

[Adam POV]

I stirred from my slumber, my eyelids feeling heavy.

Yawning, I squinted in the golden morning light that beamed through the window of the room I had been tucked into during my unconscious time.

Taking a deep breath, I moved, and every muscle screamed in pain as I did, the warmth of the blankets around me still clinging to me.

Pushing through the pain, I sat up, taking notice of the familiar scent of herbs and salves that drifted in the air, realizing immediately I was in Porlyusica's house.

The loud creak of the door interrupted my thoughts, and I quickly moved my head to see Porlyusica, her figure filling the doorway, and her hands holding a strange-looking vial. Her lips were pulled tight and her eyes narrowed as she stared at me. "Finally awake, brat?" she said and made her way into the room.

I blinked and looked down at my body, seeing most of my body covered in thick gauze, taking most of my arms, legs, and torso.

Holy shit.

I had taken a beating.

Porlyusica's voice was heavy with disappointment as she hobbled across the room to my bedside. She looked me up and down, her mouth pulled into a tight line of disapproval. "I thought you had more common sense than the average Fairy Tail member," she said, shaking her head with a snort. "But I guess I was wrong. You're just as dumb as the rest, maybe even more."

Well, that's just hurtful.

But now that I think about it, not entirely out of reason.

I had fought Deliora like Kenpachi would've, but not completely, I was both excited and scared, thrilled and concerned...

This wasn't the first time something like this had happened, this was just the first time I had gotten badly hurt because of it. First, with Gildarts during the trials, then with Irene feeling angry I hadn't been able to fight her, or my fight with the God, and now... Deliora.

I had no problems being logical outside a fight, or when my enemy was weaker than me, but when I was facing someone

stronger than me or on my level, I had trouble keeping a straight head.

"Here," Porlyusica's voice cut through the static of my thoughts as she thrust a small glass vial into my hands. The pale amber liquid bubbled and gurgled under a thin layer of fog as she motioned for me to drink it.

Thanks to the terrible smell the vial was emitting, I couldn't help but feel a twinge of apprehension as I uncorked the bottle, but I followed her instructions and wrinkled my nose before reluctantly swallowing the foul-smelling and now-tasting liquid.

I made a face, shuddering as the medicine traveled down my throat, suppressing the urge to vomit, and muttered a gruff prayer that the taste would pass soon.

Porlyusica's withered hands took the empty vial from mine. "That's what being sick tastes like," she said, the faintest trace of amusement in her voice.

That's not what being sick tastes like! That tasted like death but worse somehow!

"Now leave," Porlyusica said gruffly, pointing towards the exit with a broom she had pulled out of nowhere. "I finished your treatment and I want you gone before I break your bones again. Now shoo!" Her eyes flashed angrily.

I nodded, carefully slipping off the bed to avoid any pain only to find there was almost none to the point I almost thought I must have imagined the searing pain that had ripped through me a few moments earlier.

Just what in the hell was in that vial?!

Hehe, maybe the taste scared the pain away.

"I barely feel any pain..." I muttered, looking at her.

At this, Porlyusica's wrinkled face twisted into a scowl and her eyes blazed with anger, as she shook a crooked finger at me and waved her weapon of choice, her broom, in my direction. "Leave!"

I chuckled at the old tsundere's behavior, as I stumbled out of the small wooden cabin comically dodging the old woman's attacks that she wasn't really trying to connect.

Outside her house, the forest was quiet, save for the occasional rustle of leaves and the distant cawing of crows. The sun was setting, casting a warm orange glow over the trees.

I took a deep breath of the cool evening air and felt a sense of peace settle over me.

Time to go back home.

I might take a week or two just to relax.

The sun beat down on my head as I stepped out of the forest, and I shielded my eyes from the bright rays hitting my face as I made my way through the bustling streets of Magnolia Town, weaving through the carriages and carts as I navigated my way through the masses of people, making haste to the guild.

I wanted to let everyone know I was okay before going home. Especially little Cana, not only I was fond of the little girl but I didn't want to picture what Gildarts would do if I let her worry.

Shuddering at that thought, I pushed the heavy doors of the guild open, and I was met with the smell of ale and the savory aroma of cooked food as my gaze swept the dingy wood-paneled room, spotting a bunch of familiar faces sitting around the tavern.

Waving around, my gaze quickly locked onto the guild master's office door, and I hurried through the thickly crowded room, sidestepping and weaving through the

occasional bottle flying through the air, or broken chair, as the guild continued their daily brawl, throwing fists and taunts at each other.

Finally out of the brawl's range, I made my way to Makarov's office, and upon reaching it. I could hear the muffled sound of voices coming from the other side of the door.

Unfamiliar with the magic power of whoever the master was talking with, I reached for the handle and slowly pushed the door open. As the voices grew louder.

As soon as I stepped inside, I spotted Makarov at his desk, with a broad smile as he chatted with the woman I didn't quite recognize at first, but soon enough realized it was Ur.

Ur is here?

Huh, I didn't expect that.

As I pondered why Ur was here, Makarov glanced up from his chair, looking at me with a wide smile spreading across his face. "Ah, Adam!" he roared, springing to his desk. "I was just waiting for you!"

At this, Ur whipped her head around and a faint smirk danced across her lips. She crossed her arms over her chest and arched one eyebrow as she said, "Finally decided to wake up, huh?"

I nodded slowly. "I have to admit I didn't expect to see you here," I said, my voice coming with an obvious tone of surprise.

Makarov grinned, spreading his arms wide and puffing out his tiny chest. His eyes twinkled mischievously as he pointed his finger at Ur. "Welcome the newest member of our family, Ur Milkovich!"

Just how much had I fucking missed while I was unconscious?!

Ur's eyes twinkled at my expression as she smirked. "I was getting rusty, and the old man offered me a spot in the guild, so I said why not?"

I chuckled awkwardly and shifted my weight from one foot to the other, as I scratched the back of my neck. "Well, welcome to the family in that case."

I wonder if Ur joining meant Lyon and Gray were joining as well.

Ur's lips curled into a small, tender smile as she replied. "I wasn't the only one, Gray joined as well." Her gaze drifted away to the horizon, her eyes twinkling with the thought of him.

Hmm, what about Lyon?

"And what of Lyon?" I asked, and Ur sighed, crossing her arms.

"The brat said he'll decide later, something about having to be sure before making a decision," Ur said, shaking her head while chuckling between crossed arms.

That somehow feels like something well within Lyon's character, even though I don't quite remember anything about him specifically, yet it just feels right.

"Well... good luck to him on that," I replied, wondering how the guild would look in the future thanks to my intervention seeing as already new faces were being added to the roster.

Makarov's voice broke through my thoughts, bringing me back to the present. "Oh, just in case you were wondering," he said, interrupting my daydreaming. "You were paid in full for the job, and they even added a bonus for completing the job so quickly and efficiently. After fees and commissions, you have a total of 8,900,987 Jewels." He paused, his eyes twinkling as he watched my expression change from inquisitiveness to delight.

That's a lot of money.

Even after giving Lilia her part, I would still have a lot left.

Oh, talking about Lilia's part.

Taking a deep breath, my gaze shifted to Ur, and I cleared my throat as I remembered her part in Deliora's demise. "That reminds me, Ur, you helped me in my fight against Deliora. So if you want, I can give you part of the reward, it's only fair."

At this, Ur closed her eyes and her lips pressed together into a thin line, as her head moved from side to side in a show of vehement refusal. "Absolutely not," she said, her voice soft yet firm. "Brat, if it wasn't for you I would've died. You stopped me from using my strongest spell that alongside stopping Deliora would've ended my own life. So thanks but no, the reward is all yours."

I sighed, looking at her.

I would've tried to argue but I could tell Ur was the type of person that once she made up her mind it was easier just to go with the flow instead of arguing.

"Very well," I replied.

After forcing Lilia to accept a percentage of the reward.

Which by the way hadn't been easy whatsoever to accomplish seeing she didn't believe she had helped me at all in this job, saying that if anything Ur was the one that deserved the money not her.

In the end, I managed to convince her into taking the money by telling her that if she hadn't caught me as I was falling with her power I would've been in a worse state, but even then it was a struggle to convince her.

With that out of the way, I made my way to my apartment building, quickly reaching my floor, where I fumbled with the keys before finally opening the door.

Once inside, instead of silence, I was greeted by the sight of Cordelia and Cana moving through my kitchen with their backs on me, the smell of garlic and olive oil wafting through the air, as Cordelia chopped something with Cana watching her in awe.

How did they get in...?

Cana was the first one to notice me as she spun around, her eyes brightening with excitement, before she scampered towards me, throwing her tiny arms around my waist. "Big brother!" She squealed between giggles, her high-pitched voice ringing with absolute joy.

I smiled, hugging her back.

At this, I saw Cordelia turn around and smile fondly as she watched her little girl hug me. "I hope you don't mind but during your absence, we have been coming in to clean and tidy up a bit on a regular basis. And when I got notice you would wake up today, I decided to cook you something."

That explains why they are here, but not how they had gotten here.

But seeing Gildarts was probably involved in both cases, I can totally see how.

Also, it didn't actually bother me they were here, I was mostly curious, but not curious enough to investigate the matter.

"Don't worry, I don't mind at all," I replied, as I reached down with one hand, affectionately running my fingers through Cana's hair, which was still hugging me tightly.

"I didn't know what you liked, so I'm making one of Gildarts favorites, a simple plate of Carbonara pasta," Cordelia replied, and pulled her apron strings taut around her waist, her hands deftly adjusting the knot at the back of her neck, before turning her attention back on the stove. "If you don't like it, you can tell me, and I can whip out something else, no problem."

It wasn't my favorite dish, but I sure as hell liked a good old plate of Carbonara.

"Don't you worry, I love Carbonara as well," I replied, trying to keep my balance as Cana, clung to my legs, her little arms entwined around my legs, as her face contorted in a mischievous playful grin. Forcing me to shuffle towards the living room, my steps being more of a waddle than a walk as she giggled into my shirt.

I could really get used to this.

As I smiled at this, Gildarts kicked the door of my apartment open, his voice booming across the place as he bellowed, "Honey! I bought the drinks!" Grinning, he staggered inside the apartment and into the kitchen carrying two full bags of drinks, which had multiple drinks from simple sodas to a variety of alcoholic beverages.

Door repairs aside, I could really get used to this.