

Just between us

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| Rating: | Mature |
| Archive Warning: | No Archive Warnings Apply |
| Categories: | F/M , M/M , Multi |
| Fandom: | Fairy Tail |
| Relationships: | Lexus Dreyar/Lucy Heartfilia , Bickslow/Lucy Heartfilia , Cana Alberona/Lexus Dreyar |
| Characters: | Lucy Heartfilia , Bickslow (Fairy Tail) , Wendy Marvell , Lexus Dreyar , Loke (Fairy Tail) , Raijinshuu (Fairy Tail) , Levy McGarden , Fairy Tail Guild , Mirajane Strauss , Cana Alberona |
| Additional Tags: | Fairy Tail Dragon Slayers , Sarcasm , Drinking , Secret Admirer |
| Language: | English |
| Stats: | Published: 2019-11-30 Updated: 2019-12-09 Words: 3,059 Chapters: 2/? |

Just between us

by [HailToTheKingBaby](#)

Summary

Lucy joins up with different teams to earn a little jewel and learns about her guild mates.

I could use a drink

‘A hidden chamber has been unearthed beneath our town library.’ “Ooooooh,” ‘Assistance is needed to translate the manuscripts...’ “Aw, never mind.”

‘Travel! Adventure! Explore exotic destinations!’ “Now we’re talking!” ‘Seeking help mapping the abandoned, monster-filled sewer system-’ “Oh hell no.”

‘Requip mage needed for all-redhead burlesque show.’ “That seems oddly specific, and also not applicable.”

A dejected Lucy stood before the job board, hopelessly searching for the means to pay her rent once again.

“Jeez Nab,” a drunken Bickslow called from the second floor balcony. “When did you get so sexy?” he cackled. “You just gonna hover there all day or what, Cosplayer?”

Grumbling under her breath, Lucy shuffled over to the bar while the seith mage’s totems giggled and chattered about ‘sexy Nab’. Mira placed her usual strawberry shake before her as she took a seat. The well-worn, often weaponized stool wobbled slightly, along with her lower lip.

“Thanks, Mira, but I don’t have any money to pay for this,” Lucy muttered sadly, longing eyes locked on the fruity confection. “I haven’t been paid in weeks thanks to Team Natsu’s destructive habits.”

“Don’t worry about it, your tab is covered today as far as this bar is concerned,” Mira responded with a smile, waving off Lucy’s confusion as she headed to deliver Macao his lunch a few tables over.

The straw was already in her mouth by the time the suddenly cheery woman could respond with a questioning hum. A chuckle drew her attention to the newly occupied stool to her left. Bickslow, drink in hand, had descended to the ground floor to sit beside the target of his teasing.

“Man, I knew your team sucked, but I didn’t realize you were so talented at it,” he laughed, tongue out, gesturing to her nearly empty glass with a wink.

“Listen bub!” Lucy shouted with a vibrant blush coloring her cheeks, not sure if she was more embarrassed by the innuendo or the fact he’d witnessed her down her entire milkshake in seconds. But one look at the glossy gleam visible in his eyes through his visor told her he was drunk enough he wouldn’t remember this interaction tomorrow. Suddenly she couldn’t resist the urge to have a little fun. “If you want a demonstration of my talents, Bixy, all you have to do is ask,” she informed him, leaning closer and batting her lashes.

Eyes wide, Bickslow’s Adam’s apple dipped in a loud swallow as he leaned toward the busty blonde beauty. “That so?” he asked thickly. She nodded, lower lip between her teeth, gazing up at him through long lashes. “In that case, I’d love a little taste of your magical powers.” A naughty grin spread across her face at his words, and he couldn’t help but notice the subtle wiggle of her hips.

“Alright then, how about a little... smoooooch?” Lucy asked.

“Huh?”

Bickslow noticed too late the hand on her key ring she had shifted forward during their exchange. Next he knew, a literal ton of Holstein in a speedo landed in his lap, barstool crumbling beneath their combined weight.

Smug grin on her face, Lucy sauntered down the bar with Bicksow’s glass in her hand to the

sounds of the Thunder Legion's uncharacteristically undignified howls of laughter from the second floor. She quickly downed the remainder of the drink as she approached Mira to order another. To her surprise, she noted the bubbly, but non-alcoholic flavor of the ginger beer her guild mate had been sipping. A curious glance back at the tall man currently being straightened out and dusted off by her spirit showed her the good-natured grin on his face as he accepted a ribbing from Max and Warren. He didn't seem to be terribly humiliated, or even remotely unsteady on his feet.

As Taurus returned to the celestial realm with a 'poof,' Lucy caught the barmaid's attention. She watched carefully as Mira approached from one direction and Bickslow from the other. Once both were in hearing range, she ordered two shots of whiskey, straight.

The glasses arrived on the bar top in record time. "Hey Mira," Lucy started as Bickslow resumed his position at her side. "Who offered to cover my drinks?"

"Snitches get stitches," came the sunny reply before the suspiciously beaming woman wandered off once more.

Rather taken aback at the unexpected response, Lucy turned to Laki sitting to her right and they shared a wide-eyed shrug.

"Why so curious, Cosplayer?" The seith questioned. "You looking for someone to share that booze with?" She watched his eyes intently, the rest of his face splitting into his trademark grin.

The blonde picked up one of the glasses and held it out to him, noting how his body tensed for a long moment, his smile freezing with his tongue halfway out of his mouth. Quickly recovering, he reached for the object in her hand. Before they made contact, Lucy threw back the shot, slamming the glass down on the bar and, swapping for the second, tossed that one back as well. When the second glass hit the bar, she smiled up at him.

"Why the act, Bixy?" She asked quietly.

A forced smile graced his handsome features as he shrugged. "Don't know whacha mean."

"I mean, why are you pretending to drink?"

"Not pretending, Cosplayer." His smile had dimmed a little. "I was actually drinking my drink before you turned me into a cow patty and made off with it."

"Not what I meant and you know it. Why act like you're drunk when you're not? Have you been fake drinking all day to show off your alcohol tolerance in front of Cana?" Lucy gave him a wink and an elbow in the side.

His brows furrowed for a brief instance, but his features smoothed so quickly Lucy almost didn't notice the look behind his visor.

"Sorry," she whispered softly. "Am I supposed to pretend I don't know about the two of you- or rather, the three of you?"

Bickslow barked out a genuinely surprised laugh. "You mean when Bacchus came to visit last month?" He didn't bother to lower his voice as she had.

She glanced around them quickly, trying to gauge if anyone was listening to their conversation.

"Don't worry, little Cosplayer. The only reason we were keeping that on the down-low was out of concern for Gramps' heart, and he ain't here today."

"You really think he'd be upset to find out you're into guys?"

The man laughed again. "First of all, Gramps doesn't judge. He is visiting Master Bob right now, and it'd be hard to get a foot in the door at Blue Pegasus with that kind of attitude. And second, I'm not specifically into guys, I'm just into sexy people."

"Then why were you worried about Master's heart?" The alcohol had just started putting a hint of fuzz in Lucy's brain and she wasn't sure she was following him very well.

“Pretty sure he'd crash just from imagining Cana getting naked, never mind with a couple of dudes.”

Lucy smacked her hand to her forehead and shook her head. Right then, Mira appeared from thin air to line up another pair of shots before disappearing into the kitchen.

“Oh, I didn't-” the celestial mage called out but the other blonde had already slipped away. “I didn't order more, did I?” She questioned her companion.

They both shrugged. Lucy sucked down one of the drinks, but before she could grab the second, Bickslow wrapped his hand around it and quickly swallowed the contents.

“Satisfied?” He asked.

“No, I was going to drink that.”

“What kind of man would I be if I let a lightweight get too drunk to stand?” As she prepared to argue, Lucy tested the stability of her legs on the bottom rung of the barstool. Ok, maybe he was right. But there was no way she would admit that.

“My mysterious benefactor is buying pity booze for me, I just don't feel right spending someone else's money to prove you're drinking. But really, why pretend to be drunk?”

Bickslow shrugged. “Maybe I'm just trying to fit in with the cool kids.” He was smiling once more as Lucy rolled her eyes. “So tell me, Cosplayer, why were you moping in front of the job board? Nothing catch your eye?”

Again with the eye roll. “I'm trying to find a job I can handle on my own,” she mumbled, pressing her forehead to the bar. “It feels like that's the only way I'll ever get paid anymore. Besides, that flu going around took out Natsu and Erza. Porlyusica has them both on bed rest, with a little threat of pain of death if they step foot outside the infirmary and infect the rest of us.”

She missed his shudder at the thought of what kind of horrid death the hag could inflict.

“What about Gray?”

It was Lucy's turn to shudder. “Can you imagine the flooding that would ravage the countryside if Juvia ever found out he went on a mission alone with her ‘love rival?’”

“Ooh, shit, yeah. Hadn't thought of that. What about the mini slayer? Between her support magic and your combat abilities and adult supervision, you two could take on some decently high dollar missions.”

As if an electric current had run through her, Lucy snapped upright and turned to him.

“That sewer job sounds like crap,” he continued with a laugh at his own pun, “but for 140 thousand jewel it's probably worth the many showers needed afterwards. And it's not on the S-Class board, so the monsters can't be that tough.”

She pounced him like a wild animal, grabbing his face between both hands and kissing him square on the lips. Before his brain could even register her movement, she was stalking away from him with a little extra effort apparent in her steps.

“Hey Cosplayer, where ya headed?”

“I gotta see a dragon about some shit!”

Bickslow shrugged and turned back to the bar, flagging down Kinana to order a new drink.

“More of the same?” She asked.

“Nah, bring me something strong. I'm off duty now.”

Under My Nose

It was a good day. One where the job went right, the old geezer was drinking in the guildhall, flamebrain and his team didn't destroy anything, and paperwork was kept to a minimum. He should have been suspicious.

Just when a beautiful blonde was serving up a gourmet meal at his unusually-quiet usual spot in the guild, his nose started to itch. It was just a tickle, at first.

But when he tried to rub the feeling away, his hands couldn't seem to locate his face. With every over-exaggerated swipe of his limbs, the sensation in his nose grew more intense.

Finally, he gathered all his focus into his left hand, and made a powerful swing aimed for the center of his face.

Right as his large fist struck him in the eye, jolting him awake, Laxus sneezed.

Tiny currents of static electricity fired out from him in every direction as his body made an effort to expel the irritant, causing the head on his chest to jerk violently.

"Ow, dammit dude! Haven't you ever heard of beauty rest?" His companion covered her eyes, attempting to block out consciousness. Laxus noticed the hair that had been tickling him was now making an attempt to flee her head altogether. Small sparks were still visible here and there between the chocolate strands floating in the darkness.

"Maybe if you'd keep all that 'beauty' to your side of the bed we'd both get some rest," he grumbled as he ever-so-gently rolled her away.

Landing on the mattress with a small squawk, she quickly burrowed beneath the forgotten coverlet. "You can't blame a girl for wanting to snuggle up to a humanoid space heater. And don't think I didn't hear those air quotes mister," she griped, pulling the blanket up to her chin.

"We agreed, no cuddling," he murmured tiredly as he rubbed the rest of the irritation from his nose. He paused. "Humanoid?" he questioned bewilderedly.

"That's why I said snuggling, duh. And yes, humanoid, meaning that as a space heater, you also bear characteristics resembling those of a human being," she quipped.

With an aggravated sigh he turned his head to face her. "I'm familiar with the word, I just don't see why- you know what? No. I'm not having this conversation at three in the morning. I'm going back to sleep." He flopped to his side, attempting to block her out.

"Aw, come on, you can't even take a little teasing?" she taunted, then mumbled, "such a fuddy-duddy"

"I like you better when you're drunk," he muttered back.

"Yeah, well there are far better uses for your tongue than whinging like an old biddy."

Laxus slowly peeked over his shoulder to see her grinning, waiting for his reaction. He weighed his options carefully, knowing this might be their last opportunity for a while. But her big mouth made the decision for him.

"I mean, you could certainly benefit by asking Bickslow for some pointers on the lingual arts, but you're definitely no slouch. Although I think we both know your true talents lie more in the brute strength departm-"

A snarling, humanoid figure pounced her, ending her sentence prematurely. She squealed in delight, tangling her fingers in Laxus' hair as he demonstrated many of his diverse talents.

Later that morning, she scrubbed vigorously in the shower, careful to remove every trace of the dragon slayer's scent. He peeked around the shower curtain, already fully dressed with his

long coat draped over his arm.

"So how long is your old man in town this time?" he grumbled, startling the sudsy brunette.

"Gods, who knows? It's so hard to get a good reading on the dude. Doubtful it'll be more than a few weeks, you know how he is. He's got enough saved he could retire but he can't hold still looking enough to sign the paperwork."

Lexus rubbed a hand over his face in thought while she continued massaging shampoo through her long tresses.

"What," she questioned before dunking her hair under the piping hot spray. "You gonna miss me or something?" Her lower lip popped out in a mocking pout.

"Nah, I'm just imagining him retiring and kicking you back out of his house. Or maybe he'll keep you around to cook and clean, only to realize you can't do either," he finished with a grin as she flung bubbles at his face in mock outrage.

She arched one eyebrow. "Joke's on you, pal. He moves back in here and there's no more sleepovers unless you put a ring on it."

They both paused, the only sound coming from the running water. He slowly started to sink down onto one knee outside the shower, and her face twisted into a mask of horror. As he looked up at her, he covertly lowered one finger to the shower floor.

Screams of genuine outrage echoed off the tile and tortured the large man's sensitive ears as he sent a shock through the water that surrounded her. He darted away quickly when she turned the shower head on him, cursing him, his powers, his ancestors, and whatever unlucky fool ever did marry his stupid ass.

Leaving her to trash her bathroom however she saw fit, Lexus retreated to her bedroom to begin covering his tracks. Rubbing his finger and thumb together, he created a small spark to ignite the scented candle on her nightstand, when a small tin next to it caught his eye. The lid was slightly askew, and like a man at sea drifting toward a siren's call, his curiosity lead him to reached over and shift it aside. A beautiful deck of cards sat inside.

He'd seen them before, watched her spread them out for readings, felt their explosive power when launched at his head any time he was being a dick. But now, for some reason, he felt the need to disrupt the neat pile. The top card was warm to the touch, so he slid it off, followed by the next, and the next, until the deck cooled.

He turned the cards over, almost expecting to find some dire message of impending doom. All he spotted was a rainbow and a bunch of naked people before he heard the shower shut off, and the cards were quickly tossed back at the pile.

Lexus grabbed a pair of aerosol room fresheners and doused the room. He continued to spray the chemicals around while backing out toward the front door. Strong smelling hand sanitizer awaited him in the entryway, and he was sure to drench his hands before opening the door to step out. Now all he had to do was jump home and shower thoroughly before any other dragon slayers caught wind of her scent on him.

Also preferably before the chemical smell permanently destroyed the inside of his nostrils.

Right as he turned from the door, ready to jump, a gentle breeze slammed into him like a ton of bricks. If only the chemicals had stripped him of his sense of smell. His gut roiled from the rancid bouquet of some malevolent malodor, a cacophony of caustic aromas, bearing only the slightest, nearly indiscernible intimation of something sweet. And if he wasn't mistaken, the source of the stench was moving closer.

When he recovered from the initial shock, Lexus attempted to hone in on the source using his other senses, mainly by breathing through his mouth. Somewhere to the north, perhaps north-northeast, he could hear a clattering sound, accompanied by a sort of grunting. Judging by the mountainous terrain in that area, he figured it must be the large, horned sheep that lived

nearby battling for territory or perhaps mating purposes. Not likely what he was searching for.

Electricity consumed his form as he teleported to the roof for a better view of his surroundings. The moment he landed, Laxus spun at the sound of rumbling behind him.

A cloud of dust and debris erupted into the air on the far end of the forest, accompanied by a wild, screeching roar. Dozens of birds took to the sky fleeing the chaos. His eyes widened as he noticed a form emerge from the apex of the plume, rocketing upward.

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