

Mylakeila and the River Rescue

Once upon a time there were two little elf maidens, Mylakeila and Jerilynn, who lived in the beautiful land of Arcolina. Being only 22 and 16, respectively, they still lived in a snug and warm elf-home with their father, usually known simply as the Elf, a very wise and brave Elf-lord who was skilled in all manner of elf-crafts and a friend to both humans and elves, and their beautiful mother Andisee, who was known far and wide among the elves for her understanding of healing and keeping the bodies of both elves and humans in the condition that the One intends. (This is of far more concern with humans: there are no overweight elves, and they stay hale and hearty for all of their very long lives until the One calls them home. But, when an elf is injured it can be very serious indeed, and then Andisee's wisdom is greatly needed.) But of course, you know all that already.

Mylakeila and Jerilynn were, as are all elf-children, curious and adventuresome, so one day when Andisee asked them if they would like to go trail-ranging with Grandpa Elf, they were excited and happy. Elves, you see, do not own cars or motorcycles or any other type of smelly noisy vehicles to get around. They walk (or run) nearly everywhere on hidden trails that have been used for thousands of years, tended and marked by rangers who pass on their knowledge of the old trails to their sons and daughters. Grandpa Elf was excited too, because the trail he would be taking was very beautiful and he hoped his grand-elves would love it as much as he did.

It was a very good hike. Grandpa Elf showed Mylakeila and Jerilynn how to find the trail signs, marked in elf-letters humans can't read. He showed them how to use the *lan-is-tell* (best translated as North Star pointer) that the humans call a "compass". At the top of a mountain they ate a wonderful lunch Andisee had wrapped in fresh leaves, and thought about all the beautiful things the One has created. After lunch they went on their journey until they came to a high place with a wonderful view of the hills far away and the river below. Then Mylakeila, who has the far-sight of her daddy, exclaimed, "Grandpa, there are two humans down by the water, and I think they are in trouble!" Grandpa Elf looked, but it was very far away and he could not see all that Mylakeila could see. "What is wrong?" he asked her.

"Grandpa, I think the boy human is stuck in the mud, and the girl human is not strong enough to pull him out!" she said. "What can we do?"

Grandpa Elf thought quickly. "Did your Daddy lend you his elf-rope when he heard you were going ranging?" Grandpa Elf asked.

"Yes," said Mylakeila. "He said it was always a good thing to have. But the humans are much too far away for my rope!"

Grandpa Elf said, "Quickly! We will fasten one end of the rope up here, and the other to your waist-belt. The rope will keep you safe while you climb down to help - and it will be longer than you think!"

Mylakeila was surprised to hear that the rope would reach all the way to the bottom of the very steep cliff they were on, but she knew that her Daddy had had amazing adventures with this very rope, so she quickly fastened the rope to her waist while Grandpa Elf fastened the other end to a stout tree. "Now", Grandpa Elf said, "I do not have time to explain: but this rope is alive and will listen to you. The command "Gthen-len" will cause the rope to grow; "Ens-hort" will cause it to shrink, "Nam-ore" stops either, and "Sen-loo" unties it. But it is your rope - you must command it!"

Mylakeila could only hope the rope would listen to her, but she raised her voice and commanded "Gthen-len!", and to her amazement the rope began stretching until she was all the way down the cliff. "Nam-ore!" she shouted, and the rope stopped. "Sen-loo!" she said, and the whole rope detached itself from above and fell at her feet. She coiled it up and ran to help the humans.

It is perhaps a good idea for a moment to imagine that you were one of the humans she was trying to help. Suppose you were that poor young woman, tired and very scared that you would not be able to pull your boyfriend out of the mud he was stuck in. Then you see what looks like a 6-year old little girl running toward you in strange, wild-looking clothes. What, did you think when I told you that Mylakeila was 22 that she was like a grown-up human? You must have forgotten that elves age very, very slowly in human years, and although Mylakeila was very grown up compared to a human 6-year old, that is what she looked like to the young woman. At least, until she got closer. Then the young woman realized that this "child" was really quite unlike other girl-children she knew - her eyes were VERY large, and her hair was silken and seemed to have light shining through it, her ears were somehow different, and she was not shy and cautious like a human child would be. And then, before she knew it, the "little girl" (we know, of course, that it was Mylakeila) was tying one end of some sort of silky rope to a tree, and the other end to the pack-straps of the poor young man stuck in the mud. "Ens-hort!" the "little girl" shouted, and the young woman watched in amazement as the rope seemed to be getting shorter, and shorter, and shorter until it had pulled the young man out of the mud, safe, onto the big rock by the water.

"How did you do that?" the young woman asked, amazed. "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

"It is what The One wishes", Mylakeila said, and looking up to the top of the cliff, she waved to Grandpa Elf and Jerilynn, who told her by signs to meet them where the mountain trail meets the river trail. And she went on her way before the humans could ask her any more questions elves should not be answering.

Walking down the trail to meet Grandpa and Jerilynn Mylakeila thought about how wonderful it is to know that the One loves us all and sends rescuers when we are in trouble, and very soon (although not quite as soon as it would have been had Grandpa Elf let Jerilynn run all the way down the mountain like she wanted to) Mylakeila met them by the river and they all walked on to trails end. And, when the two elf-maidens were back at home they told Elf and Andisee all their adventures, and two very proud and happy parents put them to bed, tired, but happy.