

The Beginning After The End, Chapter 4: My Life Now

REYNOLDS LEYWIN'S POV:

My baby boy!

I was so happy we had a son. I wonder when can babies start training? When did I start training again? Man, I can't wait to teach my baby boy all about magic! I hope he turns out to be an augments like his old pops. I may know the basics of conjuring, but I can't do anything practical with it except use it as a form of mental exercise.

Alice, on the other hand, is one of the most talented people I've ever seen. Even as an Emitter, she's exceptional. Back then, after she agreed to date me, she joined my party and we went on missions together. Her restorative powers were amazing in and of itself, but what shocked me the most was when she used an area of effect spell, which healed all allies inside. Talk about one of a kind! And I'm her husband!

Hehe... I still don't get tired of saying that.

Back in the good old days before we had to settle down, we would go into Beast Glades and hunt for mana beasts. Mana beasts were various unique animals and creatures born with the ability to absorb mana into their bodies and create their own mana core, which we call beast cores.

Beast cores had an unlimited amount of uses, making them very valuable and highly sought after. Of course, the higher the classes of beast cores, the more valuable they would be. Mana beasts were classified anywhere from E class (the domesticated fanged bull used for meat and leather), to your SS class monster. I can't tell you much about those, simply because I've never seen nor heard of one, but supposedly they do exist.

Rule of thumb, you should always assume that mana beasts are stronger than humans of the same class. Simply because, even if we take mana out of the equation, a beast's physical body was much stronger than the average human's.

While the Beast Glades were dangerous, as long as you were cautious and didn't get lost, it was pretty easy to keep yourself out of trouble. The stronger beasts tended to be deeper in dungeon-like underground caves or nearer to the core of the Glades. The first few tens of kilometers around the perimeter of the Beast Glades were pretty well mapped, and as long as you were at least a C class adventurer, you'd be fine.

Once in awhile, there would be missions posted up that required a couple parties of adventurers. Those were usually for trying to clear and map the harder dungeons that weren't fully explored. If a mana beast had the power to create its own lair and have other mana beasts serving him, then you could bet there were treasures to be gained.

I tell my son Art all about this life, telling him this and much more so I can brainwa... I mean... nudge him to at least gain some experience as an adventurer when he gets older.

I don't know what I'll do if little Art never awakens. Oh God, it doesn't matter how long it takes, as long as he can train to become any kind of mage, I'll be a proud and happy father.

It's pretty easy to tell what type of mage someone will be when they awaken, because when augmenters, conjurers, and deviants form a translucent barrier, the mana behaves differently around them during that time.

Augmenters, when they first awaken, form a sort of repelling force around the barrier, signifying that they have dominant mana channels in their body. Conjurers, on the other hand, form a vacuum of mana around them, which means that their mana veins are much more dominant. Of course the degrees of the pushing force and vacuuming force depends on their talent in either category.

I don't mean to brag, but when I first awakened, at the early age of twelve, by the way, I was sleeping and the pushing force made me levitate for a good couple of minutes! Enough force to lift a human body?

If it wasn't for that time... I'm sure we wouldn't have settled down this fast.

Anyways, as soon as he awakens, I'm going to train him. If he ends up becoming a conjurer, I think I can get him a tutor from the main town since Alice and I aren't adept enough to be teaching him...

...Is what I said but...

BOOM!

Currently, 3/4th of the house is gone...

What happened?

Luckily, I was with Alice in the front yard for a bit after dinner, but... Art... Little Art was still in the house...

"ARTHUR!"

Alice's face drained of all blood as I saw her go pale, eyes wide in disbelief and worry. I nudged my wife down while covering her with a temporary shield that would last for a few minutes.

I rushed towards the direction of the explosion, shielding my body with a layer of mana over my skin. The debris was constantly thrown towards me as I reached deeper into the source of the explosion. After fighting my way through the scraps of what was left of my house and several pieces of rocks, I saw it.

My son had the all but noticeable translucent barrier flickering around him. Better yet, the repulsion of his awakened powers was what caused this explosion. He was floating in the center of a crater that cleared 3/4th of our house, as well as our entire backyard.

Haha...

My legs gave out and I just landed on my knees while my jaw hung loose. My son was almost three years old when he awakened. Only three...

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry

"Reynolds! Honey!"

I glanced back at my wife with my mouth still agape from shock. She managed to slowly make her way towards me after the remains of the explosion settled and there was no more danger.

She was making half-steps towards me, covering her face with her arms to shield what she could from the strong pushing force still emanating out of Art.

"Reynolds! What happened? What's going on? Where's Art?"

Still unable to find the strength to speak, I simply pointed towards the direction of our son.

While confused, she looked at the direction I was pointing at and all she could manage to whisper was, "Oh my..."

ARTHUR LEYWIN'S POV:

Wow I feel great!

Feeling refreshed at my breakthrough, I closed my eyes to sense my newly formed mana core. My sweet little mana core!

"ART! OH MY BABY! Are you okay?"

I spotted my mother rushing towards me while my father was on the ground kneeling.

What did he do this time that caused him to get punished by mother?

My mother lifted me up and hugged me, almost to the point where my underdeveloped ribs gave out.

I managed to squeal out a “Mom, no cry. What’s wrong?”

She didn’t answer me and continued sobbing while cradling me. My father arrived next to her, patting her back and patting my head as well, giving me a weak smile.

After a brief moment of confusion, I peeled my head away from my mother’s bosom and I looked around to see that we were standing in the center of a giant crater, with most of our house gone.

...What the f**k?

Who did this? Who had the audacity to destroy the home of a King?! The perpetrators will rue this day! I will hunt them down day and night and not rest until...

“Congrats, Art honey. You awakened, Champ.”

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

I did this?

In my old world on Earth, a similar phenomenon happened when a youth awakened. A clear barrier appeared around the awakened and a small pushing force would surround the barrier. I’m guessing, though, that the repelling force in this world was lot stronger because of the mana in the atmosphere, something that wasn’t present back on Earth.

As once a King of integrity, I decided on apologizing for this... er.. situation.

“I’m sorry Mom, Dad. Am I in trouble?”

“Haha... No Art honey, you’re not in trouble. We were just worried about you. I’m glad you’re alright.” My mother managed to chuckle through half teary eyes.

My idiot father, on the hand, was a lot more excited.

“My boy is a genius! Awakened at the age of less than three! This is unprecedented! I thought I was fast, but jeez!”

So a couple of moments of a picture perfect atmosphere was broken when a neighbor passing by screamed, “What in the world?!”

“Haha, we better clean this mess up,” my father said as he grinned, rubbing the back of his head.

A couple of weeks had passed since then. We decided to keep my awakening a secret for now. My father managed to contact a couple of his past Adventurer party members to help rebuild the decimated part of our house while we stayed in the nearby inn. With conjurers raising the ground for the foundation and augmenters doing the grunt work, the house didn't take too long to finish. The beauty of magic! Surprisingly, none of my father's ex-party members seemed to question why our house blew up.

That seemed to say a lot about my idiot father.

During the middle of reconstructing our house, my birthday came around (May 29). My parents woke me up that morning with a present, and what seemed to be a loaf of...bread(?) in their hands.

Ahh! It was a cake!... would've been easier to tell if it wasn't black.

Opening the present box to find a carefully carved, wooden sword, I hugged both my parents, thanking them for the present and the cake.

This surprised me because my parents hadn't bothered celebrating my past two birthdays, so I assumed this world didn't really celebrate such an occasion. I later found out that birthdays are celebrated starting at the age of 3 because of a tradition from a long time ago when babies were more susceptible to death before the age of three.

How medieval.

Another thing I took an interest in noticing.

Seeing children, as well as teens working on farms with their family and on forges as apprentice blacksmiths made me realize there was no mandatory form of a structured education system. Any sort of rudimentary education was provided by their families (just basics like reading and writing).

As soon as I turned three, my mother began giving me lessons for a set time, teaching me how to read and write. Playing the role of a genius son, I pretended to learn quickly, to her delight, so I could read harder books in the library without drawing suspicion.

These last couple of weeks passed by in a flash. After awakening, my father taught me the basics of mana manipulation and how to start training in it as best as he could. He tried to simplify it as much as possible so that a toddler could understand, I guess, but if it weren't for my adult-level comprehensive abilities, I don't think I would've retained much.

The basics are as follows:

An easy way to know measure your strength lies in the color of your mana core. Starting off, the mana core would be black, due to the body's blood and other impurities mixing with the mana particles as they formed into a mana core. As the mana inside the person's body becomes purer and the impurities get filtered out over time, it'll change into a dark red color. From there, the colour of the mana core would get lighter; from dark red, to a red, and then to a lighter red.

The order goes as follows: black, red, orange, yellow, silver, and then white.

From the red mana core until the yellow mana core, the colors split into three shades (Dark Orange, Solid Orange, Light Orange). Rule of thumb, the lighter the mana core's color, the purer one's mana core was and the more power they would have access to.

While the lessons with my father proved useful, I was getting impatient at the pace we were moving at. I asked mother a couple days later, "Mom, can I get books on magic?"

Since my mother still had some connections in the Guild Hall (Adventurer Guild), she managed to acquire a pretty wide collection of books on basic mana manipulation, as well as fighting with different weapons. Some of them were just books with only simple words and mostly pictures of the basics on how mana was condensed, but I ignored those. My mother gave me a strange look because the books that I'd been looking at were on a higher level. She assumed I wouldn't even be able to understand most of the words in there and tried to cajole me into reading some of the simpler books, saying that it would be easier to understand, but eventually she relented.

A typical day would involve taking reading and writing lessons from mother and augmenting training with my father. After he covered the basic theory and application of augmenting, we started physical training. Seeing how my body was too small to start sparring, we opted with running, and body workouts. I think seeing my three-year-old body trying to do a pushup would be the funniest thing, but my father did a good job holding in his laughter.

When I'm not taking either of these lessons, I usually stayed cooped up in the newly improved library, reading and meditating to further condense and purify my mana core.

As the year passed by with not much happening outside of my typical schedule, my father spoke up while we were having dinner one night.

"Honey, I think it's time we get Art a proper mentor."

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