

An AB Discovery Book

The Growing Down of Eliot Rae

A STORY FROM THE
NATION OF CAELARA

CECILIA BENNET

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by
Cecilia Bennet

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Author: Cecilia Bennet

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World Concept: The Nation of Caelara

Welcome to Caelara, a peaceful and progressive society shaped by compassion, comfort, and emotional honesty.

Caelara reimagines maturity not as something strictly linear, but as a cycle, where returning to babyhood is not only allowed but deeply honoured.

PART ONE

Chapter One: The Tired Heart

The morning sun filtered through the sheer curtains, casting a pale golden glow across Eliot Rae's bedroom. His bunny plush was pressed tightly to his chest, and his thick night nappy, hidden beneath pink-striped cotton shorts, was warm and swollen and very wet. He blinked awake slowly, a familiar wetness between his legs offering both comfort and shame. He let out a sigh, one hand reflexively reaching for the dummy that had fallen onto the pillow beside him. He popped it into his mouth and stared at the ceiling, his heart heavy.

It had happened yet again. Another night, another wet nappy. Another morning of just pretending nothing was wrong despite the obvious. He sat up slowly, hugging the plush rabbit to his chest. His name was *Chive*, short for Chive Blossom, though Eliot never said that out loud. At twenty years old, Eliot had learned to keep certain things very quiet, and bedwetting was only one of a long list of secret thoughts and feelings..

There was a quiet knock on the door. Eliot froze. Then came the voice of his roommate, Jo. "You up, Rae?"

Eliot quickly tugged his duvet higher. "Yeah," he called out, voice hoarse. "Just tired. Getting up in a sec."

Jo hesitated. "Okay. Kettle's on."

"Cool. I'll be out in a few."

Eliot listened to Jo's retreating footsteps before standing up. The crinkle from his nappy echoed slightly in the small bedroom, a sound he both loved and loathed. It reminded him of being safe... and also of being different from others. As he peeled off the damp shorts and untaped his nappy, he felt a wave of emotion rise in his chest, not panic, not guilt, just exhaustion.

Why do I keep pretending this isn't what I want? He said to himself under his breath.

He disposed of the nappy and cleaned up, slipping into a fresh pair of padded training briefs under some loose sweatpants and a

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light blue hoodie. He gave Chive a kiss on the head and tucked him under the pillow.

The kitchen smelled like vanilla chai. Jo, still in pyjama pants and a crop top, gave him a grin.

"Hey sleepy," she said. "Rough night?"

Eliot shrugged. "I didn't sleep well, so no."

Jo squinted at him over her mug. "That thing you ordered came. The package is on the counter. You know, the one from 'SnugBloom Supplies'?"

Eliot's cheeks flushed. "Oh... thanks."

He pulled the box closer. Jo took a sip and said casually, "You know, I think it's kinda sweet. Your whole thing."

Eliot looked up, startled. "My what?"

Jo waved her mug in a circle. "Like... tenderness, you know? Your nappy stuff. Whatever you're doing, it's not weird."

He didn't know what to say, so he said nothing.

She added, "If I could nap in a crib and get rocked after school, I absolutely would. You know how many of us are burnt out before twenty-five?"

That comment landed deep. Eliot looked down at the box. It wasn't just supplies. It was a pink onesie, some thicker cloth nappies, and a set of teething beads on a clip he planned to hide in his room.

"I guess," he murmured.

After breakfast, Eliot retreated to his room and set the unopened box on the floor. Instead of tearing it open, he lay back in bed and opened his tablet. His fingers trembled slightly as he typed into the search bar: "Caelara regression therapy clinic"

The top result read:

Little Petals: Growing Down Support for Teens and Adults
"Ready to come home to yourself? Choose how little you want to be."
[Book a free consult with Mama Lin, Licensed Regression Therapist.]

Eliot hesitated, then clicked the link, and a video popped up on the site. A warm, round-faced woman in her fifties spoke gently to the camera. Her hair was in soft plaits, and she wore a cream smock.

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“Growing down isn’t giving up,” she said. “It’s remembering who you were before you were asked to carry everything alone. We offer programs for all types of littles, from part-time toddlers to full-time infants. And we treat your heart like something sacred. Would you like to be held again? It’s okay to say yes.”

Eliot’s hands began to shake. He paused the video and curled into himself, hugging Chive tightly. Tears sprang to his eyes, sudden and sharp. He wasn’t even sure why he was crying. It wasn’t sadness. It was relief. He reached for his dummy and slid it into his mouth without hesitation.

That night, in his journal, he wrote a single sentence:

I don’t want to be a grown-up anymore.

Then, just below it: *Maybe I was never supposed to be one.*

Chapter Two: Talking to Mama Lin

Eliot sat on the tram with his hood up, dummy tucked safely in his backpack, and the memory of the Little Petals website still flickering in his chest like a candle flame. He kept glancing at the message on his phone:

Your intake appointment with Mama Lin is confirmed.
Location: Little Petals, Lavender District Time: 1:30 PM Duration: 60 minutes Please arrive in loose and soft clothes if possible.

Eliot had worn his softest pair of overalls, pale blue corduroy with a pink t-shirt underneath. His nappy was thin but reassuring, but he'd packed a spare, just in case. He was more or less dry, otherwise known as... 'frequently damp' as his mother had told him and others many times. As the tram glided to a stop at *Lavender South*, Eliot caught sight of a hand-painted wooden sign by a low brick gate:

Little Petals Nursery & Regression Centre: "Come home softly."

His hands felt clammy, but something in him also felt more settled, like he was stepping onto ground he hadn't walked since before memory.

The receptionist was a girl around Eliot's age wearing a gingham smock and a dummy clipped to her collar. The dummy comforted him just by sight alone.

"Hi hi!" she chirped. "You must be Eliot! You're right on time."

Eliot nodded nervously. "Yeah... that's me."

"Just take a seat on the cuddle bench," she said brightly.

"Mama Lin will be out in a moment. Want a warm plushie to hold?"

He blinked. "What?"

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"A plushie," she repeated, lifting a basket filled with well-loved toys. "Lots of folks like something soft when they talk with Mama. It's totally okay. Grab whatever you want."

Eliot hesitated, then chose a slightly saggy purple elephant. He was still hugging it when the gentlest voice in the world said, "Eliot?"

He looked up. Mama Lin was older than he expected, but in a comforting way with full cheeks, a warm smile, and hair in two braids. She wore a quilted dress that reminded Eliot of old-fashioned nursery wallpapers.

"I'm very glad you came today," she said. "Will you come with me?"

He nodded and followed her down a pastel hallway decorated with framed finger paintings and quotes like, *"Letting go isn't failure, it's flying backwards into love."*

They reached a room with big cushions, building blocks, and rocking chairs. One entire wall was shelves of plush animals sorted by colour and species.

"Welcome to my thinking garden," Mama Lin said, settling into a wide armchair. "You can sit anywhere, even on the floor. You can even lie down, if you want."

Eliot sat cross-legged on a rainbow mat, elephant still in hand.

Mama Lin smiled. "Do you want to start by telling me what brought you here?"

He hesitated. "I'm... I guess I'm tired, and lonely, and I keep thinking about... giving up."

She tilted her head. "Giving up how?"

"Giving up adulthood," he whispered. "I... Er... I wet the bed. I use nappies. I wear... baby stuff. I've wanted to be little since I was, like, ten, and I never stopped. But I'm twenty. I'm supposed to be out there, building a career. Not... wishing someone would tuck me in."

She didn't flinch. Didn't blink. Just nodded slowly.

"What's your little self's name, Eliot?"

He froze. "I... I don't know."

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"Would you like to find one?" she asked gently. "Some of my littles use a baby name when they grow down. It can help the big self to rest, but no pressure, though."

He looked down at the elephant. "I used to pretend my name was Lulu. When I played alone."

She paused briefly. "That's a very lovely name."

Eliot closed his eyes. "I don't want to carry things anymore. I want to be dressed. I want to be held. I want someone to tell me when it's nap time. I want to wake up in a crib and not worry about anything except which rattle to shake."

Mama Lin's voice was barely a whisper. "Then you're in the right place, sweet pea." Eliot's breath caught in his throat. "We have different levels of regression programs," she continued. "Some are weekend retreats with dummies, bottle feeds, short-term nappies and so on. Others are longer, like the one-month babying experience. And then, there's Full Regression."

His eyes widened.

"That's what we call Growing Down fully," she explained. "You'd move into our nursery wing with a dedicated crib and your own caregiver. There's no pressure to talk, use the potty, or wear grown-up clothes. You'll be treated, entirely and gently, as a baby, for as long as you want."

His heart skipped. "Can I... stay like that? Forever?"

Mama Lin's smile turned warm and protective. "Many do."

He wiped at his eyes. "But what if people think I'm broken?"

"Then they don't understand," she said. "Growing down isn't because you're weak. It's because you're brave enough to ask for the love you missed and need desperately."

Eliot started to cry quietly.

"Would you like a cuddle?" Mama Lin asked. He nodded, just once. She came to the mat, sat beside him, and pulled him into her arms. "There, there, little Lulu," she whispered. "You're allowed to stop being big now. You've done so well. Let me take it from here."

And for the first time in his adult life, Eliot Rae didn't feel ashamed of being small.