are you serious?! He _stole it_" Natsu raged while Lucy let out a terrible snort of laughter, which Natsu did not appreciate. "Lucy! It's not funny!"

"What in hell's name is going on here?!" A _new_ voice chimed in.

And Lucy's heart stopped beating. _No, this can't be happening._ She was sure she was about to faint.

"Lucy," the dreaded voice of her _father_ said, "would you care to explain to me why you have two shirtless boys in your room?"

"Not particularly..."

"_Lucy_"

"It's not what you think, dad, I swear! I literally came home from school and found Natsu and Gray wearing my bras and then Erza showed up! That's all!"

"That wasn't what I was expecting to hear," Erza said, her lips somewhat pursed, "but it all makes sense."

"How does that make any sense?" Lucy asked dryly.

"I'm just gonna go put the bra back on," Natsu muttered quietly, bending over to pick up her lacy black one. Letting out a horrified gasp, Lucy yanked Natsu back, seething, "Oh no you're not!"

"Can I put the bra back on?" Gray inquired.

"No!" Lucy barked.

Then Erza opened her mouth and before she could even utter a sound, Lucy fired out, "No! No one's putting my bra on, okay?!" she exasperated, feeling drained of all possible energy. She felt like she was dealing with a bunch of toddlers.

"_Lucy_" Her father spoke with a sharp tongue.

Gulping, Lucy responded a timid, "Yes?"

"You remember how I used to _beg_ for you to have friends over?"

"Err yeah?" How could she forget? He spent so many nights asking her to, hell, he even tried _bribing_ her a couple of times, but of course she couldn't have her friends over. They lived too far away—or so she thought.

"I _deeply_ regret it." He straightened out his tie. "Alright, let's see. Which one of you online predators is the one who pushed my daughter into an inappropriate relationship?"

"I feel like he's talking about me," Natsu pondered, "but I don't really get what he said..."

"Ahh, Natsu..." Jude rested his gaze upon the boy.

Natsu smiled lightheartedly, however, Lucy couldn't help but notice that he wasn't blinking. "Lucy's old man! Nice to finally meet you!"

"Wish I could say the same," Jude mumbled almost incoherently. Lucy cringed, aggressively hoping Natsu didn't hear.

"What was that?" Natsu asked, his nose crinkling.

"I said likewise, my boy! Likewise!"

"I really don't think he said that," Gray whispered to Lucy, who just awkwardly laughed in response.

"And you must be, Gray!" Jude said, turning to the next boy. "The perfect boy for my daughter!"

"Not this again!" Lucy moaned into her hands. "I thought we moved past this!"

Gray looked awkward, itching the back of his head as he gave Natsu a sideways glance. "Err...Thanks?"

"Heyyyy! I'm even more perfect for her!" Natsu argued, partially making Lucy swoon.

"The boy who made my daughter cry? Yes, I can see exactly why you are perfect for her." The acidic sarcasm rolled like waves off her father's tongue, causing Lucy to gasp. Her stomach lurched. Why did her dad have to say that? Since he didn't want Natsu to know she cried after Comic Con.

Natsu flinched. "Made her cry? What?" He whirled around to Lucy, looking at her with confused and hurt eyes. "I made you cry?" She felt like she got punched in the gut—like even worse than period cramps kind of pain. She didn't want him looking at her like that.

"N-No!" she denied. "I don't know what he's talking about!"

"Yeah!" Her father said quickly, realizing his mistake. "I'm just messing around! Natsu, I'm sure you are very perfect for my daughter." His eye twitched. "Now let's see. I assume you will all be staying for dinner? I'll get started on cooking. And Natsu, I'd like you to help!"

"Heh? Why me?"

"Because it's time we had a chat face-to-face."

And as Natsu got dragged off to his doom, Gray decided to ask, "Erza, why are you even here?"

"Because I had a feeling you and Natsu were going to ditch school to go visit Lucy! I'm very disappointed in you two!"

"But doesn't that mean you ditched school as well, Erza?" Lucy asked, eyeing Erza's school uniform.

Erza stiffened.

"Hypocrite." Gray coughed.

"_What was that_?"

****XOXOX****

"—and then Natsu just walks straight into the glass window and the whole room goes silent for a minute before falling over in laughter!"

"Ohh mann!" Gray smacked the table as he laughed his head off while Erza and Lucy were practically in tears. "Lucy's dad is the best! Keep telling us more stories about Natsu!"

"IT'S REALLY EASY TO WALK INTO A GLASS WINDOW, ALRIGHT?! They make it so clear! It's like it's not even there!" Natsu bellowed, his face was a nice burnt shade. "Aren't you supposed to be telling embarrassing stories about _Lucy_? Like how do you even know this stuff about me?" Natsu asked, incredulous.

To Natsu's chagrin, Jude only shrugged. And Lucy was beyond grateful her father wasn't telling any stories about her, otherwise, she was sure to kill herself right on the spot.

"Oh-oh-oh! I got one!" Gray said practically jumping out of his seat. "There was this one time where Natsu got bit by our teacher, Mest-sensei!"

While everyone cackled with laughter, Natsu flopped his head against the table and Lucy giggled silently, sneaking her hand over to his and giving it a squeeze.

Natsu squeezed it back.

Jude, in hushed voice, said, "Rumor has it Natsu once took a—"

"That's it!" Natsu jumped up from his seat, ripping his hand from Lucy's. "I'm going to the bathroom!"

"Natsu, there is no reason to announce it," Erza scolded.

"Fight me," Natsu grumbled as he stomped away.

"_What was that_?"

"N-Nothing!"

"That's what I thought!"

"So you two are both friends of Natsu and Lucy?" Jude inquired, taking a sip of his wine.

"Yes sir," Erza said. "Natsu and I go way back. Back to when he was just starting out..." Instead of listening to Erza's story, Lucy got up to go search for Natsu because she had a strange hunch that he really didn't go to the bathroom.

She crept into her bedroom, spying on Natsu who was lounging on her bed with Plue. "There you are," she said softly, however, her voice managed to startle Natsu. She shut the door. "Thought you got lost on your way to the bathroom."

He blinked. "Bathroom?"

"Err never mind?" Guess it really was a lame excuse to leave the table.

"Your gaming collection sucks," Natsu commented. "You don't even own any Fire Emblems _and_ you only have one gaming controller!"

Lucy blushed. "Well I'm not exactly a gamer..."

"Clearly," Natsu muttered in disgust.

"Did you just come here to mess up my room and to criticize me?"

"What? No!" Natsu sat up. "I came here because I don't know... it's been like a whole 3 days without you! That's like the longest we've ever gone without talking—besides when I vanished to read Harry Potter or when we were fighting..." he added as an afterthought.

"So what you're saying is that you missed me?" Lucy asked, doing her best to ignore the jittery sensation inside her chest.

"Pshh how'd you jump to that dumb conclusion?" He scoffed, turning his head away from her just as she took a seat next to him.

Her body thrummed with anxiety as she shyly admitted, "Maybe because I missed you." She felt the air in the room thin out, making each breath a struggle. Why was she so nervous to say these things to him? She brought her knees up to her chest, hugging her arms around them for stability.

Natsu audibly inhaled, snapping his gaze back to Lucy. His eyes were wide and intense, leaving Lucy with a fluttering feeling in the pit of her stomach. He scooted closer to her, not enough for them to touch, but just enough for his body heat to caress her bare legs. "Lucy...I made you cry?"

"What? N-No!"

"Then why did your dad say that?" he asked with such a sincerity, Lucy knew he wasn't going to drop this topic.

"Because...Because..." She lowered her gaze, staring at the light hairs on her arm. She found it hard to talk. Like there was a vacuum cleaning hose from Luigi's Mansion lying outside her mouth, sucking away all of her words.

It didn't help that Natsu's stare was unwavering and pitted with an anxious aura.

"Because...I was crying when I got home from Comic Con."

Natsu made a choking sound and then he exploded in a panic. "ARGGG HOW DO I ALWAYS SCREW EVERYTHING UP? What did I do wrong this time? Was it because I kissed you?! Damn it! I knew I shouldn't have! Look, if you don't want to date me—"

"No, stupid!" She buried her face against her knees. "It's because I missed you! I know it sounds ridiculous because we had only just seen each other, but I missed you so much that it _hurt_."

"That is ridiculous," Natsu mumbled. "Usually people are relieved when I leave..."

"Not me...Never me..."

She heard Natsu's breath hitch and for a moment, there was only silence. "Well I guess we are the same then." He boyishly grinned. "I was going crazy not bein' able to talk to you. Didn't realize it was possible to miss someone _this much_ ... I had to go see you. But then I lost your address. Good thing Levy was able to find it."

"I'm kind of concerned how she was able to, to be honest." Lucy frowned. Despite the frown, she was truly happy. Without Levy, Natsu wouldn't be here and she would have gone the entire week without him. Though maybe Lucy could have visited Natsu. The idea never even crossed her mind.

Boy, did she feel stupid.

But what was Natsu's address?

"I don't think I even know your address," Lucy said suddenly.

"Well then how about this?" He leaned over Lucy, making her heart start to race due to her face being so close to his bare chest. "W-What are you doing?" She could smell his warm scent, causing a strange dizzy spell over her. He pulled back with a piece of paper and a pen.

"Here," he started to jot something down on it. She leaned over, watching him with great curiosity, but his hand blocked her view. "Now you can always reach me." He handed her the paper, which contained his address and three phone numbers. One being his cell phone, the other being Zeref's cell phone and the last one was the landline.

"Natsu..." Her heart melted. How was he able to make something so mundane into something so sweet?

"And," he pulled out his phone, "since you'll probably get your phone back eventually, can I _finally_ have your cell number?" He looked a bit disgruntled and awkward.

"I guess." She giggled, typing in her number and as she went to close out of the phone app, she flushed, staring at his new background. It was Natsu holding Lucy bridle style from Con. She bit back a grin.

It felt so official now.

Natsu really was her boyfriend.

She wanted to go scream like crazy or jump around or _something_. Actually, what she really wanted to do must was _write_ —oh so badly at that.

And man, she couldn't wait to get her hands on her phone to change her background as well.

"Looks like this is the first time we've been alone since we started dating," Natsu mused, breaking Lucy out of her fan girl thoughts. He gave her a cheeky smile, though Lucy could see his Adam's apple bob up and down.

"Yeah." She swallowed nervously at the realization. All alone...In her bedroom...On her bed...With shirtless Natsu ...

Her face scorched in embarrassment.

"Wanna anime and chill?"

Her heart stopped. H-He couldn't be serious, could he? Hell, they only started dating! There was no way she was ready for _that_. "E-Excuse me?"

"Let's watch something actiony so I don't fall asleep during it."

"WHA-WHAT?!" She felt like she was going to die. He was serious. _Oh god._ "N-Natsu, I-I'm not ready to have sex—"

As though Lucy hadn't said a word, Natsu continued on talking. "We should get Ice Ass and Erza here too 'cuz I'm sure they'd love to anime and chill as well!"

"I'm starting to think you don't know what that phrase means..." She muttered, letting out a very relieving breath. _Thank God._

He blinked, briefly considering her question, before shrugging, confirming Lucy's suspicion that he really had no clue what that phrase implied.

"Sorry for messing up your room," he apologetically said, standing up. "Want me to help clean up?" Then he squatted down, gathering all of Lucy's undergarments and she blushed a thousand different shades. "Do you really wear this stuff?" he inquired, holding one up and she couldn't help but notice the feverish coloring on Natsu's cheeks.

"M-Maybe! Now stop touching them!" She ripped the offending item out of his hand and briskly scooped up the rest, shoving them ungracefully back into her drawer.

"I tried to get Gray to wear one," he said.

"What?!"

****XOXOX****

Not wanting to stay too late since it was a school night, Erza forced Natsu and Gray to leave with her promptly after they finished watching the Fairy Tail movie, which always managed to move Lucy to tears, except this time, it seemed like Lucy's tears didn't even compare to Gray's, Erza's, or even Natsu's tears—which practically turned Lucy's bedroom into a lake.

And even with their chaotic disaster of a visit, Lucy was sad to see them go in the end. She led them over to her front door (though Natsu was very insistent on using the window for some odd reason).

Her father was washing dishes in the kitchen and waved his own short goodbye and Lucy noticed that Natsu stiffened a bit at the sight of him, leaving her with a burning thirst to know _what did they talk about while cooking dinner_?

But today was not the day she would find out...

"Glad we got to hang out again, Lucy," Erza said, pulling Lucy in for a tight hug. "After all, our time together at Comic Con got jipped since Natsu hogged you the entire time."

Lucy laughed, hugging Erza just as tightly back.

"It was good seein' ya, Lucy." Gray said with a nod after Lucy pulled away from Erza. His hands were stuffed into the pockets of his pants.

"Same here." Lucy beamed, tying her hands behind her back.

And then there was Natsu. He gave Lucy a devilish smirk and said, "I almost forgot!" Before Lucy could even begin to question him, he suddenly seized Lucy's face in his coarse hands and he slammed her against the wall, pressing her

is body firm against hers. "S-So close." She blushed, her voice was barely above a whisper.

His eyes flickered wickedly, only serving to make Lucy's heart stop.

And then he kissed the life out of her.

It was aggressive and fast, so unlike their last kiss and Lucy _loved it_. Her eyes fluttered closed and her knees began to buckle. She probably would have fallen if it weren't for the cool wall Natsu had her so tightly pressed against.

Natsu's body was so hard and rigid compared to her own and she couldn't get enough, it made her want to explore, but she knew better. So for now, she settled for the feeling of his plush lips against her own and the way her blood rushed all over, warming her body in a sort of drunk sense.

She could faintly hear her dad gasp, but she didn't care.

All that matter was Natsu.

"Oh mannn, you are so stupid!" Gray cackled then he yelped like a puppy, which Lucy could only assume had something to do with Erza.

Natsu pulled back and looked away from Lucy, shooting her dad the biggest spiteful grin ever. "See ya, old man and bye, Plue!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****I did my best to finish this chapter today. Sorry if it majorly sucks :/ It's just been really hard for me to write lately because everything just sucks tbh ^_^^****

****I foreshadowed a few things :) 10 pts if you can guess what~****

****Hope life is treating you all well!****

****Thank you for reading!****

****Kinda curious: Smut or nah?****

74. Chapter 74

****OMG THIS STORY IS ALMOST A YEAR OLD I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I never thought I would be writing a story for a whole year and it doesn't even feel like it's been that long!****

****TRIGGER WARNING: So this chapter is a little more serious than my others so I am giving you all a Trigger Warning for abuse! So don't read the first half if you're sensitive to the topic.****

****And thank you all so much for having patience with me and being so supportive! Honestly, i wouldn't be able to continue this story without you guys being so sweet! So really, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart!****

****Thank you!****

* * *

****XOXOX****

It took Lucy quite a bit of time to clean up her room after the mess her fellow weebies created, and honestly, she couldn't find Gray's or Natsu's missing shirts. Where ever Gray had chucked them, they were long gone that was for sure.

She still couldn't believe they had actually visited her. How lucky was she

Regardless of their ruckus breaking up her internet-less week, Lucy was still suffering from boredom. She called Natsu's cell with her house phone, but he didn't pick up. Hell, she even called Zeref, who was absolutely no help in contacting Natsu. Though Zeref did provide a bit of entertainment, telling Lucy about this new potion he created, though Lucy was scared to ask what the potion was for exactly...

With it being Friday, Lucy only had two more days of punishment to go, but she knew she wasn't going to last a second longer. "Dad, I swear I learned my lesson! Can we please end my punishment today!" she insisted, practically on her hands and knees begging.

"Lucy," he exasperated, rubbing his frown-wrinkles on his forehead, " _you broke that boy's glasses!_ "

Of course this all goes back to Loke... "They were fake!"

"Did you know that at the time?"

"I..." Lucy paused, her face falling considerably. Okay, maybe breaking Loke's glasses weren't the wisest thing to do, but she couldn't help it.

"If you apologize to him, I'll lift the punishment!"

And this was why she ended up at Loke's house, inside his bedroom, while he cowered in the corner like the oh-so-brave lion he was.

Although, Lucy had to admit, she was the one who wanted to go cower in a corner. Loke's room, in a word, was scary. Not only did he _only_ have pictures of himself plastered all over the place. He had a life size cardboard cutout as well. Though if she looked past the creepy photos of him, the room was pretty average—except he had a king size bed.

"L-Look! If you wanna break more of my glasses, I'm waiting for my shipment to come in! So go away, you glasses murderer!"

"Loke." Lucy's bottom lip jutted out. He was going to make this hard, wasn't he? "I came here to apologize. It was wrong of me to break your glasses like that. I shouldn't have let my anger get the best of me."

"Well, I have to admit," Loke said, rubbing his chin absently, "it was sexy." Lucy blanched. _Not this again._ "So how are you and Natsu doing?"

"G-Good." Lucy turned away, hiding the blush that sprouted onto her face.

"That's good," Loke said, looking wistful as he fiddled with his broken glasses. "You should be careful though. Online relationships are never what they seem."

"I _met_ Natsu," Lucy said with a snort. "He's exactly what he seems. A dork."

"Yeah, but that's not what I meant," he answered cryptically. Suddenly the room looked a lot darker. Was the sun setting already? She glanced out the window, and mindlessly said, "Well no matter what you meant, Natsu is Natsu, alright?"

"Karen."

"Karen?"

"Karen." Loke looked as solemn as the setting sun, painting the sky a blood red hue. "I met her through tumblr just like you and Natsu. We got along great, really. She was an intense flirt. Way better than you." He smirked at Lucy's eye roll. "And before I knew it, I was in love. Then we met at con—"

"Lemme guess," Lucy interrupted, having watched _Catfish_ enough to know how this story goes, "she didn't look anything like her photos?"

"No." Loke shook his head darkly. "She looked _better_ than her photos. So hot. Hard to believe a creature like that could exist—until I met you of course." He winked.

Lucy's eye twitched. "So what was wrong with her then?"

"Her personality. It didn't light a match next to yours," he alluringly purred, wrapping his arm around Lucy's shoulder and she instantly stiffened. It made her feel beyond uncomfortable. The only guy she wanted touching her was Natsu. Loke had a heavy smell of cologne to him—almost like he doused himself in a whole bottle of it. It was the total opposite of Natsu's warm scent. And Loke's touch, it made her shiver like she found a bug crawling on her.

Loke leaned his head in and Lucy's heart nearly stopped. This couldn't be happening. Her eyes popped with petrified fear and then Loke pulled back, falling over with laughter. "Your face! It was priceless!"

Like a whip, Lucy struck him on the face with the flat of her hand. "You're such a jerk!" And without so much as a backwards glance, she stormed off.

"Lucy! Wait!" Loke called, chasing after her—which actually surprised Lucy. "I'm sorry! I shouldn't have messed around like that! I-I can't help it!"

"Just go away! You're just a creep from the internet," she spat, tears streaking her face. Even though nothing happened, she felt disgusting and guilty, like she just cheated on Natsu. It made her want to puke.

"She was terrible, Karen, I mean," Loke blurted out with a dry chuckle that made Lucy wince. "She...At first...she was great. Probably the best girl I could have ever dreamed of. Perfect in every way. We would meet up once a month...And always felt like the first time seeing each other each time...I didn't think it was possible to love someone _that_ much._ But then," Loke's eyes flashed darkly like the night sky without stars, "I accidentally bought her milk chocolate when of course, she only likes _dark._ And she was _mad._ So mad that she...she...God...this is so hard to admit..." Loke rubbed at his eyes.

"Loke?" Lucy's voice came out like a whisper. Her heart was pounding against her chest. She found it hard to even breathe.

"She hit me," he said, blankly staring off into the distance. "She hit me _a lot_. At first I didn't know how to react. I thought maybe it was an accident...just the heat of the moment, you know? But then...she hit me again and again and again—happened every time we would meet up. I didn't know what to do! She was so sweet online...I thought—I _hoped_ she would change but-but—"

Silent tears dribbled down Loke's face and without even a moment of hesitation, Lucy hugged him and Loke sobbed into her neck all the pent up tears he had been withholding.

****XOXOX****

Eventually, Lucy and Loke went back inside his house and for the first time, Lucy didn't feel annoyed by him. In fact, she finally understood him. He was a casual flirt because he was scared of getting hurt again and no one could blame him for that.

They ended up binge watching _Fairy Tail_ from the beginning as they told random tidbits about each other (like Lucy learned Loke moved in with his grandpa because he was transferring to a boy-only private school in her area).

Soon after, Loke offered Lucy his Skype to chat with Natsu and she gratefully obliged. She anxiously chewed on her thumb nail, sitting at Loke's desk as she waited for the screen to load, wondering if there would ever be a day she wouldn't feel nervous chatting with Natsu.

Her heart quickened the second Natsu picked up and as the screen started to load, she could hear him say, "Loke, why are you— _Lucy_?!" Natsu appeared, gawking at the screen.

"Natsu!" She grinned in relief. "You picked up! I was nervous you wouldn't."

"Oi, is that Lucy?" She could hear another boy ask and Natsu's face was now a scowl.

"Was that Gray?" She gasped. Was it her imagination or were Natsu and Gray hanging out a lot lately? She smiled, liking the idea of them becoming good friends.

Natsu's lips pursed. "Well only one person has that annoying voice."

"Tell her I say 'hey!'" Gray yelled.

"No!"

"Don't be such a hot head!" Suddenly Natsu was shoved out of the way and Gray's face appeared on the screen. "Oi, Lucy! Natsu's cheating on! He added like 5 other girls to the chat and—"

"Gray, shuddap!" Natsu yelled, pushing him aside so there was room for both of them to be seen on the cam.

"—he's a pervert now! He posts naked selfies _all the time—_!"

Then there was a quick groan from Gray, followed by silence. "You didn't kill him, did you?" Lucy asked with a hint of amusement laced in her voice.

"Ehh he'll be okay...I think." Natsu goofily beamed.

"So you're a player and a nudist now?" She giggled with coy eyes.

"Of course." His eyes glinted.

"Well then that explains why you haven't been answering any of my calls." She pouted playfully.

Natsu's face twisted. "Calls? I haven't received any besides this random number that keeps— _Oh_ ...Whoops!" Natsu sheepishly laughed, scratching the back of his neck. "My bad!"

Lucy sighed. She should have expected that. "I guess it's my fault for not leaving a voice mail... I called Zeref too. Guessing he didn't tell you?"

To this new information, Natsu strung together an array of curses directed at his brother's incompetence and Lucy could only chuckle at it.

"So did you ever find mine or Gray's shirt?" Natsu asked.

"Nope."

"Bummer," Gray commented, finally rising from the dead. "And just so you know, we really did add someone to the chat. The person's pretty similar to you—like the perfect replacement!"

"By that he means you're both annoying and weird," Natsu clarified, impishly smirking.

Lucy blanched and said her goodbyes as she caught notice of the time.

Why was alone time with Natsu so scarce?

Hopefully when she gets her phone back, it won't be like this...

****XOXOX****

"Oii, Zeref," Natsu pushed open his brother's bedroom door, "Why didn't you tell me Lucy called me—

Zeref?" The room was empty. "Of course he's not here." Natsu grumbled, his eyes grazing over his laptop with a familiar website pulled up. "I didn't know you had a blog! Let's see...how many followers do you have?"

His eyes shot wide open. "50,000 FOLLOWERS?! IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE? H-He probably follows like all 50,000 back—HE FOLLOWS _ZERO BLOGS_? _WHAT THE HELL_? What kind of stuff does he even post?!"

And that put Natsu in a stupor. Zeref literally posted nothing besides asks. _Why were people even asking him stuff_?

Natsu felt like everything was lie. All that hard work he put in so he could beat Gray's follower count...just to see his brother does absolutely nothing and has more than him.

With a sneaky grin on his face, Natsu said, "Well I'm going to ruin your perfect _Zero Follower_ count... Who should you follow..." He tapped his brother's keyboard methodically.

Lucy would have the best reaction hands down. Especially since she's been gone for a week and the first thing she sees will be Zeref following her and Natsu would make sure to make Zeref _like_ and _reblog_ all of her posts as well just to add to the creep-effect, because let's face it, Zeref was just plain creepy.

Lucy would probably call Natsu screaming his ear off and her face would get all flushed and she would do that cute little pout with her lips and—Natsu's heart clenched. Even though he just spoke to her a few hours ago, he felt unsatisfied. It was hard to talk with Gray there, but how was Natsu supposed to know she was going to call him from Loke's Skype right at that very moment?

He shook his head, _focus_. He searched _CelestialMage_ and his heart thumped faster than Happy running away from his cage. He could see the "I love Natsu" in the celestial fire he had made on her blog. He only did that to purely mess with her at the time. Because nothing was better than Lucy's reactions and it was an excuse to get her to keep talking to him.

He moved the cursor over to the follow button, and hesitated. It was like the time he first followed her. Not that Natsu would ever tell Lucy, but he must have went to her blog dozens of times, debating whether to follow her or not all because he didn't want to break that dumb bet he made with Gray...But he really wanted to be her friend, so he said screw it, and followed her anyway. Then after, Natsu had tried to convince himself and, also, Happy that he didn't care if Lucy followed him back or not _._ However, Happy certainly didn't buy it considering Natsu compulsively checked his follower count every couple of minutes.

And so, Natsu clicked the follow button on Lucy's blog, feeling anxious all over again.

A few seconds after, Natsu heard his skype ring with a message so he quickly left Zeref's room to go grab his phone.

"Lucy deleted her blog?" Mira asked in a group message.

"Huh?" Natsu blinked.

"I thought her dad was holding her electronic devices hostage," Gray messaged.

"He is," Natsu typed. "And I was just on her blog a few minutes ago. Whatchu talking about, Mira?"

"Well I went to go read her one story about the demon and the dragon but her blog was gone," Mira confided.

"Shit," Gray wrote, "it really is gone! I just checked!"

What the hell? Natsu furrowed. He quickly tried pulling up Lucy's blog, but true to Mira and Gray's words, the blog could no longer be found. Natsu's forehead creased. How could Lucy's blog be gone if he was literally just on it a few seconds ago? Maybe it was just a tumblr glitch?

"Say, Natsu," Zeref said, walking into his room. "Did you call me before?"

"Err yeah," Natsu said, somewhat distracted as he lowered his phone. "How come you never told me you had a _tumblr_? You should go follow me so you can see how awesome my blog is!"

"Oh no, no!" Zeref said abruptly, holding his hands up. "I-I can't. My blog— _it's cursed._ "

"Cursed?" Natsu's right brow flew up. "Doesn't seem cursed with all those followers you have."

"You don't understand—"

"Oh I get it! You don't wanna follow me 'cuz you're scared that my blog is better than yours!"

"No—If I follow anyone— _their blog gets terminated._ "

"You really expect me to believe such a ridiculous—" Natsu choked on his words. It was like the icy water ran through his veins and for the first time he felt this heart wrenching chill.

Lucy's blog was deleted.

Zeref's blog deletes other blogs.

"_N-No way_ ..." He felt sick. Clutching his hand over his stomach, it was way worse than the train ride home from visiting Lucy and way worse than any motion sickness he had ever felt—period.

Zeref tilted his head. "Natsu? What's wrong? You look kind of pale."

* * *

XOXOX

OMGG WHAT DID I JUST DO? Well it is angst week or its approaching or something like that :)

****Today's PSA: Domestic abuse is a big deal. If your partner is abusing you, please leave them and get help immediately! Your life is precious and you all deserve to be happy so please, never stay with someone who abuses you mentally or physically!****

****Another thing! A lot of you really put a lot of thought into the smut question that I didn't consider! It was great reading everyone's input! And I think there were more no's than yes's! Majority rules? :)****

****And lol you guys are cute! "Did you foreshadow smut?" :D pshh! No one guessed what I was hinting at with foreshadowing! tskkk****

****10 pts to those who can guess who I added to the skype chat!****

****As always, thank you all so much for reading! And thank you for being so sweet and patient with me ;A;****

75. Chapter 75

EDIT: I ACCIDENTALLY DELETED THIS CHAPTER SORRY!****

****HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THIS FANFIC! YAY THE 75** **TH** **CHAPTER! 25 chapters until 100! Isn't that insane?****

****Hehe sorry for delay had to write a 15 page paper and finals week (and binge watch Arrow) yayyyy and guess who signed up for a summer class~ :) RIPPP dunno how imma survive or how I even survived this long lol****

****And YAYYYY winner of ten points goes to Ria and Doublepasse for guessing correctly D CONGRATS SINNING TRASHH! WOO~****

****And thank you all sooo much and I may have lost my mind, so I apologize for the trash you are about to read in this chapter...****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

It took Natsu a good half hour for the shock to wear off. So he deleted Lucy's blog... It wasn't that big of deal, was it? But man, how was he going to confess to it? Well obviously, it was best to just remain calm and take a deep breath — "HAPPY, I'M SO SCREWED!" howled Natsu as he released his salamander from its cage. "I got Lucy's blog deleted!"

Happy crawled onto his arm and tilted his head to the right, pitying Natsu. "Stop lookin' at me like that!" Natsu sobbed, sinking onto his bed. "S'not my fault! I mean it is—but how was I supposed to know?!"

And instead of answering, Happy ran off his arm and onto his laptop. Natsu went to reach for him, but accidentally clicked to join his friend's group call.

"Can't believe Lucy deleted her blog," said Mira, mournfully. "It was like the symbol to our friendships. Without Lucy's blog we all wouldn't have been friends."

Natsu's stomach bubbled with nausea, gripping his bed sheets tightly for support.

"You don't think Lucy's father deleted it, do you?" Levy's voice shook with fear.

"You mean because Natsu, Erza, and I visited her?" asked Gray apprehensively.

"I would feel terrible if that's the reason," Erza said.

"Y-Yeah," Natsu fake-laughed, "me too."

"I can't imagine her old man doin' that," Gray remarked. "He seemed really cool! He told us all these great stories about Natsu—"

"Gray—shut up!" Natsu moaned.

"Ooh I know!" chimed Cana. "Her dad has her laptop, right? So maybe he found the smut she wrote and went crazy! Deleting all her online accounts and—"

"I really don't think that's likely," interrupted Levy, dryly.

Suddenly, the new member—the Lucy Replacement had finally logged on. Actually the Lucy Replacement was more of a NaLu replacement because Mira and Cana were upset that they didn't have a couple to tease with Lucy being grounded and all.

And perfect timing at that. This person would be the one who could probably offer the best advice out of anyone here on, figured Natsu.

"Gajeelll," he whined as his greeting, "hypothetically speaking, if you accidentally deleted Levy's tumblr, how would you confess?"

"What the? How the hell would I accidentally delete her blog?"

"It doesn't matter how!"

"Well I don't see how it's possible to 'accidentally' delete someone's blog," Gajeel continued. "If you're gonna make up a hypothetical situation, at least make it a good one!"

"Grr fine! You're so damn annoying," snapped Natsu. "Let's say your blog has a curse where every time you follow a blog, that blog gets deactivated. And that's how you accidentally deleted Levy's blog."

"A curse? What the fuck, Salamander? At least make the situation realistic!"

"Why does it have to be my blog that gets deleted?" muttered a sheepish Levy.

"It is realistic!" reasoned Natsu.

"What even—Wait! Don't tell me," blurted Gajeel, "you're the one who's responsible for Bunny Girl's deactivation?!"

"Ki-Kind of?" said Natsu, his eyes clenched shut like he were expecting to get hit in the face. A wave of gasps washed through the speakers of his laptop. "It was an accident! I didn't—"

"You're _soooo_ getting dumped," Gray sniggered. "How did you even do it?"

Instead of giving a nasty retort, Natsu decided to explain everything, words rushing out of him in a jumbled mess, desperate for the relief of his confession. Although, he didn't feel any better saying it out loud...

"Oh! I follow Zeref's blog!" Mira announced. "No wonder he doesn't follow anyone back! That poor thing!"

"I follow him too!" said Levy. "I love following people with canon URLs."

"It's quite a lovely blog," confessed Erza in an awfully shy voice.

"I tried to get him to send me nudes when I was drunk once," Cana causally added.

Natsu's eye twitched. What the hell was wrong with these people? "I should have followed Gray on it!" Turning his head towards his door, he shouted, "ZEREF, I NEED YOU TO GO FOLLOW THE BLOG _ICEMAKEMAGIC_!"

"Pfft, too late! Just blocked your brother so HAH!" fired Gray.

"Yeah, well I'll just hack your account and make you unblock him!"

"I'd like to see you try!"

"ZEREF, GO FOLLOW _BLACKSTEELGAJEEL_!"

"Oii, why are you draggin' me into this, dumbass?" exclaimed a baffled Gajeel.

"Guys," yelled Levy, "let's stop fighting and try to figure out a way to get Lucy's blog back, okay?"

"Levy's got a point," said Cana, chewing on something. "Tumblr blogs can only be revived within 24 hours."

The dimming sun flashed light through the blowing curtains in his room like a ray of hope. Natsu's heart skipped a beat. He gazed at the screen, despite not being able to see anything besides everyone's icons. "They can be revived?"

"Maybe it depends on circumstance, but," Mira explained, "I know someone whose blog got deactivated. He emailed staff and they restored it for him the next day!"

"So all we gotta do is email staff and then Bunny Girl gets her blog back?" Gajeel asked.

"But it has to be Lucy's email," Levy stated and Erza asked, "How do we get her email?"

"We don't," said Gray, huffing out air.

"What about that hacker guy?" proposed Cana. "Err what's his URL again? _Shit_!"

Hacker guy? The only hacker Natsu knew was—his eyes popped open and a wide grin grew upon his face. " _ArchiveMage_!" The guy who got Lucy's reposter deleted. How could Natsu forget? Well probably because he hadn't talked to Hibiki in so long...

And as quick as lightning, Natsu asked Hibiki for help. Hibiki, surprisingly, was more than willing and offered to do it for free (Albeit, Hibiki's discount was only because he thought Lucy was hot and was upset over the loss of her blog). Alas, he said he needed time and time was something Natsu didn't have.

" _ArchiveMage_ said it might take him until tomorrow," stated Natsu, pounding a fist into his hand, "so that means we needa get Lucy grounded again!"

"Get her grounded again?" Gray echoed. "Were you dropped on your head when you were a baby?"

"Are you sure you actually like Bunny Girl?" asked Gajeel, sounding a bit timid. "I mean that's just messed up."

"Natsu," said Levy, "I don't think that's a good idea..."

"Lucy gets ungrounded tomorrow. She can survive another week without internet!" insisted Natsu. He would do whatever it takes to prevent Lucy from finding this out—to prevent himself from seeing her hurt face...His gut twisted.

"This is ridiculous!" Gray exclaimed, flabbergasted.

"Actually," spoke Erza delicately, "it does protect Lucy from finding out the truth...Maybe it's not such a bad idea after all."

"And getting someone grounded could be kinda fun," offered Mira mischievously.

But what could they do to get her grounded? All Natsu had was Lucy's dad's cell number...But what good was that?

"It's gotta be something scandalous," said Cana with a devilish laugh.

Natsu's eyes lit up. "I got the perfect plan," he said, rubbing his hands together as an evil smile that made Happy run and hide graced his face. "Imma call her dad and tell him we had sex."

"He's lost his mind!" bellowed Gajeel, bewildered.

"Natsu always loses his mind when it comes to Lucy," Mira said brightly. "That's what we call love."

"So _that's_ what we are calling his stupidity these days?" murmured Gray. However, Natsu chose to ignore them and started dialing away.

"Natsu—how many times have I told you not to call me?" asked Jude, exasperated.

"How am I supposed to know?" scoffed Natsu. "I try to ignore you half the time."

Jude sputtered, struggling to find words and finally said, "Why are you calling me?"

"I just thought you should know Lucy and I had sex."

"Y-You—L-Lucy—What? I— _LUCY, GET IN HERE THIS INSTANT!_ " And the phone went dead.

"Mission accomplished," cackled Natsu darkly and this time, Happy scurried into his cage.

"You know you just killed any chances of you and Lucy ever having sex, right?" asked Gray.

"_Killed_?" Cana repeated with a mocking laugh. "More like _brutally murdered_ —"

"I was gonna go with _slaughtered_ —" offered Gajeel.

"Let's say _butchered_ ," suggested Erza.

"Ooh how about _annihilated_?" Levy asked, joining in.

"Nice, Shrimp," Gajeel said with a bit of pride in his voice.

"Great word choices, everyone!" Mira hollered, being her usual, supportive self.

"Guyyyys, cut it out!" Natsu groaned, not wanting to think of the repercussions of his plan. And what if his plan wasn't enough? He needed a Plan B. Quickly pulling up a chat with Loke, he messaged, "Loke, I need you to help me get Lucy to remain grounded."

"What? Why?"

"I don't want to go into it," Natsu replied, tapping his fingers anxiously on the keys.

"Is it because I tried to kiss her? Look, Natsu, she did almost fall to my charms, but it can't be helped!"

"You tried to _what_?" Natsu felt like he just got socked in the stomach. Rage flashed across his dark eyes like a scorching lightning.

"Anyway, I have the perfect plan to get her grounded and lucky for us, I just refilled my alcohol stash."

However, Natsu didn't read the reply. He was too busy pouting. Why did he have to live so far away?

****XOXOX****

Without sleeping even a wink, the morning sun glistened in Natsu's room, shining into Natsu's glazed over eyes. He spent all night waiting for Hibiki's reply, checking to see if he got back to him—which he finally did, but with grievous news. The acclaimed ArchiveMage was unable to restore Lucy's blog ("It's like the blog never existed!" Hibiki had exclaimed) and Natsu was officially out of luck.

This time video chatting, Natsu informed them of the terrible news. "Whoa, Natsu, you look like you had a rough night," said Cana in awe.

"How about we lie to her," said Gajeel, "tell her tumblr glitched and her blog was suddenly gone?"

"Gajeel, you're a genius!" Natsu cried out in joy. "Knew that head of yours wasn't just filled with metal!"

"_OI—_"

"Natsu, I think you should be honest with her," said Levy, her voice wavering. "Otherwise you'll always feel guilty."

"But if I do that then she's gonna break up with me!"

"Well what if you confess your love to her?" suggested Gray. "Then she will be too thrown off to dump you."

"_Confess my love_?" Natsu sputtered, his face turned the color of an iridescent red. "No way! We've only been together for week!"

"Ghihi, this must be one of the shortest lived relationships out there," Gajeel snorted.

"So what you're saying is that you don't love her?" asked Erza.

"Yes!—I mean _no_!—I mean—_arggg I don't know_!" Natsu frustratingly slammed his hands down on his keyboard which rewarded him a series of yelps from the people who heard that at full volume.

His head felt sweaty and achy. How was he supposed to react to all this. It was too sudden. Hell, he and Lucy haven't even had a chance for a proper second date yet.

"Aww he's confused," cooed Cana. "How cute!"

"I'm not confused!" Natsu snarled. "It's-It's too soon!"

"Oh c'mon!" Gray scoffed. "It's you and Lucy. You guys have been unofficially dating for months!" And everyone agreed with him on that.

"Imagine how cute that will be?!" Mira said, her voice in a daze.

"I love you's' are a really big step in a relationship, Natsu," said Erza in a voice so stern, it made Natsu flinch. "I think it's amazing you are ready for that!"

Natsu frowned. His heart rapidly pounded against his ribcage over and over again. If someone had told him a year ago he would be contemplating this, he would have laughed. Never did he think he would fall in love. It was probably the last thing on his mind. ..Why the hell was everyone being so pushy? Couldn't someone play devil's advocate and say no?

"I say don't do it," came Gajeel like a knight in shining armor. "It doesn't feel right...Confessing your love just to prevent a break up? Hell, even I'd break up with you for that!" Natsu cringed. "Telling someone 'I love you' is something sacred. You can't just toss it 'round like that."

"Whoa, man," Gray whistled. "That was pretty deep."

"Gajeel..." Levy murmured breathlessly.

And Natsu slumped down in his seat. "You gotta face the music, Salamander," Gajeel continued. "No lying. No confessing your love. Just tell Bunny Girl the truth."

"To quote my brother," said Mira, "the truth is 'manly.'"

"Guys, c'mon!" Levy piped up. "This is Lucy we are talking about. She's not materialistic! She will probably laugh it off."

"What about the part where that idiot told her dad they had sex?" asked an amused Gray.

"Morning, everyone!" Lucy's face appeared in the chat.

And a scream ripped out of Natsu's throat.

****XOXOX****

Lucy furrowed at Natsu's reaction, but decided it was best to ignore him. "Finally got my phone back—and my dad broke my laptop...But he bought me a new one! He tried to pass it off as my old one, but come on! How would I not notice my _pink_ laptop is now _blue_? Hey is anyone else's tumblr acting up at all? It won't let me log in...keeps saying my account doesn't exist?"

Instead of an answer or even a greeting, Lucy was met with just awkward silence. After a week of being away she thought someone would be excited to see her... Her eyes narrowed, gazing at each individual person. "What's with all of you?— _Gajeel_?"

Her mouth fell open as she gawked at the boy with unruly, black hair and piercings all over. " _That's my so-called replacement_? This makes me really concerned how you guys view me, oh my god." She shivered.

"Yeah," said Natsu, finally picking his head up to meet her eyes. Lucy inhaled loudly. He looked absolutely awful. His hair was disheveled, he had huge bags under his eyes and speaking of his eyes, they were really bloodshot. "Like I said the other day. You're both weird and annoying."

"...I'm insulted," deadpanned Lucy.

"I'm insulted too," deadpanned Gajeel.

"And," said Mira, smiling brilliantly, "since you were away, we missed having a couple in the group so Gajeel filled in that void, right, Levy?"

"Mira!" Levy's face turned pink.

Lucy itched her forehead. "Uhh, moving along, Natsu—" the boy startled "—do I even want to know why you told my dad we— you know ..." Her cheeks felt inflamed. Probably the most embarrassing moment in her entire life. Not only was her father spitting fire, but he was also crying rivers. And to top off the mortification, Lucy found a box of condoms sitting on her dresser when she woke up this morning.

"To get you grounded— again ," said Natsu, giving her a dazzling, innocent smile.

" Natsu !" her voice squeaked. "Why do you want me grounded?" Her chest felt heavy. Her head was spinning with paranoia. Why would he want her to stay grounded? Did he not want to see her? Did he want space? Suddenly she felt enraged. How dare he. "Do you know how embarrassing that was? You just ruined any chances of us ever —" she found herself unable to say the word, "— you know !"

"Damn," whispered Gray. "She chose the word ruined ! "

"The words we came up with were so much better," Gajeel grumbled.

"Lucy, I was just trying to find a way to get your blog back before you realized it was deleted! So if you got grounded it would have given us more time." He looked so distraught that it was impossible for Lucy to stay mad. She blew out hot air as Natsu continued to talk, "Sorry I wasn't able to get it back. It's gone for good."

"Ahh just my luck," she said, sighing bitterly. "First I get grounded, then my laptop breaks, now my tumblr is gone ..."

"Lucy," Natsu said, his face contorting with what looked like uneasiness and sadness. "I'm the reason your blog got deleted."

Her eyes grew big as a ridiculous story poured out of his mouth about Zeref and a curse and Lucy could barely follow it. It even took her a few minutes to realize he had stopped talking and was staring at her, awaiting a reaction. And to be honest, Lucy was at a loss for words, but she was able to muster out, "...Oh?"

"I'm so sorry! If you wanna break up with me I get it! I would break up with me in a heartbeat too!"

"N-Natsu! I'm not breaking up with you!"

"Then I'll break up with me for you!"

"Natsu!" Gray hissed. "Stop talking!"

Her lips began to tremble.

"Lu-Lucy! I'll give you my blog! You can delete it, trash it, I don't care—just-just please don't cry!" He looked like he was about to cry himself as he grveled on his knees with his hands tied together in a pleading way.

However, Natsu misunderstood Lucy's lip tremble. She hunched over, laughing so hard she could hardly breathe as tears trickled out of her eyes.

"Y-You're laughing ? What the hell?" Natsu gawked, his jaw hanging slightly.

"N-Natsu! It's just a dumb blog! It's not like you killed Plue or something," she said, continuing her laughs. "Do you really think I would break up with you over something like that? Now telling my dad we had sex—_that's a different story._ "

Natsu blanched.

As she sobered up, something dawned on her. With her dad breaking her old laptop and now her tumblr gone, where did that leave all her writing pieces?

"What's wrong, Lucy?" Mira asked. "You look down all of sudden?"

"Maybe the shock just wore off?" muttered Cana. "Getting drunk should help with the pain, Lucy."

Lucy pouted. "It's just that—My stories...They're all gone..."

"Don't worry! I have them all reblogged, Lucy!" Levy said quickly. "I'll pull them up for you right now—_oh no._ "

"Don't tell me they aren't there, Shrimp," said Gajeel with a wince.

"...I'm sorry, Lucy..." Levy glanced at Lucy with her pitying brown eyes.

"It's fine," said Lucy, putting a tight smile on her face. She wasn't going to cry over this. Nope. It wasn't like she was told so many hours of her life that she will never get back—except that's exactly what it was.

"Wait-wait not all your fics are gone!" Cana said with a glinting smile that filled Lucy with hope. "I still have a saved copy of the smut you wrote—"

And Lucy let out a muffled sob.

"I think you really need to get drunk..." Cana said again.

****XOXOX****

Even though Lucy seemed cool about it, Natsu still felt miserable. It was partly his fault all her stories were gone and he felt so helpless, not being able to help her recover them. And somehow, in his misery, he had passed out due to the lack of sleep and then awoke to his phone vibrating.

Loke was calling.

Rubbing the sleep out of his eyes, Natsu grabbed it and looked down to see a text from Lucy. Suddenly he felt more awake as he hurriedly opened the message.

His face faltered as he ogled at the message. It was just a spam of cat emojis... "What the?" he wondered aloud and then jolted at the sound of his Skype ringing.

Shaking his head, he dropped the phone on his bed and walked over to his laptop. "Loke?" he blinked, answering it. "What's up, Loke?"

"Ohhh, nothing...I kinda err got myself in a bit of a... _situation..._" said Loke in a peculiar voice as the screen began to load.

"What kind of situation?" inquired Natsu blankly.

"Well you see I—L-Lucy! I said stop touching my hair!" And the screen finished loading, allowing Natsu to witness

Lucy _petting_ Loke's head.

Natsu's face twisted in all sorts of ways as Lucy cried, "Wahhh so soft! I wishh Plue's furr was as soft as yours! Hey, why aren't you purring?"

"Plue doesn't even have fur! And I told you, I don't purr!" yelped Loke.

She scowled. "Natsu always purrs."

"When have I ever purred?" Natsu sputtered.

"Hnnngg, Natsuu's here!" Lucy's face lit up as she gazed at Skype with dreamy eyes. Natsu gulped. "Natsuuu, look how cuuute Loke is. Who's a pretty kitty?!" She started to stroke Loke's mane again. "Can we keep him?" she asked, giving Natsu puppy dog eyes.

Sweat dribbled down Natsu's forehead as he gingerly asked, "W-What's wrong with her?"

"Well she kind of had a bit too much to drink and kept insisting I called you..."

"YOU'RE GETTING HER DRUNK? LOKE, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?"

"You said to get her grounded," shouted Loke, looking mildly panicked as he shoved Lucy off of him.

"Yeah, but that was yesterday!" Natsu yelled.

"Well maybe you should have told me that your stupid requests expire the next day," said Loke, jabbing a finger at the screen.

Natsu jaw clenched, a vein throbbed across his forehead. " _Loke_ —"

"Wahh, two Natsus!" Lucy cooed, resting her face in her hands with hearts in her eyes.

"I'm coming over!" Natsu said, bolting out of his seat.

"But you can't!" argued Loke. "By the time you get here the last train will have already left!"

Natsu grinned. "Oh right! Thanks for the heads up, Cat Man! I'll go pack an overnight bag right now."

"Cat Man!" Lucy cheered before falling over, giggling like crazy.

"That wasn't—" Loke started, but Natsu hung up.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****WHY DID ALMOST EVERYONE THINK LISANNA WAS ADDED TO THE CHAT? I'M CRYING!****

****Guess Gajeel makes a good plot twist then? :D****

****And yayyyy Natsu gets to meet Drunk! Lucy. Any thoughts on how that;s gonna go? B)****

****Hnnnggg Pkmn Sun and Moon starters were announced~ Anyone know which one you're gonna pick? Rowlet and Popplio speak to me on a spiritual level.****

****Alsooo, 25 chapters to the possible END MAUAAH (well debatable. I still have lots planned that may or may not take more than 25 chapters hmm) Guess only time will tell.****

****Thank you all for reading! And I hope you're all doing okay! Just remember that summer is just around the corner! Hang in there!****

76. Chapter 76

****OMGG TWO UPDATES IN ONE WEEK? WHAT IS THIS MAGIC?****

****Hehe guess who doesn't have a life anymore. Maybe I'll get back into the habit of posting a lot but I also realized when I post a lot I tend to get hate :/ talk about double edge sword****

****And omg ahh I can't believe this story is close to 3000 followers. That makes me so nervous, but also really happy! So thank you all!****

****And also thank you to those who told me I've improved since the beginning of this story! That makes me really happy as well!****

****Happy Friday! Please enjoy~****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Getting to Lucy's house was a total nightmare for Natsu. He spent the entire train ride inside the bathroom upchucking everything in his stomach. Even when he thought he had nothing left, the bile still managed to find its way out.

It was hard traveling without someone to help him. He found himself wishing Gray was here, despite that guy being annoying and taking mean photos of poor Natsu, he at least was helpful enough with Natsu's motion sickness.

Dehydrated and practically dying, he arrived to Lucy's house just to see all the lights were off. He collapsed onto her porch, pulling out his phone to message Loke. "Where the hell are you guys?"

The door to the house on the right opened and a voice shouted in desperation, "Natsuu! Get over here!"

Natsu didn't need to be told twice.

"Your girlfriend is a _nightmare_!" tattled Loke with his eyes glimmering with pure, unadulterated fear. "Do you know what she made me do?" His arms moved in an exaggerated motion.

"Err no?"

"Made me spend the last three hours crawling on my hands in knees while she sat on my back pretending I was a lion! _This is all your fault!_"

Natsu sniggered, imagining the whole ordeal and also wishing he could have rode on top of Loke as well.

"She made me purr, Natsu," said Loke gravely. "_PURR! I HAVE NO DIGNITY LEFT!_"

And to that, Natsu doubled over, laughing like no tomorrow and Loke glowered at him. "Glad you find this amusing. Makes me feel less guilty over what I did." He moved quickly to his bedroom.

That sobered Natsu up as he stumbled over his feet, following Loke into the room. "Less guilty 'bout what?"

Natsu gasped, entering Loke's room was like entering a creepy funhouse. There was an army of Lokes from the self-portraits to the cardboard cutouts... "Are you sure you aren't a cat? I swear—those are legit cat ears!" He pointed at one of the photos.

Loke scowled and before he could say anything, a voice cried out, "Wahhh! Natsu's here!" And Natsu suddenly felt a force knock into his back, hugging him tightly.

"Lu-Lucy!" he yelped, trying to look at her behind him. She released Natsu from the hug and decided to grab onto his right arm, cuddling it unknowingly between her breasts. Natsu gritted his teeth, trying to ignore the way his heart s tuttered. "How is she still so drunk?"

"Well she started to sober up," explained Loke with an evil look that made Natsu's eyes narrow, "so I got her drunk a gain."

"WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU DO THAT?" exclaimed Natsu, his eyes doubling in size at the mad man in front of him.

"So that you can go through what I just went through..." He flashed Natsu a dazzling smile, which Natsu would have punched if it weren't for Lucy's deadly grip holding him back.

"_Loke_!" he seethed through his clenched jaw.

"Oi! Don't act like I forced her! She was more than willing! Hell, she even insisted for more."

"What?" Natsu glanced down at Lucy, who was busy nuzzling her head against Natsu's chest.

"I don't know...I invited her to come drink with me, planning to take her back home when she was drunk so her dad would be pissed. I was surprised she said yes so easily...I think it might have something to do with her stories getting deleted since she cried over it for a bit...Ugh nothing worse than a sad drunk—at least that's what I used to think until I met this other monster..." Loke cringed, pointing over at Lucy.

She was busy running her finger up and down Natsu's arms, eliciting goosebumps, while he grimaced remembering he was part of the reason Lucy's stories were all gone.

"Anyway, your plan to get her grounded failed," Loke said, frankly. "Her dad's outta town for the weekend that's why she got her stuff back even after what you told him—which I gotta say was pretty dumb of you. I mean mannn, you just destroyed any chances of you two ever—"

With a vein ticking on his forehead, Natsu muttered, "—having sex, yeah, yeah I know!"

"Yay! No sex!" Lucy cheered and Natsu could only chuckle. "C'mon, Lucy, let's take you back home."

"Nghh, Natsu, youu should carry mee."

"Why would I do that?" shouted Natsu.

"Cuzz you love me," she said, smiling so innocently and the only thing Natsu could do was blush at least a hundred different shades of red and his heart palpitations only grew worse.

"D-Don't go sayin' such weird stuff!" cried Natsu.

"Wow that color red kinda clashes with your hair," mused Loke with a sly smile gracing his plump lips.

"Lokeeee, shut up," Natsu groaned as he hunched over for Lucy to climb on. She hopped on, tying her arms around his neck while Natsu caught her legs, slowly standing up. Her warmth immediately embraced him as she rested her head on his shoulder, breathing her heated air against his bare neck, making him stutter with each step he took.

It was hard being the responsible one for once, Natsu decided as he fumbled his way into Lucy's house, thankful that the door was unlocked. A part of him wished he was the drunk one instead. He was so out of his element. And he felt nervous as hell. What if Lucy got alcohol poisoning? What if her dad found out about this? Natsu could just picture it now. The bat getting smashed against his head. He winced, ungracefully dropping Lucy onto her bed.

Stupid Loke for seeking revenge.

"Natsuu, make me purr."

Her words seemed to snap Natsu back into reality as he yelped, "WHAT? NO WAY!" He jumped back a few feet. Lucy frowned, hugging her knees against her chest and Natsu cocked his head to the side. "Natsu won't make me purr..." She said with a cute pout, hanging her head.

"D-Don't get all upset over it!" His heart twisted while his left eye twitched. Was this how all drunk people behaved?

"Can I make you purr?" she asked with big, brown puppy dog eyes that made Natsu want to go hit something.

"OF COURSE NOT!"

However, Natsu didn't have much of a choice in the discussion because Lucy decided to tackle him onto her padded floor and began stroking him under the chin, while making strange purring sounds.

Natsu's head was spinning. He didn't know what to do. The situation was too critical for him to handle. But he had to get a grip. With all his strength, he sat up with Lucy now straddling his lap, never ceasing in her strokes.

"L-Lucy!" He yanked her hand in his. "Stop petting my chin!"

"I could pet you somewhere else if you'd like..." She gave a sultry giggle as her other hand trailed across his lap. His mind went blank as his eyes darted down to his lap. Her fingers drew small circles making their way up his thigh. His heart pounded against his chest, sweat trickled down his forehead, and he completely forgot how to breathe.

"N-No!" he swatted her hand away. "No more petting!"

"How about kissing?"

"Wha—Mmphh!" At an almost bruising pressure, Lucy had smashed her lips against his, quickly ensnaring her arms around his neck. Her body rubbed against his lap, creating a fire Natsu never felt before. Her fingers tangled themselves in his hair, pulling tightly, which only served to ignite Natsu's desire as he awkwardly moved his hands to the base of her spine, allowing the kiss grew deeper and deeper and deeper.

It was a new type of kiss. Unlike the previous ones they shared. It was sloppy and hot. It was like fire, erratic and all over the place—literally. Somehow he found himself kissing Lucy's neck and the noises she made turned his brain to goo.

Moving his lips back to her mouth, he reveled in the feel of her tongue dancing against his own. His heart beat was so irregular, he thought he might pass out. He did his best to bite back a guttural groan every time she moved against the tightness in his lap and without helping it, his hands reached down, grabbing her by the hips to pull her even closer.

er.

Lucy broke away, panting, "It's so hot." She pulled at her tank top, trying to tug it off.

"L-Lucy, stop!" Natsu halted her arms, finally coming back to his senses.

"Fine," she said, relaxing her arms.

Natsu sighed, dropping his head in relief. "Well that was surprisingly easy..." He slowly looked back up at her, taking in her flush cheeks, messy hair, and swollen lips, causing his stomach coil like crazy. How was she still so beautiful even in her unkempt condition?

She moved off his lap and Natsu was thankful for a chance to clear his foggy head. Why did she have to be drunk? He internally groaned. Lucy's not Lucy when she's drunk.

He met her eyes and realized they were trained on his chest. He looked down at his plain navy t-shirt and then looked back into her eyes. They were hazy and glinted with something that made Natsu know he was going to regret asking, "Err...Lucy, what are you staring at?"

"Switch shirts with me!"

"LIKE HELL I WILL!"

And Lucy tugged off her tank top, exposing the pretty pink bra and Natsu could only stare. It took him a moment to realize it was the one he had tried on the last time he was here considering it looked so different on Lucy than it did on himself. It looked so—"

"Natsuuu, gimme your shirt!"

"I SAID NO!" he cried.

"Plue took his shirt off," she sulked, pointing over to the iguana and Natsu dumbly looked over to see Plue lounging on the floor, sleeping.

"Plue doesn't wear clothes!" bellowed Natsu. "If you want a stripper then maybe we should just invite Gray over."

To Natsu's chagrin, Lucy's face brightened considerably as she cheered, "We should!"

And so, Natsu chucked his shirt over at his annoying girlfriend, which she more than gladly put it on. "Yayy, Natsu's shirt is so warm," she hugged her arms against her chest.

"Why do I have to be shirtless every time I'm at your house?" inquired Natsu, crossing his arms over his chest. Then he remembered his overnight bag and quickly dug into it, pulling out a gray t-shirt that had the silhouette of a dragon on it. He shrugged it on and looked over to see that Lucy had taken off her skirt, making his shirt look like a short dress.

He gulped, shaking his gaze away from her bare thigh. This was another thing unique to him. He never found someone to be so attractive in his entire life. It was like Lucy put some kind of magic spell over him—yeah that must be it.

"I dun feel so well—" she swayed and Natsu quickly caught her in his arms. Hoisting her up bridle style, he asked, "You're not gonna puke, are ya?"

She shook her head.

Natsu gratefully exhaled. Last thing he wanted was to get thrown up on. But he certainly deserved it. Lucy wouldn't have been in this situation if it weren't for Natsu's grand scheme. He really needed to think before he acted...

He carried over to her bed and quietly untucked the covers so he could plop her down. She bounced a little as Natsu drew the covers back over her.

And just as he was about to leave, Lucy's small hand grabbed his shirt.

"Lucy?"

She looked at Natsu starry eyes and uttered a single word that made his heart pulse.

"_Stay_."

With only slight hesitation, he clambered into the bed and Lucy instantly curled up into a ball against his chest, allowing him to breathe in the alluring scent of her hair that tickled his chin. Now this, Natsu could deal with—despite his heart, once again, racing in his chest. He eyed her considerably. It was the second time he got to watch her sleep in person, but the dynamic was so much different. Last time had been innocent with Lucy resting her head against his shoulder as they awaited her train. This time, however, they were in bed together.

She had a small smile on her face. He found it to be endearing as well as nerve-wracking. It was scary how strongly he felt for the girl.

"Natsu..." she hummed and Natsu found himself at a loss for words or coherent thoughts as he stroked Lucy's head as her silent purrs vibrated against his chest.

"You're such a handful, you know that?"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Ahhh hope this chapter was okay? I'm bad at writing this kind of stuff *sweats* And I hope that it wasn't too much :0 sdfdaafd****

****Special thanks to** _ ****Kaze no Ato**** _ ****who drew out the scene in chapter 74 with Lucy hugging Loke on deviantart:******

****makoeeyedlady {dot} {/}art/Virtual-Flames-scene-Lucy-hugs-Loke-609680721****

****And thank you all for reading! And I hope you all enjoy the weekend!****

77. Chapter 77

****Sorry for taking a while. I injured myself pretty badly and now my summer is probably ruined so I've been spending every day crying :) So please have patience with me because it's hard to write when I'm clouded by emotion.****

* * *

****XOXOX****

Eventually Lucy had drifted off into a deep, heavy sleep allowing Natsu freedom to do whatever he pleased. And wh

at is one to do when he has unlimited access to Lucy's electronics?

Hack her of course.

He grabbed her laptop and her phone from her desk—not without choking on his spit the second he spotted the box of condoms just sitting there. Doing his best to ignore the object, he quickly returned to Lucy's bed with plans of grandiose; he was going to make a shirtless picture of Gray her new screensaver. However, his plans almost came to an abrupt halt when he saw that her background was of the squad in their cosplay outfits and Natsu had his arm wrapped firmly around Lucy.

Afterwards, he messed around on Skype and laughed darkly trying to picture Lucy dealing with the consequences the next day...

And, of course, there was one other thing Natsu desperately needed to do. Grabbing a thick marker from her desk, he uncapped the sharpie and climbed over her, snickering. "Payback heheh." Biting his tongue, he gingerly pressed the marker against her cute button nose and ever-so-slowly began to color it in to resemble the nose of a cat, careful to make sure she didn't wake. His heart raced with anxiousness every time her eyelids fluttered, but luckily she didn't wake up. Then he took the sharpie to her cheeks, drawing three slanted lines on both sides for whiskers.

And what's the fun in messing with someone without taking pictures? He snapped as many as he could and even angled Lucy's sleepy wrists like a cat paws and sent the photo to the group chat without any regrets. "Lucy's turned into a pervert with a cat fetish," was the only message he wrote with it.

Revenge was a success.

But he felt bad. It was all his fault. Lucy's tumblr getting deleted, her stories getting deleted, her life getting deleted ...

He had make it up to her. So he grabbed her laptop and got straight to work while Lucy cuddled against his chest, purring silently in her sleep.

****XOXOX****

Lucy woke up feeling like death... Horrifying memories of acting like a cat appeared in her head and she did her best to ignore them. She was engulfed by Natsu's warmth and found herself snuggling closer to him, loving the feeling of his arms wrapped around her. "I'm sorry," she whispered, knowing he was too deep in sleep to hear her. Quickly, she found herself lolling back to sleep, letting the feel of Natsu's chest rising and falling lure tired eyes shut.

When she woke up again, however, she felt even worse. Her mind raced with thoughts. How could she get drunk like that? Why did she think listening to Cana was a good idea? She rolled over onto her side and gasped; she nearly forgot Natsu was here. He was still sleeping and Lucy quietly processed what had occurred last night...She tried to pet him... she made out with him, she had felt his—her face became the color of a rashy red.

She was never going to live this down...She slammed her head against her pillow and screamed bloody murder.

"Shit! Wha—What's wrong?" Natsu jolted awake. "Why are you screaming?!"

"BECAUSE I'M EMBARRASSED!"

"THAT'S NOT A REASON TO BE SCREAMING!"

"I THINK IT'S THE PERFECT REASON TO BE SCREAMING!" she exclaimed, no longer yelling into the pillow.

And Natsu picked up one of Lucy's pillows and covered his ears with it, mumbling, "Shouldn't you be hung over?"

"I wasn't that drunk..."

"Coulda fooled me," he muttered thickly. He sat back up and stared at her and Lucy stared him right back. Her mouth ran dry as she took in Natsu's disheveled appearance. The first time they slept together—like actually _slept._ Not over video chat—but _in_ _person,_ and that alone made her heart race.

His hair was flat in the front, sticking up randomly in the back. His eyes had dark rings underneath, making her flush with guilt. She noticed a smirk ghosting his face and shrunk back. "Wh-What are you looking at?" Then it hit her, _bed hair,_ and probably smeared make up. She let out a sob and buried herself under the covers.

And Natsu shook the bed with his laughter. "You look so—"

"Stopppp! Don't look at me! My hair and my—"

"Why? You look cute," he said, tugging at the covers.

"D-Don't say that!" she moaned, holding her blanket even tighter.

"What? You're not gonna tease me for giving you a complement?" he jested, trying to pull Lucy out from under the covers.

"Stopppp! It's too early for this!" she whined, finding herself suddenly exhausted. Bantering was the last thing she wanted to do right now. Was this what a hangover felt like? Or was she simply tired?

"You're the one who woke me up, remember?" His voice was hoarse. "Finee, I'm gonna go to the bathroom." And she felt his weight recede from the bed. "Do that screaming thing again if ya need me."

"Natsu—" she started to say, coming out of the blankets finally, but a whimper came out instead. She clutched a hand over her stomach, feeling sick—like she were about to vomit. Nausea and bile rose inside her. She curled up into a ball, trembling.

"Lucy, your shower is awesome—It's got like five different—Oi, are you okay?" Natsu ran over to her. His breath smelled minty and his body smelt like her lavender body wash.

"No," she sniveled. "I think I'm hungover."

"I'll go make you coffee for that headache—"

"But I don't have a—"

And just like that he was gone and Lucy was too weak to stop him. He came back a couple minutes later, handing her the fresh mug of coffee, saying, "Here you go!" To be honest, Lucy wasn't much of a coffee drinker, but she didn't have the heart to tell him since he was wearing such an adorable expression.

So instead, she swooshed the drink around trying to stall sipping it. It looked lumpy and Lucy found herself internally gagging. How could he make lumpy coffee? Was that even possible? She shook her head, not wanting to delve on it any further and began to drink.

"I always forget," mused Natsu with his lips pursed, "are you supposed to put one egg or three eggs in coffee? I mean I went with two because I figured—"

Lucy did a spit take, spraying a coffee mist across her bedroom floor, causing Natsu to burst out laughing. "I wish I got that on video!"

"T-There's eggs in this? Like _raw eggs?_ "

"Yeah, that's literally what I said."

"Ohmigosh!" Lucy shot up from the bed so fast, slamming her coffee mug on her bedside table and ran to the toilet, just barely making it as she upchucked everything inside of her.

"Lucy!" Natsu dashed in after her and she felt her blonde hair get snagged together by warm hands to prevent it from getting in the way.

"Who—puts—eggs-in coffee?!" she exclaimed in between her gagging.

"Shittt, I'm so stupid!" groaned Natsu, slapping his forehead. "It's _tea_ that people put eggs in!"

And Lucy shuddered. "Remind me to never drink anything you give me ever again." Then she resumed in her puking-escapade.

Tears dripped down her face after she finished and flushed the toilet. "I'm sorry."

"Eh? For what?"

"For ruining your night and being so annoying and making you have to take care of me..."

"Ruining my night?" he snorted.

Ducking her head, her hands fisted the end of her shirt. "I just got so upset yesterday about my fics...And Cana made it seem like alcohol would make it better, but I feel even worse to be honest..."

His lips curved into a half smile as he patted her head. "Lucy, you could never ruin my night." She blushed and Natsu said, "C'mon, I'll make ya cup of tea to help soothe your stomach!"

"Please don't," she said. "I can do it myself... Anyway, get out. I wanna brush my teeth and shower—" She started dragging toothpaste along her brush. She looked up and into the mirror, dreading to see what her face looked like. Would her makeup be all over the place? Was her hair a bird's nest—"WHAT DID YOU DO TO MY FACE?!"

"I made you pretty!" he said, gleaming—until Lucy repeatedly smacked him on chest. "Ah—quit it—fine! I did it 'cuz you kept acting like a cat, you pervert!"

"I'm not pervert!" she huffed, jutting her chin up.

"Says the girl with the huge box of condoms—"

"Because _you_ told my dad we're sexually active—"

"Pshh why the hell would I tell your dad that?"

"THAT'S WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW!"

"Anyways, maybe next time you shouldn't get drunk—"

"Are you really lecturing me right now?"

"Someone's gotta be the responsible one—"

"SAYS THE ONE WHO TOLD LOKE TO GET ME GROUNDED!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said, beaming with his sharp fangs sticking out.

"Don't pretend you don't remember!" she chastised.

"What kinda boyfriend would try to get his girlfriend grounded?!"

"The kind who wants to be single," Lucy grumbled before shoving her toothbrush into her mouth. She silently prayed that the marker would wash off in the shower. There was no way she could show her face in school tomorrow with her face like this...

****XOXOX****

It took forever for Lucy to scrub off the black marker and her face felt raw afterwards. She was so going to get Natsu back for that someday...

She still felt nauseous so she took it easy getting dressed in the shirt she had taken from Natsu since that was the only article of clothing she had brought into the bathroom. She slowly emerged back into her bedroom and watched Natsu poke around her laptop.

"Do I even want to know what else you did while I was asleep?" she asked monotonously.

"Is that anyway to treat someone who spent the entire night making you something?" asked Natsu with a smirk crossing his lips.

Tilting her head curiously, she checked out her laptop and on the screen was a tumblr blog. It was doused in flames in stellar-looking flames and it had a night sky that glistened with different constellations. And one of them spelt out the name "Lucy."

"Hey, that's weird, it says _Lucy_ right there!" she said, pointing to the golden lights.

"Obviously, I mean it is your blog," Natsu said lazily.

"What?" She sucked in a breath, spinning on her heel to face him. He had this huge grin spread out across his face.

"I stayed up for most of the night making this for you," he explained. "I couldn't get your old URL back, but don't worry. I found you a better one." Although Lucy heard him, his words didn't register. She was too stunned. Too happy...Natsu spent all night doing this for her? Even after everything she put him through...

"Natsu...I-I—" She tackled him into a hug and Natsu stumbled back a bit, stiff in her grip, but Lucy didn't care; she only hugged him tighter in response because words couldn't convey the way she felt.

That was until she saw it.

Her new URL.

She blinked. _"HopelesslyInLoveWithNatsu?_ OH MY—NATSU, WHY?!"

And Natsu fell over laughing until his stomach growled. He hurriedly ran off to go raid her fridge and in the distance, he could hear Lucy shriek, "OH MY GOD WHY IS SHIRTLESS GRAY MY BACKGROUND?"

Why was messing with Lucy so much fun?

****XOXOX****

Lucy still felt sick, clutching her stomach while Natsu made himself a plate of eggs—which she had to resist the urge to puke again thanks to the coffee incident. And Natsu gave her a sympathetic look, probably because she reminded him of himself when he's motion sick.

He grabbed her hand and gently led her back to her bedroom and sat her down on her bed (After he messily remade it). Then grabbed her laptop and pulled up some random anime titled, _Erased_ (Lucy tried to get Natsu to watch _Your Lie in April_ but he wouldn't agree to it).

He sat down next to her, jostling the bed—which made Lucy dry heave. He clicked play and then suddenly she felt his hands on her waist and she was roughly pulled into his lap—which made Lucy squeal loudly. Natsu chuckled and made a joke about her being too heavy and that earned him an elbow to the ribs.

It took her a few moments, but she found herself able to relax against him and reveled in the feel of his heart pounding against her back as she toyed with his hands that were wrapped around her. It made her happy to know she was the one making his heart race and she found herself slowly starting to feel better.

Lucy had thought things couldn't get better until Natsu began to stroke her long hair. And in that moment, she was positive she fell even harder for him—if that were even possible.

They slowly began to muse over theories and Lucy was able to make scarily accurate guesses. Natsu was getting so annoyed by her that he was convinced she had already watched it or read the manga despite her protests.

And even though it was a lazy day together, Lucy was happy. She wouldn't trade this moment for anything in the entire world. There was just something about being in his presence that made her feel comforted.

"I CALLED IT!" yelled Natsu a second after the anime ended. "THAT MAKES ME THE WINNER! IN YOUR FACE! AHAHAH!"

"This wasn't a competition," muttered Lucy.

"And that's exactly what a sore loser would say," grinned Natsu.

"And you're a sore winner!" she yelped, glowering at him. Then she glanced at the clock, blinking a few times to focus since her eyes were so blurry from staring at the screen for too long. "My dad will be home soon."

"Guess I better get going," he sighed, cracking his back the second after he stood up. Lucy winced at the noise as she stood up right after him. Natsu then stared at her chest and Lucy's eyes narrowed as she pointed to her face, "Hey! Eyes are up here!"

Natsu ignored her and said, "Can I have my shirt back?" And Lucy looked down, blushing. She forgot she was still in his shirt—just his shirt in fact. No shorts, just underwear underneath.

"No way!" she said, hugging her arms over her chest.

"C'monnn!" he moaned. "That will be the second shirt that I lost here!"

"Too bad," said Lucy, sticking her tongue out. Maybe if she was able to find that other shirt, she would let Natsu have it back, but for now, this was hers for the keeping.

"Add that to the list of things you stole from me," he murmured with a pout. "My chimchar plush and now my shirt ..."

"And that list will only get longer," teased Lucy and Natsu frowned, shrugging his overnight bag onto his back. She couldn't keep the pout off her face and it didn't go unnoticed by him.

"Lucy..." he said.

She glanced up at him and gasped at his sudden closeness. He grasped ahold of her face and kissed her deeply and fervently. Her head started to spin and this time, it wasn't because of her hangover. His hands traveled from her face, down her arms and reached her hands, where he then entangled their fingers. He pulled back and breathlessly said, "Spend spring break with me."

"W-What?" she questioned, her mind was barely functioning.

"Spend spring break with me," he repeated, his eyes unblinking and unnerving.

Lucy's stomach fluttered. "Okay."

XOXOX

* * *

Ahh boring chapter. I am sorry! Hope it wasn't too dreadful to read..

And things are so calm and docile, right? Pffttt guess that means we gotta bring some angst alonggg~

Also I know lots of you are like "where's this plot going" and etc but tbh this is just a slice of life fanfic, like a weekly sitcom. So sorry if you find that to be boring :/

Hope you all have a nice week! And to manga readers, let us all rejoice over the chapter :D i'm forever screaminggg!

Thanks so much for reading!

78. Chapter 78

AHH YOU GUYS ARE ALL SO SWEET! I feel a lot better about my injury so thank you all so much and thank you all for the sweet reviews! And AHH this story is close to 2,500 favorites! That's such an exciting number ! THANK YOU!

And let's not talk about this week's manga chapter :')***

Hope you all enjoy this!

* * *

XOXOX

It was only after Natsu left that Lucy realized the damage he did to her Skype account after he had hacked her.

For starters, he had tried to jokingly flirt with Cana, but Cana took it way too far. And she flirted back with Natsu (who she thought was Lucy) in ways that made Lucy wanted to wash her eyes with bleach to preserve her innocence.

Next he fought with Gray. He called him all sorts of names in the book and Gray literally messaged Lucy, "You know

w, I expected this kinda stuff from Natsu, but coming from you, this really hurts!"

And the worst part in the Gray chat was that Natsu had added _Erza_ to it and Erza gave a scolding like no other. It made Lucy want to go cry and repent for the fight she had with Gray—even though it was all Natsu.

In a chat with Mira, she and Natsu giddily talked about ships and how Gruvia was just too cute. They even devised a plan for Mira to message Juvia and plant some seeds that Gray had been talking about her. And, to Lucy's chagrin, they talked about Lucy's long-ago-harem and decided to add Gajeel to it.

Levy and Gajeel, on the other hand, seemed to be safe from Natsu's hacking spree.

"Lucyy, so I heard you and Natsu spent the night together," messaged Cana. "Care to share?" There was a creepy winky-face at the end of the sentence. Lucy shuddered. Why were winky-faces always so creepy?

"I got drunk and tried to make Natsu purr and then passed out and Natsu drew all over my face and then I puked in the morning."

"Kinky."

"Not really...Also about the messages that were sent to you," wrote Lucy, clicking send before she typed the next part of the sentence. And just as she was about to write the next part, Cana typed, "I already know it was Natsu. No way would you ever say stuff like that. Just wanted to see how far I could push him before he stopped writing." She added another winky-face.

"Cana! Even though he deserved it don't antagonize my boyfriend," Lucy wrote back, laughing. Awaiting Cana's response, she mindlessly tied her long hair up into a messy bun.

"Can't help it," Cana messaged, "he makes it too easy. So you guys really didn't do anything couplely?"

Bashfully gnawing on her lip, Lucy wrote back, "Well we did make out for a bit when I was drunk."

"I KNEW YOU WERE HOLDING BACK DETAILS!"

"But that was it!" Lucy averred with her body temperature rising. "We spent the entire next day watching anime!"

"Hnngh you guys are boring," Cana replied. "At least Levy and Gajeel seem to be interesting."

"Huh?" Lucy nearly fell over. She quickly pulled up a message with Levy needing to find out all the details—stat. Levy, slightly timid, revealed that she and Gajeel were _kind of_ dating. Well—Gajeel had asked her on a formal date, but neither of them had been able to find a day that worked for them. So they've been doing virtual dates; eating dinner at the same time, watching movies together.

And then Cana messaged, "Well now that you and Natsu spent the night together, I bet your relationship will begin to heat up."

"What do you mean?" asked Lucy, cocking her head.

"Well you know," Cana typed, "virtual sex."

"WHAT?" Her heart pounded in her ears as she flew back, far away from her laptop as though it were going to bite her.

"What? Don't be surprised if he asks you to video chat and all you see is his —"

Lucy switched out of Cana's chat, mortified. She pressed a hand against her dying heart. Natsu would never! Cana was just teasing her and—

"Lucy, I think it's time we finally do this," Natsu suddenly messaged her—and then he called her.

"WAHHH," Lucy cried. "CANA WAS RIGHT?" Her heart felt like it was going to shut down. Sweat began to coat her body.

"Pick uppp," he messaged. "I know you're on."

"I DON'T WANT TO VIDEO CHAT!"

"Why not? I really want to do this right now because I won't be in the mood later!"

"I DON'T CARE WHEN YOU'RE IN THE MOOD, PERVERT!"

"What the hell is with you?!" asked Natsu. "I thought you wanted to have your dad talk to Zeref?"

"THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT?"

"WHAT ELSE COULD I HAVE POSSIBLY MEANT?" he questioned and then quickly typed, "JUST ANSWER ALREADY!"

And Lucy complied, however, she shielded her eyes and let out a small breath of relief to see that he really was fully clothed.

"Finally!" moaned Natsu. "Why are you being so weird? And get your dad, Zeref will be here any minute."

"I'll go get him," she said, rubbing a hand through her frazzled hair. How could she let Cana convince her that Natsu would just video chat her naked? She shook her head to clear it as she searched for her father because after Natsu had left her house, Lucy had asked her dad if she was allowed to spend spring break with him. He, of course, requested to speak with Zeref to make sure Zeref will be there the entire time. So Lucy informed Natsu of this while the poor boy died of motion sickness on the train. And Natsu, in a broken message, agreed to let Zeref speak to Jude once he made it home.

And so it began.

"Zeref," said Jude, nodding his head.

"Hi, Jude," Zeref said back, grinning. "Always good to see you!"

"Likewise!" Jude said, breaking in to a smile.

Lucy nearly jumped out of her skin at the startling sound her phone made. It was a text message; something she wasn't used to receiving. Compared to Skype, the font was bigger and the keyboard seemed slightly different. It threw her off.

The text was from Natsu and it read, "How come your old man never smiles at me like that?"

Lucy laughed and replied, "LOL!"

"You don't have to write 'lol' when I can hear it," Natsu sent back.

"So it looks like our children—"

"I'm not his child!" heatedly interjected Natsu.

"—want to spend spring break together over at your place," Jude said without acknowledging Natsu's comment.

"Ah I see," said Zeref nodding his head. "And is it safe to assume you are worried about a lack of supervision?"

"Precisely!"

"Well don't you worry, Jude, I will make sure to keep a close eye on them! And I would be more than happy to finally meet Natsu's lover—"

"_Girlfriend_!" Lucy corrected, her voice was shrill and she wondered if Natsu was blushing as hard as she was.

"Lover isn't too far off," muttered Jude. "Do you know what your boy did to my daughter?!"

"Dad— _NO!_ " cried Lucy, smacking her hand flat against her forehead.

"I'm almost afraid to ask what," said Zeref, sheepishly scratching the top of his head.

"I'm not his _boy!_" fumed Natsu as he again stated, "I'm his _brother!_"

"Your boy—he-he _slept with my daughter and had the audacity to tell me about it!_"

"Natsu!" Zeref whirled around fast. "I know I raised you better than this! Where did I go wrong?"

"YOU DIDN'T RAISE ME!" yelled Natsu. "AND I LIED! I DIDN'T HAVE— _DO THAT_ WITH LUCY! I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET HER GROUNDED! SHEESH!"

And everyone went silent and Lucy felt her heart spike with each passing second and found herself wishing she didn't exist.

"You tried to get her grounded?" said Zeref, baffled.

Jude coughed awkwardly, straightened his tie, and loudly whispered to Lucy, "Are you sure this boy likes you?" Natsu, in return, let out a noisy, exasperated groan.

"I'd rather not get into this," murmured Lucy under her breath.

Natsu roughly shoved Zeref off of the screen to take over. He looked annoyed as hell as he directly asked, "Look, can Lucy come over for spring break or not?"

"Well now that I know the truth and Zeref seems highly responsible and I do trust my daughter," said Jude with minor unwillingness, "I guess I see no problem in allowing her to—"

"YOSH!" Natsu beamed so brightly and Lucy couldn't help but beam as well. She was so happy. Finally her dad was being reasonable. "Thank you, daddy! Thank you!"

"YOU'RE THE BEST, OLD MAN! I WOULD SO HUG YOU IF THIS SCREEN WASN'T BETWEEN US!"

"I'm glad that you can't..." Jude muttered.

****XOXOX****

The following week was just a blur. Lucy was so happy at the thought of spending a week with Natsu it seemed to make time fly by. Loke had transferred into her school because it turns out he will be staying in town for the rest of the school year and it made school seem slightly better—even though he flirted too much for her liking.

And as Friday evening approached, Lucy painted her nails a soft shade of blue with Natsu just lounging on his side of the screen, watching her paint them like he were in some kind of trance.

His stare was starting to make her uncomfortable and her hands began to nervously twitch, nearly making her paint the side of her thumb as opposed to the nail. "Why do you keep staring like that?" brows furrowed, she asked.

"Becauseee it's so cool how you manage to keep the nail polish on the nails only. Although I keep hopin' you'll mess up—"

"Hey!" and right at that moment, Lucy's brush went off course and decorated her pointer finger straight down to the knuckle and Natsu rolled back with laughter. "YES! YOU FINALLY MESSED UP!"

She puffed out her cheeks as she harshly grabbed a napkin and scrubbed at her skin. "Jerk! Just for that I'm going to paint your nails over break." She cynically grinned.

"Fineee, but only if the color matches my hair," he said, eyeing his colorless nails in consideration.

"If that's what you want," giggled Lucy as she waved her hands in the air, hoping they would dry faster.

"GUYS, WE NEED TO VIDEO CHAT RIGHT THIS SECOND!" Cana messaged into their group chat and she called them. Natsu and Lucy exchanged a shrug before they answered it and Cana sat there excitedly clenching her beer bottle they awaited for everyone else to join them.

"Since we all have spring break the same week," said Cana, "we should all spend it together at my place! I got booze, video games, spare bedrooms, no authoritative figures! And you can invite anyone you like!"

"So that means Jellal can come?" asked Erza, her eyes lighting up to the idea.

"Yep!" said Cana while Natsu unstealthily asked, "But will Jellal actually appear?"

"Good question," Gray muttered.

Erza's eyes turned murderous, "What's that supposed to mean?!"

"N-Nothing!"

"Does that mean Juvia can come too?" asked Gajeel, looking contemplative as he toyed with his eyebrow piercings.

"Gahh why are you asking 'bout her?!" sputtered Gray, his voice went oddly shrill.

Gajeel's nose wrinkled. "Cuz she's a good friend of mine," he said with an air of obviousness. Gray, in return, cringed.

"What's wrong, Gray?" asked Cana, "Don't want to make kissy faces at your girlfriend?"

"Tch, she's not my girlfriend."

"But what about that kiss?" hummed Mira just as a picture of Gray kissing Juvia back at Comic Con was sent into the chat.

"That does look kind of suspicious, Gray," said Lucy, joining in on the teasing.

"Oi, I told you guys already! It was an accident!" swore Gray as he chucked his shirt off and no one bothered to inform him of this.

"There's no shame in falling in love," said Gajeel.

And Levy blushed.

"Who's talkin' about love?!" cried Gray, his eyebrows rose up higher than Lucy thought was possible.

She chuckled as she ran a second coat of polish over her nails and snorted, "Tsundere."

"He so is," Levy said, snickering.

"It's kinda cute," Mira mused.

"I'M NOT A TSUNDERE!"

"Isn't that something a tsundere would say?" mocked Natsu.

"Ughhh," Gray raked his hands through his shaggy hair. "So where do you even live, Cana?"

"West of Crocus by the coast," she said, tossing out her empty beer bottle.

"Wahh we'll be by the beach?" Lucy asked eagerly. She hadn't been to beach in years. The thought made her mouth water and her skin yearn for warm sunlight.

"Yup! So bring swim suits," she said.

"Isn't that area known for earthquakes?" asked Levy.

"Yeah but don't worry, it'll be fineee," Cana said, slurring as she started on her, questionably, second beer.

"S'not like I'll let anything bad happen to ya, Shrimp. So no worries!" said Gajeel, grinning and Levy blushed, looking away as she fumed, "I wasn't worried or anything!"

****XOXOX****

"I really want to see your house," Lucy said, sighing against her pillow as she got ready for bed.

"Hmm it's not that great," said Natsu, sitting up, "but I can give ya a tour if you'd like."

"I'd like," said Lucy, fingers burning with anxiousness. She never got to see much of his house or even his room for that matter besides the photos and glimpses she caught through the webcam.

He picked up what Lucy presumed to be his phone and flipped the screen around, no longer showing his face. Instead she found herself staring at a tank. "Happy's bed," he narrated. "He's sleeping inside the log so you can't see him."

"And look!" he said, pointing his finger at something crawling in the tank. "There's one of the crickets Happy eats!"

Lucy grimaced, nose wrinkling and lips puckering. The sole reason why she was thankful she had an iguana.

"Heheh, grossed out by bugs?" he asked, his dark eyes gleamed. "Good to know."

"I don't like that look on your face," she said, shrinking back and Natsu only laughed, continuing his tour.

"This is my bed. It's bigger and better than yours so I won't have to worry 'bout you hogging the blanket—"

"I don't hog the blanket!"

"And you don't make cat noises either," Natsu said, smirking and Lucy's lips curled into a frown. He hopped onto the bed. "And that ends the tour."

"That was hardly a tour!" Lucy blurted out in astonishment. "I already knew what Happy's tank looked like and I've seen your bed in the background!"

"Huh? You have?" he said with a blank look on his face. "Oh right! I almost forgot you're a creepy, noisy stalker who stares at things in the background!"

"Am not!"

He gave her a pointed smile before leaning over and flicking his lamp off. "Anyways, I'm going to sleep."

"Oh."

"Don't gimme that look," he said, groaning. "I haven't slept for the past two days!"

"Fineee," Lucy groaned back, "but I'm not hanging up."

"Why not?"

"Because then it feels like I'm sleeping with you," she said, her voice was hushed and her face was aflame. She laid on her back, petrified in fear. Why did she have to say something so embarrassing? Was it her own lack of sleep getting to her?

And Natsu was quiet after that, leaving Lucy to wonder if he had fallen asleep or if he had even heard her.

She shut her eyes and hugged the covers to her chest. Natsu's campfire scent lingered all over her sheets and pillow and instead of finding the smell to be relaxing, it had quite the opposite effect; it made her pulse race.

"Pssttt, Natsu, are you still up?"

"Yeah," he answered, his voice was thick making Lucy's tremble with chills. "Thanks to you. How the hell am I supposed to sleep when you say stuff like that?! Now my heart's just—argggg!"

And Lucy's breath caught, a small prideful smile glinted on her lips. She felt warm and jovial as she said, "Doki doki?"

"Stopppp," he moaned.

Lucy giggled. "I can't wait to see your manga collection. I bet you have like 20 different shoujos—"

"NO WAY!" he snapped.

"That would explain why you gave such lame tour of your room. You didn't want me to see all your shoujos—"

"I DON'T OWN ANY SHOUJOS!"

"The more you deny it, the more convinced I become," Lucy hummed, rolling onto her side with excitement.

"The more you keep talkin', the more I want Erza to punch me in the face."

"I'm sure that could be arranged," Lucy said with playful consideration.

"Natsu, why are you screaming?" asked Zeref in the background. The lights flickered on, allowing Lucy to see Natsu's flustered expression.

"I'M NOT!" he yelled and Zeref gave him a pointed look.

"I could hear you from outside!"

"What are you even doing out this late?"

"I was just—"

"Leaving? Make sure you turn the light off—"

And Lucy had enough. Turning the lights back on in her own room, she glared at her phone screen. "Can you two be quiet? I want to go to sleep."

"Oii, you're the one who—are you wearing my shirt?" Natsu's face twisted up.

"What?" her eyes darted downwards, staring at the shirt she had stolen from him and she added a slit to the shirt's neck to make it a V-shape collar, revealing a modest amount of cleavage. "M-Maybe."

Natsu stared at the screen, unmoving. Lucy thought that perhaps the screen had frozen, but then he flopped his head down against his pillow and let out a strangled cry.

"Natsu," Zeref looked hesitant before creeping over to him, "why are you acting so weird?"

Although his voice was muffled, Lucy heard him loud and clear, "Clearly I've been infected with Lucy's weirdness! HAPPYYY, HELP ME! I JUST WANT TO GO TO SLEEP!"

"You're not infected with my weirdness!" yelled Lucy, heatedly crossing her arms. Then she messily added, "And I'm not weird!"

"Then why don't you just go to sleep, Natsu?" asked a confused Zeref as he tilted his head to grasp a better understanding.

"SHE'S WEARING MY SHIRT!" Natsu exclaimed as though it was obvious.

"Soo...?" Zeref looked even more lost, glancing over at Lucy for help, but she offered none because she was confused too.

And Natsu repeated, "_SHE'S WEARING MY SHIRT!_"

Lucy's face blazed up. "Do you want me to take it off?"

Instead of answering, Natsu grabbed his blanket and covered his body with it.

"W-What's with him?" Lucy stammered.

"Natsu, maybe you should just go to sleep," said Zeref.

"HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO SLEEP WHEN SHE LOOKS HOT?"

Lucy's breath caught her chest and her stomach coiled tightly.

"Yeah, she does look pretty hot," Zeref contemplated and Lucy made a sputtering noise. Nothing was more awkward than having your boyfriend's brother call you hot—"I mean look how flushed her cheeks are!" She dropped her head in embarrassment. She should have known that's what he meant... "Well goodnight, Lucy, and goodnight, Natsu!"

And Natsu's phone screen went dark.

Lucy turned her light back off, lay down, drawing the covers over herself as she listened to the silence that filtered between her and Natsu.

"Natsu?"

"What now?" he asked, sounding irritated.

"I think you look hot too," she admitted meekly, tugging the blankets over her head in hopes she would suffocate in her sleep.

And both of them knew that neither of them were going to get a wink of sleep that night.

Tomorrow, Natsu would tease Lucy in front of the others about how she called him hot and in return, Lucy would argue that he said it first and how he couldn't sleep because of her. Of course Natsu's plan to embarrass Lucy backfired because for the rest of the day, everyone made unrelenting jokes at Natsu for getting hot and bothered over Lucy.

And for a while, everything seemed okay, but of course, nothing golden can ever last...

* * *

****XOXOX****

****ZE ANGST HAS BEEN PLANNEDD MUAHAHAHA****

****And now thinking about it, this story will probs be over a 100 chapters depending how many chapters it takes me to do what I need to do :0****

****Ahah a lot of you are curious about how I hurt myself so for those interested:****

****I injured my sacroiliac joint which is like lower back/hip area because of running. And it hurts to walk and stuff and since running and hiking are my one true loves, I'm upset I probably won't be able to do any of that this summer : / Although I did get to go walk some trails with my friend without too much pain and we did 7 miles! So maybe it's not as hopeless as I thought!****

****But I have good days and then I have bad days so I guess I'll just have to take it day by day.****

****AND THANKS FOR READING! Enjoy your weekend!****

****ASDASDFS**A this fic is almost close to 9k reviews I'm legit screaming THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH! And I made this chapter really long although it's sorta just a jumbled mess so I sincerely apologize!**

****SO CLOSE TO CHAPTER 80!** Got something special planned mwueheh**

* * *

****XOXOX****

It was strange really. No one understood what had happened. It was sudden, it was fast, and it was brisk—Mira was gushing about her favorite couple, NaLu, but then Natsu flatly announced that they had broken up.

Everyone felt like they had been zapped by lightening.

And what made the whole ordeal even more peculiar, they were absolutely civil to each other, Natsu and Lucy that is. There wasn't a hint of anger or bitterness; Just friendship. They lightly teased each other and everyone just watched, too stunned to say anything.

After the shock had worn off, Gajeel took initiative and asked what had happened. Natsu and Lucy both shrugged and carried on like they always did minus the whole flirty stuff.

Meanwhile Gray and Levy devised a plan in private to find out what had happened. Gray invited Natsu to his house for video games, while he planned to beat the information out of him. Although that was unnecessary because Natsu was compliant and merely explained that he was falling in love with Lucy.

"So then why the hell did you two break up?" asked Gray, his face twisting in revulsion and bewilderment as he sat up a bit on the loveseat.

"Because she said she wanted to be just friends—YES! AHAH I BEAT YOU!"

"She said that?"

"Yeah," he grunted, aggressively pressing the _B_ button on the control-stick, "right after I told her I was in love with her."

"Hold on a minute—you actually _confessed_ your love?_ How did you do it?"

"Hmm let's see...she was reading this book and she was so submerged in it that she didn't even flinch when I sneezed. So then I asked her what it was about—had to call her name a couple of times for her to hear me—and then she started talking so deeply and her eyes lit up like they always do when she talks about stuff she's passionate about and I just blurted out 'I love you'—she got silent and then I said something like, 'even though we only just started dating I think I loved you even when we were just friends'—Next thing I know she says something about us being 'just friends?' And the rest was history."

Gray felt sufficiently awkward to say the least. Listening to Natsu go on like this, it made him feel uneasy. He couldn't imagine things being over between Natsu and Lucy. If they couldn't last, how could anyone have a relationship? And how were they able to act like they never even dated? "So how come you guys are so cool then?"

"Hmm?"

"She rejected you after you told her you _loved_ her!_ How are you able to act so natural around her?"

"Easy," said Natsu, "it's because I love her."

****XOXOX****

"I don't know how it happened," admitted Lucy as she calmly braided her long hair. "He started saying he loves me and then the next minute he says 'just friends.' I thought maybe I zoned out because my heart was beating really fast and I was really happy—so I repeated it for clarification, you know? And then..." she dropped her head into her palms.

"But that doesn't make any sense," Levy argued, her tiny fists curled around some thick book she had been reading. "Weren't you two the happiest couple ever like a week ago?"

"Does anything ever make sense with Natsu?" she counted, tying a small pink bow on the bottom of her braid.

"What about spring break?!"

Lucy's face turned an ivory white. "I think I'm going to skip it...I can't handle seeing him." It was bad enough she and Natsu still video chatted like nothing had ever happened between them, but now having to see him in person too? It was too much to handle.

****XOXOX****

"Of course I'm gonna go to Cana's," said Natsu, pausing their game. "I just want to see her again."

"You wanna see Cana again?" asked Gray, incredulous as he dropped his gaming controller on the floor.

"What?"

"You said—"

"I meant Lucy!" Natsu yelped, unpauseing the game. His cheeks turned a light pink that matched the flower drapes in Gray's living room that Ultear had picked out a few years back despite Gray and Lyon's protests.

"Why don't you just ask her back out?"

"I can't—AHAH BEAT YOU AGAIN! IT'S LIKE YOU'RE NOT EVEN TRYING—"

"Dude, I spent like the past two months listening to Lucy obsess over you. You're an idiot to think she's not in love with you."

"Yeah loves me—_as a friend_" clarified Natsu. "Now c'mon! Your turn to choose the next level!"

"How about you write her a letter?"

"What?"

"Lucy likes reading so write her a romantic letter," Gray said, reaching down to pick up his icy blue controller. "Maybe that will get her to see you as more than a friend."

****XOXOX****

"So let me get this straight," said Erza in their new group chat that excluded both Natsu and Lucy. "Lucy thinks Natsu only loves her as a friend and Natsu thinks Lucy only loves him as a friend while they both love each other as more than a friend?"

"Gah," Cana winced, rubbing her temples, "this is making my head hurt. I need a bottle of vodka."

"I thought Bunny Girl was supposed to be smart," said Gajeel as he cleansed his new lobe piercing with saline solution.

"She is," commented Gray, "but it looks like Natsu influenced her too much."

"Okay, enough about their lack of intelligence," said Erza forcefully, driving her fist down on her desk. "We need to devise a way for them to get back together."

Mira quickly renamed their chat: Operation: NaLu and went on to suggest that they should elucidate to Natsu and Lucy what had happened. That it was all just a misunderstanding—possibly a Skype glitch.

If only that were the case though. Gray and Levy had already _tried_ that since they didn't want to get the group chat involved in something that was possibly an easy fix. However, Natsu and Lucy were both too stubborn and refused to believe either of them. _Even when Gray copied and pasted Lucy's messages to Natsu, he thought it was fake—_ and same goes for Lucy. And this exhausted both Gray and Levy immensely.

"Over spring break," said Cana, "we will all do whatever is in our power to make sure those two are always together."
"

And, thus, the plan was born.

****XOXOX****

"Luuccyyy, guess what," Natsu said, tauntingly, "I have 50 more Pokémon to go before I collect all the shinys."

"You really have no life," Lucy fumed. She had given up months ago on trying to complete the National Pokedex, she couldn't even fathom the idea of collecting each Pokémon's _shiny_ version on top of that...

"You're just jealous."

"Am not!"

"Are too!"

"Am not!"

"Are too—"

"So," cut in Cana, "are you two okay with sleeping together at my place?" That had both of them screaming and Lucy stuttering out, "I-I'm not even going."

Natsu looked like he just got slapped in the face. "You're not?!"

"N-No I—"

"You're my waifu so of course you're going," said Cana without a second thought. "And I was planning out the bedrooms—Gray and Juvia get a bed together, Levy and Gajeel, Erza and Jellal, Mira and Laxus, me and all the other people left over—"

And everyone looked unquestionably horrified. "Okay," said Erza, sounding calm and rational, "how about everyone else decides who they room with? And who did you even invite by the way?"

"Everyone who I ever Skyped with from tumblr. But only special people are invited for the sleep over," said Cana. "

I'm expecting a big turn out. Loke's coming, thunder legions coming, ummm other people too." She shrugged.

"My siblings are coming—partially because they wanna meet the thunder legion bloggers, but they're only staying for a couple of hours," said Mira. Lucy could remember Mira vaguely talking about her brother had something going on with the blogger named Evergreen. And suddenly Lucy was reminded of what Cana had said—"What's was that about Mira and Laxus?"

And all eyes were on the blushing white haired girl. "Laxus is just my new friend—"

"Ohoho look how the tables have turned," Lucy snickered, "what shall we name their ship? Miraxus?"

"I like the sound of that," said Gray, gleaming as he casually took off his shirt.

Mira pouted, clearly not liking being the butt of the joke for once. "Lighten up, Mira," said Natsu. "Now it's your turn to start a harem!"

"Yeah, and now Natsu can be the first! We can call you guys Mirtsu or NaMi?" suggested Gray.

Lucy dropped her smile. The thought of Natsu having a ship name with someone else left a bad taste in her mouth. She figured it was bound to happen and what could she do? She just had to accept it for she was only a friend. "I have to go—"

"What about you, Gray? GraMi—or Miray—" sneered Natsu, drowning out Lucy's goodbye.

"Oi, you wanna fight?"

"Yeah I wanna fight!"

Lucy hung up. No one heard her, but she didn't care. She sighed, curling up next to her iguana, "I guess it really is over, Plue."

Just as she was about to close her laptop, a message appeared—a message from Natsu. "Come to Cana's. It won't be any fun without you."

Plue looked at her in a way that said, "Or is it?"

"Oh shut up!" she screamed, blushing heavily.

****XOXOX****

Convincing Lucy's father to allow her to go to Cana's for spring break was surprisingly easy. In fact, he was more than elated to allow her to go, partially because Lucy chose to leave out the fact that Natsu and other boys would be there or that there wasn't going to be any parental supervision either.

She hadn't told him that she and Natsu broke up. She just couldn't find the words to say it...

She had packed everything she thought was necessary for a beach house trip; sunscreen—and lots and lots of bikinis that Loke gladly packed for her because Lucy was too mooney to get herself together. Hell, she was too depressed to pack anything for that matter and Loke simply did it all for her (he even made her change into a tight-white graphic tank top and pink jean shorts with flip flops because her black-on-black outfit was a no-no in his opinion).

"I don't wanna goooo," moaned Lucy as Loke practically dragged her by the hair onto the train kicking and screaming. People were staring, but Lucy and Loke barely seemed to notice.

"C'mon, waifu," said Loke, flashing her a sly smirk, "think about how sorry Natsu will feel when he sees the glorious wardrobe I picked for you—or even the scrumptious bikinis—"

"I don't want him feeling sorry," sobbed Lucy as she fell into her seat the second the train started to move. It was cold against her bare legs. "I just want him."

"There, there." Loke pulled her against his chest and soothingly rubbed her forearm.

****XOXOX****

In a word, Cana's house was huge. Although it still wasn't as big as Lucy's old mansion, it was certainly prettier, overlooking the beach with its beautiful blue ocean and its waves tumbling restlessly against the shore.

"Wowww, it's gorgeous!" awed Lucy, breathing in the salty air as the breeze tickled her nose.

"Not as gorgeous as you," teased Loke and Lucy's lips thinned as she tightly clenched her hands around her tote bag.

"Lucy!" Levy came running over, tackling her into a hug just like the time at Comic Con except this time Lucy was prepared. She stood her ground fully and hugged Levy back with equal strength.

"What took you guys so long?" grumbled Cana, who was already in a blue bikini. "I thought the party was going to start before you got here!"

Lucy apologized and carefully explained that it was Loke's fault for trying to pick up every girl he saw, but she grew distracted watching Gray try to shake Juiva off of his arm.

And then she saw him—Natsu—butting heads with Gajeel while Erza yanked Gajeel away and Lisanna was trying to calm Natsu down while he made a fist at them and as if he sensed her stare, his head jerked over, meeting her eyes.

Lucy froze and her eyes widened—almost like a deer caught in headlights. She wasn't sure how many minutes went by, but eventually, his face broke into the widest and blithest smile she had ever seen. "Yo, Lucy!"

And Lucy felt a shove in the back and with a mousey squeak, she crashed into Natsu and he fell back, crashing to the grassy ground with Lucy sprawled on top of him. Her face was pressed against the crook of his neck. Her breath was fast and coming out in pants, forcing her to breathe in the scent she missed the most—the scent of Natsu. It made her heartache—speaking of which—her heart was beating so fast and so loud, she wondered if Natsu could hear or feel it—or if his was pounding as well.

"Ughhh," Natsu moaned. "So heavy—ACK! Did you seriously just pinch me?"

"That's manly!" exclaimed Mira's brother.

"Yes," snapped Lucy. "And how was that manly? I'm a girl!"

"Sorry, Lucy," giggled a sheepish Mira, "Elfman tends to get like that and sorry for pushing you! I must have tripped over a twig."

"Tripped?" echoed Lucy. "I felt like I just got assaulted..." she moaned, her lips tickled his neck and she gasped at the sight of his rising goosebumps in that very spot.

She felt jumbled and confused as she hastily scrambled off of him. If he was reacting as nervous as she was, does that mean there was a chance he did want to get back together—and what if what Gray and Levy had said was true—that Natsu really said he loved her and it was all a misunderstanding.

She looked down at Natsu. He was sitting up, inspecting his reddening elbow, while rubbing his neck where Lucy's lips were just touching.

She blushed, averting her gaze when Natsu's eyes moved to meet hers.

"So the party is already starting down by the beach, said Cana, pointing the large group of people who were suddenly spread out upon the beach, "so do you guys wanna go pick out your bedrooms and change in swim wear?"

"As long as I get a bedroom with waifu," purred Loke, lacing his hand in Lucy's.

"Please, no," said Lucy, her nose wrinkled.

"I'll room with you, Lucy," said Levy, smiling while Gajeel groaned, upset that he was going to have to room with Natsu.

Before Lucy could go get changed along with everyone else—Erza held her back to meet the infamous Jellal. He was tall and gave off a mysterious vibe and Lucy found that to be oddly fitting for Erza—who was a blushing mess—until Natsu exploded, screaming, "HE REALLY DOES EXIST?"

And Erza attacked him; grabbing Natsu into a chokehold as she dragged him up the stairs. Then Cana came down the stairs and asked Lucy to help her search for her missing earring—which Lucy to no avail could find. Then Cana oddly let her go. "Eh whatever," said Cana. "Now go change—Levy chose the last bedroom on the left."

Lucy found the bedroom without much difficulty, and Cana sat back on the couch, clutching the supposedly missing earring in her left hand as Lucy screams ricocheted throughout the house.

****XOXOX****

The beach had been nice and breezy and Gray and Natsu were trying to get a team up for volleyball (although it was difficult because everyone was more interested in getting drunk and partying rather than playing a beach sport), however the second they approached Lucy, her face burned up like a furnace. Then she made some kind of ridiculous excuse about losing an earring when she wasn't even wearing one.

"What's up with Lucy?" asked Gray as he watched Lucy.

"She's just being her usual weirdo self," said Natsu, watching Lucy's retreating form as well.

"I really doubt that's it," muttered Gray, shaking sand out of his hair.

"Or maybe it's becuz' she walked in on me naked," Natsu causally stated, bopping the volleyball up and down.

"Why the hell were you naked?" asked Gray, eyes huge in bewilderment.

Natsu stared at him. "You— _of all people— _ are asking me that?"

"What?"

"Never mind—I was changing into my swimsuit—then the door opened to my room and she did that noise,"—Natsu imitated her gasp—"Then she started babbling on about how Cana told her this was supposed to be her bedroom," he finished speaking, utterly dense to Cana's furtively scandalous plan.

"So did it—did it _ya know_ ...?"

"Yeah," Natsu grunted.

"Mannnn," Gray laughed, "c'mon! You couldn't keep it—"

"She kept staring at it so it just— _happened_! And now she won't even look at me."

"Well it is pretty traumatizing—"

"Heyyy shut up!"

"I guess that's one way to get her to see you as _more-than-a-friend_."

Natsu scowled before nailing the ball in Gray's face. Then he sprinted off after Lucy, who was busy talking to Erza and Levy. He grabbed Lucy from behind and dunked them both into the water, drowning out her screams of protest.

Gray chuckled, knowing that those two would work out their misunderstanding soon enough as they splashed each other and Lucy attempted to drown Natsu.

Gray silently observed everyone else—watching as more people showed up to Cana's. Mira was talking to some blond dude, who Gray recognized from tumblr—Laxus and Cana, Lisanna, and Elfman were hanging around them talking to Laxus' tumblr friends Bickslow, Freed, and Evergreen.

Loke was busy chatting it up with random group of women that Gray did not recognize. Levy and Gajeel had gone off for a private walk.

And he couldn't help but notice someone was missing.

"Gah where is she?" He began to walk around, more and more people arrived. He was getting nervous. Why the hell was he even getting nervous? And then in his peripheral he saw a bush of blue hair.

He turned around and gasped; Juvia was awkwardly hiding behind a tall rock. She was clad in a pretty spotted blue bikini. Her eyes were winced shut and she was mumbling something. Gray moved closer to hear. "Juvia is-Juvia is- Juvia is so embarrassed! Juvia can't do this!"

"Juvia can't do what?" asked Gray.

The girl jumped out of her skin, screeching. Her cheeks instantly reddened like a sunburn. "J-Juvia feels shy."

"Shy about what?" Furrowed Gray. "Tch just c'mon and join the party." He stretched out his hand and Juvia gawked at it like it might hurt her and then she did a complete 180—she grabbed his hand and hugged his arm against her chest.

Gray's heart suddenly thudded and his brow began to sweat. Why did she make him so nervous?

"Juvia is holding Gray-sama's hand!" she sang. "Juvia is so happy!"

Why did he have to fall for such a weirdo, he blanched.

****XOXOX****

Despite the awkward sight Lucy had witnessed, Natsu seemed determined to make her get over the awkwardness by tackling her into the water—and it worked because Lucy found herself in a splash war with the boy, doing her best to shield her eyes from the painful salt water and trying to keep from laughing when he splashed. She was starting to win and it looked like Natsu had just about given up—until he grabbed her by the waist and picked her up.

She screamed and flailed like a fish out of water begging Natsu to put her back down mainly because she didn't want to feel his toned body pressed against hers like that now that they were no longer dating.

It hurt to be in his arms like this, but at the same time she wouldn't trade this moment at all. She stopped squirming and Natsu quietly put her down by the shore. The waves danced around their calves.

"Lucy—"

She slammed herself against his chest, hugging him. He let out a shaky groan and stiffly rubbed his hands up and down her bare spine. Her right ear was pressed against his chest, allowing her to hear his quickened heartbeat.

She wasn't sure how much time had passed before Mira and her siblings plus the thunder legion bloggers came by and Natsu ended up challenging Laxus, super muscular blond guy, into a fight—which ended with Natsu almost getting washed away in the ocean and Lisanna and Mira had to help carry him back to shore.

After swimming, Cana tried to convince Lucy to have a drink, but Natsu made sure to intercept each glass that crossed paths with her because drunk Lucy wasn't something he wanted to deal with right now and Loke, too, seemed determined to keep her sober as well.

Then they found themselves sitting by a bonfire, watching the fire swirl and its lights dance among everyone's skin. Natsu was practically drooling. "Back away from the fire, Natsu," ordered Erza, yanking the boy back by his arm and seating him right next to Lucy. It was a tight squeeze on the log so Lucy had no choice, but to have her shoulder press against Natsu's. And while her heart was beating unsteadily, Natsu didn't seem to least bit bothered by this.

Luckily for Lucy, Levy asked her to come over so she could change into dry clothes back inside Cana's house. Lucy was happy to oblige, desperately wanting to get out of her wet bikini bottoms that was starting to make her itch.

"So did you and Gajeel kiss yet?" squealed Lucy as they climbed up Cana's wooden stairs. "I saw you two go off by yourself—"

"Lucy!" Levy blushed furiously. "He-He was just trying to set me free into the ocean because I'm a shrimp..."

Lucy sweatdropped as she stripped out of her wet bathing suit. "Ah of course...that was my next assumption..."

"So you and Natsu have been acting rather close," said Levy, pulling on loose fitted tank top.

"Not really," said Lucy as she shrugged on a purple tank top and a pair of ripped jean shorts. "He's treating me exactly how one would treat a friend."

"Lucy, he can't take his eyes off of you _and_ he can't keep his hands off of you either! He didn't even move away when Erza sat you two next to each other."

"He's just comfortable around me," claimed Lucy, tying her hair into a messy, damp bun. "Like how I'm comfortable around you—because we're _friends._ "

"What else do you need to see to believe that he still has feelings for you?"

"Well...I did walk in on him naked and then he got a—"

****XOXOX****

"Sorry we're late," said Lucy as she zipped up her maroon hoodie. She and Levy sat down on an empty log together.

"Just in time actually," said Cana. "We are playing Dare or Dare and you just missed Gajeel making out with Jellal

—"

"THAT NEVER HAPPENED!" bellowed Gajeel, his eyes darting desperately to Levy to see if she believed him, but Levy was too busy giggling with Lucy.

"I don't know," said Mira, "is there any proof that it never happened?"

Gajeel jumped out of his seat. "Arggg, Jellal—tell them the truth—WHERE THE HELL DID HE GO?!"

"He tends to do that a lot," remarked Cana as she set down her empty beer can. "Anyway, it's your turn, Lucy!"

"Why do I suddenly feel afraid?" Lucy asked, shivering not from the cold wind of sea, but from the evil aura casted by her friends.

"Dare or Dare, Lucy?" snickered Gray.

"Err dare?" Lucy frowned. What a redundant name for a game... Her eyes fell onto Natsu, who was looking at Gray with nasty eyes, almost like they had been arguing. She could faintly hear Natsu hiss, "Gray, I told you I don't need your help!"

"Fine then I won't give you any," Gray whispered back. Then loudly, he said, "Lucy, I dare you to go hook up with Loke in one of the bedrooms."

Lucy's eye twitched. Like hell was she ever going to hook up with Loke and if Loke ever tried to kiss her again she was going to Lucy Kick him a place that would make him deeply regret it.

Everyone around the fire pit glared daggers at Gray, screaming, " _What about the plan?! _" Gray didn't even pretend to care about the plan because he was too busy grinning at Natsu's awestricken expression.

"Hnnghh, Juvia wishes someone would dare Gray-sama to be alone with Juvia," Juvia said longingly.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****I don't even know wth this chapter was but I had it planned for so long so mehh I guess...Please don't be mad at me :3****

****I always pictured a nalu break up with it just being a dumb misunderstanding and possibly a glitch in electronic devices :D hehe poor Natsu and Lucy, hopefully they can make out** — **i mean _make up_ soon!^-^****

****Thank you for reading and I hope you're all enjoying the summer!****

****And I have something special planned for the 80th chapter hehehe****

80. Chapter 80

****AHH 9K! THANK YOU! I truly do appreciate every single review I get! They mean the world to me and help keep me going! I know some of you don't think read them, but I do! So thank you for all the kind words and advice and etc!****

****HAPPY 80** **TH** **CHAPTER!****

* * *

XOXOX

"I'm not kissing Loke," said Lucy, speaking clearly and sternly.

"But you have to," argued Gray, who finally shifted his gaze over to Lucy from Natsu. "It's part of the rules." Natsu, however, was busy dead staring Gray with a mixture disbelief and contempt.

"I don't care about the rules," she said indignantly. "I'm not kissing him!"

Loke smirked from across the fire pit. "It's understandable. She's afraid that once we start kiss, we won't stop."

"Yeah, that's _obviously_ what I'm afraid of," grumbled Lucy.

"Well then you must suffer punishment," said Erza, taking charge of the situation. "Hot stones on your back—" she pulled some stones out near the fire using tongs.

"N-No!" yelled Lucy, jumping out of her seat. "What the hell is wrong with you?" She placed her hands protectively on her tail bone.

"Then kiss Lion Boy," said Gajeel, looking annoyed.

"I don't want to kiss Loke!"

"So that means you want to kiss the Salamander?"

"W-What does one thing have to do with another?!" cried Lucy, stumbling backwards.

"Oooh," cooed Mira, "she's not denying it."

"Do I get to put the hot stones on her back now?" inquired Erza.

"I'll change the dare," said Gray. "Lucy, I dare you to kiss—"

"Hey stop that!" yelled Natsu furiously. He got up from his seat, fists clenched, lips curled back. "Just leave her alone already, damn it!"

And for some reason, _everyone_ backed down and Lucy could see Gray, Cana, and Mira—and the others share some sort of secret smile.

"Well someone's gotta do a dare—Natsu, go kiss Cana—" sighed Loke, looking jaded.

"Pucker up, dragon boy," purred Cana, tackling Natsu to the sandy ground. Natsu let out a groan and Lucy had enough, feeling sick to her stomach as she watched Cana pin him down.

"Hnnghh why won't anyone dare Juvia to kiss Gray-sama?" moaned Juvia.

"Juvia," said Gajeel, huffing, "I dare you to kiss Gray."

"EHHH!?" Juvia and Gray shrieked together.

"Ju-Juvia could never!" Juvia cried, her face turning a boiling shade of red. "But if she must..." Juvia captured Gray's face with her hands and pulled him in for a passionate kiss while Gray's surprised yelp got muffled.

"This game has turned into a total anarchy..." grumbled Gajeel, watching the mess continue to unfold.

"Aww, Lucy!" cried Levy. "They were only kidding! No one's going to force you to kiss anyone! Come back!"

"I know," said Lucy, forcing a smile, "but I'm just not feeling well...I think I might be coming down with the flu or something—I should probably just leave."

"Lucy, wait—Gahh—Get—off!"

****XOXOX****

Lucy wasn't sure where she was headed, she just wanted to get away. Somehow she ended up back in the room she had accidentally walked in on naked Natsu. She blushed. Not wanting to think about that, or stupid Natsu who was probably kissing Cana right now, she pulled out her phone.

"LUCY!" Natsu barged into the room, slamming the door shut behind him. "You're not leaving!"

"Yes I am!" she childishly stuck her tongue out at him before spinning on her heel so that her back was facing him.

"No you're not!" He yanked the phone from her grasp and chucked it right out the window.

"Nooo! If it's broken—I swear I'm going to kill—" He snatched her angry fist and before Lucy realized what was happening, she was pinned down on the bed with Natsu straddling her hips, dressed in only his orange swim trunk, holding her arms back.

"Lucy, just calm down!"

"How can I calm down? Everyone's a jerk! I hate them—" her voice cracked. She felt so betrayed and hurt. How could they be so cruel? Forcing her to kiss someone or suffer the wrath of sadist Erza? Maybe making friends off the internet really was a bad idea after all.

"Lucy, they were just messin' with you! They didn't think you would really kiss Loke—they only kept pushing you because they wanted my reaction—and now they feel really bad!"

"Good," she spat, slamming him off of her. He stumbled to the floor and tried to race out the door, but she was too slow; Natsu had latched onto her wrist. "Cana's kicking everyone out right now. And the others all wanna apologize—I want to apologize actually..."

Lucy finally stopped struggling and met Natsu's eyes for the first time. They looked darker than usual. "If I hadn't pissed Gray off with my stubbornness then you wouldn't have been harassed like that..."

"What were you—What's that noise?"

The two of them froze, ears attentive to this strange humming sound coming from all over. Suddenly the glass mirror on the back of the door began to vibrate—so did the dressers and the window pane began to shake like crazy. The decorative lamps crashed to the floor, along with the fancy vases.

"N-Natsu?" Lucy whimpered, feeling the floor beneath her tremble.

The mirror shattered. "LUCY—GAH!" He shoved her in back of him, his hand clutching his right cheek as glass rained around them. "What's going on?!"

"Earthquake—I think!" cried Lucy just as a part of the ceiling fell to the floor right next to her.

"Get down!" yelled Natsu, though Lucy felt it was irrelevant for him to shout that because he tackled her to the floor and covered her with his body. The fall knocked the wind right out of her and a searing pain shot up her right wrist that made her eyes prickle with tears.

The room started caving in around them. And Natsu somehow maneuvered them under the bed as the dresser just toppled over. Lucy could hear a lot of smashing sounds all over. She buried her face against the crook of his neck and Natsu held her so tightly that Lucy could feel his heart pounding in his chest.

Neither of them were sure how long it took for the shaking to finally stop, but when it did, Natsu was the first one out. He had timidly crawled out, wanting to make sure it was safe then gave Lucy the okay.

She struggled crawling out, her arm burned with pain. She cradled it to her chest— "Is your arm okay?" asked Natsu lamely.

"It hurts," she hissed, "but I'll live—"

Natsu snatched Lucy's hand in his and she gasped from the jolt of pain. "Let's see if it's broken," he said, grinning crazily.

"Natsu— _don't_!"

"Relax and close your eyes," he ordered, chuckling while he slowly tickled the back of her hand to soothe her. "I'll be gentle. Just tell me when to stop." Gingerly, he began to bend it back and despite the ache, Lucy found herself melting into his warm touch. "Not broken," he murmured, his hand lingering on hers. "Probably bruised."

One eye at a time, she opened her eyes and sucked in a sharp breath; the room was in ruins. It looked like a tornado had come ripped through it. Debris and glass coated the floor. There was clearly a power outage judging by the darkness.

She looked over at Natsu and gasped. Dark liquid was dripping all over his right cheek. "Y-Your face! It's bleeding," she exclaimed, watching the blood trickle.

"Glass," said Natsu, wincing when he touched the open wound, "From the mirror."

"W-We have to get you to a hospital," she said, running to the door. "Shit! It-It won't open!"

"Probably blocked on the other side," he commented numbly as he stared at his blood soaked fingers.

Taking notice, she commanded, "Sit on the bed! I'll be right back"

Natsu grunted, but did as he was told while Lucy raced into the bathroom. It was a disaster in there as well. Broken glass from the mirrors, shampoo and conditioner puddled the floor. She did her best to avoid stepping on anything as she went into the medicine cabinet. There she found bandages and disinfectants, allowing her to breathe easy.

Returning back into the room, Natsu was busy picking at his fingers and then he met her eyes curiously. She placed all the supplies on the dusty bed, right next to him and then stood between his wide-spread legs.

"This might sting," she said, dabbing the disinfectant over his face. Trying to stall the pain, she quietly, but shakily cleaned the area around the cut that was beginning to crust up. It was nerve-wrecking being this close to his face. His eyes never leaving hers. She could barely breathe, forcing herself to at least inhale and exhale through her nose.

"Psh I doubt it. I can handle anything. My pain tolerance is like non-existent—ARGG!" A string of curses left Natsu's mouth, the second Lucy grazed over the wound.

She snickered. "What was that? You have the pain tolerance of a baby, you were saying?"

Making her cry in surprise, he grasped her wrist to halt her. "Just bandage it up already!" he said, gritting his teeth.

"Fine," she said lightly, trying to bite back a laugh as she gently placed the bandage over his giant wound.

"Thanks, Lucy," he managed to smile brightly—but flinched the second after, his hand flew to his wound.

She frowned, taking a seat next to Natsu on the bed. "It's gonna be a big scar." And not to her surprise, Natsu looked pretty smug about that. "Yush! It'll make me look like a badass!"

Lucy giggled, cradling her still-sore wrist. The pain was slowly fading from it and she could see a small black and blue mark start to form where her wrist must have smacked the ground.

She began to worry about everyone else. Sure they got out with minor cuts and bruises, but were the others as lucky? And Lucy felt terrible. Her last thoughts about them were full of hatred—Natsu patted her head. "Don't worry," he said, "We'll get out of here to make sure everyone's safe."

Except Natsu's words weren't very reassuring as he slammed his shoulder against the door for the umpteenth time. "DAMN IT! JUST OPEN ALREADY!"

"Natsu—stop!" Lucy threw herself at his back, pulling him back. "This is ridiculous."

"Well what the hell are we supposed to do?"

Lucy's eyes fell on a toppled bottle of fire red nail polish, "I think I have an idea..."

Natsu sat there quietly as Lucy worked diligently on his nails. She filed them like crazy, amazed at how ragged his nails were. It distracted her from looking at him. She didn't want to—she couldn't. Not after he had just made out with Cana. Maybe she should have kissed Loke after all. She sighed, no, that wasn't her.

"I didn't kiss Cana," he said suddenly, startling Lucy to the point where she went off path, painting his skin.

"Why not?" said Lucy, concentrating on cleaning his finger. She took notice of how he shivered when she blew slightly on the nail to speed up the drying.

"Why didn't you kiss Loke?"

"I asked you first," she challenged.

"I asked you second," he challenged back, but Lucy gave Natsu a sharp look that made the boy quickly recant his statement. "Because she's not the person I wanted to be dared to kiss."

"O-oh," said Lucy unevenly, feeling shy under Natsu's prying eyes. "Well I got dared to kiss the person I wanted to, buttttt..."

"But?" Natsu smirked, licking his lips.

"But I don't believe in public displays of affections."

"Ehh well then I guess it's a good thing we aren't in public right now," he said, looking bored, but his tone was allusive.

Lucy's pulse stuttered and Natsu began to lean inwards. Their breath mingled—or _would have,_ however neither of them seemed to be able to breathe thanks to their surge of anxiety. Their noses bumped, sending tiny chills up and down Lucy's spine and just as their lips were about to meet—the phone rang.

"My phone!" Natsu pulled back with wild excitement. He jumped off the bed and started digging in the pile of rubble. "Gray? Are you—Juvia? I'm fine—trapped in a room with Lucy—Calm down—" he tensed, his face slowly drained of its flushed color. "We'll find a way to get there! I promise!"

"Natsu?" called Lucy, her pulse rapidly increased. She didn't like the expression on his face...

"Gray's hurt."

XOXOX

* * *

Hehe sorry the break up threw most of you off, but I wanted to make it sudden and not a big deal. Maybe it's just bad writing on my part, but oh well I'm only an amateur ^^

And sorry for updating late! I'm working on two other fics besides this one so it gets complicated haha. I have my Zervis fic (that's already posted) and a new NaLu fic that I will hopefully be able to post soon (It's already 10 chapters long!)

Thanks for reading! Hope this chapter turned out alright!

81. Chapter 81

Sorry for posting late :/ my injury is actually worse than I thought it was. Turns out the problem is with my spine and I now I injured my left hand pretty badly—well really just the middle finger, so I greatly apologize to the people I have accidentally given the middle finger to! :D

Anyway, have fun reading!

* * *

XOXOX

Natsu began to pace back and forth, trying to devise a way for them to get out of the room. It seemed utterly hopeless in Lucy's opinion. The door was completely jammed shut. They tried to crawl through the ceiling by standing up top of the bathroom counter, but it kept crumbling.

"We are stuck here forever," moped Lucy on the dusty bed. She stared out in the window at the moonlit night. It looked so pretty that it was hard to believe that a disaster had just struck. She got off the bed. "It's like the moon's mocking us."

"The moon?" said Natsu, gazing at Lucy with sudden interest.

She furrowed. "Yeah the moon. You know, that big glowy thing in the sky?" She pointed her finger out the window.

"Lucy, you're a genius!" he exclaimed, startling her as he grabbed her by the shoulders, shaking her back and forth. "I never would have thought of that!"

"P-Please...st-stop the...sha-shaking!"

Natsu released her and jumped on the bed, shoving the window all the way open. It was slightly shattered from the earthquake so more glass rained down on the bed in the process. "We're gonna use the window to climb out!"

"WHAT?!" Her eyes practically fell from their sockets. He was crazy. There was no way she was about to scurry out of a window.

"It's the only way!" he said. "And there's a bit of ledge we can walk along and then we reach for the tree— _Shit_ ," hissed Natsu, staring at his hands.

"What?!" asked Lucy, her heart racing in fear. Did Natsu slice his hand on the broken glass? She grimaced, not wanting to clean another wound.

"I smudged the nail polish—can you fix it real quick?"

"Natsu! Focus!" she chided, bopping him on the head. "Gray needs you!"

He scuttled out the window and Lucy leaned over, trying to get a grasp at his complicated foot work. She gulped, she was going to fall to her death. No doubt about that and for some reason, the adventure thrilled her.

"Lucy, c'mon!" he beckoned, holding his hand out for her to take. Lucy took his hand, squeezing it tightly as possible and even though Natsu didn't complain. She knew she would feel bad later for digging her nails into his skin, but she couldn't help it; she was terrified.

She steadied her right foot on the ledge and somehow managed to get her left foot down as well. The ground suddenly looked far away. Her legs suddenly felt like jelly, but she forced herself to ignore that as she and Natsu slithered against the wall to make their way over to the tree Natsu was talking about.

"Let go," he said, trying to shimmy his hand out of her death grip.

"No way!"

"I can't reach for the tree with you trying to break my hand!"

"I'm not trying to break your hand!"

"Really? Coulda fooled me with that iron grip—"

"I don't have an iron grip!"

"It's like a boa constrictor with claws—OW!"

Natsu reached for the tree and hoisted himself onto a thick branch and called for her to follow. Wiping her sweaty palms against her jean shorts, she wrapped her arms around the branch and somehow scampered onto the spot next to Natsu. This was one thing books left out about tree climbing—how uncomfortable it was. The branch was rough, leaving scrapes along her bare legs and hands and her already injured wrist flared with pain.

Like a ladder, Natsu began to climb down each branch and Lucy followed closely. Lucy followed closely. Her wrist hurt so badly. If it wasn't sprained before, it was now.

At one point Natsu had either lost grip or the branch gave out—he let out a curse and fell to the ground. And at the same time Natsu had stumbled on, Lucy had suffered the same fate. She grabbed on to the previous branch for dear life, but the pain in her hand ignited, she lost her grip. Lucky for her, she landed on top of Natsu.

"So heavyyy," he moaned before Lucy flicked his wound. Natsu scowled at her and spat something about what kind of person hits someone's injury before running towards the front of the house.

"Natsu, slow down! We won't be able to find Gray if you keep—" They came to an abrupt halt. Seated on the steps of Cana's porch was Gray with Juvia resting against his chest. Lucy's stomach churned. She was afraid of what she was going to see. Was Gray going to be torn apart? Bloody and broken? Bruised and—

"GRAYY! ARE YOU OKAY? WHAT'S HURT—OR BROKEN?" cried Natsu.

Gray and Juvia jumped in alarm and then looking puzzled, Gray said, "Natsu? Gah what the hell happened to your face?"

"Who cares about my face," rushed Natsu, "what about you?"

"Huh? Nothing's wrong with me."

"But Juvia said—" Lucy had begun to say.

"_Juvia_" hissed Gray. "I told you it was a splinter! From moving that stupid branch that was blocking the front door!"

"B-but Juvia panicked when she heard Gray-sama screaming in pain! So she called Natsu!"

"Yeah because splinters hurt like hell!" exclaimed Gray, raising his offending finger that was bandaged up.

"That was before Juvia knew!"

"Juvia—ge-off!"

Natsu and Lucy shared a silent look. He offered her a lighthearted smile, while Lucy began to pace. "So we climbed out of a window, risked nearly _dying_ all because Gray got a _splinter?_" she said, trying to process everything. "_Unbelievable_" She slumped down next to Juvia on the porch and hysterically laughed.

Gray and Juvia shot Natsu a bemused expression, while he, in return, merely shrugged.

"Dude, are you wearing nail polish?" Gray asked quizzically.

"Yeah," said Natsu, beaming as he proudly displayed his freshly painted nails. "But they got messed up on our way to save you. Hope you're happy!" He scowled.

"So then I take it you were really worried about me?" asked Gray, amusement lighting up his bored eyes.

"Psh, of course not!"

"Yes you were!"

"No I wasn't!"

"Well the second he found out you were hurt, he bolted out that window," interjected Lucy between her fits of laughter.

"Lucyyy!" moaned Natsu, betrayed. "Gray will hold this over me for the rest of my life!"

Gray snickered haughtily and then made a coughing noise that seemed to mask some words. "What was that?" asked

Natsu keenly.

"I said thanks!" snapped Gray, keeping his eyes trained on a stick on the ground. "Thanks for coming to help me even though wasn't hurt."

Natsu chuckled. "Anytime."

"So what happened to your face? I guess we can probably add Scarface to the nickname list."

"And we can add splinter to yours," growled Natsu.

"I'm gonna go inside to see if the others are okay," said Lucy, not wanting to stay for another fight breaking out.

Gray paused from the fight. "I'm gonna go apologize to Lucy." He opened the front door and paused, adding, " _Alone_," to his statement when he heard footsteps behind him. "I feel bad for antagonizing her. So you two wait here."

Natsu and Juvia dead stared each other, before they both averted their gazes.

****XOXOX****

The inside of Cana's house wasn't as bad as the bedroom Lucy had been trapped in. Only a few picture frames, trophies from her dad's wrestling matches, and flower vases were smashed against the floor. The ceiling had bits and pieces falling down in a sawdust-style.

A hand suddenly touched her shoulder and Lucy startled. "Lucy! It's me—Gray!"

She placed a hand against her hammering heart. "You scared me," she said, her voice breathy.

"Yeah, sorry," he said, looking apologetic. "I just wanted to apologize for uh earlier..." He sheepishly scratched the back of his neck. "I shouldn't have dared you to kiss Loke—I crossed a line. I just wanted Natsu to fix things between you two, but I forgot he's a complete moron. And please don't be mad at the others. I was the one who changed the plans up—we were just trying to get you two alone together as much as possible."

"It's fine," she said, smiling sincerely. "I'm just relieved that you guys are okay. And if Natsu wants to get back together with me, he doesn't need any help."

"Did he at least give you the letter?"

"What letter?"

"The letter he—"

"Okay, times up!" called Natsu, barging in with Juvia standing behind him. "Don't ever leave me alone with her again!" he cried while Juvia wailed, "Don't ever leave Juvia alone with him again!"

Lucy fretfully whispered to Gray, "W-What do you think happened?"

"Don't know and I definitely don't want to know..." he murmured back.

"Whoaa doesn't look too bad in here!" exclaimed Natsu, marveling at the infrastructure. "The bedroom me and Lucy were in looked so much worse."

"Juvia and I were trapped outside," said Gray. "Cana had kicked everyone out like moments before it happened. Mira left with her siblings and Erza had ran inside searching for Jellal. Levy and Gajeel—no clue where they went."

"Juvia saw them go inside," said Juvia, clinging onto Gray's arm and strangely, he pulled Juvia against her chest.

"We're right here!" screamed Levy, running to them with blood soaked hands. "Gajeel got badly injured! But-but I patched him up the best I could!"

"What happened?!" exclaimed Lucy, noticing that Levy's eyes were bloodshot.

"Well the earthquake started and everything started falling all around us. He covered me with his body and things started smashing against him. I told him to stop, but then he told me that he wanted to be by my side for-forever..." She choked up.

"Don't worry," Lucy said, hugging Levy against her chest. "Gajeel will be fine."

"I know," she sobbed. "I was just so scared. It's so hard trying to keep your cool when something awful is happening."

Eventually everyone met up in Cana's living room with all their belongings packed and ready to leave because Cana didn't want them staying around for the aftershock.

Speaking of Cana, she apologized profusely to everyone saying she should have checked the earthquake reports and that this actually happens a lot while everyone mentally crossed Cana's house off of the list of places to stay at.

Mira had left before the earthquake happened and had made it home safely with her siblings. Loke had left with some girl, but apparently was fine. Gajeel and Levy went to the hospital and Lucy had a feeling Levy was never going to allow Gajeel to leave her side.

Erza and Jellal departed with Lucy, Natsu, Gray, and Juvia so the train station with private plans of their own that Lucy was sure was going to end up in one of Erza's numerous smut fics.

And as Lucy took a seat on her own train, too exhausted to give a lengthy goodbye to the others. Even Natsu seemed too exhausted as well, only giving Lucy a half-ass wave before she got aboard. But she was okay with that.

She was very okay in fact. Even though they hadn't gotten back together, she felt hopeful that maybe this was all really a misunderstanding and the second she got home, she would try to be brave and call him out on this.

She went to go shove her duffle bag in the storage compartment, when suddenly she realized that it was open. She sat back down, zippering it up—until a pair of shorts she did not recognize caught her eye. She pulled them out and blushed, remembering that they were the ones Natsu had been wearing before she walked in on him naked. How did that even get in her bag and why did she have this feeling that Cana was somehow involved?

She aggressively rolled it into a ball, but something stiff in the pocket caught her attention. She dug into it, pulling out a cream colored envelop with a waxy N stamped as the seal. In a messy scrawl it read: "To Lucy."

"A letter?" She frowned, ripping it open without hesitation.

"_Dear Lucy,_

I decided that I'm gonna give it another go at this writing stuff you seem to like so much, but it's not going too well. I'm sitting here, on my bed with Happy annoyingly crawling all over this paper, trying to think of the right words to say... Something deep and meaningful—something that will make you fall for me as hard as I fell for you. So I thought, if it's meaningful, it should come from the heart, right? But what good is that since I can't speak from my heart, hell, I can't even figure out what's in it. Actually that's a lie because you're in it.

Ughhh I'm so bad with words. I hate this.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I am in love with you, Lucy.

And don't you dare ask me why because I sure as hell have no clue. I mean you're a complete and utter weirdo, you're really loud and annoying, you're a major nerd with a cute laugh, and you make my heart feel all funny. You're fun to mess with and your angry face just makes it all the more fun. And most of all, you were my friend when no one else wanted to be and for that, I'll always be grateful and I want you to know that no matter what happens, I'll never love you any less.

And before this letter gets too long and mushy, I just wanna say thank you, thank you for being you.

-Natsu

P.S. I decided I'm going to burn this letter instead of giving it to you."

Lucy's world came to a breathless halt. Her eyes desperately reread the letter over and over again, making sure she didn't misread something because of his sloppy handwriting. And suddenly a drop of water landed on the bottom, next to his name. She lightly touched her hand to cheek, shocked by the sudden wetness. Tears? When did she start crying?

"I am in love with you..." her voice was tiny. She tossed her head back, wincing when it collided with the back of the hard seat.

"_Three minutes until depart,_ " announced the train conductor.

Taking a deep breath, Lucy neatly folded the letter back into its envelope. She yanked her duffle bag the seat next to her and broke into a run.

Where was _his_ train? She sprinted faster and faster down the train lines, searching for one that read _Magnolia_. Her legs burned and her heart painfully smacked against her ribs. She was beginning to panic. What if she couldn't find it? What if she got stranded at the train station?

She was just about to give up, leaning against a tall pillar, until she heard, "Ughh c'mon, man! The train hasn't even started moving yet!"

"Gray?!" Lucy exclaimed, panting. She bolted onto the train, shoving a woman with a baby stroller out of the way because she wasn't going to miss her chance.

She moved down the cart, searching for some pathetic person clutching his stomach or even Gray's raven-colored hair. And then she froze. Her eyes landed on Natsu. He was standing up, shoving his red duffle bag in the seat compartment.

"Natsu!" She rammed herself against him, tackling him to the dirty train floor. She buried her face against his chest, inhaling his fire-stained scent.

"Lu-Lucy! What are you doing here?"

She tried to say: "I want to spend spring break with you," but her voice was muffled.

"You want to eat fish with me? What?"

A vein ticked on her forehead so she lifted her head up and loomed over him. "I want to spend spring break with you—at your place—that is if your offer still stands—"

Natsu's perplexed expression quickly morphed into a bright, childlike grin, "Happy will be ecstatic!"

A stranger coughed, signaling Lucy and Natsu to get off of the floor because they were blocking the thin path. She sat in what she presumed was Natsu's seat, taking the window seat. Natsu plopped down next to her.

"Great, now Lucy can meet your annoying lizard—" said Gray, popping his head out from behind.

"Salamander!" yelled Natsu, his face twisting into a nasty scowl.

"Reptile," sneered Gray.

"HE'S AN AMPHIBIAN!"

"Lucy?!" Juvia's voice said. "You're going to Magnolia too?!"

"Juvia?" Lucy gasped—not because Juvia was there and it was surprising, but because Juvia said _Lucy_ , not _Love Rival_. And that made her happy.

"Gray-sama invited Juvia to stay over!" the girl squealed as someone walked past. "Juvia is so happy you're here! Now we can double date!"

"Hey was that Jellal?" inquired Gray, pointing his finger to the back.

"Where?" asked Natsu. Everyone turned to look, but whoever Gray saw was long gone.

"Gah never mind..." muttered Gray as the train jolted in its start of movement. "Say, don't you have motion sickness?" he asked, leaning over at Natsu.

"Gray!" Natsu keeled over. "I...hate...you."

"What?" he asked incredulously. "I can't let you appear cool in front of Lucy for even a second."

"Oh don't worry," said Lucy, smirking, "I already know he's just a giant dork."

"Both," groaned Natsu.

"What was that?" teased Lucy, patting his back in a small attempt to comfort him.

"I—hate—you—_both_."

Meanwhile in their group chat, Erza asked, "Has anyone seen Jellal? I can't seem to find him on my train."

The lot broke into fits of laughter—even motion sick Natsu was able to join in. And never in Lucy's life did she think she would be grateful for an earthquake.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Sorry for any mistakes, I just want to upload and be done with this chapter already and sorry if it sucks it's difficult writing with a hand and half :/****

****OMG Pokemon Go! I can't stop playing even with my injuries nothing will stop me muahahaha! I chose Charman**

der and the red team :D What did you guys pick if you're playing?!**

And thank you for reading! Enjoy your weekend!

82. Chapter 82

AH so the final diagnosis to my thrilling spine saga is that it's fractured! I can fully say that was the last thing I was expecting to hear lol. So now I get this awesome back brace! And my finger is no longer in agony so I'm able to write with 2 hands again!

Thank you all for the get well messages and for always being sweet it really means a lot!

I wish I had a better chapter planned for you all, but ehh it takes me a while to get to my point :)

* * *

XOXOX

"Why do we have to crawl in through the window?" asked Lucy, wary after the climbing escapade at Cana's.

"It's nearly midnight! If we go through the front door then Zeref will come bothering us," hushed Natsu as he hoisted himself up the windowsill. Lucy followed suit, landing on top of his back.

"The other side of the screen," she murmured as she sat up on his back while Natsu moaned into his bed. The room was dark and Natsu jostled her off of his back to go flip on his bedside lamp that looked round and orange like a dragon's egg.

Lucy desperately looked around the room, wanting to take it all in. It was messy, but not too messy. Her hand caressed the bed, admiring how soft and plush the covers were and her eyes landed on the big gaping hole in the wall.

"Wahh it's the hole!" She put her fist through it out of dumb curiosity.

"Why are you gettin' so excited over a hole?" he murmured, watching her with his head tilted in bemusement.

Unfortunately for Lucy, she chose her injured wrist to stick through the wall and it got stuck. She pulled and pulled again, but it was no use; it hurt too much. "I-I can't get it out!" she said frantically.

Natsu decided to cackle in the background rather than help her out and Lucy yelled, "Stop laughing and help me already! It hurts!"

That sobered him up fast. He crawled next to her, wrapped his hands around her wrist, ("Be gentle!" Lucy cried, flinching) and guided her out slowly. "You okay?" He asked lowly, his rough hands rubbed up and down her forearm, observing the way her skin bumped up from his touch.

"Yeah," she hummed softly.

Besides the hole-in-the-wall, Natsu's room had posters of dragons and Fairy Tail and even his autographed drawing. He had a lot of scorch marks on his walls and near the damaging marks were candles or lighters. Moving past his walls, his drawers were half open with clothes hanging out. His desk was a bit of mess with loose papers scattered about and school books left hanging open. All in all his room looked rather boyish and smelled like his pyrotechnic supplies.

The second she spotted his bookshelf, Lucy scampered off his bed. "Ao Haru Ride, Kimi ni Todoke, Orange—I KN

EW YOU HAD A SHOUJO COLLECTION! You're such a nerd!"

"You're making too big of a deal," he wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her away from the shelf.

Lucy laughed. "We so need to have a shoujo marathon—"

"So annoying," he muttered, burying his face in the back of her neck; Lucy stiffened. "I'm soo hungry," he moaned against her bare skin. She shivered.

"Me too," she said, hoping her voice sounded even as she rubbed her grumbling stomach. Cana's party was such a mess that the only food there was s'mores and that was hardly filling.

"I'll go get us some food."

And after Natsu had left, Lucy returned to his manga shelf—smiling when she saw Yamada-kun because he had only bought it because of her. She turned around, deciding now was the perfect time to snoop around without him knowing.

But before she could do any digging, her eyes fell on something she had never seen before was a side of a wall that was never shown in any of their chats. She scrambled over to it wondering what it exactly it was. She could make out dates and little pictures and writings underneath.

Cocking her head to the side, she read, "The first coloring I made for Lucy!" and beneath it was the coloring she had requested from him of Team Haru back when she had first followed him.

She gasped. "A timeline?!" Well it wasn't exactly a line, more like random events posted on the wall in no particular order.

She looked over at another one. "The day I heard Lucy's voice for the accent challenge." It was followed by a screen shot of Natsu and Lucy messaging. _ "Do you really like Gray's voice better than mine?" _ Natsu had asked.

" _ I like your voice better. Actually, I like your voice a lot, _ " Lucy had replied back.

Lucy blushed, feeling slightly embarrassed reading her own words. She looked around for the next thing that had her name on it. "The day I asked Lucy to voice chat!" Underneath was another print out of their conversation:

_ "I hate playing video games with someone without talking because then it just feels like I'm playing against a NPC," Natsu had written._

_ "Yeah, I get what you mean," she said back._

_ "Great! So let's do a __Skype__Call__._"

_ "You want to video chat!?" _ Lucy cringed at her own stupidity.

_ "No, you weirdo! You don't know what a __Skype Call__ is?" _

_ "No :3 I'm sort of new to __Skype.__ _"

_ "Oh well a __Skype Call__ is like a phone call except it's on __Skype__," he explained._

_ "So we would __only__ hear each other's voices?" _ Lucy cringed at her own stupidity.

_ "Right! That's not a problem is it?" _

"No, no problem at all."

She smiled softly, touching her hand against the wall as she continued to read the rest of it.

"The day me and Lucy video chatted for the first time!" And below that was a screenshot of Lucy smiling so brightly and Natsu looking softly in the tiny image of himself. She touched it lightly, her chest flooding with warmth.

She wasn't the only one on his wall of important events. Gray was on it ("The first time me and Gray fought!") and Erza was on a few spaces and others too— but Lucy was the vast majority of it and it made her surge with pride and her eyes landed on another one of her, "The day Lucy followed me!"

Her heart swelled and soft tears prickled her eyes. She didn't know he was the sentimental type. She hugged herself. How was it possible for her to fall even more in love with him?

Something shuffled in the background and Lucy whirled around quickly. There was nothing there and then her eyes landed on a tank.

"Happy!" she cooed, almost tripping over her feet in her mad rush. The salamander sat on a dank log, nearly blending in with it if it weren't for his electric blue spots. "You're so cute!" She tapped on the glass and Happy ran over to where she tapped—and she wasn't sure what exactly had happened, but suddenly Lucy found herself soaked in water and Happy's tank was now toppled over. And the said salamander crawled down from her hair and onto the bridge of her nose.

"Look what I scored—Lucy!" Natsu froze, taking one look at Lucy before he dropped all the bags and dishes he had been carrying and doubled over laughing. Tears literally poured from his eyes as his laughs echoed all over the room.

"Stop laughing!" she fumed.

"I'm sooo adding this to my snapchat story," Natsu gleamed with his phone pointed at Lucy.

"You're cruel!" she sobbed. She tried to take Happy off her face, but the salamander was too fast, dodging Lucy's hand as it traveled down to her drenched chest.

"Ohhhh how the tables have turned," cackled Natsu evilly. He dropped down to his knees. "Now you know how obnoxious Happy is!" He cupped his hand over Lucy's left breast to grab Happy.

"P-Pervert!" she stammered, her face flushed to the darkest shade of red. She slapped Natsu's face accidentally hitting his wounded cheek.

"Oww! I wasn't coppin' a feel!" he yelped. Placing Happy down on his lap, he reached over and grabbed Lucy's breasts with both hands and squeezed. "See? Now this is me coppin' a—OWWW!"

"I DIDN'T ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION!"

"Can't wait to rub this in Cana's face—"

"You're both perverts," she said crossly, turning her head to hide her blush. "Sorry about Happy's tank spilling over. I don't know how it happened! It just—"

"Relax!" Natsu chuckled. "Told you Happy was really excited to meet ya! Look, Happy, it's your other owner!"

Natsu grabbed Lucy's damp hand and placed the salamander on top of it, keeping his hand prisoned over it so that H

appy couldn't escape. She couldn't help but shiver at his touch. "Cold?" he asked.

"Yeah," she nodded. "Can I shower?" She felt gross and smelly from Happy's tank water coating her.

"Go ahead," he said, grabbing a t-shirt off the floor to wipe up the mess. "It's across the hall on the right."

There was just something off about being in someone else's shower, though Lucy was able to adapt quickly as she scrubbed her hair clean of the beach water and her body clean of the salamander water. She wondered if the body wash she used was Zeref's since Natsu never smelled like lavender. When she came out of the shower she couldn't find a hair dryer anywhere so she did her best towel-drying it.

And before she could leave the bathroom, it occurred to her that she had forgotten to bring clothes in. "Noo," she panicked. She debated walking out in just a towel, but then what if she ran into Zeref?

Her eyes fell over to the corner where a shirt was stuffed. It looked like plain dark blue t-shirt—something Natsu would wear. Praying it wasn't Zeref's, she pulled it on, satisfied that it was soft and fell mid-thigh.

She walked quickly back into the half open room she presumed was Natsu's room, her hair dripping a wet path behind her.

"Why do girls take so long in the shower?" Natsu asked rummaging through his bag on his floor. He glanced up at her and his eyes turned sharp. "Absolutely not! You're not stealing another one of my shirts!"

"I'm not stealing it," she said. "I'm just borrowing it!"

"Pfft, yeah sure," he scoffed. "And that's exactly what I told the pet store before I walked out with Happy—"

"YOU STOLE HAPPY?!" she wailed in horror and Natsu pulled her down to the

"Don't be so loud! Zeref's against illegal stuff."

"And here I thought you were worried about waking him," she said, sweat dropping as she dug around her tote bag for a pair of boy shorts while Natsu continued to go through his own bag.

"Ughh where is it?" Natsu mumbled to himself.

Lucy peered over at him as she tied her hair into a tall pony tail. "What can't you find?"

"N-nothing," he said distractedly. He dumped his bag upside down on his floor. "GAHHH IT'S NOT HERE!"

"What's not here? And what happened to the food?" Her stomach felt hollow.

"I ate it all."

"What?! I'm going to starve to death here!" She flopped face down onto his bed. His pillow smelled freshly washed and warm like the bonfire.

"Want me to go get us some more?" he asked, sitting on the edge of his bed.

"No, I'll survive."

"Fine," he said, "I'm gonna go shower then. After imma kick your ass at some video games!"

And the second Natsu left, Lucy sat back up. She saw his laptop on his desk and a thrill surged through her chest. Sh

e took a seat at his desk and pulled his laptop open, her heart thumping with nervous energy.

Now she really was on the other side of the screen.

It made her feel uneasy and excited all at the same time. The keyboard was a bit worn and there was cracks and indents on Natsu's wooden desk. The screen quickly loaded up from sleep mode and on it was his skype blinking with a message from Gray. "Have fun with Lucy," it said.

So Lucy wrote back, "Have fun with Juvia, but not too much fun. I'll be thinking of you!" She added a heart emoticon.

And Gray wrote back, "WHAT THE HELL MAN?"

Lucy snickered happily that she got her revenge for Natsu hacking her.

And suddenly Natsu's bedroom door slammed open and for a moment Lucy could only make out an outline of a guy with a huge bat ready to be swung. "Who's in here?!" a voice asked while Lucy screamed on the top of her lungs as she jumped out of Natsu's chair.

The guy froze. "Lucy? I didn't know you were here! It's so nice to finally meet you!"

"ZEREF?" She placed her hand over her dying heart.

"You scared me there for a second," he said with his metal bat still raised in the air as he came closer to her.

"And here I am still scared," she muttered, trying to regain her breath. "C-can you put the bat down." Sweat trickled uncomfortable down her neck.

"Of course." He lowered the baseball bat.

"W-why do you have a bat? Oh my god—my dad's not here, is he?" She gnawed on her nails in a moment of pure terror. She wanted to tell her dad she was here, not have him find her here and think that she lied. This was bad, very bad—

"Jude's not here. He told me that a bat is the most effective way to keep intruders out," Zeref said, matter-of-fact. "Would you like to take a swing at me with it?"

"No!" she cried, her back pressing against a pointed piece of wood from the desk. "Can you do me favor and not tell my dad that I'm here?"

"Lie to Jude?" Zeref frowned, rubbing his chin. "Does Natsu know you're here?"

"Er yes?"

"So I can assume you two are back together?" His black eyes lit up like a child on Christmas morning. "I'm so relieved! I never seen Natsu so distraught before, I mean he actually refused to eat for the past few days."

"He did?" Lucy asked with growing interest, however Zeref didn't seem interested anymore.

"Do you wanna see something cool?"

"Not really..."

Zeref pulled out his phone and unwillingly, Lucy looked at it and gasped. "This is—"

"Lucyyy, you used up all the hot water! How is that even possible?!" exclaimed Natsu, barging in to the room in nothing but a pair of orange boxers with water dripping down his chest. "Zeref? What are you doing here?—where did that bat come from— _SHIT!_ DON'T TELL ME YOUR DAD'S HERE!" He ran over to his drawers and yanked on a pair of shorts and a red t-shirt.

"The bat's mine," said Zeref, grabbing it. "Jude said it's the most effective way to—"

"THIS BAT THING IS CONTAGIOUS?" wailed Natsu. "THIS IS WORSE THAN GRAY'S STRIPPING HABIT!"

"Contagious?" inquired Zeref, tilting his head to the right. "Do you want to take a swing at me with it?"

"Yes—"

"_Natsu_", growled Lucy.

"You painted your nails," said Zeref, eyeing Natsu's hands.

"Yeah! But they got messed up," frowned Natsu.

Zeref patted his back. "Well at least red looks good on you! I prefer standard black," he held up his own neatly painted nails. Lucy's eye twitched watching the whole exchange.

And Zeref left, pausing at the door to smile at Lucy, "It was nice to finally meet you, Lucy!"

"Likewise!" She smiled back.

Natsu grabbed her by the shoulders. "Did you see the bat?! Now I have to fear for my life at home! Ugh me 'nd Happy need to move out."

Lucy laughed and Natsu suddenly looked serious.

"Listen, Natsu, about what Zeref just showed me—," she said.

"Oi, Lucy, I need to know—like how Mest-sensei _needs to know_ —why did you decide to stay with me on break ___"

"— _POKEMON GO JUST CAME OUT!_"

"WHAT?!"

"AND ZEREF'S ALREADY TOOK OVER THE NEAREST GYM AND HE'S A PART OF TEAM INSTINCT WITH A LEVEL 1100 RATTATA!"

"WHATTTT?!" cried Natsu. "I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT ANY OF THIS MEANS, BUT WHAT THE HELL? ! Grrr! Download faster!" He snapped at his phone. "I HAVE TO BEAT ZEREF AT SOMETHING!"

He ran into his closet and started chucking things out left and right. Lucy ducked, letting out small screams every time something almost nailed her. Then he shouted, "Catch!"

Lucy caught the item—a beanie with a pokeball outline on it. She grinned, shoving it on. Then she jammed on a pair of shorts and tied Natsu's shirt up so that it wasn't ridiculously long.

Natsu stared at her for a moment and Lucy shrunk back, timidly asking, "What?"

"N-nothing!" His cheeks were flushed. Then grinning madly, he punched his fist against his hand and said, "Here's the plan! We travel all night and once the sun rises we go to the nearest diner and buy pancakes!"

"Okay!"

XOXOX

* * *

Just some randomness~ And someday I'll believe in editing my chapters, but that day is not today nor will it be in the near future because I'm lazy ^-^

And I wonder what Natsu was searching for :D

Ahh so since this story is sorta nearing its end, I finally posted my new story I've been working on!

It's called _ **The Soul's Inferno**_ **and it's summary for those interested:**_ The summer before her first year at university, Lucy Heartfilia never imagined she would find her soul mate and she certainly didn't imagine he would already be dead. Ghost AU. NaLu._

Thanks for reading!

83. Chapter 83

AhH THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR THE GET WELLS! AND OMG THIS STORY HIT 3K FOLLOWERS! AHh!

So short chapter that includes a special surprise in a separate story post :)

* * *

XOXOX

"Natsu, I really don't think you have to climb a tree to catch a pidgey—oh why do I even bother," muttered Lucy, tossing her head back as she thought back to the lake Natsu fell into trying to catch a magikarp—and he pulled Lucy in when she tried to help him out. Her hair and clothes now stuck uncomfortably to her body and she prayed she wouldn't end up with a rash from this as she pulled on her shorts.

"Oi, Lucy!" he shouted. "Take a picture of me! It'll look sick!"

"You know my phone's dead!" she yelled back, annoyed. Her phone died fifteen minutes ago, leaving her low-key jealous that Natsu could still play.

Natsu scurried back down, jostling the tree which made leaves and twigs to rain down. "Damn it! My phone's dead now too."

Lucy scowled, hunching over to cover her head. "Natsuuu, were you posting trash memes on tumblr again?" she moaned. "I told you it would drain your phone faster! Now what are we supposed to do with two dead phones?!"

"But I had to!" Natsu insisted. "Otherwise someone else will beat me to all the memes!"

"You're too competitive," she said, pinching the bridge of her nose.

"Tch says the one who shoved me into a lake when I was tryin' to catch a magikarp!" He crossed his arms, his muscles still bulging from his tree climb. Lucy blushed as she also noticed the way his wet t-shirt clung to his body.

Ignoring that, she snapped, "I didn't push you!" She jabbed a finger at his chest. "You fell in! All by yourself! And then you pulled me in!"

"Yeah sure, likely story. Blame it on me when there's no witnesses around. And just so you know, I'm keepin' an eye on you at all times!"

"You're ridiculous," she said, exhaling. She was so tired that even arguing seemed to drain her. "I don't think I can walk one more step..." She hunched over. They had to have walked—more like _ran—_ at least 10 miles. Her legs felt like they were on fire. "I just want to sleep."

"Oh c'mon," said Natsu, "the night's still young!"

"It's 3 am! The night's not young! It's old— _very old!_ "

"Sleep is for the weak!" He roared enthusiastically and then collapsed straight to the grassy ground.

"N-Natsu?" She got down on her knees, placing a tender hand on the boy's back as he snored. "Did you really just fall asleep?! Wake uppp!" She shook him, starting to panic as she glanced into the dark abyss. It didn't seem so scary before when Natsu was awake. She could hear things rustling in the distance of the woods. Her heart raced. "Natsuuu! C'mon!"

"I'm up! I'm up!" he said groggily, popping up too fast that he almost bumped heads with Lucy, but she dodged at the last second.

"Can we please go back to your place?" she begged, her heart still racing from nerves.

"Can't," he yawned. "Dunno where we are."

"WHAT? H-how don't you know where we are?!"

"We're in the middle the woods, it's dark out, and our phones are dead. How do you expect me to find our way back? Sides neither of us were paying attention on our way here. We're better off just camping until daylight. Now go to sleep."

"How am I supposed to do that?!" she exclaimed. They didn't bring any sleeping bags or blankets and she wasn't about to go lay down on the ground that was crawling with who knows what.

"Just go lie down and close your eyes," Natsu grumbled, falling flat on his back with his arms spread.

"But-but-but sleep is for the weak, right?!" Lucy laughed nervously. "L-let's see who can stay up the longest!"

"Let's do that tomorrow."

Lucy didn't move. She anxiously stared at him. He can't be serious. Sleeping out in the middle of the woods unprotected from who-knows-what's out there. She was scared, it was as simple as that. And she most certainly did not want to sleep in wet clothes.

He opened one eye, sneak peeking at Lucy. "Lucyyy, relax!"

"I can't! I'm-I'm scared!" she bashfully admitted, biting her lip shamefully sitting against a thick tree.

His face softened and stretching out his arms, Natsu sat up and crawled next to her, his arms brushed against hers, eliciting a chill down her spine. "We did a pretty good job!" he exclaimed.

Lucy cocked her head, unsure what he was talking about.

"Reaching level 6 and all those Pokemon we caught! Gray'll be so behind! MWHAHA!"

"Why am I not surprised you're turning this into a competition?" She grinned to herself. Typical Natsu, changing the conversation to distract her.

"I wonder how Gray will feel knowing I named all my rattatas after him," mused Natsu and Lucy giggled. She had decided to allow autocorrect to name her Pokémon. Weedle became Needle and Spearow became Sorrow, and Eevee actually corrected to Levy (Lucy screenshotted that and sent it to Levy herself).

"Honored, probably," she joked and Natsu laughed.

She rested her head against his chest. His shirt was still wet from the lake and he smelled like sweat and the outdoors and Lucy was sure that she didn't smell any better thanks to the amount of running she did chasing after Natsu and her unexpected swim.

His hand rested on her thigh, drawing little patterns on her cool skin. Lucy shivered. "Cold?" he asked, pausing his strokes.

"A little," she sheepishly admitted. How could she not be cold? Her clothes were soaked through-in-through.

"Take your shirt off," he said and after seeing the horrified look on her face, he quickly amended, "I'll hang it on the branch to dry! It won't take that long since it's kinda warm out—I'll take my stuff off too." Then he pulled off his shirt and Lucy immediately turned away.

"What's with you?" he asked. "It's not like you haven't seen me shirtless before."

"N-nothing!" she snapped. He had a point. There was no way she could stay in her clothes all night. Balling her fists on the hem of the shirt she borrowed from Natsu and pulled the wet, sticky thing off, revealing her slightly dry pink, lacey bra.

She heard Natsu's intake of breath. She whirled around, shyly wondering what kind of look he would have on his face. Her thudded heavily—and then it sank. Natsu wasn't even looking at her. He was looking up, head tilted all the way back and then he plopped to the ground and went back to lying eagle-spread.

"Oi, Lucy—c'mere!" He patted the ground next to him and Lucy noticed that he had taken his shorts off too, leaving him in a pair of fiery boxers.

"I thought I made it clear I don't want to lie on the ground," she huffed, hugging her exposed chest.

"Lucy! C'mon!"

"Fine." She gingerly walked over and slithered down next to him.

"Go on your back like me," he commanded and skeptically, Lucy copied him. Her head and back smacked the grassy floor a little too roughly. She winced, screwing her eyes shut.

"Now tell me what you see!" he said, excitement growing in his voice.

And Lucy squinted her eyes open and gasped. "Stars!" So many of them at that. It was like Christmas time with all the gleaming lights. It made her heart swell at the beauty of it. "I-I've never seen so many before!"

"Me neither," said Natsu. "D'you know any constellations?"

"A few, but there's too many stars here! I can't make out anything—well that one over there is a planet because it's not twinkling—" she said, pointing into the abyss.

And up ahead of them was the dreaded lake they had fallen into and Lucy gasped at how beautiful it was with fireflies dancing above it while the stars and moon glistened in the reflection.

"Sometimes I forget how pretty the real world is," Lucy whispered.

"Yeah, me too," Natsu said, gazing out at the lake. And as silence trickled between, Lucy never wanted this moment to end. She wanted to make the most out of it. She wanted to—

Natsu yawned loudly. "I changed my mind. Sleep is for the strong—"

"Don't go to sleep yet," she said hastily.

"But I'm tiredddd," he moaned.

"W-well I think I know something that will keep you awake," Lucy said, her voice dipping lowly.

"What are you—L-Lucy!" He choked the second Lucy slipped into his lap.

And for once, she rested her forehead against his, eyes fluttering shut, just taking in the last of Natsu's surprised expression. "Thank you, Natsu," she whispered and she meant it for everything; For him protecting her during the earthquake, for him making her friends, for him always being supportive, and for him making her know what love feels like.

She wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him and with nothing but the moon and the stars as their witness to what their night would entail.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Sooo the chapter ends here...butttttt I wrote out a SMUT CHAPTER AS SEPARATE STORY! So go to my account page and look for Virtual Flames: Night of Firsts if you want to read it! Be mindful, it's M-rated for a reason.****

****And thanks for reading! Happy friday!****

84. Chapter 84

****GUESS WHO'S BACK?!****

****Got a new laptop! So yay i can write again and sorry for the delay. I kinda just wanted a break from the stress i get from writing and i got some unkind messages so that kinda just kills any motivation to write ngl. So please remember, fanfiction is free! So there's really no need to be mean to fic writers honestly...****

****Plus I'm having too much fun writing for my new fic so this one got neglected my bad...****

****also, i have a lot of unanswered messages on here so I'm sorry if i haven't replied! Im overwhelmed at the moment so please forgive me!****

****Special thanks to all of you who were so sweet about the bonus chapter! Means a lot, really.****

****And so, I believe there is about 5 or less chapters left to this story! Hard to believe it's finally coming to an end.***

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Waking up was bizarre for Lucy. She felt all shy and timid—not to mention flustered as well, but still, she regretted nothing. Natsu was snoring lightly against her. She felt a little chilly from the breeze. She quietly pulled her clothes—now dry—back on. It looked like Natsu had done the same sometime while she was asleep since he was dressed fully in his dry clothes.

She dropped back to the floor and observed the sleeping Natsu. He had a cute smile plastered on his lips and Lucy just had a strange feeling that he was dreaming about food, because there were only three things Natsu loved: food, Happy, and Lucy—her heart fluttered thinking back to the sweet love note he didn't give her—as to be expected that he would write something _like that_ and not _give it to her._

She curled up against him, resting her cheek against his solid chest and slowly closed her tired eyes. His hand crept up and rested on the small of her back. She never felt more happy in her entire life.

"Oi, Lucy, wake up!" someone said, shaking her gently.

"Na...tsu?" she opened one eye and saw Natsu crouching beside her, grinning down at her with dirt staining his cheeks and bandaid. His pink hair was unkempt with his bangs sticking flat to his forehead. How was it that he was able to look cute even with all that dirt caking him? She paled at the thought of how she must look—especially after she tried combing her fingers through her hair, only for them to get snagged on a knot.

"The sun's starting to rise," he said, pointing at the sky, "so we should probably get outta here. I know how to get home now." He stood up slowly and added a tiny, "...I think."

Lucy frowned, but couldn't suppress a giggle. She stood up and her legs were screaming with pain and exhaustion. How long did they even sleep for? She tried to check her phone, but stupidly forgot it was dead. And judging by the position of the sun and the loudness of the birds, she guessed that it had to be around 6 a.m.

She shoved back into her pocket and tried to take a step, but her legs weren't having it; she let out a loud moan of pain.

"You okay?" Natsu was beside her a flash. His brows were pulled together in worry as he reached out to steady Lucy. Her face turned beet red the second his hands touched her forearm as thoughts from the previous night flooded into her mind. His hands still felt as warm as they did during _that._

"Guess you're not..." He made a face and then released her arm and Lucy was able to function again.

"Er—I'm too tired to walk," she said, amending for her silence.

"So you want to stay in the woods all day?" he inquired, cocking his head in bemusement. "I mean I guess we could, but I really wanna shower. The dirt's makin' me itchy." He scratched at the back of his head in an aggressive manner that reminded Lucy of an itching dog.

"That's not what I meant!" she snapped. "I just want don't want to walk...Maybe you should carry me." She shyly scooped her foot into the dirt as she pouted, giving him big puppy-dog eyes.

Natsu's extreme itching came to halt as he stared incredulously at her. Once he realized that she wasn't kidding around, his left eye twitched, but he didn't protest. "Fine, get on," he exasperated, bending forwards. She clambered on, tying her arms around his neck while Natsu's hands held onto her bare thighs. Once more, she thought back to their sensual activities. She couldn't stop her heart from pounding; she wondered if Natsu could feel it. And by the way his fingers dug into her skin, she wondered if Natsu was thinking about it too...

She rested her forehead on the back of his shoulder blade. He smelled even more sweaty and woodsy than the previous night—not that she minded.

The walk back was silent for the most part, besides Natsu's stomach growling. Both of them were too tired to utter a single word. With the tip of her finger, she drew on the nape of his neck in an invisible cursive: "I love you." She watched the goosebumps form in lidded fascination. She wouldn't voice her love for him just yet. She wanted to keep it a secret between only herself—and of course Levy, who already knows. And Levy would probably be the only soul she'd tell about what happened last night, she decided. But for some reason, she had a feeling the others would still find out somehow. She grimaced.

The forest's beauty made itself known as the sun continued to rise. "Your back feels warm," she hummed, snuggling against him.

"It's warm with jealousy," he whined hotly. "I don't want to walk anymoreee!"

****XOXOX****

There was a surprise waiting for them back at Natsu's unbeknownst to the couple as Natsu animatedly came up with a game plan. "So after we shower, wanna go to my favorite diner for breakfast? Then we can take Happy for a walk—I bought a small leash that might be able to fit him—or I could just kick your ass at video games—"

"I think I'll be the one kicking your ass," Lucy said dryly.

"Pshh, no way—"

"It'll be me kicking all of your asses, actually," a new voice chimed in.

Natsu and Lucy's heads shot over to the couch and saw Gray and Juvia sitting nonchalantly with Juvia resting her head against Gray's shoulder.

"GRAY, JUVIA?! YOU'RE IN MY ROOM?!" Natsu yelled and Lucy could feel his body tense and shake along with his words. "How'd you guys get in here?"

"Zeref," Gray and Juvia answered simultaneously.

"I swear he's just out to ruin my life," grumbled Natsu with clenched fists as he lowered himself so Lucy could slide right off.

She giggled at his disdainful attitude and patted his back. "Isn't Gray always in your room?" she asked, briefly remembering all the times she called Natsu to find that Gray was there as well. She quickly smoothed out her wrinkled clothes the best she could, but it was no use. She wanted to change so badly—and shower, especially after seeing Juvia and Gray looking so dapper.

"Yeah, but usually when I'm already home," Natsu explained wearily. He crossed his arms over his dirty chest.

"Why are you guys here so early?" asked Lucy, finally glancing over at a digital clock. Her speculations had been right. It was only 6:45 a.m.

"Pokemon Go!" said Juvia, beaming. "Gray-sama and Juvia decided to get an early start and then we thought it would be fun to invite you guys along with us!"

"Yeah," concurred Gray dully, "I mean it made sense to go now than like those idiots who left in the middle of the night—which I'm assuming is exactly what you two did." He eyed their unkempt forms with amusement lighting up his eyes.

Lucy blanched and Natsu smirked, aloof. "Pfft sounds like you guys are just scaredy cats."

And it didn't take long before arguments started up. "I ain't a scaredy cat. I just don't want to stumble around in the dark like an idiot," Gray said with frost in his voice. "Makes more sense to wait until sunlight. I mean we've been playing nonstop—reached level 6 so I don't see what the big deal is."

"What team did you pick?" Lucy asked, wanting to break up the budding argument, but little did she know that was a big mistake.

"Mystic—clearly the best team—"

"WHAT? C'mon, man, Valor is obviously the best!"

"Oh yeah?"

"Yeah!"

"Wanna fight?"

"Isn't it too early to fight?" Lucy rhetorically asked, grabbing her phone charger out of her tote-bag to finally revive her deceased phone. Meanwhile Juvia cheered, "Go Gray-sama!"

"Don't encourage them!" Lucy reprimanded, although Juvia was hardly listening, blinded by the huge hearts in her eyes directed towards Gray. Lucy wondered if she, herself, looked at Natsu the same way. Her ears turned pink at the very thought.

"Oi, what's that on your nails?" Natsu asked, all anger and contempt had vanished from his voice with only curiosity in its place.

"N-nothing!" Gray tried to go hide his hands behind his back, but Natsu grabbed them and the biggest grin spread on to his lips.

Lucy glanced over and gasped. Gray's nails were glossed over in a frosty shade of blue. "You painted your nails?!"

"Juvia painted them," Juvia boasted, hugging herself around Gray's waist. "And she did a better job than Lucy did on Natsu's nails."

"It's not a competition!" Lucy said crossly, blowing hot air out of her nose.

"Pfft my nails are so much better!" argued Natsu, flashing his hands out like a model.

"They look like you clawed your hands in dirt—why the hell are you guys so dirty? Its like you fell into a lake and then rolled around in the dirt right after," said Gray with his nose scrunching.

Lucy gawked at Gray's accuracy and Natsu just shrugged. "I'm gonna shower," he announced. "C'mon, Lucy." He seized her wrist and dragged her out the door. Gray and Juvia let out appalled sputtering noises so Natsu yelled back at them, "I HAVE TWO SHOWERS, YOU PERVERTS!"

****XOXOX****

"Woww, Natsu keeps a wall of memories?" Juvia asked, gazing up with stars in her blue eyes. "He's surprisingly romantic!"

"It's not that romantic," Gray said, scoffing. What was romantic about Natsu cluttering up his room? It just made it look dumpy in Gray's honest opinion. And why Juvia even swooning over that asshat? It irked Gray in a way he didn't know was possible.

"But Natsu has everything dated—the day he met Love Rival—er Lucy! The day they skyped...Juvia's kept all the important dates with Gray-sama, _of course,_ but this is just so—"

"Oi, just because I don't keep a stupid wall full of crappy memories doesn't mean I'm not romantic."

Juvia mouth fell open, but no words came out.

"I don't need a wall to remember things," he said with affirmation. "I have my head and that's all I need. So what if I can't remember the exact date when you first messaged me—at least I'm able to remember it clearly!"

Clearly was right. He thought Juvia was some kind of internet perv—the type you block without a second thought, but something about her made him not do it. In her own weird way, she made him curious about her and now the very idea of blocking Juvia and never talking to her again made his chest ache.

"Gray-sama..." Her voice was breathy and it made Gray's stomach feel fluttery with butterflies. What was wrong with him?

He needed air. Gray left the room and walked into the hallway. He sighed into his hands. He was losing his mind.

Suddenly he stiffened, quickly flattening himself against the wall the second he noticed Natsu and Lucy, now freshly clean, wandering about. "And that's me 'nd Igneel," Natsu said, pointing to a photo hanging up on the wall. "Anndd that's a photo of me 'nd Zeref with my real parents."

"You were such a cute baby," Lucy giggled.

And Gray felt himself blush. It wasn't the conversation itself that was awkward to spy on, it was the way Natsu was looking at Lucy. He looked at her like she was his whole world. It was exactly how Juvia looked at himself—Gray ducked his head. He honestly didn't know what to do with Juvia.

He had to admit, it was easy when he was fake-flirting with Lucy just to piss Natsu off. But with Juvia it was different. He didn't want to like her. He didn't want to like anyone for that matter. Liking someone only meant pain. Gray had lost everyone he had ever loved. How was he supposed to let someone into his heart?

"You're such a liar," Lucy chastised loudly and although Gray didn't hear what Assflame had said, he had a feeling Lucy was right.

"Am not!"

"Are too!"

And swiftly, Natsu caressed her cheek and Lucy's eyes fluttered shut. Maybe to Lucy, Natsu appeared confident, but

Gray could tell how nervous the boy was; Natsu's throat bobbed up and down and his free hand shook slightly, before he clenched it into a fist. Gray wondered if he would always be nervous too when it came to kissing Juvia—he paled at the thought. Quickly and silently, he walked away before he witnessed the kiss he didn't want to see.

Kissing Juvia? Gray's stomach tensed. Why did the very idea of kissing her make him feel like he was on fire? It would be his first time initiating a kiss—Juvia had stolen his first overall kiss back at the campfire. It had made him feel weird. It was like all the ice inside his heart had melted away by the warmth of the ocean. It made his heart pound and his face flush in ways he didn't know were possible.

He made his way back to Natsu's room. Juvia was seated on the couch still, looking bored at her phone. The floor creaked as he walked back over to her. She looked up with big, adoring eyes—almost like a puppy. He could feel his resolve crack—but he had to stay cool and uncaring. But it was hard.

Behind the scenes, he and Juvia really had started to get close. She knew more about him than anyone else. When he had first told Lucy stuff about his past, it was just to get it off his chest, but with Juvia it was different. She wore her heart and compassion on her sleeves and gave him the shoulder to cry on that he never had.

She was different.

If he could only just let her in...

So he kissed her.

His eyes were open and narrow, gauging the situation and Juvia's were double their original size. His hands held her face captive, her skin was impossibly soft and smooth. Slowly, her eyes grew lidded and then shut with her cheeks turning a feverish red as she sank into the kiss. Gray realized he was resisting despite being the initiator. He closed his eyes in hopes that his chest would stop pounding, and breathed in deeply through his nose.

He never noticed it, but Juvia smelled warm—that is, if warm had a scent.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****So I wrote this Gruvia stuff before the 1st chapter came out...Gotta say it hurt to read this over ^-^ but yeee I made them canon finally!****

****Plot will be moving along, like I said above, only about 5 or less chapters left. yay then we can celebrate! Thanks for joining me for this long! although i think i have almost an entirely new audience now lol so thank you to new readers too! hope i give it the ending this fic deserves!****

****Thanks for reading!****

****Sorry again for taking over the month and coming back to a boring chapter. It's just to get me back into the flow : /****

85. Chapter 85

To Lucy and Natsu's utmost surprise, Gray and Juvia were submersed in a heated kiss. Lucy turned bright red, burying her face into the palms of her hands and Natsu muttered low enough for only her to hear, "About time." And then loudly, he said, "Don't do that stuff in my room!"

Gray and Juvia immediately pulled apart. Juvia looked dreamily at Gray—almost like she were about to pass out. L

Lucy shook her head in pity and Gray had red cheeks, but he looked like he was trying very hard to hide the fact that he was embarrassed. "Well someone's gotta."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Natsu lurched forwards with a look that Lucy was glad he'd never give her.

"It means that you're never gonna be hooking up with a girl in your room—"

"Oh yeah?"

"Yeah!"

"No fighting!" Lucy growled, jumping between the two boys who were just inches away from headbutting—or kissing according to Juvia, who looked rather distressed and muttered something about boy love...

The boys broke apart, both surprised and, also, frightened by Lucy's outburst. She could hear Gray muttering about her being scary and Natsu nodding in agreement, so with a vein throbbing against her forehead, she decided to direct the conversation elsewhere. "So you two are now a couple?"

Juvia's head whipped around fast to gaze at Gray, awaiting his official answer. He started tugging on the neck of his baseball shirt and said, "I guess—ACK!" Suddenly Gray was on the floor with Juvia hugging herself against his now-bare chest. How did his shirt come off within the span of two-seconds, Lucy would never know.

"WAHH JUVIA IS SO HAPPY!" Juvia squealed. "Gray-sama is finally hers!"

Lucy giggled and Natsu snaked his hand into Lucy's. Her heart clenched at the tiny motion, enjoying the familiar feel of his rough hand in hers.

"Oii, Juvia! I was always yours! Now calm downnn!" Gray cried out, trying to worm his way out of the tight hug, but Juvia didn't lighten up. Gray eventually gave up and he even rested his hand on the center of her back. And the position gave him the perfect angle to see Lucy and Natsu holding hands. "So you two are finally back together?" he asked.

Lucy startled, nearly tripping backwards if it weren't for Natsu yanking her snugly against his chest. Were they? She never thought to ask the question, she kind of just assumed they were—but what if they weren't? Then that would mean—

"Of course!" said Natsu without even a moment's hesitation. It made Lucy feel drunk on happiness. Why would she even doubt that? "We were never broken up to begin with." And his words relieved Lucy like never before. It was like breathing in fresh air after being cooped up inside for too long.

"Yeah," she coyly beamed, "what he said."

****XOXOX****

The day was young and the couples went out for breakfast, mindlessly playing Pokemon Go as they went about. Juvia was sharing a team with Gray since her phone wasn't compatible, so they would take turns holding it. Natsu would run between traffic, only just narrowly avoiding getting hit by cars during his adventures and the one time Lucy walked right into traffic (for an eevee), Natsu pulled her back and lectured her about being careless. To which Lucy could only say, "That's really funny coming from you..."

After eating, they all split up with Lucy dragging Natsu into a book store and Gray and Juvia hightailing out of there. Natsu didn't seem to mind being there, considering he was the one to suggest the idea to her. Shockingly, he seemed really thrilled to be there. He started pulling dozens of books off the shelf, shoving them eagerly in Lucy's face. "You should get this one!—No wait! Get this one! OH THAT ONE! It's cover looks badass!" And things only grew worse.

rise once they hit the manga section. "Ooh get this! I heard this manga is awesome! Let's read it together later and let's get this one, and..."

And Lucy was a bit overwhelmed, cradling all the books in her arms that were rapidly growing tired from the weight. "N-Natsu—can you carry some—" She started wobbling, Natsu, however, was lost in his own world and hadn't heard a word.

"What'd you guys do? Buy out the entire bookstore?" Gray asked, eyes popping out at the sight of the heavy bags that they were holding.

"No," Natsu pouted like a small child, "Lucy wouldn't let me."

"For good reasons! My arms were going to break off!" She squeezed the handle of her bags to the point where her knuckles turned white.

"Yeah, yeah," he said, rolling his eyes.

And judging by the flushed faces and swollen lips of both Juvia and Gray, Lucy didn't have to think twice about what they had been doing during the time being.

Then after they all went back to Natsu's for video games—and playing in person was a helluva lot better than playing over the internet with lags from both the games and the webcam. Unfortunately for Lucy, Gray, and Juvia—Natsu was kicking ass and nothing was worse than him winning.

"AHAHA LOSERS! NO ONE CAN BEAT ME! I'M SO AWESOME!" Natsu would bellow haughtily. "IN YOUR FACES!"

"Natsu's kinda mean," Juvia stated, resting her head against Gray's shoulder.

"Tch, sore winner," Gray scoffed, chucking his game controller.

"Psh no such thing, _sore loser,_ " Natsu simpered.

"Actually, I agree with Gray," Lucy said, sighing as she mindlessly scrolled through her new tumblr dash. She frowned, it just wasn't the same as her old tumblr. This one was so dead and all the memories her other one contained were irreplaceable. But she didn't care.

She received a private Skype message from Gray. "Wanna help me beat your boyfriend?"

"YES!" was her immediate answer back. She looked over at Gray and he smiled secretly at her and messaged her his well thought out plan while Natsu continued his gloating.

During the next round of Super Smash Bros, Lucy and Juvia both got knocked out pretty early. Lucy was a bit upset she had lost her edge from not playing so long, but it was fine since she was going to help Gray win. Sabotaging Natsu was sure going to be fun.

"Just down to you and me, Ice Princess," said Natsu gleaming. "Think you can take me?"

"Not a doubt in my mind," Gray snickered back, causing Natsu to furrow at Gray's surefire confidence.

Taking that as her queue, she twirled her index finger on his upper thigh, Lucy purred, "Natsuu."

"What, Lucy?" he grunted and although his body tensed, he gave her no other reaction. She continued rubbing his thigh up and down and Natsu squirmed a bit, with beads of sweat dotting his forehead. However, it wasn't enough because

ause his fingers were rapidly pressed down on the gaming buttons.

Taking it up a notch, Lucy stealthily climbed into his lap and Natsu started leaning to his right, trying to see past her. "Lucyyy, I can't see! Get off! You'll make me lose—mmmpfh!" Silenced with a kiss, Lucy had his face held firmly between her hands and kissed deeply as she could. Normally she would never be so daring to kiss in front of people like this, but it was for the greater good.

And only a few seconds later, Gray let out a loud roar, "YASSS! I WON! TAKE THAT, MATCH STICK!"

Lucy pulled away from the kiss and swiftly got out of Natsu's lap, avoiding Natsu's face of shock and betrayal. He threw his controller down at the ground and glowered over at Gray and Lucy.

"You two are evil!" he hissed, jumping off the couch, pointing his finger at the both of them. "Breaking my winning steak!" Then he gave Juvia a begging look. "Juviaaa, can't you make out with Gray to let me win?!"

"Juvia would be honored," she exclaimed before seizing Gray in a lip-lock and Lucy murmured dryly, "You've won enough times already."

They eventually moved on to Mario Kart, which was definitely Lucy's forte. Gray and Juvia took a break from playing, watching Natsu and Lucy play.

Lucy was in the lead with Natsu just a few speeds behind when Juvia said, "Gray-sama, Juvia wants to go to the Northern Country University with you."

"University?" Lucy repeated under her breath and without realizing it, she drove right into an explosive question mark and Natsu took that opportunity to pass her, crossing the final finishing line.

"YAS! I WON! YO, HAPPY—DID YA SEE THAT? SHE DROVE RIGHT INTO MY EXPLODING QUESTION MARK!" Natsu boasted, but Lucy's ears were elsewhere as she proceeded to eavesdrop.

"Juvia's been looking at their swim team and it seems like they're one of the top! Juvia thinks she might be able to get a good scholarship since she's swim captain!" Juvia said. "And their marine biology program looks amazing!"

"Wanna rematch?" Natsu asked, but Lucy turned away from him and said to Gray and Juvia, "You guys have been talking about colleges?"

"Yeah," said Gray, looking at her curiously. "Haven't you guys?"

"Umm," Lucy felt the back of her neck heat up. Colleges hadn't crossed her mind once. Her father kind of left the topic empty. It was her mom's job to talk school with her so her father never took the responsibility. And Natsu never brought up the topic once so the answer was a clear no.

"I thought you and Natsu would have talked about it," said Gray thoughtfully.

"Don't you guys want to go to school together?" Juvia asked, playing with a strand of her wavy, blue hair.

"Well, you see—" Lucy tried to speak, but Gray cut in and said, "Erza and Jellal aren't going to the same schools."

"Wahh! How sad! Juvia can't imagine being apart from her Gray-sama for another couple of years!"

"They've been doin' the long distance thing for a while," Gray stated with a carefree shrug. "So they're used to it."

"I don't think anyone gets used to that," Lucy said quietly, hugging her arms to her chest. She could hear Natsu take in a breath. It made her heart ache thinking of being apart from him or even any of her other precious friends. Hell, t

he university Gray and Juvia want to go to was located in the one of the furthest parts of the country. "So Northern Country University, huh?" Lucy said, dragging the conversation back to focus. "That's pretty far."

"Yeah," Gray grunted, "but it's where my parents met and I dunno I kinda wanted to go there..."

"Didn't picture you as the sentimental type," Natsu commented, studying his friend intensively.

"Tch, I ain't sentimental," Gray grumbled with his cheeks turning slightly pink. "Where do you want to go?"

"I ain't going," said Natsu carelessly.

"What?" Gray's black brows pulled together.

With the same air of carelessness, Natsu restated, "I'm not going to college."

Gray frowned. "Look, I know I call you an idiot a lot, but you have the grades to get into any school you want and get scholarship even—"

"It's not about that," said Natsu, looking down at his hands as if there was something suddenly fascinating about them, "I just don't want to go."

"You're not going?" Lucy gasped.

"What?" Natsu's eyes instantly flashed over to Lucy's; she flinched. "Problem with that?" His town wasn't necessarily mean, it was more curious.

"No...it's just that..." her mouth fell shut. She didn't know what to say. So Natsu didn't want to go to school. That means any chances of them going to a university together just flew out the window. Were there any chances to begin with?

"What about you, Lucy?" Juvia asked. "Where do you plan on going?"

"Well, you see, I haven't taken any of the exams—and I have no idea where I would even want to go—"

"There's still time to study and apply to schools—I actually had to ask Erza for help because I had no idea what I was doing," Gray said, shivering and Lucy could have shivered as well imagining how scary Erza was with her lecture.

"Yeah, but..." She ducked her head, deciding it was best to fiddle around with the designer rip in her shorts. She felt so lost that no words could even come out of her mouth. So taking a deep breath, she looked back up and smiled as brightly as she could, "You're right! I should just ask Erza. So I was talking to Levy and she told me that Gajeel is going to be just fine—that the only thing wrong with him was that he had a splinter! Can you believe that?! And all that red stuff was just a smashed bottle of ketchup!"

The room grew awkward with Natsu, Gray, and Juvia looking tensely at one another. Clearly they saw past Lucy's sudden perkiness.

Then Natsu let out a burst of laughter, clutching his gut. "Looks like all the guys in our group are little babies when it comes to splinters!"

"OI! THEY HURT LIKE HELL, MAN!" Gray exclaimed and then it didn't take long for them to get into their infamous debate over Happy's genetics.

"He's an amphibian! DON'T YOU SEE THE WATER IN HIS TANK?!"

"Reptiles drink water too," said Gray, shrugging.

"He swims in it!"

"What? You're sayin' reptiles don't swim?" Gray asked, dubiously. "I bet if I google that—"

And by the time Gray and Juvia left, Natsu bellyflopped on his bed. He tried to speak, but his voice was muffled so Lucy could only make out a handful of words, such as "Gray," "annoying," and "headache."

Lucy giggled and sat on the edge of the bed, rubbing his back. Abruptly, he sat up and Lucy squeaked at the suddenness. He stared at her for a moment before exploding with laughter. "H-Happy!" he wheezed.

Lucy frowned, bemused at why he was staring at her and laughing about Happy—but then it all made sense once he cupped his hand on top of her head. Lucy gasped seeing the small salamander in his hand. "What?! H-how did he get on my head?! Wasn't he in his tank?"

"He always gets out!" Natsu grinned and then his smile slowly faded and a rare look of seriousness took its place. "I feel like I should ask," he said, connecting their palms so that Happy could lay in both of theirs. Lucy's heart stumbled at the skin contact. "what's your deal with college?"

Lucy's shied her eyes away. "It's nothing—"

"Lucy." His voice was so stern it sent her chills. He looked her directly in the eye with a brow raised that seemed to say: _Are you really going to lie?_

She sullenly sighed. It wasn't like she had anything to hide _"My mom," she said slowly and Natsu flinched. It was so minuscule that Lucy barely registered the action. He wasn't the best with sensitive topics she had learned a while back. He'd rather live for the present than delve on the painful past, which Lucy was perfectly okay with. "She was supposed to be the one helping me with college stuff...my dad's kinda—well _you know how he is_."

"Gotcha," he said, giving her a supportive smile.

"So now it feels like it's too late."

"But it's not! Gray said you still have time—"

"I know I do! I just—I don't know what I want to do!" she groaned. She felt so stressed. Why did Juvia have to bring this up? Although she was upset, Lucy couldn't blame Juvia—the girl was happy that she was finally with the boy of her dreams so of course she'd like to announce she wants to go to the same university as him.

"H-hey! Don't get yourself all worked up now!" he half raised his hand as if debating if he should touch her or not, "No one's forcing you to go right now! You can take a gap year or just not go—like me."

"How come you don't you want to go?"

"I don't think there's any universities that'll help me become a webcomic guy," he said, grinning. "But I am thinking of taking lessons in Crocus—it's just the transportation..." He clapped a hand over his mouth while his cheeks turned a puke green.

"So you do have a plan for the future?!"

"Don't sound so surprised..." he muttered. "Don't you wanna be an author or some type of writer?" he asked innocently.

"Yes—No—I...I don't know." Lucy sunk back while Happy crawled up her arm. She did, didn't she? But what kind of career would she make writing _fanfics?_ It was easier to write with already made characters and plot, but to create her own? That sounded really difficult—and something about that difficulty made the whole idea sound positively alluring. But what about journalism? Lucy had thought about that too at one point when she was younger. Having something she wrote published in a paper sounded so cool and thrilling. There was just too many options that she had yet to explore.

"You haven't written anything in a while," he said quietly. "Is it because I got everything deleted? Ughhhh I feel like crap!"

"Noo! It really has nothing to do with that! I really don't care about that anymore. I just never thought of anything long term is all. So you want to do webcomics?"

"Yeah and you can get paid doing it if you get enough subscribers! And maybe do my own graphic novel someday. I just suck with plots and original characters and world building..." He furrowed. "I definitely want it to have lots of action and fight scenes!"

"Well I'm sure you could think of something! Maybe make it modern day and you can make the protagon—" and before Lucy knew it, she was babbling without an end. Her eyes were starry and her hands clutched her cheek as she continued to come up with a plot off the top of her head. She never realized it, but it really was fun coming up with your own stuff. "And the villain could be this crazy yandere who wants—wahh I'm taking this too far...!"

Natsu gave her a lopsided grin. "I'd be disappointed if you didn't."

"Huh?"

"Let's form a team," he said, giving Lucy a suggestive look that made her stomach start to coil.

Her eyes doubled in size. Was Natsu actually asking her to work with him on his webcomic? It was like a flood of warmth surged through her body—a warmth that developed into the feeling of _hope._

"Okay!"

****XOXOX****

* * *

****So I've been trying to get up to this part since I started writing this story lol, but I knew I had to save it for the near-end!****

****Thanks for reading and good luck to all of you who started school again! And good luck to those not in school, you lucky people!****

86. Chapter 86

****EEEEK didn't mean to go a month without updating again, I'm sorry! Life has been busy and like I stated in my other story, someone in my family is sick so now everything's been stressful :/****

****But thank you all so much! This story is so close to 10k reviews :00 i never imagined that would ever happen so thank you to those who have been reviewing! I can't even tell you how much the support means to me :00****

* * *

****XOXOX****

After their talk, Lucy fell even harder for Natsu, if that were even possible. He gave her something to look forward to. She had been using anime and tumblr to escape reality for so long, she had forgotten that the real world didn't revolve around those two things. And now that she had Natsu and even her other friends in real life, everything was different. Her life was finally coming together.

The evening was a lot more chill than the beginning of the day had been with the double date and all. They gave up on playing Pokemon Go for the rest of the evening and decided to just relax, watching an anime movie called _Kimi no Na wa_. Natsu ended up blubbering like a baby while Lucy sweat-dropped at his overly sensitive reactions. She couldn't get over what an actual dork he was.

After he had calmed down, Lucy had one last request before they finally went to bed (in an actual bed).

"I wanna watch you color a manga cap," Lucy stated plain as day. It was something she had dreamt of watching in person. Sure it had been amazing at the time when she got to watch him do it over Skype, but in person it would be a whole different experience. It made her giddy with joy.

Natsu protested against it, but Lucy gave him puppy dog eyes and he gave right in. "Alright." He sat on his bed with his laptop on his lap. Lucy sat beside him, pulling his left arm against her chest so she could snuggle against him with her head resting on his shoulder. He tensed up at her sudden movements and then quickly opened his editing program.

"Any specific scene you have in mind?" he asked nonchalantly, but his body was still tense. It made Lucy smile knowing that she was still capable of making him as nervous as he made her.

"Sakura Tree," she said without hesitation. It was heart melting scene where Haru dug up the rainbow sakura tree because Elie had gotten sick and was unable to see it in person.

"Shoulda guessed you'd pick a ship moment," he joked, pulling the scene up to start cleaning the scan. "D'you mind if I open a playlist up?"

"Nope, go ahead," she said, excited to find out what Natsu's taste in music was exactly. They had never talked about it before, but if she knew him well enough, she could easily guess he was obsessed with anime original soundtracks just like herself. Natsu put on the Fairy Tail soundtrack and she smiled at that, happy that she had guessed right, even though that wasn't much of a surprise.

Watching him edit and crop the images was so hypnotizing and calming that Lucy was starting to feel sleepy. When he got up to the coloring, the lull of sleep grew stronger. She did her best to fight against her yawns, not wanting Natsu to know she was tired, but the sideways-glances and smirks he kept shooting her gave her the impression he knew.

"Shit," he mumbled, undoing his latest stroke as Lucy drew hearts on his upper thigh of his dragon print pajama bottoms with her index finger. And his one curse was soon followed by a series of curses and groans of frustration with Natsu abusing the undo function. "Why do I keep messing up?" he grumbled angrily.

Lucy giggled at his distress. It reminded her of the first time she had watched him color. He had kept messing up then too, claiming it was her fault for making him nervous. "Maybe you just suck at this now," she mused, drawing stars now.

Natsu scowled and his pouty cheeks turned red. "That's not it!" He went back to coloring the tree and just as he was about to finish his perfect stroke, Lucy's hand accidentally went a bit too far up his lap and to his groin. His entire body clenched and he gasped. "Lucy!"

She squeaked and pulled her hand back quickly. Her face and neck turned very red, mortified by her actions.

"I almost had it!" Natsu moaned, hanging his head in defeat. "You're such a pervert!"

"It was an accident!" she cried. "I didn't realize what I was doing! I swear!"

"Ugh why do I always get so nervous with you watching?" he asked himself, no longer listening to her and Lucy's stomach tightened.

"I bet Gray could probably do a better job," she teased, knowing that would get him motivated. And she was right; Natsu was fired up, ready to prove her wrong. Slowly and meticulously, he went back to coloring, this time he made less mistakes and Lucy's eyes began to drift shut as she watched him highlight what he had just colored and the last thing she heard was Natsu chuckling softly as she felt his tender hand stroke her cheek.

****XOXOX****

When she woke up, she found herself under the covers with Natsu's arms wrapped around her waist, spooning her. Her face felt warm with delight as she took in the sun-lit room. Natsu's laptop was thrown carelessly on the floor. She winced, wondering if all boys were stereotypically careless like Natsu.

Something crawled on her hand and Lucy screamed, Natsu jolted up in a panic. "What?! What's wrong?!"

"Something touched me!" she wailed, jumping out of bed.

Natsu pulled the covers down and Lucy chewed on her nails. She was ready to bolt out of the room, expecting to see a giant spider or something. Natsu glowered and said, "Happy! How do you always manage to get out?!"

Lucy nearly face-planted the floor. "Happy?! He almost gave me a heart attack! Annoying salamander!"

Natsu snickered and placed his pet back in the tank. Then stumbled out of his room, saying something completely incoherent.

Bored and wide awake, Lucy grabbed her phone and absently looked at her tumblr. She didn't use her new one as much since it kind of made her sad that her old one was gone along with all her work she had put in it. But as she checked it, she saw Natsu had tagged her in a post.

She curiously clicked on it and gasped; it was the rainbow sakura scene. She had forgotten all about it from her sleepy brain fog and it looked perfect. It was hard to believe that last night's coloring had turned into this especially with all the mistakes he had been making. It was so vibrant and full of beauty that Lucy swooned over it.

"For Lucy," was all it said and that was all it needed to say. She hugged her phone to her chest as gleeful joy took over her body. Did Natsu have any idea how happy he made her? She reblogged the post and tagged it as, "I love my boyfriend," without even a second thought.

And through her fangirling, she spotted her disheveled appearance in the mirror and rapidly threw her phone back down and dashed off to the bathroom (with a change of clothes: a floral skirt and a light pink top) to wash her face, comb her hair, and put on some make up.

Natsu was sitting on his bed when she got back. He had changed into baggy shorts and plain black t-shirt. His hair looked extra fluffy like he had just combed it. He was sitting on his bed, staring at his phone. His cheeks looked feverish as he looked up at her. His black eyes looked serious, not their usual playful air to them. "D'you mean it?"

"Mean what?" she asked, tilting her head to the right. Natsu didn't answer. Instead, he ran up to her and seized her hands in his own. She flinched at the clammy feel of his normally dry hands—usually hers were the sweaty ones.

"What you wrote—in the tags—" His tone was desperate and his eyes looked wild as he anticipated her answer.

"What are you— _oh._ " Her face was beet-red. _I love my boyfriend._ She hadn't even realized that was her first time ever saying it. "Err yes...I mean it," she said, squirming in his hold. Her heart was pounding in her ears. Was it okay that she tagged it as that? Was he upset? Did he not love her anymore like in his letter. She felt like she was going to throw up. "Your letter—is it still true?"

"What letter?" Natsu's face drew a complete blank.

And Lucy felt her heart snap in half. Natsu didn't know about the letter? That must mean one of her friends probably wrote it to try to get her back together with Natsu. "Never mind," she said briskly, ripping her hands of his grasp. She felt embarrassed. That letter had made her so unbelievably happy—just knowing he was in love with her—to find out it wasn't true.

She hugged herself. She didn't think she could handle the rejection if he didn't love her—Natsu's hand grabbed her forearm and whirled her around to face him. His eyes were huge, searching her face before he blurted out, "Lucy—I love you—"

"Natsu—"

"I'm so in love with you," he declared like it was his own personal edict. His eyes were anxious and filled with a desperation Lucy had never seen before. And if someone had told her the Earth had stopped spinning on its axis in that moment, she would have believed them. It felt like all the air in the room had left and that time had stopped working.

Lucy's eyes softened along with her heart. She looked away and mumbled to herself, "So the letter was true after all ..."

"What letter?" he grunted, overhearing her mumbles.

Lucy stumbled over to her bag and began to search through it, pulling out the letter that was addressed to her in sloppy handwriting. "This letter." She waved it in the air.

Natsu yanked it out of her hand and pursed his lips as he read it. His already-flushed-cheeks darkened and he looked at Lucy with horrified eyes. "Y-you al-already re-read this?! HOW DID YOU EVEN GET THIS?! GAHH I WANTED TO BURN IT! IT'S SO EMBARRASSING UGHHH! KILL MEEEE!"

Lucy swiftly took the letter back to prevent Natsu from doing any harm to it. She laughed as she watched him sink to the floor, pulling his pink hair out. "It's too early in the morning for this agony!" he groaned and Lucy laughed harder, tears welling up in her eyes as she watched something blurry crawl on top of Natsu's head. "HAPPY, HOW'D YOU GET OUT AGAIN?!"

Happiness truly was a beautiful and pure feeling.

****XOXOX****

Natsu left his room soon after to go get someone to make them breakfast. Although Lucy had no idea why she could hear Natsu screaming, "GRAY'S ALWAYS SHIRTLESS!"

Lucy giggled quietly as she pulled up Natsu's Tumblr on his laptop. His inbox had over 30 messages; she had forgotten he was actually a popular blog. She was nosy, of course, and opened them. The messages ranged from requests, to anime discussions, to flattery, to even anon hate. She frowned. She had no idea he got anon hate often, but that only made her admire him more how he didn't let it get to him.

And despite her admiration, Lucy wanted to mess with him. So, she took it upon herself to start answering his asks with cute, out-of-character gifs and emoticons.

"Zeref's so annoying," Natsu grumbled, stomping back over to his room, the door slammed shut behind him. "He kept asking me about Gray—what are you doing? OI, DON'T WRITE THAT!"

"Why not?" Lucy asked innocently. "It sounds exactly like something you would say."

"LIKE HELL WOULD I EVER USE THE CAT-FACE WITH THE DOUBLE CHIN!" he bellowed and Lucy snickered as she clicked `_published._`

Suddenly Lucy was tackled onto her back and Natsu straddled her hips, pinning her arms above her head. "Don't go answering my inbox with cutesy replies!" he groaned and Lucy's cheeks flushed up because of the awkward position he had put them in.

"They weren't `_that_` cute," she murmured, trying to look away from his smoldering eyes.

He hissed something under his breath, which sounded awfully a lot like, "Anything you write is cute."

Her heart hummed and she bit her lower lip. She tried to ignore how Natsu still hadn't got off of her. His body felt hot and muscular. She could feel each muscle contract as he shifted slightly. Her mind immediately went back to their heated night, making her more flustered than ever.

Natsu, however, beamed down at her and eagerly started in about Zeref and Gray, but then he caught sight of Lucy gnawing on her lower lip and his expression suddenly darkened; it made Lucy's heart skip a beat.

It was like a magnetic attraction that smashed their lips together in an animalistic way. It was fast and messy. Natsu had freed Lucy's hands and seized ahold of her face. Her hands did the same, grabbing his tightly as she kissed the life out of him. Both were desperate and breathless as they gasped for air in the mere seconds they would break. His fingers glided down her body, grasping onto her bare thigh as his lips descended downwards, experimentally nipping at her neck.

Lucy mewled at the warm, tickling feel of his soft lips. Her body felt hot and her blood rushed all over like the ocean flooding the shore. Her nails raked down his clothed back—

"Natsu, are you sure Gray—oh my!" Zeref's voice broke through their heated pants. Lucy screamed and shoved Natsu off of her and he smacked his bedroom floor and let out of a moan of pain. "Ah I should probably leave..." Zeref said hesitantly and then he was gone.

****XOXOX****

*** * ***

****Last bit was a little bonus part for the chapter :3c****

****So some of you guys like when I give anime recs and it's been a while, so I recommend the movie**** `_Kimi no Na wa_` ******. It's beautifully bittersweet and the animation is just hnngh~**

****And i forgot to thank tumblr users:**** `_Ravenluckarts_` *****and**** `_Emmys-sketchbook_` ****** for really pretty fan art!**

`_**ravenluckarts . tumblr**` `***post/147353603965/started-some-fanart-for-missyplatina-s-beautiful**` `_`

`_**emmys-sketchbook . tumblr . com**` `***post/147397511050/a-quick-sketch-of-a-scene-from-missyplatina-s**` `_`

****Just type in without the spaces!****

****Hope life is going well for all of you! Thank you for reading!****

87. Chapter 87

****Sorry I keep updating once a month! Living is hard...BUT THANK YOU FOR 10K REVIEWS! :3c****

*** * ***

****XOXOX****

Spring break flew by in a blink of an eye. With each day passing, Lucy felt a stab to the heart. She couldn't bare the thought of going back to their internet relationship. It was painful the idea that she would only see him through the tiny screen of her laptop. And so, she did her best to savor every minute they spent together. Although, Natsu made it hard at times with the way he would bicker with Gray and Gajeel over Skype chat every night like clockwork.

"Since when did you guys have a chat?" Lucy wondered why the girls didn't have one, but she realized that the girls loved nothing more than torturing the guys so it all made sense now.

"So we could fight without Erza scarin' us," Natsu said.

"Of course..." Lucy mumbled suspiciously. "Then why are you and Gray asking for relationship advice—HEY! WHY IS THIS CONVERSATION ABOUT ME BEING A WEIRDO?!"

"You're so intrusive."

"You're one to talk..." she grumbled, remembering how he went through all the drawers in her bedroom and hacked her Skype.

And his appetite—it was insatiable. It was like he had a blackhole for a stomach, an endless pit that swallowed everything and he had the nerve to act like it was strange that she _wasn't_ hungry after they had finished a four course meal.

But the moments she truly cherished were the ones where they sat there doing their own stuff, where Lucy felt inspired to write fanfiction and Natsu played some loud war game in the background. She could picture this being a routine for them someday. And as silly as it sounded, it felt so weird for her to be touching Natsu's laptop—typing on the keys that made Lucy fall fast and hard for him.

Suddenly it occurred to Lucy that the room got quiet—she paused in her typing—

"Aww! Don't stop!" Natsu groaned next to her ear. Lucy screamed and Natsu continued to complain, "I wanna know what happens next!"

"Don't read while I'm writing!" Her ears and face turned pink. It was so embarrassing having someone read while she was writing. Hell, it was more embarrassing than having someone else read it in general.

"Why not?" he asked with lips downturned. "You make me show you my stuff—"

"That's different!"

"No it's not!"

"It's embarrassing!" She buried her face in her hands, trying to hide her giant blush and Natsu laughed.

"Well too bad that I like embarrassing you," said Natsu ominously, "'Haru tenderly cupped Elie's—"

"NOO!" Lucy's jaw slacked. She tackled Natsu against his bed, ready to strangle him, but she halted, noticing the feverish flush he adorned. He was just too cute and her stomach fluttered nervously. She leaned her head down—suddenly the door flung open and someone's voice boomed, "LUCY, ARE YOU OKAY?!"

That voice—it couldn't be—"D-DAD?!" And just like when Zeref had interrupted them, Lucy had managed to shove Natsu off the bed and onto the floor at once as she sat up looking at her dad's terrified expression, while she wanted to go bury herself in the ground.

"I heard there was an earthquake—and Zeref said you were here!" he said, panting.

She mentally face-palmed herself as she jumped off the bed—almost stepping on Natsu, who just rolled to a pretzel-style sitting position. She had forgotten all about the earthquake since Cana said everything was fine and that it happens all the time (Cana even tried to get them all to come back over, but no one wanted to...). "The earthquake was a while ago and I probably would be dead by the time you showed up honestly..."

"I'm just happy that you're safe!" Jude breathed in relief, hugging Lucy, who tried to squirm out of it. "You are my pride and joy, Lucy. I don't know what'd I do if I lost you too."

"Quit it!" Lucy yelped, her eyes met Natsu's, who was beaming so brightly that his new face scar stretched thin. She flushed, dropping his gaze.

Then her dad shoved her away and started screaming like a little girl, flailing his right arm up and down like a dead fish. "GET IT OFF! GET IT OFF! GET IT OFF!"

Lucy stumbled back, a little scared by her father's sudden freakout. "Get what off?" She looked at his hand and then noticed sometime blue and black on her father's wrist. "Happy?!" she gasped and then she started hysterically laughing. It was like the time her father discovered Plue—claiming there was a monster in the house.

Jude snapped back, "No! I'm not happy! I'm terrified! THIS THING IS GOING TO KILL ME!"

"Oii!" Natsu jumped up and seized Jude's arm. "Stop shaking your arm! You're gonna hurt Happy! C'mere, buddy!"

Lucy watched as Happy crawled back onto Natsu, looking relieved to get away from her dad's incessant shaking.

"W-what is that thing?!" Jude wheezed, clutching his right hand over his heart. "I-it looks poisonous!"

"Happy's a salamander and he ain't poisonous," Natsu said, stroking Happy's back with the tip of his index finger. "I think...Oi, Lucy—I would know if Happy was poisonous by now, right?"

"Err I'd imagine so..." Her face blanched.

"What's with all the noise?" Zeref's voice chimed in and everyone looked at the threshold of the door to see the dark haired boy gazing at them curiously.

"T-this demon was on my hand!" Jude stammered, pointing at Happy, who was resting on Natsu's head.

"Natsu! Don't go on people's hands!" lectured Zeref. "I thought you knew better!"

"What the?!" Natsu's eyes bugged out. "Why does the word _demon_ make you think he was talking about me! And

Happy ain't a demon!"

"Oh!" Zeref blinked with understanding. "You were talking about Natsu and Lucy's baby—"

"BABY?!" Jude screamed. "Y-you have a baby with him?! My little girl!"

"Make them stop!" Lucy moaned against Natsu's chest and he snickered and said, "Well you are Happy's co-owner, remember? Technically makes us co-parents!"

And with her dad there—chaos was ensued because Natsu absolutely loved scaring him with Happy despite Lucy's protests and each time, her father squealed in fright, only fueling Natsu's motivation to torture him.

"Listen, Lucy," said Jude, straightening his tie, "are you sure want to spend the rest of the break with this guy? If you're being forced to stay here—blink twice!"

"Dad—stop! I want to be here!" Lucy tried to be insistent. Of course a part of her was home sick, and she really missed her own bathroom and not having to worry if the toilet seat is up. She also missed her other clothes—Loke had managed to pick out her most scandalous of outfits, but she didn't want to leave Natsu just yet.

"WAS THAT TWO BLINKS?! Don't worry! I'll pull the car out back—I lent Zeref my bat—so go find it if you need a clean break—"

"Heyyy! Knock it off!" Natsu glowered, seizing Lucy's wrist in his callous hands. "Lucy came here on her own free will and she can leave whenever she wants!"

"BLINK TWICE IF HE'S LYING!" Jude bellowed and Natsu's short fuse burned out.

"Stop that!" Natsu whined and then grunted out, "Y-you know how I feel about her!"

Jude grinned warmly and said, "Yes, yes I do."

Lucy was confused by the exchange because now both guys were smiling, and that was when she realized that day back at her house—when her dad had that long talk with Natsu—Natsu must have confessed his love for Lucy to her dad...

****XOXOX****

"I told you it would downpour!" Lucy yelled through the treacherous streams of water, shoving her wet bangs out of her eyes, but realized it was of no use because the rain kept mushing them back down. Natsu had wanted to take her to the old neighborhood comic book store. In theory, it was a magnificent idea, but the dark, ominous clouds made Lucy hesitant, but Natsu reassured her that they were nothing to worry about.

Oh, how wrong he was....

Natsu's spiky hair looked unnaturally flat from the dampness, but he still looked hot nonetheless. She wanted to shy away from her thoughts, but mentally scolded herself and gave a pep talk that she's allowed to think that about Natsu since he is her boyfriend after all—and hell, he did just confess his love to her. Her face was a rosy pink as she chewed on her lower lip, looking at Natsu with pouty eyes.

"What?" Natsu grunted.

"N-nothing," she stammered and as she went to move, she accidentally stepped into a rather deep puddle. "EEK!" she cried, fanning her arms out for something to grab a hold of. Natsu acted fast—swiftly rushing in front of her, just in time to take the blunt of the fall.

Natsu landed on his back and Lucy's boobs were pressed firmly against his face. "Rushi..." his voice was muffled and tickled her chest, causing Lucy's face was flaming up. She frantically pulled herself upright and Natsu's face was deeply flushed as he sat up. "Can't believe that actually happened..."

"S-shut up!" She was about to climb off his lap, but Natsu grabbed her wrist and kissed her in the heart of the downpour.

Water trickled through their eyelashes and down to their lips. The rain was so heavy and cold, but Natsu's lips were warm, filling Lucy's body light, bubbling heat.

There was not a soul around in this heavy rain and Lucy couldn't blame them. It really was awful weather after all. And as Natsu started kissing her neck, and his hair tickled right under her nose. She tried to hold it back, but alas, it was no use—she sneezed on him.

Natsu pulled back and a look of amusement lit up his dark eyes. "Did you just sneeze on me?!"

"M-maybe..."

"Eww! And it felt wet too!"

"It was a dry sneeze!"

"Then why do I feel water—"

"Because it's pouring out! Stop trying to embarrass me! Besides—you used to say my sneezes were cute!"

"Tch never!"

"Liar!"

"Am not!"

"Are too!"

The next thing she knew, she found herself in a mud war as she and Natsu through grenades of mud at each other in blind ambition. She kept her eyes closed but could feel the mud splattering against her chest and face while the rain beat down harder than ever. Then she was tackled to the ground with Natsu holding her arms above her head.

"Prepare to admit defeat!" He laughed like a maniac and before he could throw more mud on her, while Lucy thrashed he froze—staring at her face. He dropped all the dirt and caressed Lucy's cheek. "

The rain suddenly stopped and a voice called out. "What the hell are you guys doing?"

They froze and looked up. Gray and Juvia were standing over them with a pink umbrella perched in Juvia's hand.

"Lucy got her snot all over me so I was seeking out my revenge," said Natsu, impishly grinning over at Lucy, while Gray and Juvia grimaced.

With mortifying anger fueling her, she grabbed a handful of mud and smushed it against his face. He let out a muffled yell and Lucy gritted, "I didn't get any snot on you, you jerk!"

Their fight picked right back up and Gray and Juvia ended up joining in thanks to Natsu accidentally—or maybe it was on purpose—nailing Gray in the face.

****XOXOX****

The storms refused to die out so the couple was trapped inside for the most part, but they made the most of it. They went on double dates via Skype. Their date with Gajeel and Levy was actually rather normal granted most of it was spent with Natsu and Gajeel spitting crude words at one another while Lucy and Levy fought each other in an online Fairy Tail game.

The most interesting date had to be with Erza and Jellal. "A double date was such a brilliant idea," said Erza in content while Natsu blurted out, "I'm confused. How the hell is this a double date?"

Erza cocked her head and her scarlet brows furrowed inwards, so Lucy decided to clue Erza in by asking with a nervous smile, "Uh, Erza, where's Jellal?"

"What do you mean?" Erza frowned. "He's right behind—" she stopped talking, noticing that she truly was alone. "JELLAL?! Where the hell does he always go?!" She pulled out a fancy looking knife and stabbed her dresser with it before taking off. Natsu and Lucy both flinched from the noise.

"I still don't think he's real," Natsu whispered into Lucy's ear with his lips brushing gently against the outer lobe. The action caused her to shiver, but still, she had enough sense to hiss, "Don't say that!"

"WHAT WAS THAT, NATSU?!" Erza roared, however, she wasn't back on the screen yet and that made the whole thing even scarier.

"N-nothing!" he stammered, shoving Lucy in front of him as a human shield.

The best part about the whole double date was that Jellal did eventually make an appearance and that was when Erza was searching for him. Then he would leave to go find her just when Erza would come back—it was endless cycle that was amusing at first, but it got boring fast, and so, Lucy and Natsu ended up working on their comic, finding themselves inspired by the strange couple.

On Tumblr, Natsu uploaded every selfie that he and Lucy took together, which she found to be amusing since Natsu acted like taking selfies was a punishment worse than death, but now she knew it was only just an act. And their fellow followers started to catch on that they were dating and would message either Natsu and Lucy about how they shipped them from the beginning—especially Wendy—despite her being on the timid side, she couldn't stop messaging Lucy about how adorable she thought they were back at the con.

And the group chat—they seemed more rowdy than ever. Mira gushed and squealed after every word Lucy said about what she and Natsu had done so far.

"Oi, Cana—are ya jealous?!" Natsu said suddenly and Cana put down the beer she had been chugging just as Natsu decided to squeeze Lucy's boobs. Everyone on the screen gasped—Mira looked ready to faint—Levy was blushing—Juvia was trying to get Gray to squeeze her own boobs—Gajeel looked away—and Cana pouted, murmuring, "Don't rub it in, you jerk!"

And Lucy slapped him. "PERVERT!"

"Heyy!" Natsu glowered, rubbing his sore face with a pout. "You weren't calling me that when I —"

"NATSU! Stop talking!" Lucy cried into her hands.

Everyone started laughing and wolf-whistling and taking bets how fair they've gone.

"We haven't had sex yet!" Lucy yelled, unable to take their torture anymore—and that was the truth. They experime

nted with each other's body sporadically after the first time, but they never did get as far as that. Lucy wasn't sure if s he was even ready for that yet and Natsu never made an effort to push.

Levy was the only person Lucy confided to about her sexual escapades since Levy had chosen Lucy to confide to as well. Unlike the others, they were both the least experienced and that made it easier to talk about rather than having Cana or Erza's expert advice and peer pressure to do more...

"Gray-sama and Juvia have," Juvia said with a glint in her oceanic eyes.

Everyone gasped at her forwardness and Gray shoved her away and yelled, "No we haven't!"

"Yes! In Juvia's dreams," Juvia sighed wistfully with a twinkling look on her face, while everyone practically face-pl anted the floor.

****XOXOX****

Like always, leaving Natsu was the hardest thing ever. It was like a rip in her soul. He walked her to the train—he e ven offered to ride it home with her, but Lucy was firmly against it, not wanting him to suffer from his motion sickn ess.

She tried to smile, but as each minute passed, her heart began to race more and more. She didn't want to leave him. Why couldn't she live just a little bit closer—granted she was lucky he didn't live on the opposite side of the world, b ut still, the distance was killer.

And as the train arrived, Lucy threw herself at Natsu's back and hugged him with all her might. Her crying face was buried against the back of his neck. She could feel Natsu straining to look at her as he placed his hands over hers.

"I'll visit you every weekend, Lucy," he said with sincerity and Lucy let out a choked sob that she tried so hard to ho ld back and while he didn't say 'I love you,' she knew his words spoke at the same depths; he was always willing to b attle his motion sickness for her sake.

She unwrapped herself from Natsu and started wiping her eyes. Natsu didn't miss a beat— quickly turning around to face her.

He looked both sad and uncomfortable. He wasn't the best with dealing with emotions, Lucy knew. So she did what she thought was best; she smiled brightly through her tears. "I'll visit you too!" she said with all the integrity she had left.

Natsu stared at her for a moment before a small blush colored his cheeks and she held that image in her head as she s tumbled onto the train.

****XOXOX****

* * *

****Ayy so either next chapter or the next, next will be the last chapter! Yeyy! A part of me wants to go back through this story and rewrite all the chapters, but its kinda cool seeing how much my writing has progressed from the begin ning :D****

****Also, how many of you would be interested in a smol prequel from Natsu's perspective?****

****And I wanna ask if there's anything you guys wanna see before it ends? :0****

***GASPS* OMG WOT? AN UPDATE? AND IT'S NOT A LENGTHY AUTHOR'S NOTE CHAPTER? AND T HIS STORY ISN'T ABANDONED AFTER ALL? HNNGGG**

HIIII! REMEMBER ME? I'M BACKK! *TACKLES YOU INTO A HUG*

NOW GO READ! *SHOVES YOU AWAY*

* * *

XOXOX

Lucy stared at the image for hours. Reblogging it every single time she saw a different edit or coloring of it. It was glorious. The newest chapter of _Fairy Tail_ had the absolute perfect Haru and Elie moment she had ever laid eyes on—okay, maybe that was an exaggeration, but still, the recent chapters had left her feeling deprived and this was just the right dose she needed.

She was able to tear her eyes away from the images long enough to see that she had a snapchat from Natsu. She opened it and it was video of Natsu scrolling through his tumblr feed, showing the same set of gorgeous edits Lucy had just reblogged. _Still so beautiful_, she sighed to herself.

"Lucy, I think you have a problem..." Natsu's voice came through the recording.

She frowned, refreshing her dashboard and the frown disappeared as a new coloring of the same Haru and Elie panel graced her dashboard. She didn't feel like sending a photo of herself back to him, so she absentmindedly snapped a photo of the newest edit and wrote on it, "What do you mean?"

After it sent, she reblogged the image to add to her spam of trashy ship posts.

Natsu called her phone since it was faster than using Skype that's been lagging a lot lately. "You keep reblogging the same photo!"

"Isn't it so romantic?" she hummed. "My ship is perfect!"

"It's not even a shipping moment," Natsu argued. "They are literally just standing next to each other! How is that romantic?"

"But look how cute they look together!" she swooned, falling flat on her back on her fluffy bed.

"I think there might be something wrong with you..."

"You just don't understand," she sighed dreamily. She wouldn't be surprised if there were stars or hearts sparkling in her eyes. She was so happy.

Natsu exhaled, loud and exaggerated, and Lucy giggled. Maybe she was being ridiculous, but she couldn't help it. She was so in love with them. It was like the fate of her world depended on whether Haru and Elie had even the most infinitesimal moment of interaction. She could already picture a new fanfic idea in her mind. She put Natsu on speaker, pulled up a blank document, and started banging out her ideas like a pianist composing music with the words flowing out to the beat of her shipper heart.

"Guess I'm happy that it makes you happy," he said at last. "What'd you think of the chapter, I mean besides for that one tiny, barely noticeable corner panel of Haru and Elie standing next to each other?"

Lucy scowled at her phone, wishing Natsu could see it, but if he knew her well enough—which she was sure he did—then he knew and was probably smiling back at her with that annoyingly cute teasing smirk of his. She thought back to his question, gnawing on her lower lip before diving in to her theories of what was to come. Natsu shared his own, albeit, his were a bit more gruesome and seemingly impractical, compared to hers, which she considered to be realistic.

"Too bad we are in the final arc," Natsu sighed. "I don't think there's enough chapters left for all the cool stuff I want to happen!"

"Final chapter? What are you talking about?" Lucy asked, hand frozen midway through a sentence she was just typing.

"Things seem to be coming to an end, don't ya think?"

She scoffed, nettled by Natsu's words. As if it would actually end just as it reached the climax! "I won't believe it until I see it announced by Mashima-sensei! Ohh, I'm going to be late to school," she groaned, glaring at the time on her laptop. She saved her document and shut her laptop.

"Me too," he said. "We might as well ditch at this point."

"If Erza found out what you were suggesting, you know she would kill you," Lucy said, thinking back to all the times Erza threatened to punish Natsu...

"Tch, it's not like she has to know," Natsu said with his tone impishly arrogant. "Besides, you need a break! All you do is study, study, study for your finals."

"Which is exactly what you should be doing," she grouched while switching her phone to speaker mode. She set it down on her dresser and looked over herself in the mirror. She straightened the jacket to her uniform and neatly tied her hair up to a side-pony. Her hair had grown so long that keeping it down had become a nuisance.

"So you actually are going to school?"

"Of course I am!"

"Lucy!" her father called, and she told Natsu to hold on and left the room.

"Yeah, dad?"

He was sitting at the table with Plue in his lap, stroking the rough skin on the reptile's back. "So your spring dance is coming up soon! And I have a feeling you're afraid to ask me for money for a dress and the answer is of course I'll give you money for one!"

Lucy's face and ears reddened. "Dad, I'm not going. How many times do I have to tell you that?"

"But I thought that boyfriend of yours—"

"Natsu's not the type for a dance and besides it won't be fun without all my friends there," she said, thinking about how she couldn't possibly go to a dance without Levy or Erza and the others. It wouldn't be fun getting ready for it without them—or at least that's what she had seen in all those cliché book scenes for dances.

Her father frowned and pulled out his wallet. "Well, if that's the case, I'll let it go, but I might have accidentally," he pulled out a huge wad of cash, "lost some money and if you find it, you should keep it." He winked, placing it on the table. "Have a good day today! I won't be home later because I have an overnight for a meeting that's really early to morrow morning."

Lucy smiled despite everything and took the cash. She would spend it on something more practical, like merch. She went back to Natsu's phone call.

"You're really late now, you might as well stay home at this point," Natsu said smoothly.

"Nice try."

"You're no fun," he complained. "So, what'd your old man want?"

"Oh, he just wanted me to know he won't be home tonight," she said, omitting the part about the dance. It's not like Natsu would be interested in going to it anyway. She thought back to all those times her dad had brought up the dance while she was talking to Natsu and the others in their group and she couldn't recall Natsu ever saying that he would go with her.

"Looks like I better call out of work tonight," he said, "'cuz I know how much you hate being home alone."

Her heart skipped. "You don't have to do that."

Natsu had gotten a job recently in order to stop relying on Zeref and his probably illegal funds. But that led to Lucy not being able to see Natsu as often. And as much as she knew it wasn't his fault that he kept getting assigned weekend shifts, it hurt.

"Yeah, but if I don't, no one else will because you're too weird—"

"I'm not weird!" She hung up and threw her head back, only Natsu could ruin a moment. But nonetheless, she still missed him.

Her eyes flickered back to the time and she gasped. She was extremely late now. Feeling like a cliché magical girl protagonist, she grabbed her book bag, stumbled as she jammed her feet into her shoes, and ran out of the house.

****XOXOX****

The past month at school, Lucy managed to fall into a routine with Loke, where they would sit together and discuss Fairy Tail or study and work on homework in each other's company. At first it had felt like a curse that Loke moved next-door and went to her school, but it truly was a blessing in disguise.

Things had truly changed for her. Loke, being the shameless flirt that he was, had actually flirted with Lucy's old friends, the ones that made her feel like a freak for loving anime. They even had the audacity to approach Lucy to ask about Loke and Lucy didn't miss the chance to proudly boast that Loke was the biggest otaku she had ever met.

"Those girls over there are so weird," Loke murmured, staring at the table Lucy had once sat at. "They came up to me calling me _sensei_ — I personally think they meant to call me _senpai_, but still it was creepy...then they asked me to go watch _Naruto_ with them! How ridiculous! I hated that anime!" He cringed in disgust. "They are not worth the time of day."

Lucy laughed. Her old friends were pretending to like anime to get with Loke. Karmic justice at its finest.

"So the Spring Fling is coming up," said Loke, smoothing out his lion mane hair. "You going to it?"

"Nah," said Lucy, writing out the formula for centripetal force. Why did she ever think it was a good idea to take physics?

"Really? Thought you would be all over that. Dressing like a princess and with your regal beauty, it's truly fitting. A

nd it would be fun with Natsu there—I do enjoy hitting on you in front of him." Loke's eyes twinkled.

"As much fun as that is, I don't think it's Natsu's type of thing," she said, remembering her dad's business party. She had brought Natsu as a date and instead of dancing with her, he spent all his time stuffing his face at the buffet. He clearly had no interest in dances. "Besides, my dad's mentioned the dance in front of him a lot of times. He's never showed interest in it."

"I'm sure he'd be happy to go if it's what you really want," Loke said, rolling his pen between his fingers. "Or, we could just go together, waifu. We could be the rulers—"

"Not gonna happen!" she said, her words were as sharp as one of Erza's swords. As much as their friendship has grown over the past few weeks, she didn't want him as her date—_ever._

"Fine, can't blame a guy for trying." He gave her an apologetic smile that somehow made his shameless flirting seem as innocent as Gray's stripping habit. "Today's chapter was great, wasn't it?"

"Yeah! Wasn't that panel of Haru and Elie so cute?!"

Loke snickered, "Hmm, not sure, I don't think you reblogged it enough times for me to have it burned into my memory just yet." She playfully punched him and he laughed some more. "Well, I bet you'll be even happier soon when they finally become canon."

"That won't be happening for a while," Lucy said with indifference.

"For a while?" Loke frowned. "I'm pretty sure we are in the final arc, waifu. Your ship's bound to be canon any chapter now."

She paused, her heart leapt into her throat. Why would Loke say the same thing Natsu had said? They must have read a post of some theory that Fairy Tail was reaching the end. That _must_ be it.

"We are not in the final arc," she said stiffly, her hand curled tightly around her pen.

"How are we not in the final arc?! They're fighting all the main villains and things are finally getting revealed. I'd think that you being a writer would be preceptive enough to pick up on it. Face it, waifu, the manga is coming to a close."

Lucy blushed. She hated being belittled like that and she was tired of the conversation. He was wrong. Absolutely and irrevocably wrong. She tapped on her phone, wanting to distraction, unfortunately, she saw that her group chat was discussing the chapter as well.

"Do you guys think _Fairy Tail_ is ending soon?" asked Levy.

Natsu was the first one to reply a big capital, "YES!"

Lucy started to type something, but she stopped after seeing Gray's message: "I hate to agree with that asshole, but yeah."

Erza, too, agreed that it was ending and said that Jellal predicts that it'll be ending shortly and Jellal is _never_ wrong. Mira seemed to be more on the doubtful side, but Gajeel was quick to argue with her on that.

"We already had one couple confess," Gajeel pointed out, "so if that's not a sign, I don't know what is."

"What about the fact that they're fighting _the_ biggest baddie in the series?" wrote Cana. "Hate to say this, but it's definitely ending any chapter now."

"Not to mention," typed Erza, "they finally revealed what Fairy Heart is and all that other stuff."

Lucy's heart started to race. Okay, so they all had good points, but it can't be the end. It just can't! This arc is just the fight where they hold him back just for now and then there comes the final arc where they have the standoff!

But, she felt sick to her stomach. She thought about offering her half eaten bagel to Loke, but she was still annoyed from their conversation. Lucy got up, walked towards the garbage can, and threw her bagel in there with anger as her driving force.

They were wrong. She was adamant about that and refused to buy into their baseless theories. It couldn't just end without an announcement.

Or could it?

Lucy shook her head, ridding herself of the rancid thoughts and went onto Tumblr to clear her head. But there was no mercy for her on there. Her dash was clouded with reblogs of similar posts of what her friends had been saying. That at Fairy Tail was most likely at it's end. And worst of all, Jellal's post was the most recent thing on her dash with people commenting on it: "If Jellal says so, then it has to be true! Fairy Tail is ending!"

Lucy closed out of the app and closed her eyes. She wanted to go back to being happy about Haru and Elie standing next to each other and to before she talked to anyone today. She felt mad at her friends and at the world.

Maybe she was being overdramatic, but Fairy Tail was her salvation. The only thing that was able to bring a smile on her face while her mother was sick in the hospital, back when they would read it together. And it was the only thing that kept Lucy sane once her mother had finally come to pass. If Fairy Tail ended, then she would lose her one last connection to her mom. Her eyes watered and she willed the tears back. She would not cry at school, she furiously wiped away the one stray tear.

She inhaled deeply, held it, then exhaled. _Wrong. Everyone is wrong._ She opened her eyes and looked back over at Loke, who was looking at her notes, copying off of her. And she let him, too tired to chastise him about it.

Her phone buzzed in her uniform's coat pocket with a text message from Natsu. "Lucyyy, you there?"

He had been texting her all day, but she hadn't felt like answering, so she gave one worded answers and this time, she didn't feel like replying at all, so she didn't. She sat back down and decided to pull out her writing journal, flipping to the latest character she had come up with. She and Natsu planned it that she would write up a character and he would try to sketch it out. She only had a few characters written out. The main character was a teenage boy with spiky white hair and sword strapped to his chest. Not very detailed, but she made up for the lack of physical description with his personality traits.

"Make sure you base a character off of me in your story," said Loke, peering over her shoulder to read her character profiles.

Lucy grabbed her pen and wrote down what she said, "An annoying guy that looks like a cat? Got it!"

Loke gave her a sour look. "I think Natsu has finally rubbed off on you."

"He has not!"

As much as she appreciated the distraction, it didn't wash away the dull throb that thrummed in her heart, reminding her that nearly everyone in the Fairy Tail fandom thought the manga was coming to an end.

****XOXOX****

Lucy's heart felt heavy as she arrived home from school. She just wanted to curl up against Plue and cry. Why was everyone so certain Fairy Tail was ending? It gave her such a headache thinking about it again, but she couldn't stop the obsessive thoughts.

Fairy Tail ending... She clenched the straps of her backpack as she kicked off her shoes by the front door. If Fairy Tail was ending, did that mean her friends would drift apart? Technically, they would no longer have a common interest to hold them together. Her stomach knotted. She felt nauseous. Was this how Natsu felt when he's motion sick?

She walked towards her bedroom and stopped dead in her tracks. Something was off. The door was slightly ajar, but that wasn't what bothered her; it was the sound of muffled voices. Her eyes darted around nervously, landing on her dad's prized possession: the bat.

The metal was cool to the touch. She tested out its weight and found that it was inconveniently heavy. She practiced a swing, but the its weight had her unbalanced and she nearly toppled over. Steadying herself, she pushed her door open with the silver tip of the bat and screamed on the top of her lungs.

"Oh, Lucy's here," Natsu said to everyone in the room—everyone? Her eyes flashed from one person to the next: Gray, Juvia, Levy, Gajeel, Erza, and some guy she did not recognize.

"WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING IN MY HOUSE?!" She held the bat high in the air, but it was as good as frozen from the shock of it all. She was lucky they really weren't burglars.

"Why do you have that bat?!" Natsu yelled, slamming his hand against his heart. "Put it away! You're scaring Gray!"

Gray, however, was too glued to his phone to even notice what was going, but at the sound of his name, he looked up and Juvia tackled him into a hug.

"Gray-sama is so cute when he's scared!"

Gray struggled to free himself, whilst shouting, "I'm—not—scared!"

"Gray," said Erza, flicking her long, scarlet hair over her shoulder, "come on, you know that Lucy would never actually hit you or any of us with that bat, no need to be afraid."

"I know that!" Gray continued to protest, still fighting his girlfriend's hug. "But I'm telling you I wasn't scared!"

"He's in denial," Gajeel cackled with his abnormal laugh echoing.

"Definitely," said Levy, scribbling something down in her notebook. From the looks of it, Lucy realized that they were all doing schoolwork. Foreign textbooks and notebooks were littered all over her bedroom floor and on her small coffee table.

"I hate you guys," Gray said in resignation, finally allowing Juvia to cuddle him.

Lucy shook her head, not quite believing how lively her friends were. "How about I just start again," she said. "Hi, Natsu, Gray, Juvia, Levy, Gajeel, Erza, and, uh, some guy I don't know." The _some guy_ had blue hair and looked vaguely familiar, just not enough for Lucy to come up with a name.

Erza blushed and scowled. "Lucy, it's Jellal! Of course you know him! You went on a double date with us, remember?"

"That's who that guy is?!" Natsu gasped and judging everyone else's raised eyebrows and O-shaped mouths, they see

med just as surprised.

"Uh, right...Jellal. That's what I meant..." Lucy looked away, tapping the bat awkwardly on the floor. The double date over Skype, where Erza spent the entire time looking for Jellal. How could Lucy ever forget that?

"See, knew it would come back to you." Erza looked pleased by this with a huge smile stretching proudly across her lips.

Lucy leaned the bat against the wall and started to relax the best she could. She shrugged off her backpack and gazed around her friends, spotting a big enough gap in their circle right in between Natsu and Juvia.

Natsu smiled warmly as she took her seat, tucking her skirt beneath. She gave him a brief smile and then ducked her head. Worst possible day for her friends to come over, she decided.

She stared at a nail polish stain on her carpet. "How long have you guys been here? Didn't you all have school?"

"Of course we did," said Erza, "but Natsu was very concerned about you—"

"Oi, I wasn't concerned!" interrupted a red-faced Natsu. "I just wanted to make sure Lucy was okay since she was acting weird."

Lucy instantly felt bad, swallowing thickly. Of course he would notice something was amiss with her.

"That's what concerned means, you idiot," said Gray, who was back to playing on his phone.

Natsu's nostrils flared. "Hey—"

"You two better not be fighting," hissed Erza through her clenched jaw.

"No, sir!" said Gray, his phone slipped from his trembling fingers. "I-I mean ma'am! No, ma'am!"

"A-aye!" said Natsu.

"As I was saying," Erza smoothed out her white blouse, "we had to come check things out to make sure you weren't harmed in any way. Mira couldn't come because she had a test today and Cana lives too far, but they wanted us to tell them as soon as we found out about your state of being."

Lucy felt like an awful friend, who didn't deserve these wonderful people as her own. It was now and always has been obvious that even if Fairy Tail ended, their friendships were real. Their fates were intertwined and Lucy finally broke into a smile and tears blurred out her vision.

Her phone buzzed with a new message into their group chat from Erza. "Lucy is well enough to threaten us with a bat. Natsu's concerns were for naught."

"Kinky," Cana was quick to write back and Lucy snorted, shoving her phone away.

Things settled down quickly after that with Erza commanding everyone to get back to their assignments. So, Lucy begrudgingly dumped out her backpack and got started on her Spanish homework. They worked in silence for the most part, with casual conversations floating about. Gray and Natsu started in on their journey to Lucy's house via Erza's car (both swore that Erza was some type of demon behind a wheel). Although, Natsu keeled over at the mere mention of a car. Lucy snickered and rubbed small circles on his back, but contrary to her comforting actions, she threatened him.

"You better not puke in my room."

Even Gajeel looked green from the conversation and Lucy choked on her spit. "You have motion sickness, too?!"

"Of-of course...not," he said between gags.

Levy pinched the bridge of his nose. "No wonder you always make us walk everywhere."

And then they all went back to work, until Gray said, "Is the dude with the stripping habit based off of me or Musica?"

"W-what?!" Lucy dropped her pen and looked over at the dark haired boy. He was busy studying her character journal. How did he get his hands on that? She cursed at herself, remembering that she threw all her books carelessly out of her bag.

"Oh!" Levy gasped. "Those are your original characters?!" She moved next to Gray to read it as well.

"Wait! I haven't even gotten a look at it yet," complained Natsu with his forehead creasing as he bumped Gray to the side to get a good look at it.

"Y-you guys aren't supposed to be looking at it yet!" Lucy helplessly tugged on the collar of her uniform as her body temperature rose sky high. She hadn't let anyone see it yet because she was a bit shy over it. It was one thing to write about other people's fictional characters, but revealing her own felt like she had just stripped bare in front of her friends.

"This character seems a lot like Juvia's Gray-sama," said Juvia.

"Lucy, this seems like plagiarism of Musica," said Erza, looking a bit disappointed.

"I know! I guess it just seemed so natural to write a character who strips." Her shoulders slumped. She had meant to change that out after she had accidentally wrote out the character.

"Maybe we can come up with another character?" suggested Gajeel, who looked over at Levy for some ideas.

"Yeah, I'm sure we can all come up with something, like another habit!"

"Why are you guys so interested in this?" asked Lucy.

"Well, with Fairy Tail ending, we need a new story to get excited over," Erza said.

Lucy's expression darkened. Right, she had forgotten that they all believed Fairy Tail was ending. Her fingers curled on the edge of her glass coffee table while her friends continued to belt out ideas.

"This guy needs piercings."

"He should be the scholarly type that likes to read a lot!"

"He needs to get into lots of fights!"

"This makes me feel sad," said Levy, "thinking of our next obsessions after Fairy Tail's gone."

But Lucy could barely pay attention to them. She felt numb, like her mental processing had been frozen by Musica.

Something warm on her bare thigh brought life back to her body. Lucy unfroze with a startle and glanced down. A tanned hand was resting on her. _Natsu._ Her heart stuttered just as he gave her a comforting squeeze. She looked up

at his with bright eyes, but his gaze was on everyone else.

"It's not like we know for sure Fairy Tail's ending," Natsu said, taking back what he had said earlier. "For all we know, we might have another 50 or so chapters to go."

Everyone else shrugged, not quite agreeing with Natsu, but Lucy still appreciated the effort. She smiled warmly at him and he beamed back, showing off his sharp teeth. It was the little things like that, that made her fall in love with him over and over again like the waves kissing the shore.

"Cana says we should change the character's stripping habit to a crossdressing one," said Levy, reading from her phone.

"Hmm, I think I need to see that first," said Gajeel and everyone unanimously agreed upon that and all eyes were fell onto Gray.

Gray dumbly blinked, his droopy eyes darting over each person. "Why're you all looking at me like that?"

Natsu got up and opened one of Lucy's drawers that contained her skirts and Lucy didn't want to ask how he knew which drawer she kept them in... Natsu chuckled it at Gray, who caught it before it smacked his face. "We need you to crossdress."

"What? Why me?"

"Because you're the one with the stripping habit," said Natsu, taking his spot next to Lucy.

"I'm not doing it!"

"Gray," said Erza with a scary-calm voice that sent shivers down Lucy's spine, "you will do it."

"I don't want to wear a skirt!"

"Gray-sama can wear Juvia's bra if he prefers that," Juvia snaked her hand under her shirt and Gray quickly smacked her hands back down.

"No!"

"D'you want Lucy's bra?" Natsu asked. "You've worn that before—"

"Gray-sama wore Love Rival's bra, but won't wear Juvia's?!" Juvia gasped, shooting Lucy a look that could kill. Lucy wanted to explain that it wasn't what she thought, but Gray beat her to it.

"It wasn't like that! Natsu wore her bra, too! We were just messing around! Look, guys," Gray said earnestly as he stood up and shimmied out of his jeans, "you can't just tell me to acquire a new habit. One does not get to choose!" Meanwhile, he tugged the skirt onto his hips.

"Uh, Gray," said Levy, biting her lip to hold back the obvious smile, "if that's really the case, then why are you wearing the skirt?"

"What?" His eyes shot down to the blue skirt that was way too short on his figure. "You have got to be kidding me!"

"D'you want the matching top, too?" asked Lucy, failing to fight off her laugh. Natsu and Gajeel didn't miss a beat, pulling their phones out and snapping as many photos as they could.

Gray savagely tore off the skirt, looking more comfortable in just his checkered patterned boxers. "I don't want a cro

ssdressing habit! I hate you guys! What is this? Pick on Gray Day?"

"Well, everyday is Pick on Gray Day," Natsu said with a wicked grin that was quick to disappear when Gray punched him in the arm.

"Lucyyyy! Gray is starting with me!"

"You started with him first."

"Tch, of course you're takin' his side," Natsu sank back into his spot like a scolded puppy. And before Lucy could retort, he placed his hand back on her thigh, except this time it was a lot higher than before. His fingers curled around her inner side and her breath hitched. She wondered if Natsu even realized how high his hand was.

Her face burned scarlet and her heart did flip-flops. She looked around to see if anyone else noticed, and to her misfortune two people did: Gajeel's pierced brow rose high and Levy awkwardly looked away with her own face turning as red as Lucy's.

Lucy bit her lip and glanced up at Natsu through her mascara-coated lashes. He was sticking his tongue out at Gray and then he moved his hand off of her and she was able to relax and breathe easily once more.

"I happen to think the crossdressing habit really suits you, Gray," said Erza, "Don't you agree, Jellal?"

Lucy eyes shifted over to the empty spot next to Erza that was once taken by the mysterious guy.

"Jellal?" Erza asked again with less certainty.

"Erza," said Levy, apologetically, "he's not there."

Erza sucked in a breath and whirled around to see that Jellal truly was no longer next to her. "Where is he!" She grabbed her phone and angrily dialed his number.

"Please tell me he's not wandering around my house and that I'm going to find him creeping in the hallways at night," prayed Lucy. That was the last thing she needed, to find Jellal roaming around while she was alone tonight.

"When the hell did he leave?" asked Gajeel. "There's no way I coulda missed him exiting!" And he had good point; Gajeel was seated directly across from the door. If anyone would have noticed someone sneaking out, it had to be him.

"I didn't even hear the door creek," Natsu added, "and my hearings pretty good."

"Are you sure about that?" Gray asked innocently. "Because you always say 'What'd you just call me!' and that's made me a bit curious if you ruined your hearing from how loud and obnoxious your voice is." He shrugged his shoulders as if to say, _oh well._

"Hey! If anyone's voice made me lose hearing—it's Lucy!"

"Me?!" Lucy gaped, pointing her finger at her chest. How did she possibly get dragged into their stupid argument?

"Yeah! You're always shouting when I'm wearing headphones—"

"You shout a lot, too," she said dryly.

Gray shoved his pants back on. "I need some air. Anyone wanna go walk and get food?"

Everyone was quick to say yes, especially Erza, who was certain that they would find Jellal at the pizza parlor in Lucy's town. Though Lucy wasn't going to hold her breath on that. Jellal was like the wind, gone without a trace.

"I just need to get my keys to lock up and I need to give Plue some water. Order me a plain slice, please!" said Lucy as she walked her friends to her front door. She grabbed her iguana's water dish and rinsed it out in the sink.

"Order a meaty one for me, and make sure it's extra spicy," called Natsu, moving c

"No spice? I got you bro, no worries," said Gray, slamming Lucy's front door shut before Natsu could fight back.

"Grrr! Why is that guy so annoying!" Natsu grumbled, leaning against her kitchen cabinet with his arms folded over his chest. "Thinks he's so cool makin' stupid jokes like that."

"I'm willing to bet he says the same thing about you," she said, giggling.

"As if." He met Lucy's eyes and the space between his eyebrows crumpled. "So, are you okay? You seemed a bit off today."

"So you were concerned about me then, hmm?"

"Yeah, right," he said, a playful smile broke its way onto his lips. "Now quit dodging my question."

"I'm okay," she said, distractedly as she scrubbed Plue's dish. "It's just that..." The water grew hotter by the second, but she was glad for it. Her voice was on the verge of cracking. She didn't want to say it out loud, that she was scared that they were all right about Fairy Tail ending.

"Just what?" He turned the sink off, ruining her only distraction as she was forced to look at him, but she still didn't. Instead, she threw her arms around his neck and buried her face against his chest. His shirt was soft and it smelled like smokey incense.

"I don't want Fairy Tail to end..." she sniffled. "I don't want you guys to be right."

"Had a feeling it was about that." His voice was gentle as he wrapped his lean arms around her waist, his warm hands rested on the small of her back. "I meant what I said before. And just because we think it is, doesn't mean we're right. You know our theories are always wrong ninety percent of the time. Why would we start being right, now?"

She pulled back and wiped her tears on the rough material sleeve of her school uniform. She could have laughed, marveling at how he was able to ease the pain inside her chest. She stood on her tips of her toes and kissed him with as much force as she could muster to convey her _thank you._

They pulled back for a brief moment, before kissing with a deeper intensity that ignited a fire inside her. Natsu moved the kiss from her lips and trailed over to her cheek and down to her neck, where he sucked gently, testing out the waters to see if Lucy would object to it. Her body shivered and he nipped very lightly, enough to make Lucy suck in a shaky breath.

Their bodies wriggled against each other, and Natsu picked her up and placed her on top of her kitchen counter, knocking over Plue's bowl with a loud bang.

Natsu pulled back. His lips looked deliciously red and his hair was all mussed up thanks to Lucy. He ran his hand through it, but it not making it any neater and Lucy absolutely loved it that way.

"Lucy," he leaned his forehead against hers, tickling her with his soft bangs. His hand rested once again on the inner part of her upper thigh. "All I want to do is explore every inch of you."

Her mouth went scorch-dry. He didn't say it in a sexy, dirty-talk kind of way. It was with sincerity and thrill. He gave her thigh light squeeze that sent pulse of tingling heat all throughout her body.

"Then do it."

At a burningly slow pace, his fingers crept higher and higher—and she was hysterically laughing. Natsu's hands were all over her body, tickling her. She wheezed, and squirmed on top of the counter she was trapped on, begging him to stop. But her incessant laughter muffled her voice, and tears clouded her vision.

"You pervert," Natsu joked, halting his tickle assault. She panted, calming down from the attack. She gingerly eyed Natsu, making sure he wouldn't attack again. He snickered before capturing her lips once more.

"Hey, uh, sorry to interrupt, but where did Erza and everyone else go?" someone called from behind them and Natsu and Lucy both gasped, cocking their heads in the direction of the voice. There stood Jellal with a sheepish expression and a very red face.

"We found Jellal!" Natsu punched the air with excitement.

"Oh thank goodness—let's get him out of my house before we lose him again."

It wasn't long before everyone left. Erza wouldn't let Natsu spend the night at Lucy's because then he wouldn't make it back in time for school tomorrow. It was a bittersweet goodbye. A part of Lucy wanted to time alone, but another part of her didn't want her friends to leave just yet, but alas they had to.

She showered and took a bath afterwards, letting the heat of the water massage her body. "What a long day," she murmured, pouring lavender-scented bath salts into the water and let the sweet smell take away her anxiety.

She didn't stay in long, not wanting to get all pruney. She wrapped a fluffy floral towel around her body and with a smaller white towel, she tied her hair up in it, not wanting to drip everywhere. She changed into loose sleep shorts and a black t-shirt that she had stolen from Natsu.

Lucy sat down on her bed with her laptop on her lap and went to check out the official translations of the chapter to see if there were any major translation errors. As she skimmed it, she only found differences in phrasing, but nothing seemed to be drastically different. However there was one small line that caught her attention.

Fairy Tail is coming to an end with just 10 more chapters left!

"What?"

The towel fell from her head and her damp hair kissed the back of her neck with a sickening chill.

"WHAT?"

XOXOX

* * *

I'm so, so, so sorry that eons have passed since my last update! I played around a lot with this chapter, deciding how to wrap up this fic, but I just wasn't feeling it. So I took a much needed break and I always get inspired by real life things and with Fairy Tail actually coming to its end, why not end my fic to the same tune? :D And I apologize for any typos, I can't read this chapter over anymore without losing my mind.

So, if you all don't mind, I'd like just a few more chapters to officially wrap up my fic :3c

And 6k word chapter is a pretty good apology gift, don't you think? ^_ ^

Also, people who are caught up on the manga: whAT WERE HAPPY AND NATSU GOING TO SAY BEFORE THE THING HAPPENED? HNNGGGG

I'm actually quite scared to post this chapter since it's been so long and I wonder if people are even going to read this update :/

Well, I hope you guys liked the chapter! Thanks for reading!

89. FINAL CHAPTER

Hallo, I would like to personally welcome you all to the LAST CHAPTER OF THIS SEEMINGLY NEVER ENDING FIC! It's funny, when I started writing it, I didn't intend for it to be _the last chapter._ It just sort of, kind of turned out that way? It really resonated with me. And with that said, go enjoy~

* * *

XOXOX

It was a quite a surprise to Lucy that she didn't cry. Not a single tear was had shed that week. Maybe it's because she had cried them all out prior to the news. Or maybe it was because she knew it all along and as much as she denied it, she knew the truth within her heart.

In an ironic sense, she was the one to first post the news on tumblr and to tell all her friends about it the second after. The notes blew up for it fast. Some fought her, demanding a source, which she regretted not posting underneath (Natsu would tell them to shove off to her liking). Others just tagged tearful emojis, sharing their grievance over the official news.

After the news and shock of it all died out and weeks started to pass, the chapter count grew closer and closer to one with each passing day. Lucy decided she would put her mind off the topic by finally spending her the money her father gave her for a dress. The items she ordered arrived quickly and Lucy was quick to snap photos to send into the group chat. She lied down on her bed, head hanging upside down, and her hair brushed the floor. Her phone was secured in her hand. Plue sat leisurely in the corner of her room eating from the plate of lettuce she had set up for him.

"I'm jealous!" Levy was quick to type.

"You're dad gave you extra allowance this month?" wrote Natsu. It was a reasonable question considering Lucy had went overboard. Not only did she buy figurines of Haru and Elie, she bought plushies of them and magnets, keychains, buttons. She even bought a bunch of volumes that she was almost caught up on them.

"Well, he gave me money for a dress for that dumb spring formal," she typed, grimacing at the thought of that damned dance.

"Oh! I remember that," Mira was right on it. "Why don't you go to it? It would be so cute!"

It wasn't long before all the girls, surprisingly Erza, who Lucy realized really had a secret girly side to her—and even more surprising was Gajeel. They gushed and wished that their school had a dance. Well, really, Lucy did want an excuse to dress up and see Natsu in a tux. She wondered what kind of look Natsu would have on his face when he saw her in a dress. But on second thought, Natsu probably wouldn't even notice. She face-palmed after sighing.

"Bet she doesn't want to go because she knows that stupid matchstick will embarrass her," wrote Gray.

"Bet she doesn't want to go because she knows that stupid snowball will embarrass her with his stripping!" Natsu retorted.

"Why the hell would I go to the dance with her? I ain't her boyfriend, dumbass."

Natsu didn't reply.

"Ah ha! Got him to realize he's an idiot," Gray continued.

"Is it wrong that I still ship Gray and Natsu?" Cana asked.

Everyone, besides the aforementioned, agreed. Natsu wrote out Lucy's name in caps to emphasize his betrayal. Lucy twirled her hair around her finger, shaking her head with an amused smile dancing on her lips. She loved her friends and loved her chat. And she would be forever grateful to Fairy Tail for giving her this blessing.

****XOXOX****

The day had finally come, the Spring Fling. Lucy was happy because her teachers decided not to give homework that night. She could hear her peers complaining about the fact that the dance was on a Thursday of all days. Lucy figured it was so that students were forced to go to school the next day instead of being out all night—probably drinking. _Smart,_ she thought.

"Last chance, Princess," Loke purred like the dashing cat he was. "Come to the ball with me, or forever miss out on this wonderful once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

"Well," said Lucy, tapping her finger on her chin to feign thinking, "if it's once-in-a-lifetime, then the answer _must be _no."

Loke gave her an exaggerated look of hurt, clutching his hand over his heart as though he had been shot. "My heart can't handle the rejection. How will I ever go on?"

"I'm sure you'll manage—and there he goes," she chuckled, watching Loke strode over to a bunch of girls who were giggling in his direction. He gave them a charming smile that made them all burst out into another fit.

When Lucy arrived home, her father was waiting for her with a huge unmarked shopping bag on the counter of their kitchen. "Lucy! So, I know you were having a hard time on picking out a dress for your dance—"

"I actually never went to pick out a dress—"

"Zeref and I decided to go surprise you with one instead!"

"Zeref? What?" Lucy frowned.

"Here!" said Jude, with a warm, yet creepy grin, passing Lucy the bag.

Lucy's frown only deepened. What was going on? Zeref and her father...picked out a dress for her? "You didn't have to do this...Really."

"Well, I did. Now go get ready!"

"But I'm not going," Lucy insisted. How many times did she have to tell him this? What was with her father's persistence over this dumb dance?

"Can't a father get to see his little girl dress up and be happy?" Jude gave a small pleading pout that made Lucy's eye

twitch. She couldn't say no to that. So with a heavy sigh, she agreed to it.

"Zeref picked out the color. He said it would really compliment your skin tone!"

Lucy wanted to comment on how absolutely bizarre it was that her dad and Zeref went dress shopping for her, but what would be the point in that. All she would get is more confusion.

She shut her bedroom door and stripped out of her school uniform. And from the bag, she pulled out a large box and opened its lid. Inside was the most beautiful dress she had ever seen. It was a deep shade of red. She debated if maroon was the color to describe or maybe it was a color considered to be the color of wine, but whatever it was, she loved it. And what she loved more was that she had a hair ribbon the exact same color.

She pulled the dress on, admiring the silky material and how it felt cool against her skin. It was a halter, so she tied it tightly around her neck. Although she had to loosen it since it was almost choking her. Lucy dug around her ribbon collection and found what she was looking for. She tied it into a bow around the side of her hair. For the finishing touch, she pulled out a pair of heels to top it all off.

She looked over herself in the mirror and smiled. She felt like a little girl again playing dress up. Her smile faded away as she remembered she had nowhere to wear the dress to. Well, at least she could make her father happy about wearing it. And she had to admit Zeref was right about the color being perfect for her. She shuddered, again, wondering why Zeref went shopping with her father for this.

"Dad! I'm in the dress, are you happy?" she shouted, leaving her room. Her father didn't respond. Lucy huffed in annoyance, rounding the corner to her kitchen. "Dad?"

And he was missing. Lucy puffed her cheeks out. "Really?" she muttered under her breath. Where could he have possibly gone? She searched everywhere and he was nowhere to be found. She trekked back into her room, deciding maybe she would just take a selfie and show it to him later. Or maybe it was just a ploy to make her fall in love with the dress and then want to go to the dance after all.

She flipped her bedroom light on and a voice said. "Yo, Lucy!"

She gasped. Natsu was leaning against her bed, arms crossed over his chest—wearing a tux—and a grin that made all the blood in her body rush into her face.

"N-Natsu! What-what are you doing here?" She could barely speak. She suddenly felt self-conscious about her state of dress. He probably thought she was even more of a weirdo for dressing up so randomly. But then she realized again—he was in a tux. What was going on?

"Tonights your dance, right?"

She curtly nodded. Words seemed to fail her.

"So, we're going to it! Geez, Lucy, I thought you were supposed to be good at figuring things out."

She chose to ignore the jab. "You're taking me to the dance?"

"Didn't we just go over that?"

"But I don't have tickets and my dad is missing—and you have tickets!" Natsu had chosen that moment to flash the said tickets at her. He strode closer to her.

"Your old man gave them to me during that talk we had a while back," he explained, flicking the tickets with his finger. "I meant to ask you, but I forgot. Zeref actually reminded me—he also said he picked out your dress and to let h

im know if it matched your skin tone like he thought it would? What does that even mean?" His face contorted.

Lucy's face tightened. And the saga only gets stranger. She inhaled deeply to clear her head. Natsu's scent filled her nose. Smoke and incense. She felt a surge of desire and grabbed his face, pulling him in for a hungry kiss. It was rushed, but still managed to make her tingle. His hands went to the small of her back and she rested her head on his shoulder.

"I think I know what I want our comic to be," she said, feeling the rapid beating of his heart. She loved how solid and sturdy he felt. Is that what people mean when they call someone their rock?

"What's that?"

She pulled back to get a good look at his face. She was sure her eyes were glowing with delight. "A story where a bunch of strangers meet online and—"

"Isn't this the plot to Durarara!?"

Lucy lightly smacked his chest and Natsu laughed. "Let me finish! A bunch of strangers meet online and become best friends and go on crazy adventures and fall in love." It was an idea that had been eating at her for a while now. They could come up with a complex world with magic later on. But for the time being, she wanted to relive her whole experience and make it so she would never forget it.

"We should add gang wars and an urban legend to it!"

"Now who's the one copying Durarara!?" Lucy said, smacking him again.

Natsu shrugged and pulled Lucy back against his chest. Her face warmed, but she welcomed the sudden closeness.

"Sounds like a shoujo."

"And you secretly love shoujos!"

"Do not!"

"Do too!"

"You're too sentimental!"

"Says the boy who has a memory wall!"

Natsu stiffened and leered at Lucy's smug smile. She won that argument. "You're annoying," he said in resignation. "But I do love the idea. We should spice it up—add a pyromaniac to it!"

"Of course," Lucy said, stifling her laugh. "And if the pyromaniac is going to be the main character, maybe we should call it _Virtual Flames?_"

"Sounds good to me. Ooh you know what? We could also make it into a harem-type story!"

"Not going to happen—"

Natsu's lips were on hers. She let herself melt into, but the sudden creak behind them made the couple jump apart.

"Aww, Jude! I told you that dress would look perfect with Lucy's complexion." Zeref stood at the foot of her door wearing a gentle smile. Unlike Natsu, Lucy always thought of Zeref as the brittle and frail type.

"That you did," said Jude, leaning against the wall. "Guess I was wrong to argue with you on that."

"ZEREf!"

"DAD!" Lucy's head snapped to Natsu. "You invited your brother here?"

"No," said Natsu, dumbfounded. "I came here on my own. But Zeref is right about the dress."

Lucy's neck and ears flamed up and she dropped her gaze to the floor. So Natsu does like the dress after all.

"I just picked Zeref up from the train station," Jude explained. "He wanted to be there to take photos! Now let's go outside so we can get a nice background."

Lucy and Natsu shared a look and then laughed. Everything about their relationship and the circumstances that surrounded them had been weird from the start. Why would things start to change now?

And to kick off the first photo, Natsu cupped the back of her head and kissed her. His hand was warm and his kiss blocked out the rest of the world. And virtually, it was just the two of them and she loved that.

****XOXOX****

The day came for the final chapter of Fairy Tail to be released. Lucy and her friends decided that they would skip school and be online for the release and live read it on screen share. Levy's laptop had the best connection so she was going to be the one to stream it.

"C'mon on alreadyyy," moaned Natsu. His head was slumped against his desk. Happy was chilling right next to his head. "This is taking forever!"

"Well, you know what they say about a watched pot," said Mira, amused. "It never boils."

"Really, Mira?" Cana groused, tapping her fingers against her desk agitatedly. "That was so lame."

Mira only laughed. Lucy admired how Mira is always cheerful no matter what. Besides her little sister getting bullied off the interest, Lucy wondered if there was anything that ever made the girl mad.

Gray had already stripped down to his birthday suit and Erza was right on his case about that.

"Gray—clothes! Now!"

"A-aye!" Gray stood up, flashing everyone on screen. Lucy squealed and looked away. She heard Natsu laugh right after. She was pretty sure his laugh was directed at her and that made her body temperature rise.

"Guys—GUYS!" Levy screeched. "It's up! It's finally up!"

Everyone went still and silent. Lucy unconsciously chewed on her finger nails. Later she would have to refile and paint them, but that wasn't a concern to her at this time. Screen-share mode started, and after few moments of lag, things went smoothly.

Water splashed down onto Lucy's desk. She couldn't control the tremble of her lips. Her vision blurred some of the scenes. She would have to read it over again. All of her side-ships were finally canonized. And all the characters seemed to be successful and happy. And as the last page approached—the moment her ship finally got together, she really lost it. Dropping her head against the desk, she let the silent tears spill and got out of their video chat.

It was over. After years of waiting for this. It was finally over.

What was she supposed to look forward to now?

What would she look forward to week-after-week?

Would she ever find a new manga to obsess over?

And all those memories with her mother...

So many questions that had no answers.

Lucy couldn't have wished for a better ending. It was everything she had expected and more. She would make sure she edited the hell out of every scene on it and write more fanfics, but that still wouldn't fill the void left in her heart.

Tumblr was filled with tribute edits and people thanking the fandom for the fun they had together. And that was when an idea struck her like. As a final goodbye to Fairy Tail and also to her mother, she would make a tribute. And that was exactly what she did. It felt like the accent challenge all over again. Sharing the deepest and heaviest part of her heart. She didn't care if no one read it. It wasn't for people. It was for herself and that's all that matters.

Lucy placed her laptop in her lap and sat with her back against her bed's headboard with her chimchar plushie settled next to her, and started to type. But that didn't feel right. Not at all. She climbed back out of bed, annoyed that she probably wouldn't get as comfortable the next time she sat back down. She dug into her desk drawer and pulled out a pretty pink stationary that had delicate roses drawn around it and grabbed a purple pen. She got back into bed and rested the letter against her laptop and began.

And once she started, she couldn't stop.

"Dear Mama..."

So much has happened. So much she wanted her mother to know. About all the friends she's made, about how Fairy Tail ended, about how well she's been doing in school, about her lovely Plue, about how wonderful dad is (even though he lost a bit of his mind), about her writing, and foremost, about Natsu.

She cried while writing, but it wasn't from sadness. It was more of a relief. It's like she had been dying to share her tale with someone, that now she finally did, she felt light and free and _happy_. She uploaded a photo of it and posted it on her blog, tagging it as _personal_. And she didn't wait around to see how many notes it would get because she didn't care. Instead, she delivered the letter to her father.

Jude looked confused at first, but once he started reading, his features softened, making him look a few years younger. When he finished, he didn't say a word, and pulled Lucy into a tight hug. He kissed her forehead and Lucy felt herself tear up once more.

She rubbed her tears away and settled herself back in bed. It was late and she wasn't the least bit tired, so she pulled her laptop back out and decided to check tumblr anyway. She gasped—shocked to see her ask box overflowed and the supportive notes all with messages about how beautiful it was.

And after she replied to all her messages, there was just one ask left.

"Your mom would be so happy to read this." From Natsu.

Lucy laughed and wanted to call him a dork for being so cliché. But instead, different words seemed to type out.

"I love you."

In her group chat, she decided to randomly write: "I really love you guys."

And she logged off.

**~Fin~**

XOXOX

* * *

To my lovely readers,

I am shook that this is finally completed. I didn't think I had it in my tbh! I am sorry if any of you found it to be rushed, because IMO, I am quite satisfied by this chapter! This story took me nearly 2.5 years to complete and its like wow 2.5 years of work done! Ahh I can't handle this! I'm suddenly getting emotional. But I'm so happy to be done at last!

Thank you all for reviewing, reading, favoriting, and thank you for the fan arts. I don't think I would have ever finished if it weren't for you guys, honestly. And thanks to llh34th3rll (check out her deviantart if you want to see!) for the last fan art I received for this story! I'm so lame and print out all the arts you guys make for me and put them in a binder in my room :D

Also, I thought I should share that I am meeting my online best friend, tobethefairybest (tumblr: truepokefan) for the first time today! I gotta pick her up from the airport soon and I am in disbelief over this and we are going to comic con together! Isn't it ironic to finish this fic the day I reenact it! (Of course I'm dying from a cold right now and I hope she's prepared to get sick lololol) And I'm going to be cosplaying for the first time! I'm going as Chelia! I'm a bit nervous to do so because that's really not my kind of thing. I'm more of a wallflower and would rather observe other people cosplaying, but maybe it'll be worth the experience? Wish me luck ;O;

And also, I recreated my tumblr. It is now mizzlyplatinum. I had lost ownership of my original URL lol rip me. So if you wanna follow, go ahead and I'll follow back ^^ trying to make friends lol and if you wanna see my partially completed cosplay it's on there!

Well, I guess this is goodbye then.

Thanks again for joining me with this fic and I hope life treats you all well. Sending you all lots of love.

Love,

Platinum

End file.