

Prologue - Doushi's Forthcoming

"Ooohh! Elise, your belly has become quite big, hasn't it!? The delivery is right around the corner!

"Elise is soon going to become a mother, huh?"

At this point Elise's belly has become so big that anyone could tell. Probably worried about her, Doushi and Nina-sama, Elise's mother, have visited to check on Elise. Since I've suddenly received a message that they want to come over, I used 『Teleport』 to the capital to pick them up.

As far as I've heard, Doushi has been asked by Nina-sama to accompany her as well. Come to think of it, I've heard that those two are siblings hailing from different mothers, the part about them going into action as soon as they decide on something is so identical that it's pretty clear for them to be siblings, despite the big differences in their appearance.

Arriving at the Baumeister mansion and spotting Elise whose belly has become quite big, both are very happy. From my future child's point of view, Doushi registers as its granduncle, and Nina-sama is going to become its grandmother. Putting aside Doushi, Nina-sama doesn't give one the impression of being a grandmother.

"It means I've grown old as well, doesn't it? Very soon I'm going to become a granny."

"You don't look like it at all since you're so young."

"Wendelin-kun, you're quite skilled at flattery, aren't you?"

"No, seriously...ouch!"

"What's wrong, Wendelin-kun?"

"Nothing, I just bumped my little toe against the chair's leg..."

"Oh my, you have to be careful."

Just because I flattered Nina-sama by calling her young with the intent of giving her some lip service since she's my mother-in-law and doesn't look like a grandmother at all, Elise pinched my butt for some reason. These two are like twins when it comes to their appearances and the size of their breasts, but Elise's character takes after her father, I guess.

Nina-sama completely takes after Doushi.

"I wonder what it's going to be, a boy or a girl?" Nina-sama drops yet another bomb.

There are extremely many people voicing their wish for Elise's child to be a male heir, and although I haven't touched upon that topic in an attempt to not give her unnecessary mental stress, her mother directly stabs at the core of the matter.

It's not like she's a nasty or overbearing person, but Erw and I somewhat flinch back due to the words and conduct of Nina-sama who plainly can't read the mood. Elise also looks a bit peeved. The others...oh, all of them have already escaped the room. They've called it consideration, saying that they'd just be nuisances since Elise's mother has made the effort to especially visit us.

Thinking about it now, it was a smart move to get out of here, I suppose. Albeit they won't do anything like that if only Doushi is present.

"It doesn't matter what gender as long as the child is born healthily. Elise is still young, so she can give birth to a number of children. Father-in-law-sama also said so, that he's simply fretting because of his own age. Even though it looks like he's going to be easily okay for another 20 years."

Certainly, Cardinal Hohenheim might stay healthy for at least that long, but for Nina-sama to calmly voice out what everyone else finds difficult to speak about...no doubt, she's Doushi's younger sister just fine.

"No matter what gender the child might have, it'll be a sturdy child resembling me, especially if it's going to be a boy!"

"Oh true, I'm sure it'll grow up full of spirit, if it resembles you, Brother."

"Eh? Resemble...Doushi?"

Erw's short comment rings all alarm bells in my head. Now that he's mentioned it, I remember that Elise is connected by blood to Doushi as his niece. I've known about this for a long time now, but the two don't resemble each other at all, which caused me to completely forget about it.

"(A child resembling Doushi?)" Unintentionally I end up imagining my soon-to-be-born child.



『Father! Join me in my special magic training!』

It's the scene of an old-man-like child similar to Doushi forcefully inviting me to join his magic training without even caring about my own circumstances. Moreover, for some reason that child has a pineapple haircut, Doushi's trademark.

"(If it's going to be a boy, that might still work somehow...but, if it's a girl...)"

『Father! Join me in my special magic training!』

The scene of my daughter, who has a pineapple haircut and looks just like a female pro wrestler, inviting me to train magic with her without caring about my own circumstances surfaces in my mind.



"..."

"Wend, your face is ghastly pale. Yours too, Elise."

It looks like Elise also suffered a shock from imagining something similar. Erw points out that we're both looking unwell.

"Having said that, I also used to be a small, lovely boy in the past. Right, Nina?"

"You're right, Brother."

""""...!?""""

Neither Erw, Elise, or I know how we should answer here. No matter how you look at it, I can't imagine something like a cute, young Doush. All that appears in my mind is the figure of an old-man-like child.

"I'm the second son of the Earl Armstrong House! Because my older brother was scheduled to inherit the house, I left to the outside world as an adventurer in my youth, and trained myself greatly!"

Maybe he's saying that he's been shaped into today's form by his daily hardships as an adventurer, despite having been a truly cute boy in the past?

"(No, Doushi's brother has the same feel about him, hasn't he?)"

With Erw pointing this out in a whisper, I increasingly feel that Doushi's statement sounds fishy at best. Even though Doushi's brother hasn't really set forth into the world to train himself, he resembles Doushi quite a lot. Or rather, I've heard from Elise that the men of the Earl Armstrong House mostly have physiques like that of Doushi.

"Even though he was really cute in the past... Brother, how about we show them a portrait of your younger days?"

"Nina! That's a marvelous idea! Look at my cuteness as a young boy, and be surprised!" With those words, Doushi retrieves a small portrait from his magic bag. "Here, take a look!"

Staring at the portrait handed over to us by Doushi, we're confronted with the frail face of a pretty boy who would completely look like an androgynous beautiful girl if we hadn't known about him being male.

""""E——eh! This is Doushi (Unlce-sama) in his youth——!?""""

It's only natural for us to be surprised. If this is really supposed to be Doushi, it makes me actually wonder whether he hasn't been cursed to become a wild beast in an underground ruin, or used some special magic potion...that's how much of a difference exists between his current appearance and the one in the portrait.

"Ah, but, the hair and eyes of the person in this portrait are blue, aren't they?"

"Oh, you're right."

Elise notices the weird part after looking at the self-proclaimed 『Portrait of Doushi』. The color of Doushi's hair and eyes is gold, and it's very unlikely for both to change in color because of aging.

"Huh?" Doushi checks the portrait, which I gave him back, once more. "Ooohh! Sorry! This is someone else!"

"Uncle-sama, who is that person? I have never met the person in that portrait..."

"He is...Bruno is my best friend! Come to think of it, the anniversary of his death is just around the corner. Maybe that's why it has appeared from within my magic bag? He's not of this world anymore, but I was fourteen and still had some traces of cute childishness left to me when I met him..."

"" ... ""

We couldn't help wondering, 『Just who had a cute childishness?』, but Doushi's story continued, not giving us a chance to retort.

"Having turned fourteen, I had decided to leave for the world!"

For some reason, the topic has completely digressed, and Doushi arbitrarily began to talk about the memories of his past.