

The land of Fiore was prosperous before its time, thanks to abundant magic imitating technology - but not all people were that lucky. In an alternate universe, magic does not exist and the most powerful mage guild in the world manifests as a new superpower: the industrial tycoon.

If you are in Fiore and pass a textile factory, chances are it belongs to Jude Heartfilia. The man was once a hard-working merchant who worked his way to prominence, but all compassion died along with his wife Layla. Anything and everything became a tool to his success, including their daughter Lucy, whom he tried to marry off to a business associate once she turned seventeen. Her intended husband was Sting Eucliffe, a bonanza farm owner from whom Jude obtained most of the cotton used in his factories. This infuriated another of Jude's associates, who insisted he or none would have Lucy.

Jude could always get his cotton through Sting's partner Rogue Cheney, but there was only one way to market. That spring Lucy was married to the railmaster. Natsu Dragneel later claimed he had not been looking for a wife, but never regretted his brash action. He could not allow Lucy to marry Sting. Natsu's father Igneel had been a shareholder in Sting's farm, so Natsu knew the man well. For the most part they were friends, but Natsu knew that Sting got drunk every weekend. Sting was a MEAN drunk. Over the time he had done business with Jude, Natsu had met Lucy a few times and become fond of her as a person. He considered her well worth cutting the textile robber baron a deal on shipping.

Most of the businessmen Lucy had met were her father's age, but marriage introduced her to a whole new generation of entrepreneurs. Natsu, she soon learned, couldn't ride his own locomotives due to extreme motion sickness. He instead traveled on back of a silvery-blue stallion called Happy. He was a generous man to those closest to him, particularly a teenage boy named Romeo Conbolt whom he was training as his right-hand man. Natsu's generosity, however, did not extend to the blue-collar workers, who had begun derogatorily referring to him as "the fire dragon".

Natsu's train cars and rails alike required copious amounts of steel, which could only be supplied by Gajeel Redfox. Gajeel had been born poor in another country, but once he got his foot into Fiore's steel industry, he monopolized it and grew into the wealthiest man around. His technique was simple but effective. First he bought up his suppliers, then his distributors. Once he had that control he was able to improve his product and make it cheaper, running his competitors out of business. When his competitors were gone, he no longer had to be cheap; the market was in his hand. Once he amassed his fortune he began to build public libraries, pleasing his bookworm of a wife, Levy. Sharing a love of literature, Lucy and Levy soon became good friends.

Natsu's rival Gray Fullbuster was a man of luck. Good and bad both, his life just happened to him. As a young child his family was murdered by an outlaw the press knew as Deliora, bad luck. In his late teens he returned to his cold mountain home, and repairing the old well struck oil, good luck. A few years later, once he had gathered a prominent portion of the oil industry

into his control, he happened to save a young woman's life. No one was sure what kind of luck that was, for from the day he pulled Juvia Lockser from a fast flowing river, her father became determined that his daughter should marry Gray, he had money after all.

Most of the tycoons exploited their workers for an extra buck, but not Mr. Fernandez. He used the philosophy that a happy worker worked well, so built his company town accordingly. He even built a complementary amusement park for his employees to use between shifts. So many people could only dream of crafting chocolates in his factory that it became known as "The Tower of Heaven". One little known fact about Jellal is that he was an early supporter of women's rights. Though too timid to make a public statement, he consistently lent his ear to the women in his life. Most of his company's more risky actions in fact, had started out as the ideas of his wife Erza. The couple never had any children of their own, but founded an orphanage, naming those children as heirs to his company.

Brightening up the country for the first time was the never before dreamed of commodity electricity, and it's forthright young master Lauxus Dreyar. Lauxus was a bit of a recluse, preferring to conduct his business through his right hand men Freed Justine and Bixlow. Socially too, he was known to have no friends or romantic interest, allocating nearly all his time to planning his next business transactions.

Rumors claimed that Lauxus, despite his success, was a spoiled brat that would have never amounted to anything if not for his rich grandfather. Makarov Dreyar was the only older tycoon Natsu introduced Lucy to, and he was by far the oldest she had ever met. The 88-year-old man made his money off of nothing other than money itself, he was the banking tycoon. Makarov provided funding to all the young businessmen in their various endeavors, proudly looking at what they built and calling them his children. While Makarov generally favored one man in each industry, he always made sure that one or two competitors didn't go out of business. Competition forced "his children" to make their products better, thus increasing the value of their stock. After all he was a businessman.