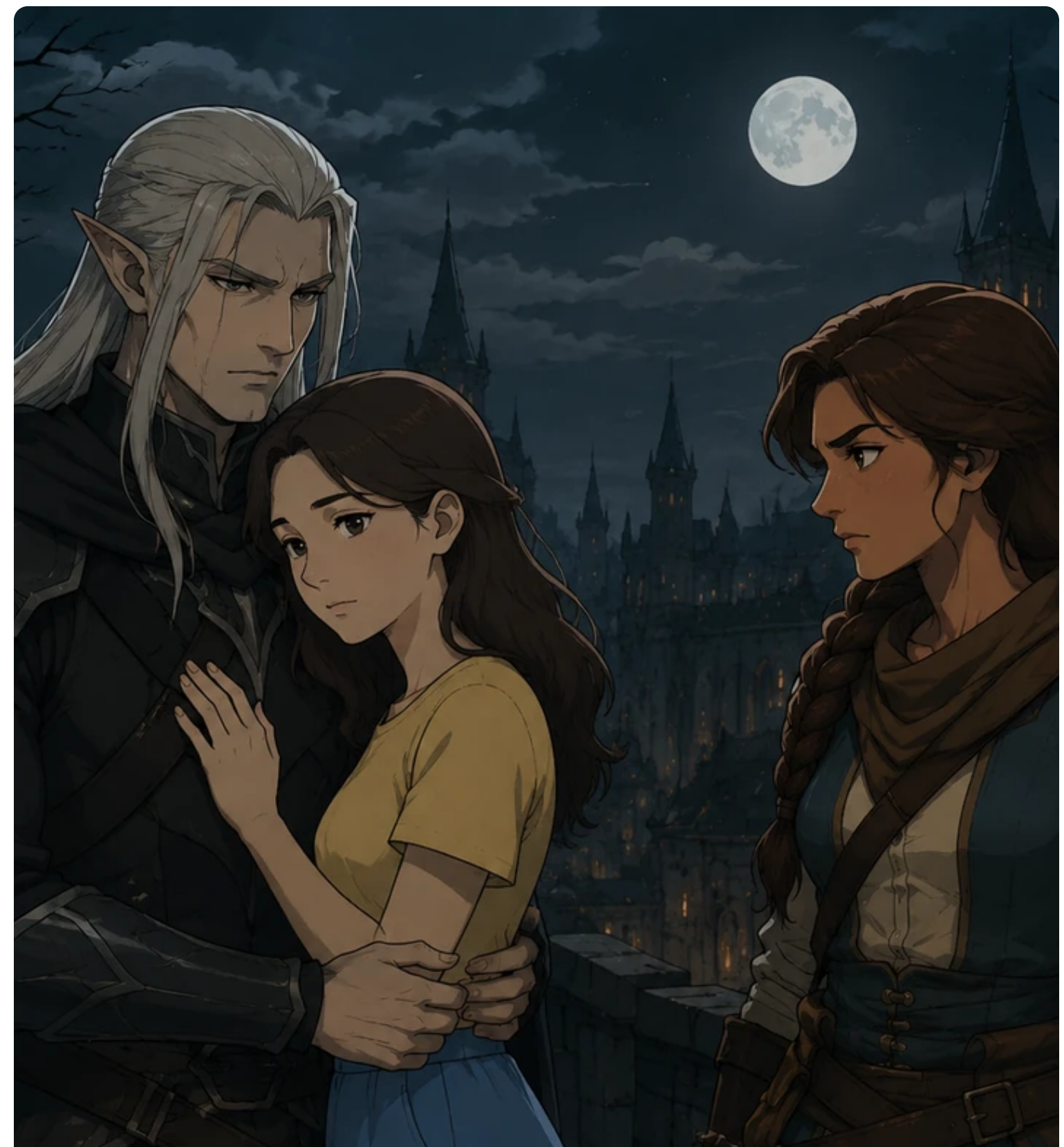


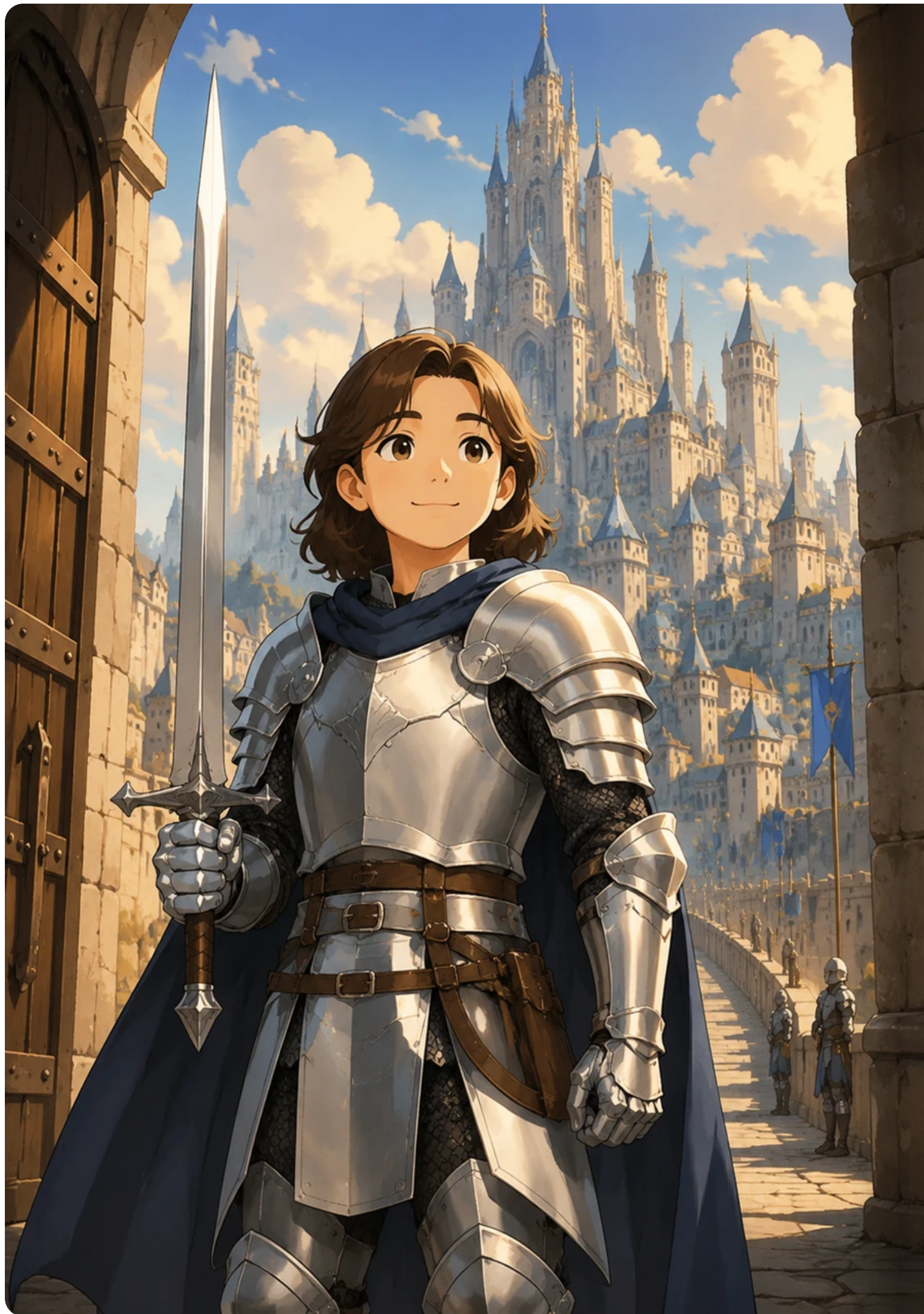


# The Knight of Death: Legacy of the Lost Blade

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In a peaceful rural village surrounded by rolling green hills, young Caelen practiced his swordsmanship every day with infectious enthusiasm. Revered as a prodigy who could master any blade technique effortlessly, his bright smile and boundless cheer warmed all the villagers. He harbored a grand dream that echoed through the valleys: to one day become the greatest swordsman in the entire world.



Driven by his ambitious dream, Caelen journeyed to the grand capital city, where towering stone spires touched the clouds. Impressed by his extraordinary sword skill and lighthearted demeanor, the King welcomed him into the prestigious Royal Guard. Adorned in polished silver armor, the cheerful young prodigy proudly stood watch over the kingdom's gates, eager to protect the peace.



When war suddenly ignited between neighboring kingdoms, Caelen was dispatched to the front lines for his very first battle. Amidst the chaos and clashing steel, he took a human life for the first time, an unsettling experience that shook his gentle heart to its core. Though troubled by the gravity of combat, Caelen held onto his resilient warmth, determined to maintain his joyful spirit despite the shadows of war.



Years later, Caelen left the Royal Guard to explore the vast unknown world as a free adventurer. On his journeys, he forged deep bonds with a group of loyal companions and fell deeply in love with a kind-hearted woman named Elena. Together, they traveled across scenic lands, sharing laughter around campfires and enjoying the happiest years of Caelen's life.



Two decades passed, and Caelen grew into a seasoned warrior in his late thirties, contented with his quiet life. However, a sudden conflict erupted between rival nations, forcing the kingdom to draft all veteran adventurers due to a dire shortage of royal knights. Once again, Caelen took up his sword, marching alongside his beloved Elena and trusted friends to defend the realm.



The conflict took a devastating turn when a ruthless enemy force overwhelmed Caelen's party. He watched in helpless horror as his dearest friends and his beloved Elena were slain before his eyes. Consumed by immense sorrow and despair, ancient magic within his soul awakened, transforming him into a True Elf—the primal, ageless humanoid race—adorned with pointed ears, silver hair, and cold, radiant eyes.



Wielding terrifying, otherworldly power, Caelen single-handedly turned the tide of battle and secured ultimate victory. Yet, the cheerful prodigy of the past was entirely gone; replaced by a ruthless killer who struck without hesitation and rarely spoke. Wherever he walked, trails of blood followed, earning him the terrifying moniker of the Knight of Death.



Decades passed while Caelen remained physically unchanged at around sixty years old, blessed with timeless elven longevity. Wandering the lands as a stoic sellsword, he eventually joined a new party and met a spirited female adventurer named Lyra. To his surprise, Lyra's gentle persistence and bright heart slowly began to thaw the icy armor around his shattered soul.



Yet another war broke out across the region, threatening to destroy everything in its path. Refusing to repeat the heartbreaking tragedy of his past, the Knight of Death stepped into the fray with unmatched resolve. Caelen fought with relentless precision at the vanguard, placing himself as an impenetrable shield between the enemy forces and his new companions.



When the dust finally settled, the war was won with absolute victory and not a single companion had fallen. Looking back at Lyra and his friends standing safe and unharmed under the golden twilight, Caelen felt a soft, genuine smile return to his face for the first time in forty years. The fearsome Knight of Death had finally found peace, reclaiming the joy he thought he had lost forever.