

Enough with This Slow Life!
I WAS REINCARNATED AS A
HIGH ELF
AND NOW I'M
BORED

2

story by
rarutori
illust. by
ciavis



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In Kaeha's household, whenever there was cause for celebration, they'd break out the rice for dinner. As something that had to be imported, it was quite a rare luxury here, so I was really excited to see how Win would react to it.



MIZUHA

"HEH
HEH
HEH"

KAEHA'S MOTHER

"Maybe a
spoon would
be easier for
you, Win."

"That must
be a really
long time!"

SHIZUKI

"This is
how you
hold them.
Here, try it."

"HUH?"

WIN

KAEHA

ACER

"It's been so
long since I've
eaten a meal
like this. It's
great."

The elven visitors had truly arrived in the dwarven kingdom. Even though I knew they were coming, I could hardly believe my eyes seeing elves here of all places.

"Yeah, guess it's been about thirty years, huh? You still using that kukri I sold you? Bring it by later, I'll fix it up for you."

OSWALD

REBEES

AIRENA

HURATIO

"It has been quite some time, Mr. Oswald and Lord Acer. Thank you for having us for this short visit. We look forward to meeting you all."



CHARACTERS



Kaeha's Mother (Kuroha)

Once suffered from tuberculosis, but recovered with Acer's help.



Kawshman

Acer's master in magic and ritual. Researching the production of relic.



Nonna

Daughter of the owner of an inn in Janpemon.



Acer

A whimsical high elf with a thousand-year life span. In addition to Spirit Arts and archery, he is also proficient in blacksmithing, swordsmanship, and magic.



Airena

A seven-star adventurer. Acting as the representative of the elves.



Oswald

Acer's master in blacksmithing. He returned to the land of the dwarves, aiming to become king.



Kaeha

Acer's master in swordsmanship. Working hard to rebuild the Yosogi School.

Acer was reincarnated as a high elf, a race straight out of fairy tales who can live for a thousand years. One hundred and twenty years after becoming self-aware, he grew tired of his monotonous life in the forest and ventured into the outside world.

On his journey, he pressured the dwarf Oswald and the swordswoman Kaeha into teaching him their trades, exchanged his knowledge of blacksmithing for instruction in magic with Kawshman, and created his own magic sword. He enjoyed the seafood of the port town Saurotay, and indulged in the heavily wheat-based cuisine of Janpemon. His journey continued for years, led by his curiosity alone.

Now, after receiving word from the adventurer Airena, he heads to meet a half-elf child, born from a human father and captive elven mother in the incident in Ludoria years ago. He has no experience raising children, but has plenty of love to give to the young child he hopes will become his closest friend. His heart swelling with anticipation, he meets the young half-elf for the first time.

Acer's new journey into parenthood is about to begin!

STORY





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Chapter 1 — High, Half, and the City of Wheat

Let me take a minute to explain the geography of this world. That being said, I'm not an expert in that field, so I can only talk about the area around the Kingdom of Ludoria.

Just east of the Great Pulha Woodlands where I first emerged stood Ludoria itself, a fairly large nation compared to those on its borders. It had monsters which could be hunted for resources in the woodlands on its west edge, a wealth of mineral resources in its northern mountainous region, and a fertile eastern region producing an abundance of food. It was a diverse and stable nation, both culturally and economically.

In recent years, a number of the kingdom's noble families had been deposed, leaving the royal family's power and influence with less competition. So while the country looked strong from the outside, the loss of much of its ruling class, combined with the growing monster populations within its borders, meant the kingdom's future was anything but clear.

Paulogia lay directly to the south, a region I'd guess was about half the size of Ludoria. I didn't know much about it, but I could assume their porcelain and ceramics were famous across the world. They were on good terms with Ludoria, as much of their food was imported from their larger northern neighbor, but I couldn't say the same about their relations with the Vilestorika Republic on the continent's southern edge.

To the east of Paulogia was the Duchy of Kirkoim, making it southeast of Ludoria and northeast of Vilestorika. To be honest, I passed through it quite quickly on my journey, so I didn't learn much about it. Kirkoim was on good terms with Ludoria, Paulogia, and Vilestorika, allowing free passage for people and goods between them. It also occasionally acted as a mediator between Paulogia and Vilestorika. Heading northeast from there would take you to the Azueda Alliance, where Odine was located.

But north of Kirkoim were two nations further separating the Alliance from Ludoria: Zyntes and Jidael. In the past, these nations had been at war with both Ludoria and the Alliance, but by this point, all conflict had

ceased, and the area was largely peaceful. These good relations were likely due to the birth of another power to the northeast, Darottei. Situated directly north of the Alliance, this warmongering newcomer provided a common enemy that demanded all of their attention.

In summary, to the west of Ludoria were the Great Pulha Woodlands, to its south were Paulogia and Kirkoim, and to its east were Zyntes and Jidael. As for the North, that region was occupied mostly by mountains. It was too dangerous a location for people to go...and apparently a small nation of dwarves lay at its heart.

Beyond the northern mountains was the Empire of Fodor, which maintained a hostile relationship with Ludoria. The precarious mountain range between them had kept the conflict from escalating into a full-blown war, but they still built fortresses in those mountains to keep an eye on each other, and small skirmishes were common.

Anyway, that was quite a long explanation. My point is that when the elves left Ludoria, they moved to the forests in Paulogia, Kirkoim, Zyntes, and Jidael.

On my journey to pick up the half-elf child, I met up with my friend Airena in Sviej, the capital of Zyntes. She was an elf, so although it had been years since our last meeting, she looked more or less the same as the first day we met.

“It has been a while, Lord Acer. I suppose this is much like the last time we met,” she said with a laugh as she stepped into my room at the inn, in surprisingly good spirits.

It seemed talks with Ludoria were progressing well. According to her, while the royal family had seized the holdings of the nobles they had executed in their bid for power, managing the people of their territory had become quite an ordeal. The citizenry of the eastern reaches of Ludoria were in constant fear of another earthquake. Similarly, they were terrified of the elves, whose demand for an apology from the kingdom had yet to be met. After ignoring the elves for years, people began fleeing the area, afraid that the anger of the elves would bring an even greater disaster than the one they had already experienced.

On top of that, with the elves having abandoned the nearby forests, the number of monsters emerging from them began to increase. Anxiety among the citizenry continued to grow, and crop yields dropped across the region.

A hit to the breadbasket of Ludoria wasn't just a local issue, though. For example, this would also impact the amount of food that could be exported to Paulogia. Prices of food within the kingdom would rise, general unrest would spread, and food exports would start to decline.

And all of this had happened after the royal family took direct control of the area. Their attempt to blame the executed nobles for the current state of affairs hadn't been enough to silence the demands for a solution.

No matter how strong Ludoria was as a nation—or rather, because of its strength as a nation—unrest among its people immediately piqued the interest of its neighbors. So in an attempt to keep this situation under control while they still could, they came to the table to negotiate with Airena and the elves. In all likelihood, the current king would bow to the demands for an apology within the next few years, and then step down from his position. The current crown prince was still too young to ascend the throne, so he would probably lead with the assistance of the current king's younger brother, the archduke. Resolving the unrest within Ludoria would then be up to those two and their skills, but it would at least resolve their conflict with the elves.

Once the apology had been made, some elves would start to return to their homelands and cull the monsters. I had an odd feeling I would be called upon at that point. Of course, not all elves would forgive the humans even after an apology, and the humans' fear of the elves wouldn't be so easily dispelled. But that wasn't an issue anyone was responsible for solving. That was the end of things, as far as I was concerned. The gulf between them would only be filled by time.



“Maybe it's a bit early to be saying this, but good work, Airena. I doubt anyone else could have achieved the same results.”

About six years had passed since I had caused the earthquake in Ludoria. From the perspective of an elf or high elf, barely any time had passed at all. I couldn't begin to imagine what it had taken to bring the negotiations to this point. It must have been very different from the carefree years I had spent in that time. Even up against an entire nation, Airena wouldn't take empty lip service. I imagined she had found herself in danger more than once.

As far as I was concerned, the actions of Ludoria's royal family couldn't be less interesting. The people I cared about were the citizens of

Vistcourt, and Kaeha and her mother in the capital. As long as those lives weren't threatened, I couldn't care less about who sat on the throne. I really admired Airena for being able to stand up and work hard to resolve this situation, knowing she may have felt the same way.

"No, it was nothing. I was just following your example, Lord Acer, following my whims. I couldn't stand to let the nation where Clayas, Martena, and their child live fall to ruin." The mischievous smile she gave when she said that was the most charming side of her I had ever seen.

Of course, there were still plenty of problems. The forests the elves used to call home would need to be reclaimed from monsters. And of course, they would need to be repopulated. Convincing the elves to return to their old homelands, after just settling into new lives, would be backbreaking work.

But I was confident Airena would get it done. Persisting through any hardship and using every resource at hand to see their convictions through were the marks of what humans called a hero. Well, she was an elf, but I already saw her that way. There was no need to worry.

Setting that tangent aside, it was time to move on to the main subject. I started by trying to break from the solemn atmosphere we had created.

"By the way, Airena. I've been really looking forward to meeting this kid," I said, clapping my hands together. I was actually really excited about this. The burden a half-elf was born with would no doubt be heavy, but there was no reason for me to be gloomy about it. I had no experience raising children, but I had spent quite a bit of time thinking about the endeavor. So while I didn't think I'd be fit to be called a parent, if I was called upon to be their friend and guardian, I had more than enough love to give.

But as if to try and dampen my enthusiasm, a sad expression rose on Airena's face. "Yes, he is here with me. Right now he is taking a nap in my room. I left the window open, so the wind spirits should inform us if he awakes."

Hearing that, I forced myself back into my seat. I see, he was napping. I'd feel bad for bothering him while he was trying to sleep.

But besides that, it seemed Airena had gotten quite a bit more comfortable with asking the spirits for help. It was one thing to call on them to attack something or create wind or water for you, but asking them to carry about a specific task once certain conditions had been met was

surprisingly challenging. But she had said the spirits would inform her if the child awoke like it was nothing. Even among elves, she was likely among the greatest of spirit callers.

“But I have to ask you one more time, Lord Acer. Are you really okay with this?” she asked. “I do not doubt your love for the child. My concern is that his shorter life span as a half-elf will be a source of grief for you.”

So she was concerned about what would happen when the child’s life came to an end long before my own. Or perhaps she was just projecting her own feelings on me. After all, she had also chosen to part ways with Clayas, knowing she would far outlive him. But while I wouldn’t say her concern was unwarranted, it wasn’t especially necessary.

Of course, just as she feared, in a few hundred years when the half-elf died, I would certainly be crushed. But that would be the case whether I was a high elf or not. It wasn’t something to worry about before even meeting someone.

“It’s possible I could die tomorrow. I’m pretty sure I won’t, but I can’t say it’s impossible. So I don’t think it’s worth worrying about something so far into the future. And if we’re talking about life span, you’ll die long before I do too. If I was worried about it, I wouldn’t be able to have friendships with *anyone*. I don’t want to live like that.”

The only exceptions were other high elves and the spirits. Maybe that was why most high elves didn’t open their hearts to anyone but their own kind. If so, that was a very lonely way to live.

In my previous life, one of my friends had said, “No matter how right we think we are in the moment, people are the kind of creatures to look back on their past choices and be baffled. The only thing regret is useful for is prompting self-reflection, so it’s far more important to live now without regrets.” The memory was so old, I couldn’t even remember what kind of person he had been, but those words had stuck with me. I wasn’t a human anymore, but I still wanted to make sure I lived without regrets.

Airena looked at me in surprise. I doubted she had given much consideration to the difference in our life spans before now. As obvious as it was, the fact she was a long-lived elf herself meant it probably never occurred to her. As someone who was going to die long before I would, she couldn’t share in that grief with me.

With Airena at a loss for words, a long silence stretched between us. I wasn’t sure how to say it, but that wasn’t what was important to me. Just because I’d live longer didn’t mean I wouldn’t associate with them. That

went for humans like Kaeha, dwarves like Master Damned Dwarf, the half-elf child, and of course, Airena herself. Not even if it meant I would outlive them all and become a spirit of nature myself one day.

I just wanted to live to the best of my ability, taking a path with no regrets.



After finishing my conversation with Airena, and waiting some time for the half-elf child to wake up, I headed to their room.

Unfortunately, the atmosphere between Airena and I had been left a little awkward, but I imagined that would fix itself over time. Though I knew it was selfish of me, I figured that no matter what I did or thought, she would come to understand and accept it eventually, so I wasn't especially worried.

I opened the door with a creak, revealing a child that looked to be about three years old by human standards, staring back at me with sleepy eyes. He must have thought I was suspicious from the start, but I couldn't help it. Seeing such an adorable child staring up at me was like a lightning bolt to my heart. The impact made me want to crumple on the spot, but I forced my legs to move forward instead of buckle. Stepping up beside the bed, I groaned, holding a hand to my chest.

Airena had already given me a brief description of him. Yes, him. I finally knew this child, beautiful and adorable as he was, was a boy. Kids are really something else.

But more importantly, he didn't have a name yet. Growing up among elves so far, he hadn't been especially concerned with getting one, but it was around this time that the community would come up with something to call him. The fact he didn't have one yet meant he hadn't been accepted as a part of the community. Was that because of the circumstances of his birth? Or was it because I said I'd adopt him?

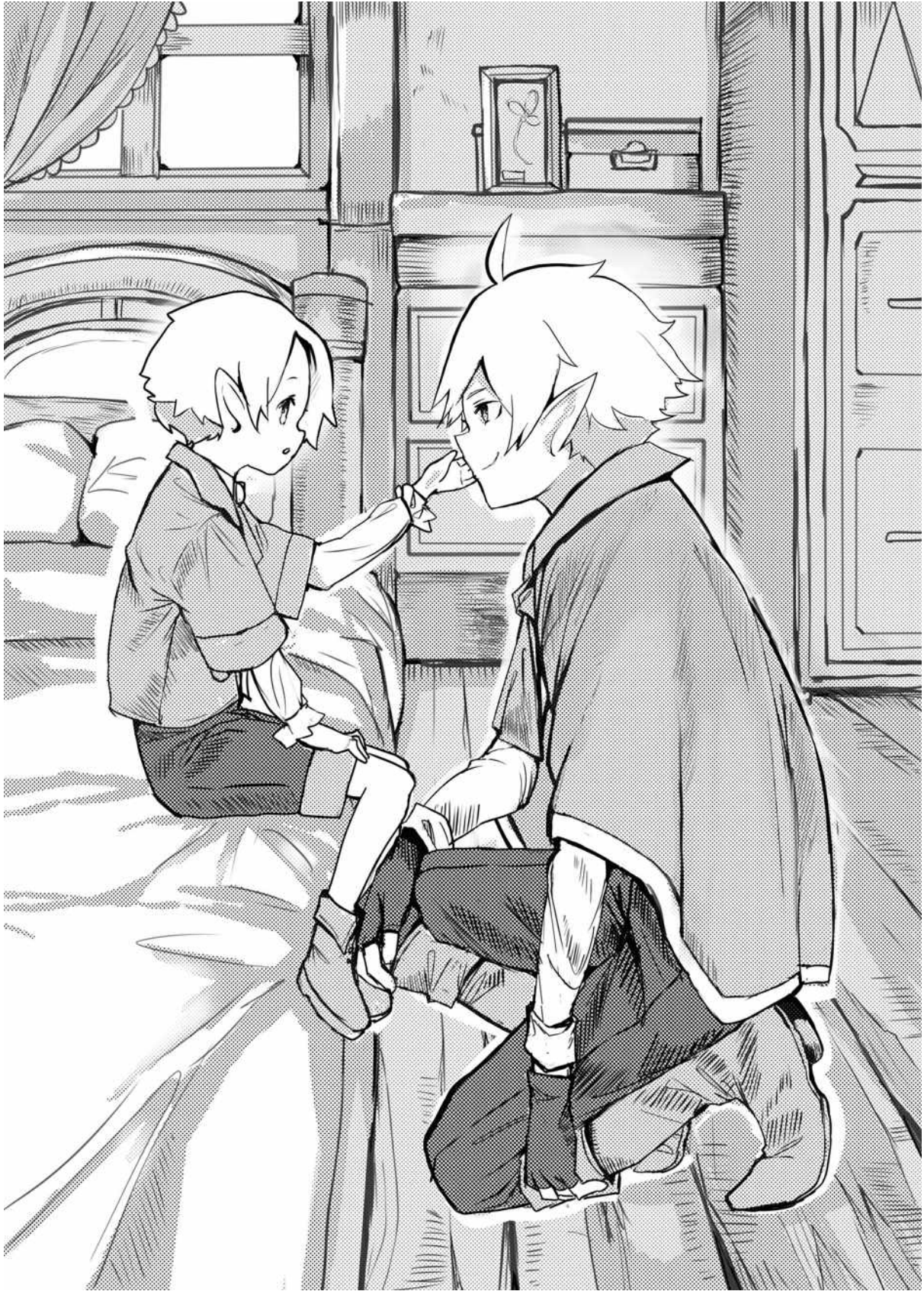
Considering I was still living on the road, I thought he would be better served by living in a community until he was old enough to survive a life like mine, but maybe that was a mistake. Maybe I should have headed to his hometown right away and spent a few years looking after him there.

But now wasn't the time for regrets or self-reflection. I'd do that later, not in front of him.

I crouched down in front of the bed to drop to the boy's level. He seriously was adorable. Would I really be okay? I could already feel

myself becoming overprotective. As I drew closer, the boy stared intently at my face.

“Wow, you’re glowing. It’s so pretty...” Those were his first words to me.



I'm not glowing, I'm normal!

My instinct was to protest immediately, but I didn't want to scare him, so I managed to hold it back. It seemed the boy was born with good eyes. The glow he saw in me was the natural immortality of a high elf's soul. That was why most elves recognized me as a high elf immediately and dropped to their knees when we first met. In other words, he could see things no ordinary human could. He would be able to see the spirits.

That was a very auspicious start. It wouldn't really change anything between us if he couldn't...after all, I was already practically falling in love here. But if he could borrow the powers of the spirits, they would be a huge boon to him for life in human society. And most importantly, he would always be able to see these friends at his side. That was fantastic news.

The boy reached out timidly to touch my face, so I responded in kind. Someone watching from the outside might have been confused as to what we were doing, but I was having fun, and it seemed he was too. It was a perfect win-win situation. Which reminded me.

"You were born in winter, right?" Surprised at my sudden words, the boy's hand stopped. Well, I suppose he wouldn't know either way. But from what Airena had told me, he had been born in winter. "So from today on, your name is Win. I'm Acer. They also called me 'child of the maple.' From today on, I'll be your friend and guardian. Is that okay?"

Heart pounding, I gave him a name, gave him mine, and asked that question. Of course, regardless of how he responded, it had already been decided that I would be taking care of him. But I really wanted him to be okay with it too.

I doubted he understood what I really meant, but he was able to figure out that I wanted something, so he gave a small nod, his tiny fingers moving across my cheek again.

Man, I was over the moon. I was so glad I came to meet him. I was so glad I agreed to look after him. Above all, I was so glad he was born. Even if no one else would say it, that was a fact I could declare with pride.

A breeze blew in through the cracked open window, swirling around the room. Rather than trying to confer a blessing or any such thing, it was more that the spirits of the wind had noticed I was celebrating inside and had come to celebrate with me.

Win's eyes went wide as he watched the spectacle in front of him. Whether it was for Win's sake, who still couldn't see the spirits very well,

or because they were too excited to do otherwise, the wind spirits had come and made themselves very apparent.

And so our first meeting passed—a gentle, calm, and joyful occasion.



First contact between Win and I had gone splendidly, but there was a rather significant problem now rearing its head. I hadn't given even a moment's thought as to what we would do next.

In my defense, I had been so excited to meet Win, the thought had never occurred to me. And even if I thought of it, I was in no state to come up with anything. But if I just kept traveling around with no plan, it would only become a burden for him. That was too irresponsible, even for me. I couldn't bear to put him through that.

If Airena figured out that I had no idea what I was going to do next... I could stand the lecture, but there was a real possibility she'd demand to take care of me again. It wasn't like I couldn't support both Win and myself with blacksmithing, but as an elite adventurer, Airena's wealth was literally orders of magnitude beyond mine. Once Win got a bit older, being able to cut loose and play with him would be quite fun...but once you sank into the swamp of being coddled like that, it was difficult to break free. I was worried Win would end up growing into the kind of useless man who would never work. Even imagining that possibility put a huge weight on my heart.

As such, regardless of how much or how little, I would definitely have to work. While I worked, I would need someone else to take care of Win, like a housekeeper. But I couldn't hire just anyone. If I was going to leave my precious Win with someone for even a moment, I needed to trust them from the bottom of my heart.

The first people that came to mind were Kaeha and her mother, but at this stage, thinking of heading back to Ludoria was a little premature. At the very least, I would have to wait patiently until Airena's negotiations had earned an apology from the crown. But even if it was just my selfish perception, Kaeha's mother felt like the closest thing to family for me. I really wanted Win to meet her someday...

Once that apology did come, going back to Ludoria to encourage the other elves to return to the kingdom wasn't such a bad plan. And Kaeha's Yosogi dojo would leave nothing wanting as far as security went.

The next person I thought of was Caleina, a woman I met in Saurotay.

While personally I liked her and found her quite reliable, I couldn't really see myself leaving a child in the care of a spy.

There was also Kawshman, my student in blacksmithing and teacher in magic, but he had clearly said that he didn't like children. Even if he took a liking to Win, I got the feeling he would be a bad influence on him. Kawshman was quite capable as a teacher of magic, but he was more of a rival than a friend to me, and there were plenty of things I didn't want Win learning from him. I could practically hear Kawshman saying, "You're in no position to talk," but my point still stood.

Besides them...oh, right. If it wasn't for too long, there was someone who might work. She had still been a child when we last met, but five or six years had passed since then, so she should have been old enough for me to rely on by now. The girl I met in Janpemon, the city in the Duchy of Travoya. Her name was Nonna, right?

The stone ship floating in a sea of golden wheat. Yeah, I wanted Win to get a chance to see that too. Janpemon was a prosperous city, the food was delicious, and the people were kind. I still had the letter from Travoya's blacksmithing guild, so if it was only a year or two until returning to Ludoria was an option, staying in Janpemon seemed like a good idea.

Okay, it was decided. This was the perfect plan.

Making a sling out of cloth to hold Win to my chest, I left the capital of Zyntes behind, heading back for the Azueda Alliance. Win was old enough to walk on his own, but still too young to have the stamina for walking between cities. Carrying him in my arms the whole way would be exhausting, so the sling would give me the extra support I needed.

Airena was returning to Ludoria to continue negotiations, so we parted ways at the inn in Sviej. The next time we met would likely be when the situation in Ludoria had changed, and I was able to return to Ludoria's capital.

"I am quite surprised. I never expected you to have thought so far ahead, Lord Acer. Ah, no, I don't mean that in a bad way. It is just that since you have the power to handle anything, you seem like the kind of person to decide how to deal with each situation as it comes..."

This was her response when I told her about my plan. She must have been quite worried about me to say something rude so casually, but I supposed that all stemmed from my past mistakes. How should I put it? It felt like something was urging me to do some self-reflection.

At any rate, the path in front of me was bright, leading into a shining, colorful world.

“Look, Win. There’s a huge bird in the sky up there.” I pointed up at the massive bird above us. Though it was quite far away, the fact it was large enough for us to see clearly meant it was almost certainly a monster. But that didn’t matter to us. Seeing the creature soaring through the open air, Win was awe-struck. His open-mouthed wonder was adorable, and made me happy too.

The world was huge and full of things that would surprise us. And now, we were off to go find them. I would teach him about all kinds of things he hadn’t learned in the forest, and we would learn even more together.

I had no doubt it would be fun for both of us.



Passing through Zyntes and Jidael into the Alliance, we took a boat down the river to Lake Tsia. After a short rest in the town of Folka, we took another boat south and west, bringing us close to Travoya. As a path I had already taken once, it went fairly smoothly. Unlike when I walked, the scenery changed rather rapidly, and it kept Win’s rapt attention the entire journey.

Once we disembarked, it was only a short walk to Janpemon. Unfortunately, unlike my last visit, the wheat wasn’t in season, but the huge fields still had a grandeur to them.

We had left on our journey immediately after meeting, so Win and I still didn’t understand each other very well. My only impression of him was that he was a child, without much else to say. He seemed fond of me, and gave clear and honest reactions to his surroundings, but the fact he had yet to show much individuality was starting to concern me.

To put it another way, he was *too* well-behaved. That wasn’t a bad thing per se, but if it was instilled in him by his upbringing rather than part of his natural character, it wasn’t really something to be celebrated. Thinking about it seriously, such a small child being so restrained was rather sad.

Of course, our relationship had only just started, and we had way more time to spend together compared to humans, so there was no reason to rush things. We could take our time getting to know each other. We didn’t really have any other choice.

Naturally it having been five or six years since my last visit, the guard at the gates had changed, but entry into the city went much smoother than last time. When I showed my master blacksmith's license and the letter of recommendation from the Travoya blacksmithing guild, I was immediately granted entry to the city.

Apparently, the sword I had made for them was still kept on display at the blacksmithing guild, and would be brought out for exhibitions at festivals. Even the gate guard had seen it. It was hard for me not to feel embarrassed hearing all that. Of course I was proud of the sword too, and it was much better to hear this story than that it was being used for some other crude purpose, but it still felt a little awkward.

After a big welcome from the gate guard, we made our way into the city. The city hadn't changed much in the years I had been gone, so I followed the map in my memory to the inn. But while the layout of the city hadn't changed, its people certainly had.

"Welcome! Are you here to stay the night? Or just for dinner...oh, an elf—wait, Mr. Acer?!"

The moment I stepped into the inn, I was greeted by the shocked voice of a girl that wasn't quite so young anymore. It was Nonna, one or two sizes...okay, significantly bigger, and looking quite a bit more mature than the small girl in my memories. She was still of the age that you would think to call her cute rather than beautiful, though.

It seemed that she remembered me after all. Patting Win's back to help soothe him after he was taken off guard by Nonna's sudden shouting, I gave her a smile and a nod.

"Long time no see. You've gotten quite big, haven't you? I'll be staying, but I'm hungry too, so dinner as well. For me and this little guy."

The shock on her face grew even deeper as, still totally flustered, she led us up to the second floor. She brought me to the same room I stayed in on my last visit. The cost of the room was the same as before at fifty copper a night, but the meals had gone up a bit. Breakfast was now ten copper, and dinner fifteen. But if the food was as good as it was when I was here last time, it was still a great deal.

"Uh, welcome back, Mr. Acer. Is, umm, is this your son?" she stammered out while handing over the key for the room. It was kind of nostalgic to see her tripping over her words again. Last time it had been about whether I was an elf or not, wasn't it?

"Yeah. It's a bit complicated, but he's my kid now. Well, he's adopted,